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Cristián Alarcón Ferrari

Abstract

Taking as a starting point the ongoing debate on the very meaning of populism today, and in particular the debate on the ideological, or non-ideological, dimensions of populism, this paper uses the term populist strategies to analyse and explain right-wing parties' political and policy proposals for rural areas in Chile and Sweden. The paper offers a summary and focused conceptual discussion on populism and within this context, the paper elaborates on the definition of populist strategies as a way to methodologically and empirically delve into some conceptual problems of the conceptualization of authoritarian populism. For this purpose, the paper empirically focuses on the political programmes and interventions of contemporary right-wing political parties, namely, the political parties forming Chile Vamos in Chile, with Sebastián Piñera as its presidential candidate in 2017, and the political party Sverigedemokraterna (henceforth Sweden Democrats Party) in Sweden. Here, the paper looks at their forestry, water and agriculture politics and policies for rural areas. The focus on forestry, water and agriculture brings the analysis of right-wing populist strategies into the wider context of current land questions in Chile and Sweden, and it allows us to look at the local rural contexts for which such policies are formulated. Within this context, the paper brings into the analysis alternative rural movements in Chile and Sweden, such as for example movements for the recovery and defence of water in Chile and rural groups promoting inclusionary politics for rural areas in Sweden. This is a way to show how the populist strategies of those right-wing political parties confront the political praxis of such alternative movements and it helps to elaborate on the significance of distinguishing between populist strategies and popular politics in rural areas in relation to capitalist ideology, processes of capital accumulation and struggles around private property regimes.

Introduction

This paper has the following two objectives: First, to examine the rural politics and policy proposals of right-wing political movements in Chile and Sweden and to discuss such proposals and policies in terms of populist strategies. Secondly, to place such populist strategies in the context of wider land and ideological questions and thus to discuss prospects of emancipatory rural movements in terms of the articulation of popular movements and politics in the countryside in Sweden and Chile. When discussing the latter, the need to conceptually distinguish between populist strategies and popular politics becomes particularly relevant in this context. Below, I start by introducing some wider conceptual issues around the question of populism and authoritarian populism to provide the context where an important part of the conceptual discussion of the terms of populist strategies is located.

As has often been highlighted, the study of what is referred to as populism is characterized by conceptual problems (Taggart, 2002; Müller, 2016; Quijano, 1998; Svampa, 2016) and for some populism is one of the few essentially contested concepts in the social sciences (Mudde, 2017). Within this context, we can often see a conceptual tension arising from the conceptualization of populism in relation to the conceptualization of the popular, e.g. popular support represented in populist parties or movements, with popular demands leading to populist expressions, etc. It should be borne in mind that in contraposition to some of the main goals of the right-wing parties approached in this paper, there are important efforts to articulate popular rural politics in Chile and Sweden, and from the perspective of thinking emancipatory rural politics, such a conceptual tension becomes an important problem to be addressed. In this regard, I would start by arguing that to simply incorporate the popular into the definition of populism, and in this way to simply regard populist movements as

expressions of popular interests, conceptually undermines the possibilities of thinking of the formation of popular movements as counter-movements to right-wing politics.

In following this argument, I would add that this problematic lies at the centre of re-thinking emancipatory rural movements today. This is particularly relevant in contexts where past and present emancipatory rural movements have been widely understood in terms of rural popular movements or where wider popular movements have been formed through alliances between urban and rural working classes articulating popular politics in rural areas. Thus, it seems important to make sense of the differences between the rural politics of popular movements and what I will below analyse in term of right-wing populist strategies addressing rural politics in Chile and Sweden.

In this paper I focus on using the term populist strategy instead of focusing on populism as such, and thus I will avoid an a priori definition of these two political movements as populist movements. Underlying this option is the consideration about the risks of misunderstanding the political nature of these movements through a priori defining them as cases of populist or non-populist. Here, and when using the term populist strategy, I will connect this approach to some of the current alternatives to research on populist politics, which instead of focusing on populism as such, focus on the study of more concrete manifestations of possible populist politics. To facilitate the conceptual discussion to be elaborated below, I will first briefly present the two case studies for this paper.

