



Michael Zürn, Nieves Fernández Rodríguez,
Lena Röllicke, Maximilian Weckemann,
Alexander Schmotz, and Stefan Gosepath

Towards a Typology of Contestation. Four Clusters of Contestants

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Cluster of Excellence
“Contestations of the Liberal Script (SCRIPTS)”
Freie Universität Berlin
Edwin-Redslob-Straße 29
14195 Berlin
Germany

+49 30 838 58502
office@scripts-berlin.eu

www.scripts-berlin.eu
Twitter: [@scriptsberlin](https://twitter.com/scriptsberlin)



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AUTHORS



Michael Zürn is Director at WZB Berlin Social Science Centre and Professor of International Relations at the Freie Universität Berlin. Until 2023, he was director of the Cluster of Excellence “Contestations of the Liberal Script (SCRIPTS)” together with Tanja Börzel. He is the leader of the DFG research group “Overlapping Spheres of Authority and Interface Conflicts in the Global Order” (OSA-IC) and a member of the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften and the Academia Europaea. His work focuses on the emergence and functioning of inter- and supranational institutions and on their impact on the global political order.

michael.zuern@wzb.eu



Nieves Fernández Rodríguez is a Research Fellow at the WZB Berlin Social Science Centre and is part of the “Towards a Typology of Contestations” project within the Cluster of Excellence “Contestations of the Liberal Script (SCRIPTS)”. She holds a double degree in Law and Political Science and a Master’s degree in Advanced Studies in Human Rights from Universidad Carlos III and is pursuing a doctoral degree at Freie Universität Berlin. Her publications focus on contestations to liberalism, migration and forced displacement policies in Latin America. Her research interests also include public policy and institutions in Latin America.

nieves.fernandez@wzb.eu



Lena Röllicke is a Research Fellow at the Cluster of Excellence “Contestations of the Liberal Script” (SCRIPTS) and the WZB Berlin Social Science Centre. At SCRIPTS, she is part of the project “Towards a Typology of Contestations” and the Berlin Graduate School of Global and Transregional Studies (BGTS). In her PhD, she works on affective polarisation in liberal democracies, combining theoretical-conceptual approaches and qualitative methods. Her work has recently been published in *Electoral Studies*. She holds an MA in Political Philosophy from Universitat Pompeu Fabra and a BA in Liberal Arts and Sciences from University College Maastricht.

[lena.roellicke@wzb.eu](mailto:lana.roellicke@wzb.eu)



Maximilian Weckemann is a Research Fellow at the Cluster of Excellence “Contestations of the Liberal Script” (SCRIPTS) and WZB Berlin Social Science Centre. He is currently pursuing a doctoral degree at Freie Universität Berlin. As part of the project “Towards a Typology of Contestations”, he examines the challenges to the liberal script. His doctoral research focuses on the imagined futures of the far right. He was a visiting scholar at Scuola Normale Superiore in Florence, Italy.

maximilian.weckemann@wzb.eu



Alexander Schmotz is a Senior Fellow in the Department of Global Governance at WZB Berlin Social Science Centre. He received his PhD in 2014 from the Berlin Graduate School of Social Sciences at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and has since held positions at WZB and King's College London. Alex works on autocratic regimes, the international dimension of authoritarian rule, and international influences on democratic regression, examined primarily with quantitative methods. His work has appeared among others in *Comparative Political Studies*, the *European Journal of Political Research*, and *Democratization*.

alexander.schmotz@wzb.eu



Stefan Gosepath is Professor of Practical Philosophy at the Institute of Philosophy at the Freie Universität Berlin and associated with the Otto Suhr Institute for Political Science at the Freie Universität Berlin. Until 2022, he was co-director of the Centre for Advanced Studies "Justitia Amplificata. Rethinking Justice. Applied and Global" together with Rainer Forst. He is also Principal Investigator at the Cluster of Excellence "Contestations of the Liberal Script (SCRIPTS)" and the research group "The Deserving Rich – A Multidisciplinary Analysis of the (Re-)Production of (German) Wealth". In addition, he is a member of the Academy of Science and Literature in Mainz. His research focuses on political philosophy and theory, moral philosophy and ethics.

stefan.gosepath@fu-berlin.de

Towards a Typology of Contestation.

Four Clusters of Contestants

Michael Zürn, Nieves Fernández Rodríguez, Lena Röllicke, Maximilian Weckemann, Alexander Schmotz, and Stefan Gosepath

ABSTRACT

Liberal ideas, institutions, and orders are being challenged globally and in diverse ways. Based on cluster analysis, this paper identifies four clusters of contestants challenging the liberal script: “Fundamentalists”, „Authoritarian Populists“, „Market-Sceptic Egalitarians“, and „Identity-Focused Contestants“. These clusters group diverse actors based on their critiques of liberal principles, epistemological standpoints, intensity of their contestation, identities and emotions. The Fundamentalists pose the greatest challenge to the liberal script, rejecting most liberal principles and endorsing alternative scripts. The Authoritarian Populists instead predominantly contest equal moral weight and civil rights. The Market-Sceptic Egalitarians critique the capitalist market economy for producing material inequalities. Lastly, the Identity-Focused Contestants focus on either constructing national identities or challenging the oppression of minority groups, often criticising liberal authorities for being “hypocritical”. The paper contributes to a nuanced understanding of the diversity of contestants that is useful for researching the causes and consequences of contestations within liberal societies.

1 INTRODUCTION¹

Around the globe, liberal ideas, institutions, and orders are being questioned. Authoritarian and illiberal regimes claim the superiority of their developmental models, referring to their seemingly higher efficiency and effectiveness in fighting pandemics or reducing social inequality. These claims are not without success. More than 70 per cent of the world’s population lives under autocratic rule, whereas liberal democracies regress (Papada et al. 2023). Similarly, fundamentalist movements

that associate liberalism with moral decay have seized state power in some countries and seem willing to use all means to fight against the modern ways of life. Such groups often want to replace liberal orders.

Within liberal democracies, populists of various colours attack liberal elites for failing to address the people’s “real” concerns, accusing them of moral bankruptcy. Others lament the societal rift and rising inequality produced by neo-liberal policies. Postcolonial critics refer to liberalism’s complicity in colonial structures, arguing that liberalism has served as justification for violence, exploitation, exclusion, and injustice. Yet again others denounce the liberal hypocrisy of using double standards, highlighting the blatant discrepancy between liberal ideas and practices. Those actors, rather than aiming to replace the liberal order altogether, often demand changes to improve the way in which it works in practice. In this working paper, we want to take a closer look at what characterises different kinds of contestations and which actors seem to have similar positions and approaches vis-à-vis the liberal script. In other words, we aim to identify clusters of contestants who show similar features and explore what makes them similar to each other – and different from those actors who belong to different clusters.

In a nutshell, we find that one can distinguish between four different clusters of contestants, each of which shares certain characteristic features

¹ This Working Paper is part of a larger book publication that we are currently preparing. Many people have contributed to our work with the most helpful support and comments. They will be acknowledged extensively in the book. For the support with preparing this Working Paper, we want to thank our student assistants Clare Crossland Monclús, Louisa Böttner, Aman and Jan Kraus.

that can shed light on the specific way in which they contest the liberal script. Based on those characteristics, we call the four clusters “the Fundamentalists”, “the Authoritarian Populists”, “the Market-Sceptic Egalitarians” and “the Identity-Focused Contestants”.

This working paper is structured as follows. After describing the methodology that we employ, we identify four clusters of contestants and discuss their characteristics in detail. We conclude by discussing the theoretical implications of our findings.

2 USING CLUSTER ANALYSIS TO GROUP CONTESTANTS

In order to arrive at the four clusters, we first constructed a list of potential contestants of the liberal script worldwide, including governments, political parties, social movements, and militant organisations. We arrived at this list using automated text analysis of reports by international news agencies as well as existing databases such as the Manifesto Project (Volkens et al. 2020) and the PopuList (Rooduijn et al. 2019). Based on region and type of actor, we drew a stratified random sample of 53 actors from that list of contestants (see Zürn et al. forthcoming for an overview of the sampled cases). For each actor in our sample, we then collected information on 55 variables to identify similarities and differences between the actors, using secondary literature and expert interviews. The selected variables capture (the nature of) contestations of the thirteen normative principles at the heart of the liberal script², alongside a range of other dimensions such as contestants’ epistemological stance, the intensity

of their contestation, their use of emotions and their identities. For each sampled actor, we wrote a case narrative containing our coding decisions and justifications for each variable.³ Additionally, we incorporated the codes in a dataset, which serves as the basis for further analyses. Using the dataset as a starting point, we employed *hierarchical cluster analysis* to identify distinct types of contestants. Hierarchical cluster analysis joins contestants into clusters based on the similarities and differences between them.

