СУВЕРЕНИСТИЧЕСКИЙ ПОВОРОТ.
СУВЕРЕНИТЕТ КАК СПОРНОЕ ПОНЯТИЕ СНОВА

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Аннотация*. В основу данной работы положен анализ концепции суверенитета, продвигаемой современными суверенистами. Автор доказывает, что, хотя в разных странах суверенисты отличаются друг от друга, их объединяет специфичная трактовка концепции суверенитета. Основываясь на анализе трампизма и путинизма, суверенистических идеологий, реализуемых в рамках старой демократии и новой автократии, автор показывает, что суверенисты определяют суверенитет как верховенство «народа», воображаемого большинства, отрицающего суверенитет человеческой личности, и поощряют недоверие к международным организациям и договорам, поддерживающим космополитические нормы справедливости. Также автор демонстрирует, что трампизм и путинизм представляют собой два случая «суверенистического поворота» в различных политических контекстах; при этом путинизм является более радикальной идеологической позицией и оказывает более глубокое влияние на политическую и конституционную систему России.*

Ключевые слова*: суверенитет, суверенизм, космополитизм, социальное воображение, идеология, трампизм, путинизм, популизм*

THE SOVEREIGNTIST TURN:
SOVEREIGNTY AS A CONTESTED CONCEPT AGAIN

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Abstract*. This paper is based on an analysis of the concept of sovereignty as promoted by contemporary sovereigntists. I argue that although the sovereigntists vary greatly from country to country, they are united around a specific interpretation of the concept of sovereignty. Based on an analysis of Trumpism and Putinism, the sovereigntist ideologies of the core old democracy and the new autocracy, I argue that the sovereigntists define sovereignty as the supremacy of the people, the imagined majority; deny the sovereignty of the human person; and promote distrust of international organizations and treaties that support cosmopolitan norms of justice. I propose further that Trumpism and Putinism represent two cases of the sovereigntist turn in different political contexts; however, Putinism is a more radical ideological position and has had a deeper impact on the political and constitutional systems of Russia than Trumpism has had on those systems in the United States.*

In 2021, in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated socioeconomic crisis, the existing political contradictions sharpened in global, regional, national, and subnational contexts. The sources of these contradictions, however, are predominantly to be found in the prepandemic era: in the exodus of America from international politics and its abrupt "return" in 2021, in a certain declared "Westlessness", in the manifest disappearance of common, West-supported rules, in the growing role of non-Western states and economies in shaping the global agenda, and in the many other changes that our "full world" lived through in the immediate past decade.[1]

One of several core contradictions that have escalated in 2020 is the sharpened contest for the understanding of sovereignty. On the one hand, sovereignty is interpreted as state sovereignty, an underlying legal and political principle guiding processes inside and among states for several centuries until the post–World War II period (Kelsen 1920; Smitt [1922] 1985; Reisman 1990). And this interpretation sparks anew the conflict with the other meanings of sovereignty. Specifically, it tries to undermine an understanding of sovereignty as an undeniable quality of a person as defined by transnational human rights treaties and acknowledged by sovereign states (Brand 1994; Cohen 2004; Benhabib 2016). Since the end of World War II, these two meaningful conceptualizations of sovereignty have been drawing closer together, and with the third wave of democratization and the dissolution of the *socialist camp*, they began changing fundamental practices in politics, human development, state-building, and international relations (Huntington 1993; Benhabib 2016; Brunkert et al. 2018).

However, in our times and in our full world, the conjunction of two major meanings of sovereignty is under attack by powerful ideological groups that deny the second meaning and reinterpret the first in a very specific way. These political groups came to power in old and new democracies and autocracies and acquired the label of "new sovereigntists". They have already had a strong ideological impact on the policies of Brazil, Hungary, Poland, Russia, the US, and the UK, which may further change the nature of international relations and the quality of democracy around the world.

In this article I analyze the reinterpretation of the concept of sovereignty by today's sovereigntists. For my analysis I use two cases—Trumpism and Putinism—in which the sovereigntist ideology was well articulated and had a strong impact on foreign and

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[1] Here I refer to several concepts that critically differentiate our era from the previous periods of modernity. "Westlessness" is a process whereby the world "is becoming less Western" and the West itself is "getting less Western, less rule-based, less value-oriented" and may become less Western, too (see: Westlessness 2020: 6; Beyond Westlessness 2021). "Full world" denotes the relatively recent situation in which humanity has lived since the mid-20th century where no more "empty space" is available for growth and every action in every national sector influences other sectors in other nations (see: Weizsäcker & Wijkman 2018: 9ff). Both concepts describe the profound change in the global cultural and political situation in which "sovereignty" becomes a freshly contested concept, with potentially far-reaching consequences for the international order.

domestic policies. In my analysis I try to answer the question, what is new and what is borrowed in the sovereigntist understanding of sovereignty, a core ideologeme of this movement? In the course of the analysis I will test my hypothesis that the sovereigntist interpretation of sovereignty is only partially a political reaction to the widespread practice of sovereignty that balances human rights and state supremacy; what is more important, sovereigntism offers a new worldview that not only denies rights and liberties to the individual but also promotes a new conservative understanding of world, state, government, people, human person, and their hierarchy.

Accordingly, this article is divided into five parts. In the first part I show how the imagery of sovereignty has changed over the past several centuries and how the alterations affected state-building and international relations. In the second part I describe the sovereigntist turn in understanding sovereignty in general terms to establish the context for further analysis. In the third part I analyze the Trumpian imagery of sovereignty, a (hopefully) short-lived sovereigntist turn in an "old democracy". The next section is dedicated to the sovereigntist turn in Putin's Russia and its impact on Russian political culture and the country's constitutional system. In the conclusion I summarize the answer to my key question and review my hypothesis.

Conceptual and Historical Contexts

The sovereigntist turn is an ideologically driven political process that Is taking place in many countries around the world, affecting equally both old and new democracies and old and new autocracies. This turn changes the post−World War II understanding of sovereignty, and thus of a state, of international politics, and of law. Sovereigntism is the political ideology that drives it. Sovereigntism as such is not a new ideology; it was actually a logic of political action, legal judgment, and international relations since Jean Bodin's and Thomas Hobbes's theories of sovereignty and the state-building practice stemming from the Peace of Westphalia (Hobbes [1651] 1980; Holmes 1988; Bodin [1586] 1992). And between 16th century and today, the concept of sovereignty has evolved over the course of a long history that saw its meaning contested among at least five interpretations. In her conceptual history of sovereignty, Raia Porokhovnik (2013) writes that by the mid-20th century, four major forms of sovereignty could be identified. First, sovereignty was understood as an absolute, indivisible power (a view held by Bodin, Hobbes, and to some extent Spinoza and Kant). Second, sovereignty was perceived as the location of supreme and final authority at the top of a pyramid of discrete lower powers (as proposed by Locke and his followers). Third, sovereignty was applied as a common term to denote two distinct authorities, supreme lawmaking authority and the legitimate power to rule, that limited each other's scope and endowed the *people*, not the ruler, with sovereignty (the liberal tradition). Fourth, sovereignty was treated as the coexistence of internal sovereignty (which granted a monopoly on the use of legitimate force within a specific territory) and external sovereignty (which granted external war- and peacemaking powers) (Prokhovnik 2013: 5−8). The fifth interpretation−sovereignty as the supremacy of a human person (both a citizen and an alien), acknowledged by states−

became intellectually and practically influential since the mid-20th century (Benhabib 2004).