Chile Vamos and Piñera's presidential programme in Chile

In December 2017, Chile's former president, businessman and investor Sebastián Piñera won the runoff election with 54% of the electoral votes and thus was elected Chile's President for the second time. In February 2018, Piñera announced the names of his ministers, including his minister and his vice-minister of agriculture. For the two posts, he selected landowners with interests and activities in the agro-business and export agriculture sector. In the case of the vice-minister of agriculture, the politician chosen for the post has also been an active actor in the water market in Chile, obtaining water rights for agribusiness projects in which he has participated. In another announcement of political relevance in the context of the rural politics in the country, Piñera named the former president of the National Society of Agriculture – a traditionally right-wing and conservative association of landowners- to serve as the political authority in the Araucanía Region, an area with permanent tensions concerning the historical land reclamations of Mapuche people and conflictivity caused by the expansion of plantation forestry. In a public statement concerning his new post, the incoming regional authority for Araucanía expressed that in the region, “*the people want to invest, want progress and want the region to grow*” (Mayol, 2018, interviewed on 26/02/2018 in www.t13.cl).

These announcements can be seen in line with some of Piñera's main approaches to rural issues during his campaign, a campaign characterized by permanent attacks on the reforms initiated in the previous Government. Piñera's approach to economic growth outlined in recent weeks will be first based on what Piñera's economic advisors call a shock of investments, which in important ways is based on speeding up pending environmental authorizations for transportation and irrigation projects. In looking back to the formulations in Piñera's electoral programme (available at: <http://agricultura.sebastianpinera.cl/>) and his current preparation to take office in March, one can observe that besides a vague call to create a working plan for the implementation of a National Programme of Rural and Agricultural Development, Piñera's programme for the rural areas was based on the following goals:

1. To ensure water availability to strengthen the agricultural sector. Here, the programme starts by stating that his presidency will ensure legal security of the property rights on water. In addition,

the programme proposes to finish dams currently under construction and to build new ones for irrigation purposes.

2. To strengthen rural family businesses through what the programme conceives as modern cooperativism.
3. To improve the competitiveness of small and medium rural businesses through providing access to loans, technology and expertise to access markets.
4. To deepen the integration in the global economy through improving the export capacity to new countries and into new market niches for organic agriculture.
5. To bring more competition to avoid market distortions.
6. To strengthen the forestry sector, including reforesting areas affected by the recent large forest fires and the introduction of incentives to mitigate climate change.

Another important component of Piñera's approach to the rural areas is his specific approach to Araucanía, which he envisions in his *Plan Araucanía* (<http://planaraucaania.sebastianpinera.cl/>). This proposal starts by a diagnosis of the situation in the region in terms of economic stagnation and ongoing job losses. The main terms of *Plan Araucanía* combine political means as the constitutional recognition of the Mapuche people and the implementation of new instances to give answers to the historical demands of Mapuche people along with initiatives for economic development considering legal reforms to allow for the productive use of land owned by Mapuche people, including the elimination of bans on the selling of such lands, the promotion of investments and the implementation of a system of credits and loans for Mapuche entrepreneurs.

The set of policies briefly and summarily presented above conforms the core of Piñera's approach to development in rural areas. In more general terms, and for a political assessment of how these policies are linked to Piñera's political strategy, one can first observe that an important aspect of his presidential programme and campaign was based on blaming the past government for implementing bad reforms that in his view attracted wide disapproval of the citizens. In this regard, the programme stated that in doing so, the past government had the "*wrong diagnosis of the true aspirations of our people*" (programa presidencia Sebastián Piñera, 2017, p. 24). In this regard, Piñera presented his programme as a way to recover what in his view was a previous path of development and political consensus to achieve development. Then he uses the talk of a new Chile with a better future for the purposes of representing a view of the people in Chile. In his words, and in differentiating his government from the previous government, according to Piñera this new government will be a government for *all Chileans*.

In analysing some of the political underpinning of Piñera's programme concerning rural areas, one needs to consider some of the political movements and political processes he is explicitly or implicitly confronting when proposing his rural policies. First, and concerning water issues, his prominent defence of water rights is a direct signal against the increasing criticism of the system of property rights governing water resources in Chile and discussions aimed at the reform of the water code in the country. Within this context, a growing movement for what is framed in terms of the recuperation of the water in Chile has mobilized rural and urban groups through public demonstrations, including 5 national rallies and public campaigns. This movement was the result of the articulation of local groups, especially in rural areas, experiencing the damaging consequences of the privatization of water in Chile and in this process this movement has aimed at constituting a wider popular movement for the recovery of water, and with the explicit political aim of recovering the water use for the benefits of the peoples. Second, and concerning forestry, Piñera's programme can be seen as a response to growing criticism of the forestry sector which was partially addressed in the formulation of a new forest policy for the period 2015-2035. However, Piñera's response is based on re-enforcing the much-criticised forestry model in the country. In addition, underlying his programme one can see the goal of re-enforcing state efforts to incorporate small land owners into plantation forestry.