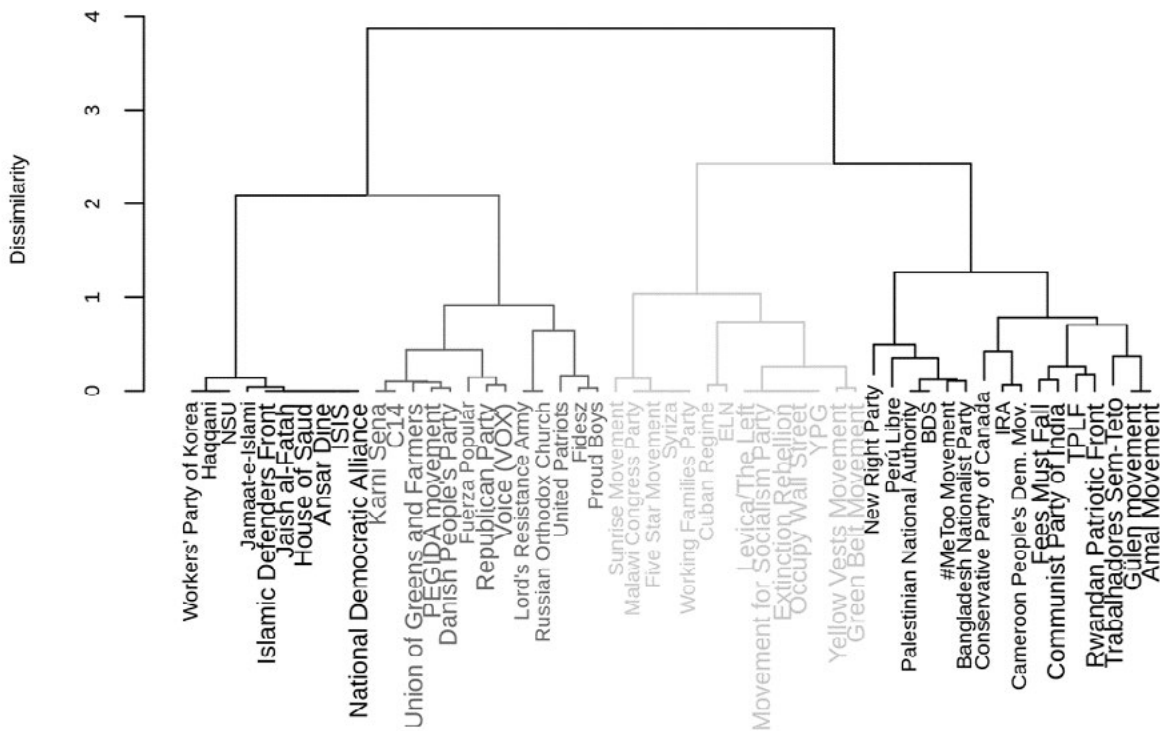
We resorted to four different clustering methods, and a range of variable weights and cluster-detection algorithms, and present here a synthesis of the results – in other words, a meta-cluster analysis – of a total of 96 cluster analyses with iterating specifications. This procedure allows us to alleviate idiosyncrasies from individual cluster solutions and provide a balanced representation of how contestants cluster together across various specifications. For more information on clustering methods, and detailed findings of all 96 cluster analyses we conducted, please see Michael Zürn, Nieves Fernández Rodríguez, Lena Röllicke, Maximilian Weckemann, Alexander Schmotz, and Stefan Gosepath (forthcoming).

Hierarchical cluster analysis is an ideal method for this project for two reasons. First, it accommodates the project’s premise to depart from an inductive typology of contestants. Hierarchical cluster analysis is an inductive, exploratory method that starts with detecting empirical similarities in the data, rather than testing a pre-specified model against the data. Second, hierarchical cluster analysis is well-suited for our kind of data: relatively few observations described by relatively many variables, collected in a (partly) non-random sampling procedure.

² As suggested by Michael Zürn and Johannes Gerschewski (2021), foundational – or “first-layer” – principles include individual self-determination, equal moral weight and private-public distinction; “second-layer” principles include representative democracy, the rule of law and separation of powers, political, social and civil rights, market economy, property rights, tolerance and progress.

³ See a brief overview of each sampled actor in the appendix.

Figure 1: Dendrogram showing the results of the meta-cluster analysis



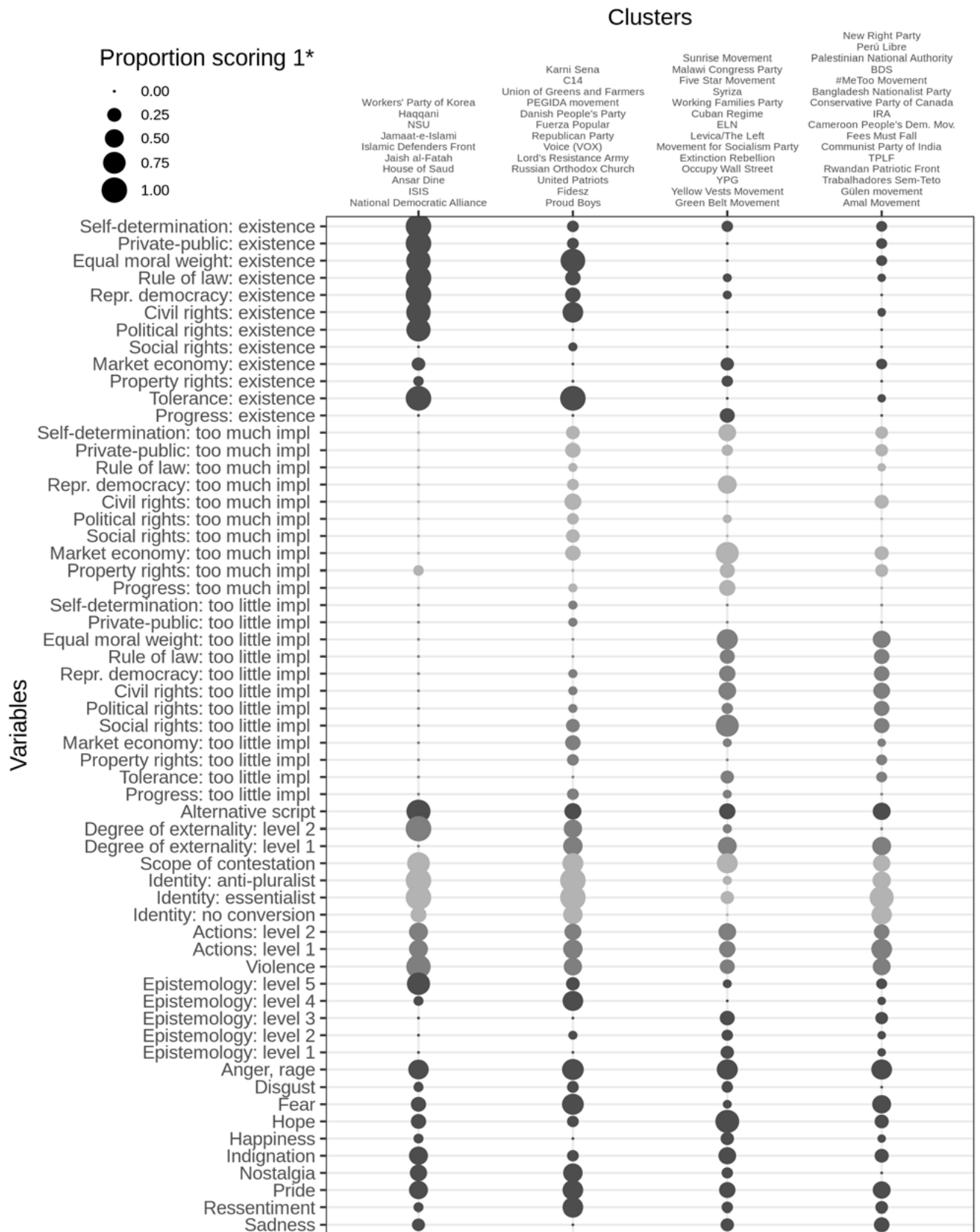
3 FINDINGS: FOUR CLUSTERS OF CONTESTANTS

Figure 1 shows the result of our meta-cluster analysis in a *dendrogram*. It illustrates the nested, hierarchical structure of clusters in a tree-like diagram, where the height of the bifurcations indicates the dissimilarity of actors and clusters. The figure reveals *four major clusters*: On the very left, the first cluster ranges from “Workers’ Party of Korea” to “National Democratic Alliance” (NDA), and the second from “Karni Sena” to “Proud Boys”. Moving further to the right, the third cluster ranges from “Sunrise Movement” to “Green Belt Movement” and the last one from “New Right Party” to “Amal Movement”. The four clusters stand out in the figure: they are rather dense, in the sense that members of the individual clusters are very similar to each other; at the same time, the four clusters are clearly delineated, in that the dissimilarities between them are substantially larger than the within-cluster differences. At the highest level of the clustering hierarchy, we see a dichotomous

distinction between the two clusters on the left-hand and right-hand sides – the actors in these supra-clusters are most different from one another. Two more dichotomous separations occur at the second hierarchical level, where the two supra-clusters are split up into our four main clusters, two each on either side of the tree structure. Note that the two neighbouring clusters on either side of the tree show a similar degree of dissimilarity.