These five interpretations of sovereignty were imagined and practiced differently in various periods of modern political history, but sovereignty always remained important as a legal and political concept. The synthesis of different, often conflicting elements of this concept was achieved through the force of the social imagination. Human participation in socioeconomic and political processes is possible owing to the combination of direct personal experience, individual and group judgment, and complex conscious processes that produce certain views, beliefs, and ideologemes. This production is the activity of the social imagination, and its result is social imagery. As such, imagination is a cognitive operation carried out on an unreal thing or situation, where all rational categories are applied to the possible object of sensation which is not actually present at the given time; imagination unites aspects of fantasy, virtuality, and possibility in cognition and action (Ricoeur 1994; Cocking 2005; Bottici 2014; Glaveanu 2018). The synthetic and productive force of imagination also transcends the individual–collective dichotomy (Adams 2004; Zittoun & Cerchia 2013). The physical, semiotic, individual, collective, and other aspects of reality come together owing to the creative force of the human imagination, which makes, among other things, the political realm a space of human creativity, of the application of collectively shared ideas to reality and its change (Berger & Luckman 1956; Schutz & Luckman 1960; Castoriadis 1987; Taylor 1989; Honnet 1995). Accordingly, in this paper I treat the concept of sovereignty as the product of a long process that transformed individual and collective practices and understandings of state, citizen, and relations between states and citizens, which in turn created today's social reality with its unequal distribution of wealth and power in the world-system and attempts to rectify such an inequality.

Initially, the imagery of sovereignty manifested as a "commitment to territoriality, national politics . . . and resistance to comity or international law" (Koh 2005: 52). For several centuries, the political order within and among nations was based on an understanding of political sovereignty as the principle of the undisputed supremacy of norms, values, and interests within the confines of a territory controlled by the government of some sovereign state. In the course of this history the sovereign has been reconsidered: first it was a traditional monarch, then it was an absolute monarch in a regular state with an emerging bureaucracy, then it was the regular nation-state with a systemic bureaucracy (Tilly 1994; Du Gay 2005). This last idea of a sovereign was a universally accepted norm up until the existential crisis of World War II (Schrijver 1999; Biersteker 2002).

Despite its universal acceptance, this imagery of sovereignty was constantly in conflict with itself. What is the source and who is the bearer of such sovereignty? The clash for sovereign status was being conducted among a "prince" (which soon became an absolute monarch), a state (which turned into a bureaucratic political machine in metropolises and into colonial administrations in the boundless imperial networks around the world), and a nation (which oscillated between a δῆμος, a political community of citizens, and an ὄχλος, a crowd, masses)—all these conflicting imaginaries of

sovereignty were constantly undermining the stability of a state and relations in the world-system. By the 20th century this internally incongruous understanding of sovereignty had differentiated into the above-mentioned five meanings of sovereignty. And these conceptual differences materialized in practical conflicts within and among contemporary nations and jurisdictions, manifesting in loss of the old universally accepted imagery of the sovereign.

After the shock of World War I, the most influential states—those that survived the war and those that came into existence because of it—did their best to create a less contradictory world by developing some common understanding of sovereignty. The contradictory content of different sovereignties called for legal solutions and political action. Among other ends, the League of Nations was supposed to be a mechanism for resolving conflicting sovereignties (Stone 2000; Anghie 2001). The Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States (enacted in 1933) represented an attempt to reinforce the old imaginary melding state sovereignty and people sovereignty into one concept right before World War II—a barren effort that did not keep the world from global total war (Österud 1997; Grant 1998).

The conceptual contradictions of sovereignty were visible not only in the governmental practices of the decaying colonial states and the unstable nationalist states. They were also evident in the debates among legal scholars and political philosophers of the interwar period. World War II and the political history of the early 20th century showed that states, through their establishments and for their sovereign purposes, could engage in criminal acts (total war, genocide, purges) that contradicted another image, the state as a super-institution based in the idea of justice (Ackerman 1980; Emlyn-Jones & Preddy 2013). In this ideological context, states as sovereigns couldn't be judged and punished. Thus the founding idea of a state—justice—was put into question. How can justice and sovereignty coexist?

In 1922, Carl Schmitt offered the following definition of a sovereign: "Sovereign is he who decides on the exception" and who decides on "the distinction between friend and enemy" (Schmitt [1922] 1985: 5; Schmitt 1996: 12). Schmitt criticized the liberal democracy with its commitment to legal limits on the political authority, which, in his interpretation, meant that the constitutional-democratic state was incapable of being sovereign. In a way, he expressed the most radical view on the supremacy of sovereignty over justice, a view supported by other theorists (e. g., Jellinek 1905). In this statement Schmitt offered a universalist maxim of power-based sovereignty: whoever is in government has the legitimacy to make any exceptional decision and to divide humanity into two categories—those who are *us,* and the rest, who are *enemies*. This image of sovereignty in many ways continued Bodin's and Hobbes's logic of sovereignty as the possession of exceptional power in an isolated state-controlled territory, and it prescribed sovereignty to be of a particularistic nature, with no space for international law or obligations.

At around the same time, Hans Kelsen famously argued that every legal system is a hierarchy of norms based on a fundamental norm of the system. According to such logic, if there are conflicting norms in a system of justice, the conflict can be resolved through

recourse to a higher norm. In a sovereign state, the fundamental norms are in the state's constitution. However, international law can become a higher norm for national legal systems, which makes the entire idea of a sovereign system unsatisfactory (Kelsen 1920: 320–321). Thus the principles of justice and sovereignty were seen as incompatible as well, which forced political actors to assign primacy to only one of the principles. To continue with this logic, if justice is a universal value on which political communities are grounded, then it should be formulated as a principle in an international law that could resolve conflicting norms of sovereign nations. The two principles were seen as incompatible, and this difference indeed became among the key ideological factors that drove nations into the catastrophe of World War II.