The Sweden Democrats in Sweden

The Sweden Democrats Party is today a major political force represented in the Swedish parliament. In 2010 the party entered the Swedish parliament with about 6% of votes, and 2014 its support grew to about 13% (Schierup et al., 2017). The party is associated with neo-Nazi roots, a radical opposition to immigration and immigrants and appeals to racial characteristics of the Swedish people. For the purposes of this paper, I will focus on the party's approach to rural issues as it is represented in the following documents: 1) its political programme for the election in 2014 and its current statements on the party's policy on the party's website, 2) public media interventions of the former party speaker for rural affairs, 3) political flyers distributed by the party during the elections of 2014 in the city of Uppsala (which meant flyers aimed at political constituencies in the rural areas of the Uppsala municipality too) and 4) a selected number of policy proposals submitted to the parliament where the party manifests its views on political issues concerning rural areas.

I start by looking at two sections of the Sweden Democrats Party's political programme for the election of 2014 that are relevant to examine in this context (programme available at: <https://sd.se/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Valmanifest.pdf>). One section presents the party proposal for the countryside and the other presents its views concerning environmental issues. The proposal for the countryside opens with a statement presenting the Sweden Democrats Party as a party working for a living and dynamic countryside with good social services and good communication through the whole country. Also, the programme proposes that Sweden should reach independence in terms of food provision and it also proposes the right of all inhabitants to land and water access. To achieve such goals, the party proposed greater efforts towards increasing employment in the countryside and efforts to foment the tourism, forestry, agriculture and mining sectors. Also, a fund for the countryside is proposed with the aim of ensuring an increase in employment opportunities. When it comes to environmental issues, the party highlight that the environmental policy in the country should have as a starting point "love and care for the own home". In this regard, the party declares its intention concerning solving environmental problems in the Baltic Sea, to contribute to global environmental issues and to eliminate dependence on oil. In the current formulation of its approach to environmental issues, the party emphasizes the need for a balance between environmental goals and the competitiveness of the country. This focus on rural issues is also manifested in the political propaganda used by the party for the elections in 2014. In the city of Uppsala, for example, the political campaign consisted of 9 main points and one of these concerned the situation in rural areas, for which the party proposed the improvements of social services and favouring local companies and prioritizing support for the consumption of local products. In addition to this, one can note that three out of ten candidates for positions at the municipality level had policies concerning rural areas as their main political proposals. Within this context, a prominent political proposal was presented in terms of increasing security in the countryside and delivering more services to the rural population. In terms of electoral propaganda for the European Union, an issue highlighted by the party was the question of hunting rules. For this, the party had as a proposal that such hunting rules should be decided in Sweden, which has a background important controversies concerning hunting in the country during the last years.

Recently, the party has taken on as an important political issue the question of forestry and property rights. One can see this in proposals by the party's lawmakers submitted for discussion in the parliament and also in public interventions of the former speaker for rural affairs of the Sweden Democrats Party (he left this role after being charged with corruption in 2017, but kept his role as adviser of the party in rural affairs). In one of these proposals from 2016, and concerning the defence of property rights, the representatives of the party argue first that the law must be respected and that property rights are one of the most important grounds of a democratic society (https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/motion/aganderatten_H4021821).

In turn, the former party speaker for rural issues has also taken the defence of the property rights of forest owners as a main goal of the party. In doing so he combined that political view with a political language borrowing important concepts from the language used in mainstream environmental governance in Sweden (see: <https://sd.se/att-inte-se-skogen-for-alla-trad/> and <http://www.atl.nu/synpunkten/utforma-en-skogsagarvanlig-skogspolitik/>). For example, in such context he argued in terms of environmental services provided by the forests as something to be combined with other uses of the forests. Yet, he contraposed the interests of forest owners to the interests of what he defined in terms of left environmentalists, who in his view were imposing more restrictions on forest owners. In articulating the defense of property rights, the party's representatives have invoked the principle of freedom under responsibility as a key political issue in their framing of forest politics. We can observe here that the notion of freedom under responsibility was introduced in Sweden as a result of neoliberalization of the forestry sector in past forest legislation and it was declared an official principle for forestry in Sweden. Here, freedom under responsibility has been understood as a situation where the state imposes minimum requirements to the forest sector and forest owners and they in turn work to improve the situation above those minimum requirements.