What are the key characteristics of the four main clusters? To identify what the respective cluster members have in common and what distinguishes the different clusters from one another, we rely on two sources of information: On the one hand, Figure 2 below shows the proportion of actors in each cluster (x-axis) that score 1 on each of the clustering variables (y-axis). The bigger the dot, the bigger the proportion of actors that score 1, the smaller the dot, the smaller the

Figure 2: Variables within and across clusters



* Except Scope, where dot size gives average re-scaled (0-1) overall number of contestations.

share of actors scoring 1.⁴ The different colours of the dots simply serve to improve the readability of the graph by distinguishing between the different variables and/or sets of variables.

On the other hand, the case narratives provide the background knowledge to contextualise the concrete actors that are grouped in the clusters. We describe and characterise the different clusters by using both sources of information. We also show a dot plot graph for each cluster with information on how the respective actors in the clusters scored on the respective variables.

As the graph above shows, the different clusters are each characterised by different aspects. While the first cluster, for example, contains a large percentage of actors contesting several normative principles for their validity (as represented by the very large dots), others show more marked similarities in identity or emotions variables.⁵ To make sense of those characteristics, we will first describe each cluster in detail before moving to a more comparative discussion towards the end of this chapter.

3.1 CLUSTER 1: THE FUNDAMENTALISTS (WORKERS' PARTY OF KOREA – NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE)

The first cluster (see Figure 3 below) presents the most severe contestations of the liberal script. The actors in this cluster outright reject most of the liberal script's normative principles as well as its epistemology, instead adhering to some sort

of ultimate, superior authority. At the same time, their contestation is characterised by a high degree of intensity: all actors in this cluster use violence, defy the principles of the liberal script with their actions, and many promote alternative scripts. Their identities are built on essentialist notions of the in-group, and they generally endorse anti-pluralist views of society. In many instances, their contestations are explicitly directed against the liberal script and challenge it as a whole. We thus call this first cluster the Fundamentalists.

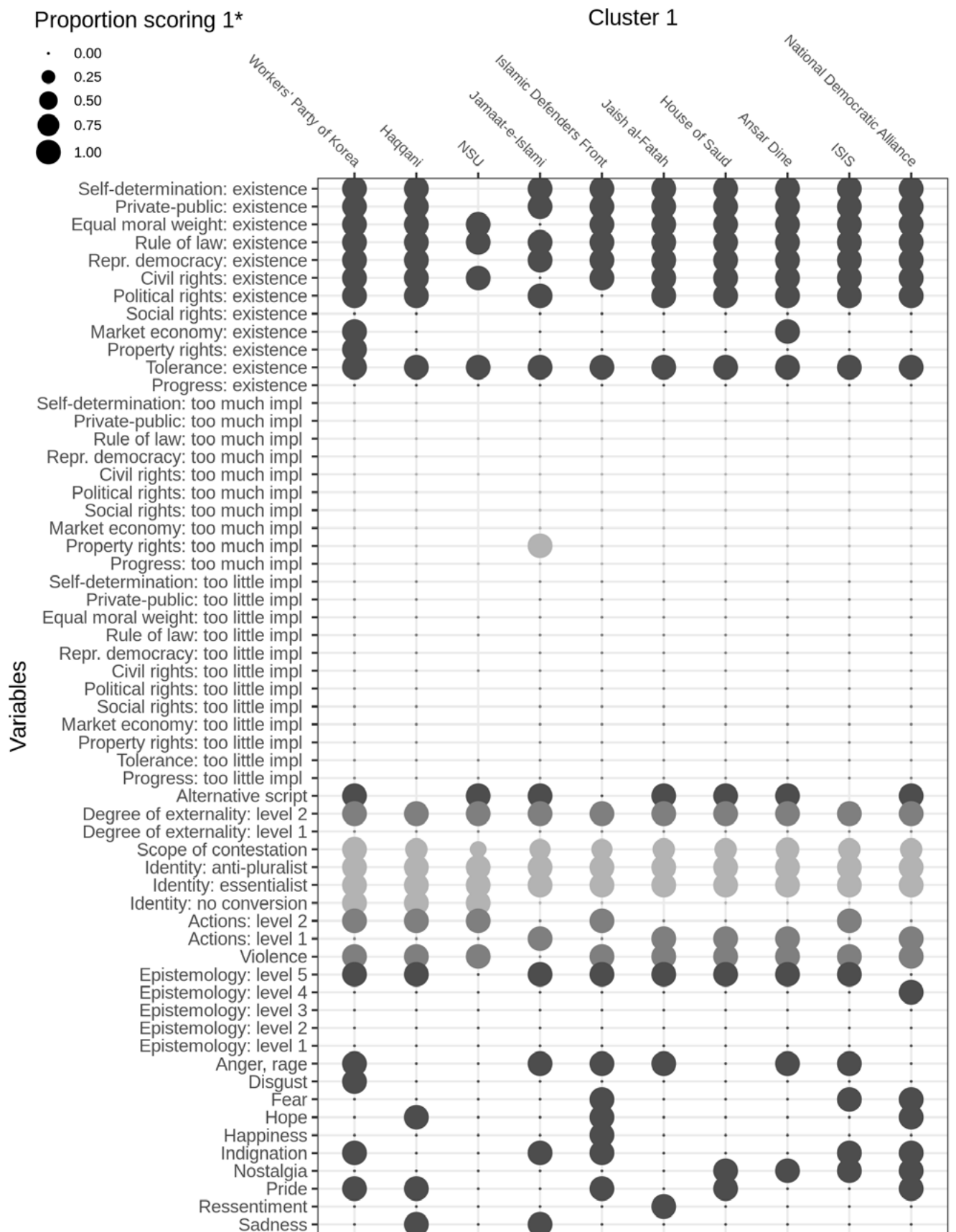
Looking at the specific actors from our sample that cluster together in this first cluster, most of them are from regions in the Global South (the MENA region, Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia and the Pacific), yet several are also active on a global or transnational level. The majority of the actors are militant organisations (the “National Socialist Underground” (NSU) from Germany, “Haqqani” from Afghanistan, the Indonesian “Islamic Defenders Front”, “Jaish al-Fatah” from Syria, “Ansar Dine” from Mali and the “Islamic State of Iraq and Syria” (ISIS), which is active transnationally) but the cluster also includes two governments (“House of Saud” and the Workers’ Party of Korea) and one social movement/political party (“Jamaat-e-Islami” from Pakistan). In ideological terms, it spans different sub-groups, including most of the Islamist fundamentalist actors from our sample, totalitarian actors such as the Workers’ Party of Korea and the NSU in Germany, and the Hindu-fundamentalist government of Narendra Modi through the NDA in India.

Despite their ideologically diverse backgrounds, what all those actors have in common is that they fully reject a very high number of liberal principles, ranging from first-layer, justificatory principles such as individual self-determination, equal moral weight, and a private-public distinction to second-layer, more applied ones such as civil and political rights, tolerance, the rule of law and

4 Ordinal variables (such as Epistemology, Scope of Contestation and Actions) are here depicted as binaries. However, for each actor, only one of those binaries can score “1” (1 meaning “present” and 0 “absent”). In the case of the identity-variables, 1 stands for the more exclusive identity construction, 0 for the more inclusive one.

5 Note that, generally, it is particularly the very large and the very small (or absent) dots that characterise the respective clusters, as they indicate the highest degree of homogeneity within the cluster. Medium-sized dots in turn indicate more heterogeneity within a cluster, with some actors contesting a certain principle (or embracing a certain strategy or emotion) and others not.

Figure 3: Cluster 1



representative democracy. The justifications for the contestation of those principles are mostly based on the respective ideological backgrounds of the actors. For example, in sharp opposition to liberal principles that give priority to individual self-determination, the actors in this cluster command that individuals should not follow their own choices but, respectively, the supposed will of god (as demanded by, for example, ISIS (Hashim 2014) and House of Saud (Sajó et al. 2021), the party, nation and country's leader (in the case of the Workers' Party of Korea, Green 2016) or, albeit somewhat less explicitly than in the previous examples, the Hinduist Indian community (in the case of Modi, Jaffrelot 2017).