The reconstruction of the world after the new experience of unprecedented state-guided violence during World War II and after required a reimagining of sovereignty that would not contradict justice—both within and outside the nation—and would not undermine the existence of humanity (Deák et al. 2000; Krasner 2005: 71ff.; Judt 2006: 12ff.). This reimagination of sovereignty was indeed an ambiguous process in the condition of globalization leading to the "full world", in which political systems, jurisdictions, economies, ecological systems, and humanity as a biological species were unable to remain isolated in national territories (Weizsäcker & Wijkman 2018: 10ff.; Schwab & Malleret 2020). On one side, a sovereign state as such was thought to be part of the problem. To lessen the risks a sovereign state produces for peace and life on the planet, the United Nations organization was established as an all-embracing platform for interstate conflict prevention, resolution, and management (Peck 1996). On another side, after World War II most colonies were emancipated from subjection to national sovereignty (Strang 1990; Asprenger 2018). So some new postcolonial polities were keen to practice the outdated, particularistic imagery of sovereignty. On a third side, the sovereignty of the state was more and more outweighed by the increasing sovereignty of the human person and the growing role of human rights within and among states—an imaginary that was providing a new approach to understanding sovereignty (Rudolph 2005; Levy & Sznaider 2006; Benhabib 2018). Altogether, a new, universalist—that is, applicable to all societies around the globe—imaginary of sovereignty was developed as the unity of national and personal sovereignty.

With the introduction and ratification of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, the new universalist imaginary of sovereignty acquired a serious legal tool to become a widespread practice. But it took another four decades for the practice to became reality. First, the stability of this universal unity needed a strong argumentation. One of those who offered such an argument was John Rawls. Rawls (1999: 577) offered "democratic citizenship in a constitutional democracy" as a solution to the contradictory nature of a state and personal sovereignty. He implied that states were to base themselves on recognition of human personal sovereignty and the superiority of international legal norms, which would transform a Leviathan into democratic "cooperative venture(s) for mutual advantage" (Rawls 1971: 84). In this way, the citizens of a democratic state would become the "owners" or shareholders of the republic in the form of a territorial association. In this state, individuals would be the "sovereigns", with the ultimate authority to decide on state matters. This theory may seem idealistic, but it

indeed describes the imaginary that guided the post–World War II legal and political development of the Western core polities (Bell 2000; Benhabib 2016).

Second, this development was constantly undermined by the logic of the Cold War: as a result of the fight against "global communism", Western governments had a security argument to rule, with limited respect for civil rights. The lasting Cold War state of emergency opened Western authorities to the temptation to use the Schmittian understanding of sovereignty in their own countries (despite limitations imposed by their own constitutions) and in their ally states (Latham 2011: 2, 5; Gustafson 2007: 13ff.).

Third, the socialist camp and parts of the economically developing world were opposed to the new universalist imaginary of sovereignty. Global socialism, despite its many varieties, from Brezhnev's and Deng Xiaoping's opportunism to Castro's and Pol Pot's radicalism, cherished the imagery of world social revolution. In this framework, sovereignty was not connected with a state: if a state is to be a machine to administer production (Marx 1845), it needs neither political nor legal sovereignty. The peoples of the world were expected to be freed from the accumulation of capital and from capitalism's superstructure, including the dominance of the political machine. The practices of socialist states in the post–World War II period, however, were based on etatism, state corporate capitalism, and an administrative economy (Yakovlev 2010; Krasnobel'mov 2013; Resnick & Wolff 2013). And the international politics of the USSR and China were based on the spread of a socialist anticolonial revolution and the socialist model of state-building. By 1984 the network of states "developing by the socialist path" had reached its historical zenith, and the networks of states oriented toward either Moscow or Beijing included almost half of existing states, which were national states with "limited sovereignty" and different degrees of dependency on one of the core socialist states, enjoyed growing access to social benefits, and had extremely low respect for human rights and civil liberties (Wallerstein 1984; Jayatilleka 2014; Alles & Badie 2016: 11; Verhoeven 2020). In this network of states, constitutional democracy and a human person's rights were close to nonexistent (Osakwe 1981; Kartashkin 1991; Balboni & Danisi 2020). The USSR and China themselves were governed not by a public government but by the party at every level and in every sphere of decision-making, which made the ruling bodies of the party a peculiar sovereign (Shapiro 1965; Schubert 2008; Friedgut 2014). State sovereignty was rather a bargaining point between the Communist Party of the USSR (which de jure was not part of the state) and the pro-communist parties in the countries of Eastern Europe and the global south, which could lead either to cases similar to Angola's or Afghanistan's civil wars, with permanent interference from external actors, or to communist isolationism, such as in Ceausescu's Romania or Hoxha's Albania. The "affirmative action empire" of the USSR (Martin 2001) saw a sovereign in the party leadership, which paid lip service to some level of sovereignty in the working class/people (which could have some identity/*natsionalnost*'), but this was definitely not state sovereignty. In the overarching Marxist political imaginary, sovereignty—in any of its political or legal forms—was simply not among the key issues.[2]

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[2] Which does not exclude the importance of nonpolitical sovereignty. On this, please read Yurchak (2015).

It was the end of Cold War that provided a new universalist imaginary of sovereignty with the chance to become one of the leading practices in politics, state-building, and international relations. One of the results of the end of the global conflict between the capitalist and the socialist camps was an opportunity to build a more just and cooperative system of international relations. Seyla Benhabib describes this perspective as follows:

> [W]e have entered a phase in the evolution of global civil society which is characterized by the rise of *cosmopolitan* norms of justice. (Benhabib 2016: 113)

With the dissolution of the socialist bloc, for several decades this global civil society and states coexisted in a system of nonconflicting double norms. On the one hand, international law was organized around treaty obligations recognized by sovereign states as part of their own national legislation. On the other hand, the norms of international law indeed became cosmopolitan when individuals—whether as citizens or just as human beings—were treated as subjects endowed with universally acknowledged rights, which no state could deny them, even if at times these rights might be regarded as contradictory to the interests of a government. The fact is that after 1948, the new sovereignty imaginary—and all related political, legal, security, and other practices—more and more saw states through a liberal lens. When the emergency argument of Cold War times ceased to undermine it, a state was a recognized sovereign only if it could fulfill its human rights obligations and adhere to the prohibition of crimes against humanity (Grimm 2015: 89–92; Benhabib 2016: 113–14). And the expectations of global populations concerning their governments and their freedoms were in accord with it (Inglehart & Welzel 2005: 5–7).

The 21st century opened in a globalized world where sovereignty was largely understood and practiced in the unity of a state's and a human person's balanced rights, with the strong involvement of international obligations. The universality of liberally understood democracy and a state's obligation to serve its citizens were at the heart of the international order that had emerged. However, already in the first decade of the 21st century a number of crises—the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the global financial crisis of 2008–2009, the Russo-Georgian war—showed the limits of the practical application of the new imagery of sovereignty and laid the groundwork for the future sovereigntist turn.