The party proposals to the parliament are often framed in terms of emphasizing policies that are already partly in place in the country but the party proposes and qualify them with the declared aim of favoring local populations and their interests. In the case of forestry, it is not difficult to see that the party builds on feelings among some Swedish forest owners about being objects of unfair impositions by the establishment in Stockholm or by the EU in Brussels. In fact, the defence of property rights by the Sweden Democrats Party must be read along the analysis of some forest owners' representatives, who have recently taken the issue of property rights and the critique of the principle of freedom under responsibility as main concerns of forest owners, which has meant an important polarization of the discussion on forest management in Sweden and its relation to environmental objectives for forestry. In this regard, what the party does here is to clearly and outspokenly go against efforts of environmentalist groups and what they see as threats to the property rights of forest owners and land owners. On the other hand, the anti-immigration discourse of the Sweden Democrats Party resonates in its racialization of the Swedish countryside.

The political strategy of the Sweden Democrats Party concerning the rural areas of Sweden is not separated from the overall anti-immigrant politics of the party and its attacks on environmentalist groups which the party representative sees as leftist environmentalists. Yet, concerning the issue of immigration, one can observe that in contrast to the Sweden Democrats Party's exclusionary strategy, an important coalition of rural movements also struggle to favour rural areas and face the current problems in these areas with a very different approach to immigration, and in fact they see immigration as part of the solution to problems, such as for example lack of labour force and depopulation in the rural areas. One example is The Village Action Movement in Sweden, which consists of about 4.500 village action groups and it estimates that around 100.000 persons are directly involved in its initiatives for rural areas (<https://www.helasverige.se/in-english/>). This is a coalition of rural actors that has articulated a view on rural development that brings together issues of social justice, environmental protection and it works toward offering job opportunities to immigrants in the country. In addition, such an alternative rural coalition generates links with forest owners' associations to build common grounds in order to re-think forestry in the country. In many ways this coalition can be seen as a popular organization which while recognizing contradictions and problems in the rural areas in Sweden works toward inclusionary forms of facing such challenges and, in this way, it differs from the kind of rural welfare chauvinism one sees in the rural approach of the Sweden Democrats Party.

Discussing Populist Strategies of Right-Wing Parties in Chile and Sweden in Relation to Popular Politics

To begin with, I would like to propose some general considerations concerning the two political movements presented above. First, and in general terms, the Sweden Democrats Party is clearly an extreme right-wing party with fascist orientations based on a sort of exclusionary welfare (or welfare chauvinism) and primarily oriented to confront immigration as its main political focus. In the case of Piñera, he represents a neoliberal agenda in economic terms, a conservative agenda concerning ethical and moral issues, and an authoritarian agenda in terms of dealing with important sources of conflictivity in Chile, as is exemplified in his discourse of rule of law and pacification in Araucanía. When it comes to the general framing of his political vision and his approaches to specific policy areas, I argue that one can interpret both Piñera's and Sweden Democrats Party's approaches to rural issues in the terms of populist strategies. In both cases, the populist strategies to address rural issues are connected to wider ideological and land questions in Chile and Sweden. A main ideological and land question concerning the politics of Piñera has to do with his effort to re-enforce a neoliberal discourse and rule in the context of an agrarian process characterized today by ecological and social conflicts. In fact, his political view to the question of how to use the land in Chile replicates the old dogma of competitive advantages re-signified in neoliberal terms, and now aiming for the incorporation of small producers into the process of export. In turn, the engagement of the Sweden Democrats party on issues concerning property rights and forestry is also a demonstration that their political approach to rural issues in Sweden is defined by the terms of a wider social-ecological question concerning how to use the land and the forests. Again, an ideological dimension is given to that question in Sweden by important conflicts concerning environmental goals and production goals for agriculture and forestry.