Several of the Islamist actors in this cluster aim for the establishment of a caliphate in which all private and public life is guided by Shari'a law. Obedience to Islamic law in all areas of people's lives is oftentimes portrayed as a matter of propagating virtue and preventing vice (Gopal/van Linschoten 2017) and is strictly monitored and enforced, including in individuals' private lives. This stands in stark contrast to the liberal principle of private-public distinction which relegates religion to the private sphere and leaves the decision to follow religious guidelines at the discretion of the individual. In a somewhat different way, but equally contesting the private-public distinction, the Workers' Party of Korea has a large surveillance apparatus to listen in on its citizens' private conversations, thus dissolving a boundary between a public and a private sphere (Silberstein 2020: 590).

The adherence to an ultimate, superior authority that most actors in this cluster share also has far-reaching implications for their conception of the political system and their contestation of principles such as representative democracy, rule of law, separation of powers, and political rights. In the case of the Workers' Party of Korea, for example, glorifying a dictatorial leadership figure

and demanding unconditional obedience to the party, the nation and the leader defy any idea of democracy and separation of powers. Executions, torture, and arbitrary detentions committed by the regime also show little respect for the rule of law or political rights of North Korean citizens (Fahy 2019). Those actors aiming for the establishment of a caliphate and a state based on Shari'a law equally reject the idea of representative democracy and a separation of power. Laws are not passed by an elected government representing popular sovereignty but are religious mandates of Islamic law. In their vision for society, power would be (or *is*, as in the case of, for example, the House of Saud (Alhusein 2019; Quamar 2015) concentrated in an unelected religious representative, for example, the caliph (cf. ISIS) or a religious monarch (in Saudi Arabia's House of Saud). Strict obedience, as well as love for the king, is considered a primary duty – and virtue – of all citizens in Saudi Arabia. In turn, it is his task to protect Islam, implement the Shari'a and “order people to do right and shun evil”, thus “fulfilling the duty regarding God's call” (Sajó et al. 2021: 157).

According to actors such as the Islamic Defenders Front, Islam is considered incompatible with democracy and accepting democracy would be equal to giving up the core of the Islamic faith (Wilson 2015). In contrast, Jamaat-e-Islami, originally a religious movement which later entered electoral politics in Pakistan as a political party, endorses a less radical view of Islam. While in the past, it equally considered democracy as “haram” (i.e. religiously forbidden) and thus incompatible with Islam, its later engagement in electoral politics could be interpreted as trying to achieve its goal from within an electoral democratic system⁶, thus representing a more moderate view than the

6 “Electoral democratic system” here does not refer to the V-Dem qualification, according to which Pakistan qualifies as an electoral autocracy (Lührmann et al. 2020). It just refers to the observation that, in contrast to other Islamist actors, it operates within an electoral system, despite its wish to implement the rule of God instead of the rule of the majority.

other Islamist actors in our sample. Nevertheless, Jamaat-e-Islami advocates for the rule of God instead of the rule of the majority and does not believe in a system of checks and balances as it does not see the possibility of a flawed rule of God, thus equally rejecting the liberal principles of representative democracy and the rule of law and separation of power.⁷

Modi's contestation of representative democracy and the rule of law takes a somewhat different form than that of the other actors in this cluster. Modi himself, as the leader of the governing NDA and of the by far strongest party of this alliance, the right-wing party Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), does not reject democracy in an outspoken and explicit way – unlike several of the other leaders in this cluster. Nevertheless, he presents himself as the immediate representative of the will of the (Hindu) Indian people and follows an ethno-religious nationalism which in itself contests the idea of equal representation. Rather than representative democracy, Modi thus strives for something that could be called majoritarian or ethnic democracy (Jaffrelot 2017). At the same time, however, Modi and his BJP have strong ties to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a right-wing, Hindu nationalist paramilitary organisation with long-standing roots in civil society. The members of the RSS are known for repeatedly breaking the law, beating and killing Muslims with impunity. Similarly, “hurt sentiments” rather than actual breaches of the law are used as an excuse to put people in prison for years before even getting a legal process (Interview 11⁸). Despite his supposed

commitment to liberal values in the international sphere, Modi thus clearly tolerates – if not endorses – repeated violations of the rule of law and political rights by members of his wider political regime, a trait he shares with the other actors in this cluster.

Another striking characteristic of the first cluster's normative contestation of the liberal script is its rejection of the principles of equal moral weight, civil rights, and tolerance. Again, the reasons for this rejection can often be found in the different actors' respective core ideologies. Many of the Islamist actors, for example, consider religious minorities, including Shia Muslims, as heretics who do not believe in the “one-ness of God” and thus as not deserving of equal moral weight and civil rights (Al-Dayel et al. 2020). Next to that, they contest the notion of gender equality, seeing the “true role” of women in the private sphere and denying them the right to seek access to the justice system, travel or enjoy education independent of male guardianship, as, for example, in the case of the House of Saud (Al Al-hareth et al. 2015; Alsuwaida 2016) but also ISIS (Ingram et al. 2020), Haqqani (Reuters 2022; Shelley et al. 2022; Yousufi 2021), Jaish al-Fatah (Khelghat-Doost 2019) and Ansar Dine (Interview 5⁹; Kirjner/Margueliche 2021). In line with their rejection of a distinction between the public and the private sphere and based on their conception of a virtuous life as a life following the laws of the Shari'a, they reject the idea of pluralism and sanction any lifestyles and behaviours that are not in line with those ideals. The condemnation of such lifestyles in many cases not only applies to the specific regions they originate from but also extends to a critique of – and in some cases attacks on – Western lifestyles and values of modernity

7 This is not to imply that all Islamist actors necessarily reject the principle of representative democracy, nor that they are per se one homogenous group with no meaningful differences in their stances towards liberal principles. As Hanna Pfeifer (2024) convincingly argues, lumping all Islamist actors together does not do justice to the complexities of political Islam. While there are thus also Islamist actors (such as the Tunisian Ennahda) who also strive for compatibility between Islam and democracy, the Islamist actors included in our first cluster do not embrace such compatibility – not even the more moderate ones such as Jamaat-e-Islami.

8 Interview 11 with Prof. Amit Prakash, Professor at the Centre for

the Study of Law and Governance at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, interview by Röllicke, Lena (16 January 2023).

9 Interview 5 with Prof. Hussain Solomon, Professor at the University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, interview by Fernández Rodríguez, Nieves (11 November 2022).

whose spread they consider threatening the purity of their societies. While the Islamic Defenders Front thus, for example, attacks bars or other places where they suspect “vice” to target lifestyles they do not agree with in Indonesia (Budiari 2016; Varagur 2017; Woodward et al. 2014), ISIS also carries out terrorist attacks in Western countries themselves, sometimes specifically targeting places that represent a Western lifestyle such as the Bataclan theatre in Paris in 2015.

In contrast to the other Islamist actors in this cluster, Jamaat-e-Islami, while equally contesting a plural way of life and believing that women have a different role in society than men, do not completely relegate women to the private sphere but stress their value in the political project of Islamising society (Ahmad 2008; Amin 2014). Advocating for a weaker form of the Shari’a where the rights of women and minorities are incorporated, it is thus the only actor in this cluster who does not contest the notion of equal moral weight and civil rights.

Sharing with the Islamist actors a reliance on religion as a founding pillar of their social and political project, Modi’s regime (including the RSS and Hindu vigilantes) contests the equal moral weight of non-Hindu Indians, especially of Muslims, who are considered as a morally inferior threat to the purity of the Indian heartland. While Modi does not contest the principle of civil rights per se, he *de facto* denies them to the Muslim part of the population and fails to protect them from discrimination on the grounds of religion. When it comes to the principle of tolerance, there is a clear tension between Modi’s discourse and his practice. In one of his speeches, he calls India the “land of diversity” but clearly does not apply this ideal to Muslim or other non-Hindu minority groups. While Modi could thus in several respects be considered a somewhat “softer”, more implicit than explicit contestant than the other actors in this cluster, his clear rejection of the principles

of equal moral weight and the private-public distinction, together with the endorsement of practices violating numerous other liberal principles such as individual self-determination, representative democracy, the rule of law, civil and political rights and tolerance nevertheless explain his categorisation as a member of this so-called fundamentalist cluster.

The two non-religious actors in this cluster, in contrast, do not base their rejection of the principle of equal moral weight on religious principles or supposedly morally inferior religious minorities but instead on the inherent hierarchy in society, protecting the privileged position of the ruling class which is assigned by birth (in the case of the Workers’ Party of Korea (Hunter 1999) or following a neo-Nazi ideology grounded in the belief in the superiority of certain people over others, such as foreigners, leftists, homosexuals, Jews, homeless people or policemen, as in the case of the NSU (Busch 2013)).¹⁰

The rejection of the principle of equal moral weight is also reflected in, and to some extent originates from an essentialist conception of the community (which, as we have seen, can be based on religion, the supremacy of the party or on race and ethnicity) and an anti-pluralist view of society. While most actors, especially the religious ones, allow for conversion into their in-group by adhering to their respective religious principles, the normative contestation of this cluster is nevertheless closely linked to a very exclusivist identity construction. This strong focus on the community and the attempt to (re-)establish a primacy of this community and to return to a state more similar to a glorious past are also reflected in the emotional repertoire of the cluster. While

¹⁰ Overall, it should be noted that the smaller number of contested principles for the NSU is due to scarcity of scholarly information on the actor and should not be understood as a softer critique. All information that is available points to a similarly fundamentalist contestation as that of the other actors in this cluster.

the different actors invoke quite a wide range of different emotions, including even some positive emotions such as hope, there is quite some focus on pride (50%) and nostalgia (40%).