The Sovereigntist Turn

As I discussed earlier, the social imagination is a source of great power for transforming reality. The interconnection of personal and collective will, creativity, and action can change the materiality of social, legal, and political systems (Bottici 2014: 17ff.; Etkind & Minakov 2020: 10ff.). However, the cosmopolitan sovereignty was quickly contested by political philosophers and legal thinkers, as well as by politicians and civic activists from different camps. For example, Michael Walzer and Samuel Moyn have argued that cosmopolitan sovereignty had little impact on practices in national legal and political systems in most countries of the world; this means that the imagery was deficient, it did not extend to social practice (Walzer 2004; Moyn 2010). Jean Cohen has argued that, to

grant social and political justice, the human rights regime must be balanced with the principle of self-determination, which in turn implies the coexistence of global cosmopolitanism and national sovereigntism (Cohen 2012). Or thinkers like Thomas Nagel insisted that cosmopolitan sovereignty is a regime founded on the contractual commitments of sovereign states, which could rightfully be withdrawn by such states; that is, the cosmopolitan imagery depends on the sovereigntist imagery (Nagel 2005). To each of these arguments equally strong counterarguments have been posed by other thinkers (e.g., Seyla Benhabib, Jürgen Habermas, Wolfgang Merkel), but the mere discussion was enough to weaken the influence of the cosmopolitan imagination (Fine & Smith 2003; Benhabib 2011a, 2011b, 2016; De Wilde 2019).

Simultaneously, the growth of inter- and transnational systems of norms globally and regionally provoked resistance from those political actors who valued the sovereignty of states more than the rule of law and human rights. For example, despite the cautionary pace of European integration, the Maastricht Treaty (1992) and the Treaty of Lisbon (2007) provoked strong movements against further integration in old and new member states (Schimmelfennig 2019; Rozenberg 2020). As Rozenberg demonstrates, these sovereigntist movements arose simultaneously on both the left and the right, had a very vaguely defined ideology, and reused for their purposes the old continental ideologies such as "nationalism, Gaullism, traditionalism, and republicanism" (Rozenberg 2020: 166).

If from inside the nations, the emerging sovereigntist turn relied on long-established ideologies and varied tremendously from place to place, when viewed from the outside, from an international perspective, the sovereigntist movements of the 21st century have taken three major forms. Analyzing cases of sovereigntist movements from all the nations of the world, Delphine Alles and Bertrand Badie divided them into three categories: archeo-sovereigntism, conservative sovereigntism, and neo-sovereigntism (Alles & Badie 2016: 12). In a nutshell, the first was a reaction to unfair globalist practices and called for a return to the order existing before World War II or earlier; the second aimed at preserving the interstate order without further integration and situated the Westphalian vision at the center of its imagery; and the third responded to the binary cosmopolitan sovereignty with demands to promote norms protecting the independence of each existing state, to grant equality between and among states, and to contain core states in their attempts to influence other nations (Alles & Badie 2016: 16–18). In that last perspective, the sovereigntist turn was guided by the need for a conservative reinvention of justice, which would be provided by the sovereign state, not by some international institutions with unclear legitimacy.

Both approaches, of Rozenberg and of Alles & Badie, define contemporary sovereigntism from within and without mainly as a reaction to the full world and its global political, economic, and legal order that emerged at the beginning of the 21st century. But this provides only part of the answer as to the sources of the sovereigntist turn. Still to be addressed is the *positive* guiding ideas of these sovereigntist movements.

In my opinion, contemporary sovereigntism—in its different forms and categories—is based on the reinterpretation of sovereignty in such a way that it would let the power elites of certain states adapt the political system and economy to the

conditions of the full world, where political egoism and legal particularism are, in a longer-term perspective, suicidal. Thus the sovereigntist turn is only partially of a reactionary nature; it is also a conservative form of ideological creativity that attempts to find new forms of particularism that would permit a political community to resist the global challenges without losing its politically and legally understood state sovereignty. And certainly a human person's sovereignty, with its individual and minority rights regime, was to be dismantled as a danger to the political community.

My hypothesis is supported by an analysis of two cases of sovereigntism that, despite their different contexts, have in common a merger of the reactive response to globalization—namely, a desire to return to the pre–World War II or earlier order—and the conservative ideological creativity that would situation sovereignty with the individual nation, not subject to supranational agreements or organizations. These cases concern the interpretation of sovereignty by Donald Trump and his supporters, and the interpretation of sovereignty by sovereigntists from Vladimir Putin's entourage.

The Trumpist Interpretation of Sovereignty

unlike Marxism or liberalism, Trumpism as a political ideology lacks a fundamental body of texts that would supply a basis for analysis. For that reason, those who analyze Donald Trump's ideological and political views must rely on mediated speeches, bits of quoted conversations, and short posts on social media (Brock 2016: 16ff.; Mollan & Geesin 2020: 407ff.). This is probably its peculiarity: the Trumpist ideology should be spoken, it should avoid firm definitions, and it should rely on the active participation of supporters in interpreting short statements or posts. The term "sovereignty" and its derivatives, for example, in the mass of these statements and posts is quite rare (my search in the archive of the Twitter account "President Trump 45 Archived" found only seven mentions of the term or its derivatives, and all are mainly emotional in their use). And before Trump became president, as Mollan and Geesin, who studied media materials with the participation of Donald Trump before his political career took off, argue, he was reluctant to discuss international politics (and issues such as sovereignty) (Mollan & Geesin 2020). This mediated and undefined use of terms in Trumpism probably stems from the specific subculture of the tea party movement, with its irrational polemics and its own mass media networks (DiMaggio 2011; Street & DiMaggio 2015).

The link between Donald Trump and the tea party movement was mainly provided by Stephen K. Bannon, a person important to the electoral victory of Donald Trump in 2016 and the ideological framework of his presidency, at least in its initial phase. First of all, Trumpism borrows from the tea party worldview an understanding of sovereignty in the context of the denial of the full world condition and the transnational character of many security, legal, social, and ecological problems. Instead, the sovereignty issue was very important for tea party ideologues. Already in a speech at a tea party gathering in New York in 2010, Bannon placed the primacy of the interests of "the people" at the core of his sovereignty concept:

> This accumulated debt at all levels of our society poses an immediate existential threat to America . . . Now unlike the manufactured crises of global warming and healthcare, this is a true crisis. This crisis threatens the very sovereignty of our country. (Bannon 2010)

Later the idea of sovereignty was developed in Bannon's famous Vatican speech (2016). Here sovereignty was demonstrated to be the central issue for the solution of the global crisis of capitalism. According to Bannon, to cope with the current crisis of capitalism, which is ruining the lives of erstwhile middle-class citizens (or *the people*), it is necessary to downplay, dilute, or ignore the influence of transnational organizations (the Davos World Economic Forum, the EU) and federal governments (e.g., of the US) that cannot respect political communities of working people at a state level:

> Look, we believe—strongly—that there is a global tea party movement . . . The central thing that binds that all together is a center-right populist movement of really the middle class, the working men and women in the world who are just tired of being dictated to by what we call the party of Davos. (Bannon 2016)

In this context, Bannon offers a remedy: sovereignty and nationalism that would ensure the functionality of freedoms for the middle class (or the *majority* as *the people*):

> I think that people, particularly in certain countries, want to see the sovereignty for their country, they want to see nationalism for their country. They don't believe in this kind of pan-European Union or they don't believe in the centralized government in the United States. They'd rather see more of a states-based entity that the founders originally set up where freedoms were controlled at the local level. (Bannon 2016)

And this "nationalist sovereignty" becomes a particularistic maxim with universalist aspiration:

> I happen to think that the individual sovereignty of a country is a good thing and a strong thing. I think strong countries and strong nationalist movements in countries make strong neighbors, and that is really the building blocks that built Western Europe and the United States, and I think it's what can see us forward. (Bannon 2016)

In this way, the tea party ideology raised the issue of sovereignty as a key element that would later be adopted by Trumpism.