Now that I have stated that concerning rural issues these two political movements use a populist strategy, I will outline how I am conceiving populist strategies in this regard (the term populist strategy, or populist party strategy, has been already used in the literature, see for example Luther, 2011 and Cammack, 2000). First, in these two cases, a populist strategy is part of a repertoire of political strategies to reach voters and to intervene in representative political processes. Second, a populist strategy in this context is based on representing particular interests as if they were the interests of all the nationals in Chile and Sweden. Here, rather than using the term *the people*, the terms used are *the Swedes* and *the Chileans*. Third, such populist strategies aim implicitly or explicitly at attacking alternative political proposals to address rural issues in the two countries. Fourth, such populist strategies operate in a context where one can also see the mobilization of what can be conceived as movements oriented towards popular politics for the rural areas.

In what follows, I will connect this understanding of populist strategies to some relevant issues in the wider discussion on populism. In this regard, two issues to be highlighted and further elaborated are the following. A first issue concerns the need to elaborate on the question of the differences between populist strategies and popular politics. This issue implies a normative question pertaining to the relation between emancipatory potentials of popular rural movements in the context of right-wing populist strategies in the countryside. To highlight this issue, I would like to recall that when elaborating on authoritarian populism, and in replying to Jessop et al., Stuart Hall argued that he attempted to "[...] distinguish the genuine mobilization of popular demands and discontents from a 'populist' mobilization which, at a certain point in its trajectory, flips over or is recuperated into a statist-led political leadership." (1985, p.118). In addition, in another context Hall elaborated in terms of the popular-democratic versus authoritarian populism, where Hall distinguished between 'popular' and 'populist' mobilization too (Hall, 1980). Here we see a conceptual tension between the popular and the populist, which can be addressed in terms of distinguishing between a *genuine mobilization of popular demands* and against populist mobilization. I would argue that from a normative point of view, much of the conceptual construction on popular rural politics, as opposing to right-wing populist strategies, has to do with making such a separation between a genuine politics for popular interests and populist strategies. Yet, this separation clearly implies semantic issues and therefore I have above

emphasized that this argument is made from a normative point of view. In this regard, a key issue concerns the analysis of populist strategies in relation to the meaning of lying in politics and the articulation of truth claims in popular responses to right-wing populist strategies.

To continue elaborating on this point, I would say that the conceptual tension originated in differentiating between what can be conceived as popular and what can be conceived as populist is also manifested in Laclau, who defines populism in terms of a popular subjectivity. Yet, he conceives this popular subjectivity without making a clear link to a popular subject. In his book *On Populist Reason*, Laclau (2005) makes an important conceptual point in this regard. In commenting on an assessment of the so-called American populist of the 1800s, he states:

“But obviously, if through rhetorical operations they managed to constitute broad popular identities which cut across many sectors of the population, they actually constituted populist subjects, and there is no point in dismissing this as mere rhetoric”(emphasis added in the original, p.12).

Here we can ask: Why has the assessment of the constitution of popular identities not led Laclau to the interpretation of popular subjects, and why has he instead terminologically opted for theorizing this in terms of a populist subject? One answer seems to be provided by Laclau when later on he states that “*a popular identity functions as a tendentially empty signifier.*” (p.96). Yet, in this regard one can note that Laclau distinguished between democratic and popular demands, and attributed to the latter forms of demands the possibility to challenge hegemonic formations. However, the ambiguous theoretical place of popular subjects in Laclau raises obvious theoretical and political points of contestation with Laclau’s theorizing of populism, and for a good number of Latin American scholars engaged in emancipatory politics, the theoretical and political problem here is obvious: considerable political efforts on the left have gone into thinking and contributing to the formation of popular political subjects (*sujetos políticos populares*). Interestingly, while Laclau’s and Mouffe’s theorizing on populism has been linked to a sort of left-wing populism of *Podemos* in Spain, one can see that at some points *Podemos* representatives see their political work towards the construction of a popular subject (Eklundh, 2018, 134-135).

The question of distinguishing between populist strategies and popular politics has important conceptual consequences when analyzing what are sometimes referred to as “really existing populism”. For example, when elaborating on his definition of populism in terms of a moral question, Müller (2016) concludes that if his definition of populism is accepted, the only political party that expressly self-identified as populist in the US, namely the American People’s Party of the 1890s, was not in fact a populist movement (p. 85). This resonates with Canovan’s insights into what she saw in the American People’s Party of the 1890s in terms of a movement appealing to the people in order to get unity and distinguish between producing classes and plutocrats (p. 284). This latter point places the discussion into the very problematic of the definition of the people, as the terms *populist* and *popular* are both derived from the term *people*. In this regard, in his book *The Virtues of Mendacity: On Lying in Politics*, Martin Jay has observed that:

“It might be noted that at the very moment when “the people” was transformed into the source of popular sovereignty during the French Revolution, it was crossed with another meaning, which restricted it to the common people opposed to the ruling elites and willing to use violence to overturn the old order” (Jay, 2010, p. 217).