While the economic aspects of the liberal script, specifically the market economy and property rights, are only contested by two actors in this cluster (the Workers' Party of Korea and Ansar Dine), the cluster's strong opposition to the principles of self-determination, private-public distinction, equal moral weight, representative democracy, rule of law, civil and political rights and tolerance described above nevertheless shows that the actors in this first cluster largely reject the liberal script *as such*. This also entails a fundamental rejection of the liberal epistemology script. Unsurprisingly, the adherence to an absolute authority in the political and social realm in many cases also extends into the realm of knowledge and truth – resulting in the promotion of an absolute truth based on religion (specifically, Islam) and ideology (specifically, Marxism, in the case of the Workers' Party of Korea). A notable exception is Modi's NDA, which does not promote one single narrative but a variety of shifting narratives and sources of knowledge, preventing the media from reporting anything that might go counter to the regime and making it an active purveyor of alternative facts and explanations (Interview 11¹¹). The epistemological contestation of Modi thus comes closer to being one of alternative facts rather than absolute truths. Nevertheless, it challenges the liberal epistemology script not just for its implementation but for its foundational principles: the rejection of absolute truths, epistemic self-reliance, open public debate, and the epistemic authority of science.¹²

Strongly tied to their wholesale normative and epistemological contestation of the liberal script, most actors in the first cluster (87,5%) put forward an alternative script, such as Jihadi Salafism in the case of ISIS (Ingram et al. 2020) and Jaish al-Fatah (Guido 2016; Hubbard 2015; Steinberg 2016; Styszynski 2014); Wahhabism or Salafism in the case of House of Saud (Sinani 2022) and Ansar Dine (Göldner-Ebenthal 2019); National Socialism for the NSU (McGowan 2014), Communism for the Workers' Party of Korea (Widjaja et al. 2021) and Hindu nationalism in the case of Modi's NDA (Jafrelot 2017). Nevertheless, in many instances, the rejection of liberal principles does not just arise from an independent alternative vision of society but also entails a direct engagement with the liberal script or Western values and the spread of modernity, sometimes treated as the embodiment of liberalism. Ansar Dine, for example, has carried out several terrorist attacks on UN peacekeepers in Mali, representing its opposition to liberalism, the West, and its conception of secular statehood, which had been effective in Mali since the French colonisation (Interview 5¹³). Others seem to fear a modernisation of Muslim societies by the spread of Western values, positioning their own fundamentalist interpretation of Islam in opposition to a more liberal version of Islam, as for example in the case of the Islamic Defenders Front (Facal 2020; Wilson 2015).

This direct opposition to a Western enemy is also reflected in the actors' recourse to anger, rage, and indignation as the most widely invoked emotions in their emotional repertoire. At the same time, it is also enforced very persistently: All actors in the cluster use violence to implement their contestation and either implement their (already very

11 Interview 11 with Prof. Amit Prakash, Professor at the Centre for the Study of Law and Governance at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, interview by Röllicke, Lena (16 January 2023).

12 It should be noted that in the meta-cluster analysis (as represented by Figure 1 above), the NDA (Modi) is located at the borderline to the authoritarian-populist cluster and was thus likely also part of a cluster with more authoritarian-populist actors in some

of the 96 individual cluster solutions. One overlap with the authoritarian-populist actors that is in line with such proximity to Cluster 2 is the promotion of alternative facts rather than absolute truths, as we will discuss below.

13 Interview 5 with Prof. Hussain Solomon, Professor at the University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, interview by Fernández Rodríguez, Nieves (11 November 2022).

comprehensive) critique or even go beyond their critique by carrying out further illiberal actions. This makes their contestation not only the deepest but also the most intense of all four clusters.

To sum up, this first cluster is characterised by a fundamental opposition to the principles of individual self-determination and the private-public distinction, to political principles such as representative democracy, the rule of law and separation of powers and political rights, and to the notion of equal moral weight and related principles of civil rights and tolerance. The common denominator of their contestation is, instead, the adherence to an absolute, ultimate authority, which is at the same time the source for most of their critique of liberal principles and their endorsement of an absolute truth. Placing the community above the individual, the actors in this cluster also construct exclusivist, essentialised identities, which they promote against their enemies with violent means. This cluster is thus the one with the deepest, broadest, and most intense contestation of all clusters.

3.2 CLUSTER 2: THE AUTHORITARIAN POPULISTS (KARNI SENA – PROUD BOYS)

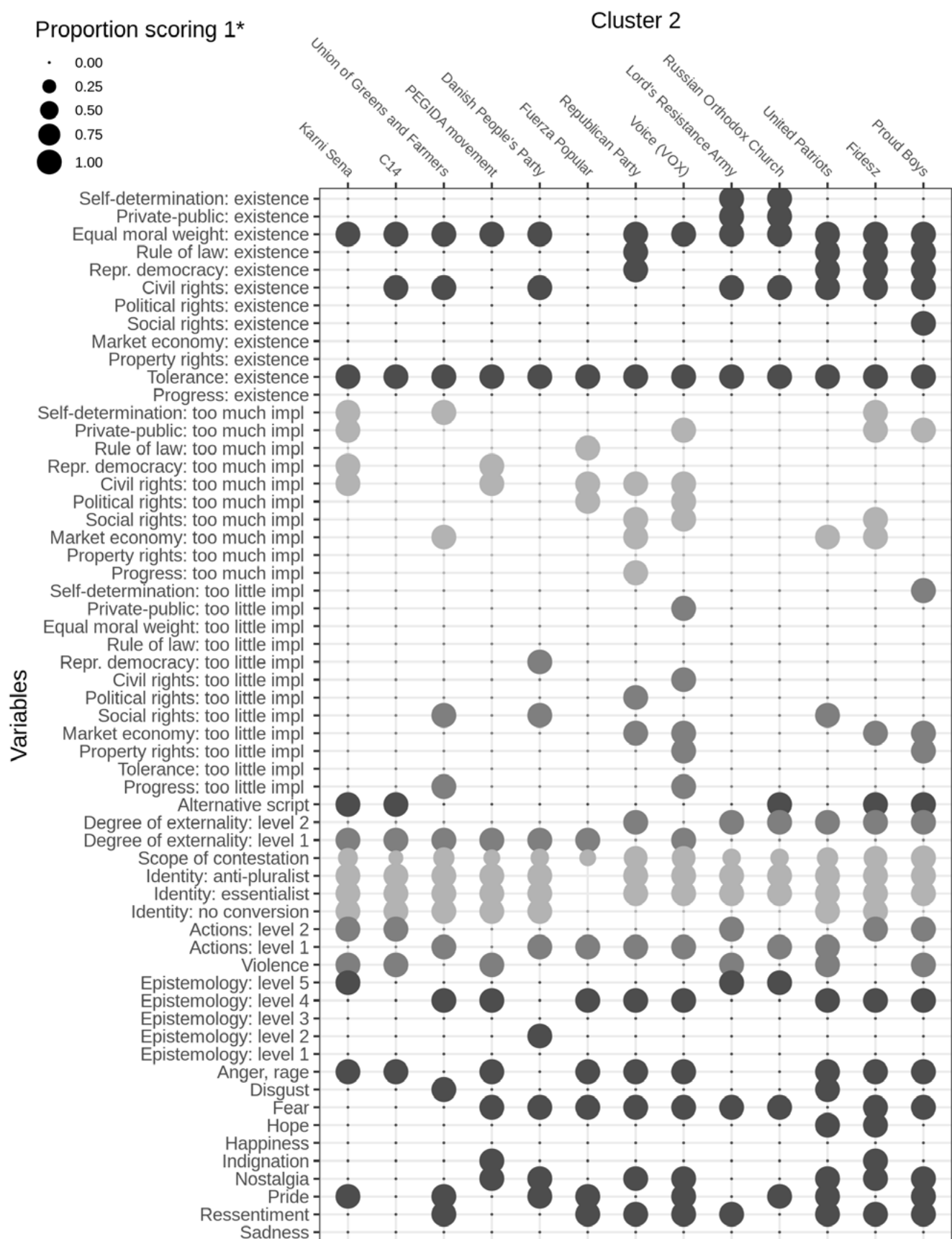
The second cluster (see Figure 4 below) is predominantly marked by a normative critique of equal moral weight, tolerance and civil rights, alongside exclusive identities. In addition, the actors in this cluster can be distinguished by a strong epistemological contestation, with most of them promoting alternative facts and others adhering to absolute truths. The contestations grouped in this cluster are less intense than those in Cluster 1, but more than those in Clusters 3 and 4, aiming to restore the power of established political or societal powerholders.