It is also important to note that the term *people* applies to a specifically defined political community of citizens. Bannon is not an ethnonationalist, he is an "inclusive nationalist" who looks at "the center" or "the majority" of society. This societal center is the Judeo-Christian relative majority that "invites people of different backgrounds to unite under a common 'American' sense of self" and "dissolves minority identities—leading to the emphasis on 'colorblindness' of 'all lives matter' and opposition to affirmative action" (Guilford & Sonnad 2017). By inventing such "people" as the real sovereign, Bannon gains the ideological ground to deny the sovereignty aspirations of human persons, minorities, and humanity as represented in the form of transnational institutions or the liberal globalist imagery. This ideologeme also provided the ground to prohibit immigration: "On a March 2016 episode, Bannon said that restoring sovereignty meant reducing

immigration. In his radio shows, he criticized the federal H-1B visa programs that permit U.S. companies to fill technical positions with workers from overseas" (Sellers & Fahrenthold 2017).

Another important influence on the Trumpian understanding of sovereignty was John R. Bolton, former US ambassador to the UN and former US national security adviser. In Bolton's worldview, the post–World War II order was constantly undermined by the leftist, anti-American activity of the UN and other inter- or transnational institutions (Bolton 1997). Long before joining President Trump's administration, Bolton was an ardent critic of international law (see, e.g.: Bolton 2000). And in the Trump administration, as Aaron Ettinger argues, Bolton was the most important figure promoting a sovereigntist vision of sovereignty:

> Bolton's line of thinking is most consistent with the emergence of sovereignty as the conceptual anchor of Trump's foreign policy. . . . [H]e objects to international institutions on the grounds that they are unconstitutional and violate the principles of popular sovereignty in the US—a position characteristic of the 'new sovereigntism'. (Ettinger 2020: 4)

With these sources of understanding sovereignty, this concept became central to the foreign policy strategy of President Trump (Patrick 2018: 76ff.; Ettinger 2020: 10–11). The ideological impact of Trumpism on US domestic policy was realized in repressions against migrants and in growing conflicts with US minorities (Gonzales 2017; Morris 2019). The same impact on foreign policy meant reduced US participation in global issues and NATO, withdrawal from the Paris climate agreement, and growing conflict with UN (McGee 2017; Thompson 2017). And the ideological background of these processes was partially connected with the sovereignty ideologeme.

In his public statements in the highest international arenas, President Trump constantly referred to sovereignty. For example, unlike in the statements of other US presidents at the UN General Assembly in the 21st century, Trump used that term quite often: ten times in a 2018 speech and five times in a 2019 speech (Trump 2018; Trump 2019). Here are some typical statements in which sovereignty shows its strategic role for the US leader:

> I honor the right of every nation in this room to pursue its own customs, beliefs, and traditions. The United States will not tell you how to live or work or worship. We only ask that you honor our sovereignty in return. (Trump 2018)

> We will never surrender America's sovereignty to an unelected, unaccountable, global bureaucracy. (Trump 2018)

> Around the world, responsible nations must defend against threats to sovereignty not just from global governance, but also from other, new forms of coercion and domination. (Trump 2018)

> The United States is also working with partners in Latin America to confront threats to sovereignty from uncontrolled migration. (Trump 2018)

> Liberty is only preserved, sovereignty is only secured, democracy is only sustained, greatness is only realized, by the will and devotion of patriots. In their spirit is found the strength to resist oppression, the inspiration to forge legacy, the

goodwill to seek friendship, and the bravery to reach for peace. Love of our nations makes the world better for all nations. (Trump 2019)

In these statements, sovereignty is stressed as a core undiscussed ideologeme linked to the (patriotic) people, to tradition, and to the state that is elected by and cares about them.

In the vast literature analyzing the Trumpist ideology, it is stressed that sovereignty is among several key ideas of Donald Trump and his supporters. After reviewing this literature, Aaron Ettinger (2020: 11–12) concluded that Trump's view on sovereignty had three dimensions:

1) World order and international peace can rest only on "self-regarding sovereign states looking after themselves, as opposed to a world of interdependent and integrated countries".

2) "[S]overeignty [is] the duty of government to take care of the needs" [of the people].

3) Sovereignty was "the banner" of his party's campaign against other US parties and groups (Ettinger 2020: 11).

This understanding of sovereignty was in fact Donald Trump's and his supporters' creative reinterpretation of sovereignty in US domestic and foreign policy discourse in 2016–2020. This reinterpretation denies the long evolution of liberal politics and constitutional practice in the US, the realities of the full world, and the practiced complex notions of sovereignty in international relations and law in the 21st century. Instead, in this populist ideological framework the status of the sovereign—the people—is ascribed to the relative majority of the population the government should serve and whose interests the state should defend. The interests and identities of other parts of the population, especially minorities, may be subjugated to the supremacy of the sovereign. The demands for equality between the majority and minorities, or for recognition of the international mechanisms defending individual rights or the common interests of humankind, constitute a threat to the sovereignty of *the people*. These ideological posits are examples of populist ideologemes of a particularistic kind: they deny the universality of human persons' sovereignty and the common, shared interests of all the human population of the world. In the Trumpian imaginary, the world is a place of peoples (with their traditional cultures and the states founded by them) who live together but share a minimum of rules necessary to provide for a peaceful coexistence, a place of trade based on the exclusive interests of the peoples, and a place where the principle of noninterference in national political systems and jurisdictions is observed. Altogether, this worldview is spread through mediated images or short posts that avoid definiteness, contradict logic, and have no other reference than the imagination of certain groups of believers.

The Putinist Interpretation of Sovereignty

Unlike Trumpism, Putinist sovereigntism has been influencing Russia's domestic and foreign policy for about fifteen years and has a solid textual basis. As an ideology and a set of relevant policies, it started in the last years of Vladimir Putin's second presidential term (2004–2008), influenced the decisions of the following Medvedev administration, and has continued during Putin's third and fourth terms in office, right into the present.