To substantiate his point, Jay quotes William H. Sewell Jr.’s who in his *Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation* elaborates as follows:

“On the one hand, le peuple could mean the entire French population. It was the people in this highly generalized and somewhat mystical sense that was designated as sovereign in the

political theory adopted by the National Assembly. On the other hand, le peuple could mean the ordinary people, commoners as opposed to nobles and clergy, or the poor as opposed to the cultured and wealthy. It was, of course, the people in this latter sense who were thought to be capable of acts of crowd violence. The semantic slippage between the two meanings of “the people” made possible an equation of the people who rose up and took the Bastille (sense two) and the sovereign form of government that suited it best (sense one).” (Sewell, 2005)

In this regard, Jay observes that “*As the history of populism shows, this semantic uncertainty has never been fully shed*” (Jay, 2010, p. 217). I would argue that in the context of this paper, such semantic uncertainty is part of the process of politicization where the meaning of popular politics and the formation of popular subjects can be seen as different to populist strategies of right-wing parties.

A second issue to be further elaborated in the context of this paper concerns the analysis of populist strategies in relation to current literature on populism. Gidron and Bonikowsky (2015) have distinguished three main approaches to the study of populism, namely, populism as a political strategy, populism as a political ideology and populism as a discursive style. In this regard, one can also observe today differences between research approaches that starts by defining populism as such, and from that definition scholars categorize politicians and political movements as populist or non-populist. An example of this strategy is the so-called ideational approach to populism, which defines populism by reducing it “*to a common, minimal core, seeing it as a political discourse that posits a cosmic struggle between a reified “will of the people” and a conspiring elite. Populism in this ideational sense exists as part of a larger typology of discursive frameworks, including pluralism (in which people reject a Manichaean outlook and see the good in their political opponents) and elitism (which inverts populism’s outlook by celebrating the virtues of the elite and the fallibility of the masses).*” (Hawkins and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017).

On the other hand, one can consider an alternative way to study populist politics which consists of studying concrete populist manifestations in specific political activities. In this regard, for example, Moffitt focuses on the performative dimension of populism (2016), Jansen approaches populist mobilization (2011) and Gidron and Bonikowsky (2015) look at representations of populist claims and rhetoric in speeches, television ads, and debates in presidential campaigns in the US from 1952 to 1996. In this latter case, it is relevant to highlight that such analysis of the trajectory of populist argumentation in US politics and focused on a more specific level of analysis, shows that populist claims are an important and expanded feature of presidential politics in the US. In the case of Jansen’s notion of populist mobilization, this notion is close to the notion of populist strategy but I would argue that a difference here is that thinking in terms of populist strategy allows such strategies to be seen in the absence of important mobilization. As the cases of Piñera in Chile and the Sweden Democrats Party show, their populist strategies can be seen in their electoral campaigns and in the case of the Sweden Democrats Party, in their public interventions in the parliament or in the media. These, more than acts of populist mobilization, are political acts that take place through a formal and established political mechanism of representation and constitute political electoral strategies of a populist nature according to the terms proposed above to understand populist strategies of right-wing movements.

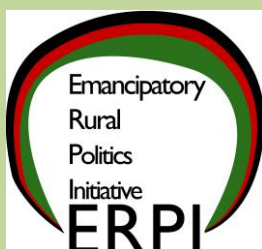
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About the Author

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The Emancipatory Rural Politics Initiative (ERPI) is a new initiative focused on understanding the contemporary moment and building alternatives. New exclusionary politics are generating deepening inequalities, jobless 'growth', climate chaos, and social division. The ERPI is focused on the social and political processes in rural spaces that are generating alternatives to regressive, authoritarian politics. We aim to provoke debate and action among scholars, activists, practitioners and policymakers from across the world that are concerned about the current situation, and hopeful about alternatives.

For more information see: <http://www.iss.nl/erpi>
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