The cluster includes both actors from the Global North and the Global South. It also consists of all types of actors: governments, political parties,

militant organisations, and social movements. A large share of these actors is elsewhere categorised as authoritarian populist parties (the New Right Party, Vox, “Danish People’s Party”, “Fuerza Popular”, “Union of Greens and Farmers”, Karni Sena), as far-right movements or militant organisations (Karni Sena, “C14”, Proud Boys, “Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the West” (PEGIDA)) and/or governments of autocratising countries (“Fidesz”, “Republican Party”, “United Patriots”). In addition, it includes two religious actors: the “Russian Orthodox Church” and the “Lord’s Resistance Army” (Uganda). Since most of the actors share the characteristics of authoritarian populists, we resort to this label to name the cluster.

Most of those actors (92%) reject the principle of equal moral weight. The main aim of their contestation is to maintain the privilege of certain societal groups (cis-men, natives), suggesting more or less explicitly their superiority over others. Each of the actors usually puts the focus on one particular social group. The Trump administration’s ideas (the Republican Party) are rooted in white nationalism, targeting racial and ethnic minorities (Pulido et al. 2019); the Proud Boys (The US) hold deeply sexist beliefs, viewing women and other sexual minorities, such as the transgender community, as inferior to cis-men (Klein 2019; Valasik/Reid 2023); the Danish People’s Party perceives Muslim migrants as an economic threat and blames them for different societal problems, including crime, disorder or failures within the welfare system (Awad et al. 2022). Relatedly, all these actors target the principles of tolerance and, often, of civil rights (61%), either for their validity or for being implemented too much. The Union of Greens and Farmers (Latvia) criticise modern liberal values for attacking traditional Latvian nationalist values, implying a rejection of diverse lifestyles (Galbreath/Auers 2009), whereas the Russian Orthodox Church perceives Western values and the egalitarian evolution of human rights

Figure 4: Cluster 2



as going against God's will (Interview 13¹⁴). Only in Fuerza Popular (Peru), the critique of civil rights does not come with a critique of equal moral weight as the rejection of certain minority rights (such as abortion or same-sex marriage) is less based on a perception of these groups' inferiority and more on strategic considerations to arrive to power (Fonseca 2022).

The normative critiques of equal moral weight, tolerance and civil rights often come with the critique of other principles. Those, however, vary across the different actors forming the cluster. Some of these actors (30%) also contest liberal democratic political systems, in particular by challenging the rule of law and the liberal pillars of representative democracy. This is, for example, the case with Fidesz (Hungary), which contests the idea that the will of the people could be adequately captured through representative institutions, and advocates, instead, for the use of referenda to push their own agenda (Bíró-Nagy 2021). In several instances, actors are not always explicit about the principle that they target but rather resort to strategies of window dressing. For instance, the Republican Party implicitly criticises the existence of the democratic principle by challenging the elections for being rigged and positioning Trump himself as the only person who can save his country (Horwitz 2021). The principle of market economy, on the other hand, is often (30%) criticised for being implemented too much and too little. Whereas Vox (Spain) or the Republican Party have a more or less neoliberal agenda in economic terms, the latter is also protectionist of domestic industries (Lieven 2016), thus at the same time endorsing free market principles while aiming to restrict them in the interest of national interests.

Despite such critique of liberal principles and unlike actors falling into Cluster 1, most of the actors in this second cluster (52%) do not put forward a coherent alternative script. In fact, this cluster includes several actors (such as Vox in Spain or Fuerza Popular in Peru) who identify themselves with liberalism, especially with their economic dimension, differentiating themselves from left-wing actors who are perceived by them as a threat to people's freedom. However, 38% of the actors under this Cluster are vocally against the liberal script and do in fact propose alternative scripts. C14 and the Proud Boys defend neo-Nazi alternative scripts, which justify the exclusion and violence against minorities. The Russian Orthodox Church promotes the values of "Orthodox Christianity", marked by anti-Western beliefs and a rejection of secularism and individualism (Curanović 2019; Interview 13¹⁵; Suslov 2016). Fidesz advocates for "Christian Democracy", which defends Christian values as opposed to liberal democracies which allows and protects multiculturalism (Orbán 2018). These actors – the most radical ones falling under this cluster – differ from those falling under Cluster 1, however, in the lesser scope of contestation and degree of externality.

On the epistemological dimension, the actors in this cluster frequently (61%) contest liberal epistemology by spreading fake news and promoting alternative facts. For instance, the United Patriots (Bulgaria) have spread conspiracy theories on climate change and promoted censorship regarding foreign agents (Bankov et al. 2021). Religious actors within this group – the Lord's Resistance Army and the Russian Orthodox Church – also believe in absolute truths, challenging the liberal epistemology in a more fundamental way. In this regard and in their critique of the public/private distinction and individual self-determination, they again resemble actors falling into Cluster 1. However, in

14 Interview 13 with Prof. Regina Elsner, Professor at University of Münster, Münster, interview by Crosland, Clare (12 October 2023).

15 Interview 13 with Prof. Regina Elsner, Professor at University of Münster, Münster, interview by Crosland, Clare (12 October 2023).

contrast to those actors, these two contestants do not critically engage with political principles, that is, rule of law, political rights, or representative democracy. Their contestation is also softer in other regards: whereas the Russian Orthodox Church does not resort to violence (Interview 13¹⁶), the Lord's Resistance Army does not put forward an alternative script.

Related to their criticism of equal moral weight, the actors in this second cluster are always characterised by an exclusivist identity based on both anti-pluralist views of society and essentialist identities. Notably, they strongly rely on the conception of a homogeneous people. Many of them claim to bring “power back to the people” by introducing “real” democracy. This claim is often directed against liberal cosmopolitans at the cost of liberal protections of minority rights, tolerance, civil rights, and a general notion of equal moral weight. For instance, Vox claims to defend the “Spanish nation” from what the political party identifies as the enemies of Spain (or the “anti-Spain”): Basques, Catalans, independentists, and “red-ones”, that is, leftists, who are not considered to be “true Spaniards” (Rubio-Pueyo 2019).

In defending the in-group from the threat posed by the out-groups, many actors of this second cluster (69%) often invoke feelings of fear of Others. For instance, the Proud Boys express anxiety about losing power over spaces traditionally reserved for men (Park 2022). A similar share of actors (69%) also invoke anger against the political, official elites, including the media (e.g. PEGIDA) (Jünemann 2017) or at minorities that are blamed for undermining social values (e.g. migrants in the case of Fidesz) (Boros/Laki 2018: 5). To a lesser extent, emotions of resentment, nostalgia, or pride for an imagined past in which the people they claim to represent held – or were fighting for

– power are often invoked by those actors (61%, 53% and 61%, respectively). For instance, the PEGIDA movement (Germany) invokes nostalgia for the political institutions and culture of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) as part of their indignation against contemporary institutions (Önnerfors 2018).

Regarding their intensity, slightly more than half of the actors (53%) either implement their critique or carry out illiberal actions going beyond their critique and 38% do both. Despite their greater intensity compared to actors falling under Clusters 3 and 4, many of the contestants in this group do not implement their critiques. For instance, although the leaders of the Union of Greens and Farmers have been accused of corruption – an illiberal practice – the group hardly implements any of its critique (Freedom House 2017; Interview 7¹⁷). This is due to the fact that many of these actors are part of liberal democracies, where constitutional rights limit their capacity to implement their critique. Finally, almost half of the actors (46%) resort to violence, most often directed against minorities or political adversaries (e.g. Proud Boys, against women or anti-fa) (DeCook 2018; Reid et al. 2020) or members of the elite (e.g. PEGIDA) (Druxes/Simpson 2016: 9). Cluster 2 is thus distinguished by having a lesser extent of illiberal actions compared to Cluster 1, and by having a greater extent of illiberal actions compared to Clusters 3 and 4.

To sum up, this cluster is characterised by its critique of equal moral weight, tolerance, and civil rights, its belief in alternative facts, and its exclusive identities. Beyond their normative focus and epistemological critique of liberalism, it differs from Cluster 1 in its lesser scope of contestation, degree of externality and illiberal actions, and from Clusters 2 and 3 in its broader scope of

16 Interview 13 with Prof. Regina Elsner, Professor at University of Münster, Münster, interview by Crosland, Clare (12 October 2023).

17 Interview 7 with Prof. Jeffrey Sommers, Professor at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, interview by Fernández-Rodríguez, Nieves (02 December 2022).