In 2007, in his final address to the Federal Assembly before temporarily leaving office, Vladimir Putin showed himself to be a politician with an established conservative ideology—something that he lacked in the early 2000s. In this lengthy speech he mentioned sovereignty only three times, but every time it is part of the key ideological message that—seen in retrospective—explains Putin's evolution through reelection in 2012, the aggression against Ukraine beginning in 2014, support for the "Russian Spring" ideology, and the recent constitutional amendments that give him many more years to run for the presidency. In the speech, first, Putin links "national wealth" (which includes morality, language, cultural values, the memory of the forefathers, and history) to the "unity and sovereignty of the country" (Putin 2007a). Second, he cites Dmitrii Likhachev's conservative statement that "state sovereignty is also defined by cultural criteria", which means the unity of different ethnic groups in one united people of Russia with an assembly of cultures in one state tradition. And third, state sovereignty is meaningful only if a government cares about its people and defends their economic and security interests (Putin 2007a). This speech was made as part of Putin's legacy to his successor and in the wake of the end of an "antiterrorist operation" in Chechnia.

Two months before, Vladimir Putin had delivered his famous speech at the Munich Security Conference in which he criticized the decline of national sovereignty in the "unipolar world":

> However, what is a unipolar world? However one might embellish this term, at the end of the day it refers to one type of situation, namely one centre of authority, one centre of force, one centre of decision-making. It is world in which there is one master, one sovereign. And at the end of the day this is pernicious not only for all those within this system, but also for the sovereign itself because it destroys itself from within. And this certainly has nothing in common with democracy. (Putin 2007b).

He also criticized the international organizations he considered to be serving the interest of the core threat of a unipolar world, the OSCE, and NATO. However, he supported the "truly universal" character of the UN and nuclear disarmament treaties (ibid.).

Both 2007 speeches were actually signaling the start of an era of "sovereign democracy" (Okara 2007: 9). This term in Russian ideological use was introduced by Vladislav Surkov in 2006 in a lecture that later was published as an article in Russian and English (Surkov 2009). Here Surkov, a young presidential aide and emerging ideologue, stipulated the following understanding of sovereign democracy:

> The supreme independent (sovereign) power of the people (democracy) is charged with satisfying these aspirations and requirements on all levels of civic activity— from the individual to the national… Here, in Russia, democracy faces major

challenges. It must test upon itself and turn to its advantage the might of globalization; overcome shadow institutions that block its progress—corruption, criminality, the market in counterfeits and disinformation; withstand the reactionary attacks of isolationism and oligarchy. It must create a new society, a new economy, a new army, a new faith. It must demonstrate that freedom and justice can and ought to be thought and discussed in Russia. (Surkov 2009: 8)

As a sovereign democracy, Russia is seen as among the same sovereign democratic states that together constitute the world:

These ideas are rooted in the conception of a just world order as a community of free communities (sovereign democracies) that cooperate and compete on the basis of rational rules. And they therefore presuppose the liberalization of international relations and the demonopolization of the global economy. For this reason, of course, they irritate the planetary strongmen and monopolists. (Surkov 2009: 9)

The people that has its dignity in sovereignty must respect others' and its own supremacy. That posture is also appropriate when some groups want international integration, as in the EU. For the isolationist imagery, these groups (NGOs) urging the supranational integration of discrete nations are not truly representative of the people since they are driven by other, nonsovereign interests:

Certain devotees of commercial philosophy working in specialized 'noncommercial' and 'nongovernmental' organizations write that in our age of integration and interdependence it is foolish to cling to sovereignty. Among the governments that sponsor such writings, however, it will be hard to find a single one willing to eliminate its own national legislation, economy, armed forces, and itself. (Surkov 2009: 12)

Basically, these ideas are evident in Putin's speeches I quoted from earlier. So basically, 2006–2007 was a period of formation of Putinist sovereigntism aimed at state sovereignty in the name of the people and government's service to that people in socioeconomic and security terms. Among the security tasks is the defense of the people's sovereignty from the Western core and those individuals and groups that want to promulgate this core's illegitimate interests on the sovereign soil of Russia.

Later, this sovereigntist vision was tested in 2008, in the Russo-Georgian War, and in 2014, in Ukraine. At first glance, the "sovereign democracy" doctrine would appear to make the Russian Federation's actions illegitimate in both cases. However, according to the sovereigntist ideology, in both cases the sovereignty of the Georgian and Ukrainian peoples was not respected, essentially on the ground that it did not exist: these peoples, in Putin's sovereigntist vision, had lost their sovereignty in a "color revolution" and through attempts at European and Euro-Atlantic integration, acts by which national states were reordered to align with the Western core and lost their sovereignty.[3] Here the

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[3] On this, see Vladimir Putin's statements on color revolutions (Putin 2014) and war with Ukraine (BBC Ukraina 2014); data from the Surkov emails hacked in 2016 (Panfilov 2016); Surkov's own public speech (Ria Novosti 2018); and witnesses speaking on Surkov's role in the Donbas war (Deutsche Welle 2017).

sovereigntist ideology shows that the supremacy of sovereignty is recognized only if "the people" stays isolated and avoids integratory policies.

Fifteen years after the first announcement of sovereign democracy, it is evident that many of the initial sovereigntist ideologemes have become guidelines for the domestic and foreign policymaking in Russia. In President Putin's recent speech at Davos, one can see the same criticism of international law that violates people's sovereignty and of the Western core that does not respect political multilateralism (Putin 2021). Much stronger, however, were his statements in the spirit of social conservatism, notably the emphasis on caring for a population struggling with the pandemic and the associated economic crisis, on the need to support family values and privacy, and on the need to inspire demographic growth and a return to social cooperation based on traditions (Putin 2021). These statements were made by a ruler who was successfully reelected in 2018 in nonfree and noncompetitive elections, who introduced draconian control over civil organizations through "foreign agent" legislation in 2017–2020, and who amended his country's constitution in accordance with his sovereigntist program in 2020 (OSCE ODIHR 2018; Tysiachniouk et al. 2018; European Parliament 2020; Kazun & Semykina 2020).

Probably the most visible influence of sovereigntism on Russia can be seen in the constitutional amendments of 2020. The sovereigntist constitutional amendments included the following stipulations:

1) Recognition of international obligations only if they "do not contradict the constitution of the Russian Federation" (Article 79). Here the Putinist program managed to sever the constitutional grounds for the impact of the cosmopolitan part of the concept of sovereignty. De iure, the Russian state can now be exempt from all previously ratified international human rights and civil liberties agreements that provided Russian citizens with the same sovereignty as the citizens of other nation-signatories to these agreements.

2) Prohibition of foreign citizenship or a foreign residence permit for public servants of higher categories (Articles 77 and 78). In sovereigntist logic, the ownership of foreign assets, such as an apartment, makes public officials vulnerable to foreign influence on decision-making, which in turn makes Russia less able to serve its people and thus less sovereign.

3) A ban on foreign citizenship for Russia's president and the requirement of 25 years of permanent residence in Russia prior to the election (Article 81). This also is connected with the sovereigntist strategy to promote those politicians that have minimal firsthand experience with living in other societies and dealing with other cultures.

4) References to a "thousand-year-long history", "remembering the ancestors, their ideals and faith in God", and "defense of historical truth" (Articles 67, 2–3). All these statements are connected with the people's sovereignty ideologeme where *the people* is essentialized through its historical rootedness (or the Surkovian "depth") in Russian soil, in synthesized "local multiethnic" tradition, in traditional confessions, and in specific Eurasian genetics.

5) Provision for "the balance between civil rights and obligations, of social partnership, and of economic, political, and social solidarity" (Article 71) (Zakon 2020; Venice Commission 2020). This amendment reflects the idea that the sovereign people is at the center of relations between public and private organizations, so that solidarity gains a social conservative overtone.

Altogether these amendments have finalized the rewriting of the Russian constitution as a text based on sovereigntist legal-political imagery, which strictly differs from the liberal imagery of the constitution of 1993.[4] Instead of imagining the future, today's power elites in Russia orient their political imagery toward the past, which is defined in sociogenetic, traditionalist, and populist terms. Despite its surface conservatism, this ideology must create new and reinterpret old ideologemes in order to accommodate Russia's ideological, cultural, social, lingual, and religious diversity. So the unifying terms of "multiethnic" (*mnogonatsional'naia*) tradition and people require that elites and other social groups reinterpret this multiethnicity in their own way. This sovereigntist imagery demands the participation of both the rulers and the ruled in producing the meanings of such ideological posits.

This Russian sovereigntist creativity can be seen in several sovereigntist circles that in different times were close to Vladimir Putin and his immediate entourage. I should mention first of all Vladislav Surkov's opinion paper, "The loneliness of the half-breed". Here Surkov, who at the time of writing it was losing his political influence and moving toward the margins of active politics in Russia, analyzed the direction of Russia's "post-Crimean"[5] development. According to him, Russia had launched itself on a trajectory of isolating itself from the rest of the world:

> Beyond 2014 there lies an indefinitely long period, Era [20]14+, in which we are destined to a hundred years (or possibly two hundred or three hundred) of geopolitical loneliness. (Surkov 2018)

In lengthy pessimistic lines he lists several waves of Russian Westernization that never served the good of the Russian people. For example, the most recent, post-Soviet Westernization was a mistake:

> We agreed to shrink. We began to worship Hayek as fiercely as we had worshiped Marx. We slashed the demographic, industrial and military potential by half. We turned our backs on the other Soviet republics and were about to say good-bye to the autonomies. . . . But even a downsized and humble Russia proved unable to negotiate the turn towards the West. Lastly, a decision was made to do away with downscaling and downsizing and, what is more, to come out with a declaration of rights. The events of 2014 were unavoidable. (Surkov 2018)

This "decision to . . . come out with a declaration of rights" also shows how the Putinists understand laws and rights: as rightfully belonging to the people, not the individual, and

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[4] For more on liberal-modernist imaginary of the post-Soviet constitutions of Russia and other countries, see Minakov (2018: 237ff.).

[5] This term is widely used in the social sciences to describe Russian politics and society after the annexation of Crimea and its consequences for Russia's political culture and regime, its international position, and relations with neighboring nations (see: Shlapentokh 2014; Fabrykant & Magun 2019).

to the majority (defined by local tradition), not to minorities (who by defending their identity undermine the majority's sovereignty).

Another important part of the sovereigntist imagery is a specific genetics. Surkov stipulates Russia's cultural specificity as a "Western-Eastern half-breed nation" with a "double-headed statehood, hybrid mentality, intercontinental territory and bipolar history", and offers the only viable solution for its development in the contemporary full world: a long strategic "geopolitical loneliness". This loneliness is required for Russia to cease "mixing" with Others and to reidentify itself, ideologically and genetically. Understanding the impossibility of such loneliness in the full world, Surkov is forced to look for a "creative solution": Russia is supposed to participate in international politics and trade, and should focus not on "abroad" but deep inside itself, in its "depth", from where "a slowly traveling message from deep space has just begun to reach our ears" (Surkov 2018).

Another failed Putin ideologue, Aleksander Dugin, came up with a new sovereigntist manifesto-like document that reacted to two recent ideological events. In the first event, Klaus Schwab published a report promoting the "Great Reset" idea, which calls for a "more inclusive, more equitable and more respectful of Mother Nature" economy (Schwab & Malleret 2020). The second event was Putin's social-conservative address in Davos (Putin 2021), to which Dugin responded in an online conversation.

In his text, Dugin declares Schwab's idea to be a new liberal attempt at a "takeover of humanity's imagination" that would lead to a global economy without the use of oil and its products, and to "greener" development (Dugin 2021). Dugin's reading of Schwab's reset idea immediately discloses the sovereigntist imagery. First, he immediately stipulates that through the use of mass media and social networks, liberal globalists are to trying to impose laws that would (1) "glorify" minorities ("gender, sexual, ethnic, biological") and (2) "demonize" national states. Second, the concepts promoted by the Club of Rome (sustainable development in a full world) means decreasing Earth's human population. Third, the decarbonized economy is designed to hit the economies of Russia, the Arab countries, and some Latin American countries; thus the new economic plan means a strike against countries opposed to the liberal international order with its cosmopolitan understanding of sovereignty. Dugin's fourth claim Is that the liberal globalists promote digitalization as a means of seeking total control over human populations through AI, robotization, and genetic mutations. And finally, the natural environment, according to the new globalist plan, is to become another form of capital itself (Dugin 2021).

Altogether, Aleksandr Dugin interprets Schwab's Great Reset proposal as paving the way to "a triumph of liberal ideology in its highest stage, the stage of globalization", which "dooms" humankind to be liberated. To resist this kind of future, Dugin offers instead a "Great Awakening" plan, which, in his opinion, was prepared by the supporters of Donald Trump. The Great Awakening means understanding the threat that liberal globalists pose to all people who disagree with liberal principles and the principles of cosmopolitan sovereignty:

'The Great Awakening' is the insight that modern liberalism in the stage of globalization has become a real dictatorship, has become a totalitarian ideology that denies—like any other totalitarianism—the right to have any point of view different from the dominant one. (Dugin 2021)

The manifesto ends with the description of today's world as the scene of an approaching war between globalists and their liberal supporters in each nation-state, on one side, against those who, like Putin, support "the people's" sovereignty, on the other side.