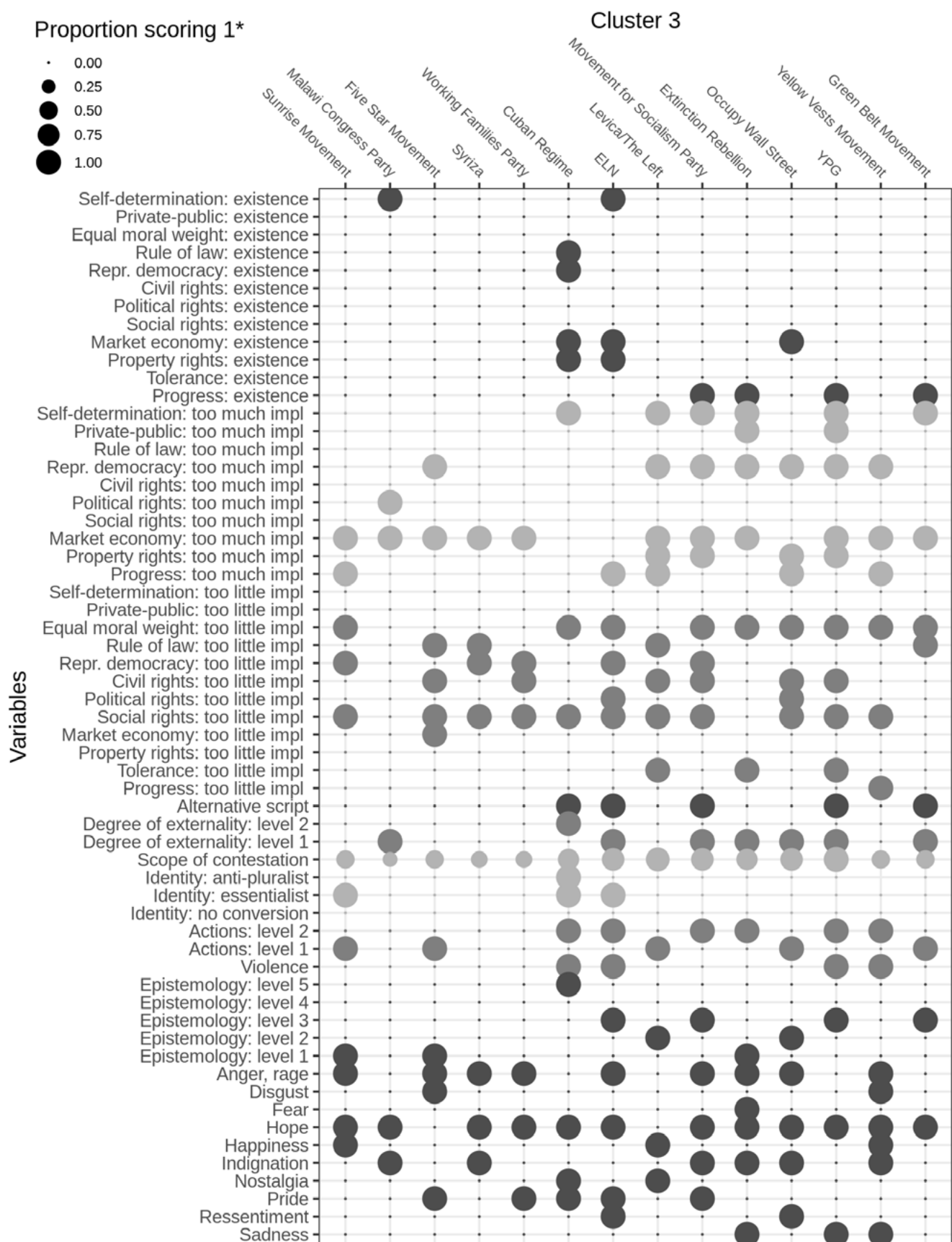
contestation, degree of externality and illiberal actions.

3.3 CLUSTER 3: THE MARKET-SCEPTIC EGALITARIANS (SUNRISE MOVEMENT – GREEN BELT MOVEMENT)

As the name already suggests, the third cluster (see Figure 5 below) is characterised by contestation of the market-based elements of the liberal script and the inequalities associated with a capitalist market economy. It includes actors who would mostly be characterised as more or less left-wing but who do have slightly different political origins: Some actors, for example, have a clear (Post-)Marxist orientation, such as the Cuban Regime, the Colombian rebel group “National Liberation Army” (ELN), the Bolivian government “Movement for Socialism Party” (MAS), the Kurdish “People’s Protection Units” (YPG), and the Slovenian political party “Levica”/“The Left”. Others are commonly classified as “left-wing populist” parties or movements, which mostly have their origins in the 2008 financial crisis or the ensuing European austerity crisis, for example the Greek government-party “Syriza”, the Italian party “Five Star Movement”, the “Working Families Party” from the United States, the “Yellow Vests Movement” in France and Belgium and “Occupy Wall Street”, a grassroots movement that started in the United States but soon spread across various countries all over the world. A third group of actors could be characterised as environmentalist movements, including the Sunrise Movement in the United States, the Green Belt Movement in Kenya and “Extinction Rebellion” which acts transnationally, yet mostly in countries of the Global North. One exception to this overall rather left-wing cluster is the “Malawi Congress Party”, which is generally considered more conservative and in fact anti-Marxist, yet also favours stronger state involvement over a free-market approach and thus shares the central point of contestation of this cluster.

The main commonality which the actors in this third cluster share is the normative contestation of liberal principles related to questions of equality and the market economy. 11 out of the 14 actors contest the principle of market economy for being implemented too much. This contestation usually comes along with a critique of too little implementation of social rights (which 11 out of 14 actors, i.e. 78,57% contest). While the specific focus of the critique differs somewhat by context, the main line of argumentation of all those actors is the way in which the liberal script is currently implemented seems to favour the free market principle over the guarantee of social rights. Syriza, for example, has built its campaign on a strong anti-austerity message (Kioupkiolis/Katsambekis 2018). It argues that the logic of profit and deregulation that have characterised the EU austerity crisis bear huge social costs that need to be addressed. Similarly, Levica criticises austerity measures, privatisation, and tax havens, arguing that the capitalist system disproportionately benefits the wealthy at the expense of the lower and middle classes (Toplišek et al. 2019). While European actors such as Syriza, Levica and the Five Star Movement (Mosca/Tronconi 2019) direct their critique at their national and EU institutions, the Cuban Regime, the Green Belt Movement (Cockram 2017; Muthuki 2006) and to some extent also the Bolivian government party MAS (MAS-IPSP 2021; Mayorga 2017; Postero 2010) are more concerned with the international liberal economic system, which they consider to further marginalise and exploit developing countries. As Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez (2018), for example, stated in his speech at the United Nations General Assembly in 2018, global problems such as hunger and the lack of access to drinkable water are “the consequence of capitalism, especially imperialism and neoliberalism; of selfishness and the exclusion that comes together with that system and of an economic, political social and cultural paradigm that privileges wealth accumulation in a few people at the expense of the exploitation and

Figure 5: Cluster 3



* Except Scope, where dot size gives re-scaled (0-1) overall number of contestations.

the misery of the majorities". Not only is this contestation aimed at addressing the inherent tension between the principles of market economy and social rights; but it also denounces the hypocrisy of liberal authorities for claiming to be liberal while ignoring the effects of their own actions that stand in sharp contrast to their liberal promises. Actors with a strong focus on the environment such as the Sunrise Movement (Blades 2018; Goodrich 2019; Stuart et al. 2020) and Extinction Rebellion (Berglund/Schmidt 2020; Stuart et al. 2020) (but also MAS) (Mamani 2016; MAS-IPSP 2021; Mayorga 2017; Postero 2010) equally criticise the international economic system; however, they focus their critique specifically on the extractivist logics of a capitalist economy and its detrimental consequences for the environment.

Despite their strong market-focused critique, most of the actors (78,57%) in this cluster do not demand a wholesale abolition of a capitalist market economy. For some, this has always been the case, while others, such as MAS (Postero 2010; Valencia 2015) and Levica (Toplišek et al. 2019), have softened their critique over the years or have adopted more pragmatic claims, postponing the overall aim of establishing a socialist society for now to first prioritise development. Instead of rejecting a market economy altogether, those actors thus demand stronger interventions by the state, for example, in the form of welfare benefits and social securities or a stronger regulation and prosecution of tax evasions and benefits for economic elites. This is also the main feature that the otherwise more conservative Malawi Congress Party shares with the rest of this cluster: it favours strong state intervention in order to foster development (Crosland 2022; Interview 12¹⁸; Malawi Congress Party 2019).