The Putinist understanding of sovereignty has both reactionary and creative elements that, unlike in the Trumpist case, have had an impact on Russia's domestic and foreign policy for about fifteen years, at least since 2006. President Putin's endless reign has resulted in the wide spreading of sovereigntist beliefs that have affected not only Russia's political institutions but also its political culture. This profound influence can be seen both in the constitutional amendments themselves and in the popular support for these changes,[6] or in the sovereigntist imagery of the Russian mainstream creative class.[7] The Putinist interpretation of sovereignty describes the world as a battlefield— ideological, political, and economic—between sovereign peoples and their states, on one side, and transnational institutions with their neoliberal and cosmopolitan ideologies undermining sovereignty and even the ontological foundations for the life of the peoples on the other side. In such a context, human rights and civil liberties are either marginal issues or a source of threat for the majority and its culture, identity, and genetics. Minorities are seen either as the traditional ones, which have their place in the hierarchy of the "multiethnic Russian people", or as nontraditional ones (organized around civic, gender, sexual, social, religious, or other identities), which constitute a threat to the sovereignty of the people and its state. Any demand for equality of minorities with the majority should be seen through the lens of the supreme interest of the people. The interests of collectives bigger or smaller than the people (humanity, the individual, civic organizations, a minority group) can be regarded as legitimate only if they agree with the people's interests. Altogether, the Putinist worldview is a mainstream political religion, adherence to which opens up a political career or the status of a legitimate citizen. Alternative ideologies, including those that promote ideas about cosmopolitan sovereignty, are marginalized and characterized as either foreign or promoted by "foreign agents".

Conclusion

Today's political and ideological processes take place in such a globalized world that domestic and external events are increasingly less distinguishable. This interconnectedness of political plans inspires different ideological camps to compete in

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[6] According to official data, 68% of Russian registered voters participated in the referendum on the constitutional amendments in 2020; almost 78% of voters supported the amendments, and only 21% of them abstained (please see data of the Central Voters Commission at http://www.cikrf.ru/).

[7] This can be seen, for example, in the recent debates around the so-called "Bogomolov Manifesto" (Bogomolov 2021; Novaya Gazeta 2021), or in the analysis of the ideological background to recent Russian film-making (2020).

redefining the key concepts that serve as a foundation for both the global order and the national order at the same time. Among these key concepts is sovereignty. Above I briefly described the history of this concept's development through five different definitions that in the post–World War II and post–Cold War period has ended with the imaginary of sovereignty in the form of a unity of national and personal sovereignty that promoted cosmopolitan norms of justice in each national jurisdiction. This unity was partially based on the liberal idea of the self-determination of the individual, who has the inalienable right to decide (even arbitrarily and irrationally) about his or her body (including abortion or euthanasia), property, lifetime, participation in collective life, and so forth. At the same time, this unity was enabled by states' approval of these universal norms as part of their own laws and obligations. The unity so achieved provided political, social, and economic actors with new opportunities for development. However, the unity itself and this development had their contradictions and drawbacks, which became the targets of criticism from different ideological groups, one of which is the new sovereigntists.

The contemporary sovereigntists vary greatly from country to country, region to region. But their common feature is a specific interpretation of the concept of sovereignty. I analyzed this specificity using two examples, Trumpism and Putinism. The first ideology gripped the strongest old democracy on the planet, though just for four years (2017–2020). The second ideology has guided Russia's development from a partially free state in 2000 to an achieved autocracy in 2021.

The Trumpist ideology ascribes sovereignty to the people, an imagined entity that has the qualities of working people, the majority, Judeo-Christian tradition, peacefulness, and readiness to include those who do not Insist on their minority identity. Such a people is the owner of a state—the state as part of the US as a country and of the federal government. International institutions or minorities that create obligations for the US are seen as hostile to the sovereign. This ideology avoids clear universalist definitions of sovereignty and the sovereign, and relies on blurred statements on social networks, visual materials, and permanent rediscussion in communities of supporters.

The Putinist ideology ascribes sovereignty to the people, an imagined collective that has the qualities of a multinational people united by a long history of living together, of majority, of traditional religion (Orthodox Christian or traditional Islam), and of a readiness to include those who neither stipulate their minority identity nor intend integration with the global core. Such a people is the object of care by the state. With the recent constitutional amendments, the state has become a monopolist in providing wealth and security to the people and a coordinator of other public and private organizations for the common good of the majority. Putinism is much more widespread among elites and the general population than Trumpism is. It is also better described in legal norms and publicized lengthy texts written by the ideologues. Alternative views and their spread exist under the control of the state and thus far do not constitute a threat to the ruling sovereigntist.

The sovereigntists of the old democracy and the new autocracy alike seem to share a distrust in international organizations and treaties that support the personal sovereignty of an individual human. However, Putinism treats the UN as a useful tool to

inform other nations about the Russian government's policies, while for Trumpism, the UN is a dangerous organization that challenges the sovereignty of the American people. A certain level of distrust can also be witnessed vis-à-vis NATO and the EU, although for different reasons. For Trumpists, transnational organizations can be tolerated as long as they do not undermine the exclusive interests of the people, the sovereign of the world's core state. Conversely, Putinists are much more oriented toward isolation from international organizations; after several violations of international law against neighboring sovereign nations and imposed sanctions, the outside world is seen as a source of existential risk for the people and its historical traditions.

Both sovereigntist movements are hostile to human personal sovereignty, to minority rights, and to the universal norms of cosmopolitan justice. "Justice" stems from what is right for the collective imagined as a majority. Whatever undermines the supremacy of the majority is unjust. Thus the liberal concept of sovereignty that has also become part of national juridicality is seen as unjust and cannot be practiced by a government loyal to its people.

Trumpism and Putinism represent two cases of the sovereigntist turn in different political, economic, cultural, and geopolitical contexts. They share the core vision of sovereignty as a quality that belongs to the people, which is an imagined majority whose specific qualities are traditional for each country. The role of the state in general is viewed as that of a caretaker of the people's interests; however, the level of etatist paternalism is much stronger in the Russian case. Both movements imply exceptionalism and isolationism, but again, Putinism is much more radical on both these counts.

With the above analysis and conclusions in hand, I can now answer the key question of this paper. Both cases of sovereigntist ideology react negatively to the challenges and responsibilities the full world demands from contemporary states and their citizens. Sovereigntist exceptionalism and isolationism are of a reactionary nature and reuse a traditional, pre–World War II understanding of sovereignty. However, in both cases the sovereigntist imagery demands the creation of a new understanding of the people, human and individual rights, minorities, post–World War II international organizations, and transnational challenges such as ecological erosion. In that respect, contemporary sovereigntism is an example of a conservative creativity that invents new identities (Judeo-Christianity, traditional religions), new temporalities (of those honest working peoples who are undermined by minorities and globalists; of the deep people; of strategic loneliness), and new functions for the state (which are less political or legal and more oriented toward the security of the majority and its biological and cultural reproduction). From that perspective, human rights, minority rights, planetary transnational issues, and the institutions that are responsible for keeping these issues on the international political agenda are seen as illegitimate and dangerous for the sovereign peoples and their polities. Thus it is logical to conclude that contemporary sovereigntism offers a worldview that denies the cosmopolitan norms of justice and stipulates that the world is a space of coexisting sovereign peoples and their states, on one side, and, on the other side, global transnational groups that try to achieve global

supremacy, subdue the peoples, and pervert the traditional understanding of man and woman, human being, family, and religion through cosmopolitan values and technologies.

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