In contrast to such reformist approaches to the market economy, the Cuban Regime (Hernández Martínez 2015; Landaburo Sánchez 2019; Mesa-Lago/Pérez-López 2013; Pérez 2014), the Colombian ELN (Gruber/Pospisil 2015) and Occupy Wall Street (Appel 2014; Shrivastava/Ivanova 2015) put forward a deeper critique which targets the validity of the principle itself. They all perceive capitalism to be inherently flawed and unjust and thus impossible to sufficiently reform. While the ELN instead strives to implement an economy based on cooperative associations that follows a more Orthodox Marxist approach (Interview 9¹⁹), Occupy Wall Street does not develop a concrete alternative but simply argues for a "non-capitalist" economy that is more focused on human needs than on profit (Bray 2013). The Cuban Regime, on the other hand, is one of the few socialist regimes that survived after the end of the USSR. Since the Cuban Revolution in 1959, Cuba has been a socialist regime with a planned economy in which most enterprises were run by the state. In the late 2010s, it has started undertaking economic reforms that took the first steps towards liberalising the market, for example by allowing the circulation of private capital and the exercise of private economic activities (Hernández Martínez 2015; Landaburo Sánchez 2019; Mesa-Lago/Pérez-López 2013; Pérez 2014). Nevertheless, it is still outspokenly opposed to the capitalist market economy and presents its own system as an explicit alternative.

Whenever the critique of capitalism has a more systemic character, it also comes along with a contestation of the implementation of not just social rights but also equal moral weight (which is the case for 9 out of the 14 actors (64,29%). On those accounts, free market imperatives and a capitalist, often neoliberal, logic are blamed for having created such extensive inequalities between the wealthy and the less wealthy that

18 Interview 12 with Prof. Daniel Wroe, Professor at University of East Anglia, School of International Development, Norwich, interview by Crosland, Clare (01 March 2023).

19 Interview 9 with Henry Ortega, Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular (CINEP), Bogotá, interview by Fernández Rodríguez, Nieves (11 December 2022).

they systematically violate the principle of equal moral weight. This violation not only concerns the material living conditions of those who are economically less well-off, but it also extends into the political sphere: either the wealthy specifically or economic considerations more generally are considered to have disproportionate influence on political decision-making, thus undermining the quality of representative democracy (a reasoning put forward by half of the actors in the cluster). In response, some actors, such as Syriza, demand a better implementation of the system of representative democracy, for example by limiting the influence of lobbyists or economic incentives on policymaking in an attempt to restore the representative principle of democracy (Aslanidis 2021; Katsourides 2020; Syriza 2018). Others, such as Occupy Wall Street (Taylor 2013) or the Yellow Vests Movement (Hayat 2022; Knops/Petit 2022) instead push for more popular influence in the form of direct, leaderless democracy, which could complement (and in some cases also replace) more representative, parliamentary forms of democracy. Such demands for more direct forms of democracy can also be found in other actors in this cluster, for example, MAS or the Five Star Movement. Their critique of the current workings of democracy, however, is not necessarily related to economic concerns only but also regards the disproportionate influence of political elites over the popular will or, in the case of MAS, the exclusion of Indigenous people from existing forms of democracy (Mayorga 2017). The Cuban regime presents a bit of an exception in this regard. On the one hand, it is critical of the hypocrisy of liberal authorities (in particular the United States) who claim to be democratic (or strive for the democratisation of national political systems, respectively) but then interfere in other States' sovereignty if they do not show ideological affinity with them. At the same time, despite identifying itself as a "popular democracy", it is in practice a dictatorship which supports the idea of a unitary, dominant party, the "Communist Party of Cuba", which

entails a vertical way of adopting legal norms and stands in stark contrast to the principles of representative democracy as well as the rule of law and separation of powers (Interview 6).²⁰

In addition to concerns with equal moral weight, social rights and representative democracy, the contestations in this cluster also target the notion of progress on which the capitalist system is built. Nearly two-thirds of the actors argue that a capitalist market economy relies on an extractivist logic in which humans dominate and are free to exploit nature at any cost. In response, some actors, such as the Sunrise Movement, the Yellow Vests Movement, the ELN, Levica and Occupy Wall Street demand a different balancing of liberal principles, which involves more consideration for the planet and the environment. The Sunrise Movement (2022), for example, advocates for the adoption of a Green New Deal which proposes concrete goals and mitigation strategies to achieve net-zero CO₂ emissions by 2050 while remaining within a "green growth" paradigm. In contrast to this, actors such as the Green Belt Movement (Rush 2020), MAS (Mamani 2016; MAS-IPSP 2021; Mayorga 2017; Postero 2010), YPG (Cemgil/Hoffmann 2016; Galvan-Alvarez 2020; Hunt 2019) and Extinction Rebellion (Sauerborn 2021; Westwell/Bunting 2020) do not consider this a sufficient adjustment. For them, there is a need to adopt a fundamentally different approach to nature, the planet, and the environment, which involves an end to extractivism and instead puts care for the planet and a worldview which views humans as part of rather than the rulers of nature at the centre. Those actors also contest the principle of individual self-determination for being implemented too much; in other words, they criticise the predominance of an individualised society which comes at the expense of the planet, the environment, and other non-human beings.

20 Interview 6 with Prof. Liosday Landaburo Sánchez, Professor at International University of Ecuador, Quito, interview by Fernández Rodríguez, Nieves (25 November 2022).

Lastly, some actors (6 out of 14, i.e. 42,85%), especially those who reject the principle of market economy altogether (i.e. the ELN, the Cuban Regime and Occupy Wall Street) but also MAS, YPG and Levica also criticise the idea of or problems associated with private property, which is closely connected to their contestation of market economy and is considered to contribute to the production and maintaining of material and moral inequalities.

Overall, around half of the actors contest at least some element of the liberal script on a fundamental level; four reject the notion of progress, three reject the idea of a market economy and two reject the principle of individual self-determination. In addition, the Cuban regime also contests the rule of law and representative democracy (Interview 6)²¹, making it by far the actor with the largest degree of externality in this cluster. Despite this, however, the normative critique of this third cluster is considerably less comprehensive than that of the fundamentalist cluster and also, although to a lesser degree, less so than that of the Authoritarian Populists. The main difference with regards to that second cluster, however, is *which* principles are contested at an existential level, more than the number in principle. While Authoritarian Populists contest principles aimed at equality, the market-focused egalitarians contest precisely those principles that are considered to stand in the way of equality. In line with this, the five actors that put forward alternative scripts to the liberal script generally claim to strive for more egalitarian, humane or holistic societies, as represented by eco-feminism (e.g. Green Belt Movement) (Hunt 2014; Rush 2020), Democratic Confederation (e.g. YPG) (Galvan-Alvarez 2020; Pavičić-Ivelja 2017; Uluğ et al. 2021), Indigenous Nationalism (e.g. MAS) (Stefanoni 2006) or Marxism-Leninism (“Guevarism” in the case of

the ELN) (Gruber/Pospisil 2015; Pérez 2013; Renwick/Hanson 2014; Sierra 2019) and Communism (“Guevarism” or Castrism in the case of the Cuban Regime) (Hernández Martínez 2015; Landaburo Sánchez 2019; Mesa-Lago/Pérez-López 2013; Pérez 2014). Those two last cases also include an anti-imperialist element, adjusting traditional Marxism-Leninism to the Latin-American context.

The critique of inequalities is also represented by the epistemological contestation of the actors in this cluster. While this third cluster is less homogenous when it comes to its actors’ epistemological position than the first two, it is nevertheless the cluster with most actors contesting epistemic injustices or internal hierarchies and (neoliberal) biases in the university system (4 out of 14 actors contest epistemic injustice, 2 internal hierarchies and 3 the science-policy link). The Green Belt Movement for example criticises the hegemony of Western knowledge and value systems and instead demands the inclusion of more Indigenous and local sources of knowledge (Schell 2013; Taylor 2013). Similarly, MAS aims to decolonise knowledge production by giving more voice to Indigenous knowledges (García/Peñate 2015; Healey 2009; Postero 2010). In the case of the YPG, their critique of epistemic injustice is also linked to their critique of capitalism and patriarchal structures: they demand the democratisation of knowledge production which, according to them, is currently impeded by a capitalist system which pushes women out of the knowledge system and into the household (Kemerli 2022; Roelofs 2018; Üstündağ 2016). Not only the critique of epistemic injustice but also the demand for a better science-policy link is clearly linked to actors’ normative critique of the liberal script. Both the Sunrise Movement (Stuart et al. 2020; Sunrise Movement n.d.) and Extinction Rebellion (Berglund and Schmidt 2020), for example, demand that the scientific consensus on climate change be taken more into consideration in policymaking. Coming from a slightly different background

21 Interview 6 with Prof. Liosday Landaburo Sánchez, Professor at International University of Ecuador, Quito, interview by Fernández Rodríguez, Nieves (25 November 2022).

but following essentially a similar logic, the Five Star Movement favours a version of techno-populism which aims for more consideration of expert knowledge in policymaking in order to foster efficiency (Bickerton/Accetti 2018). The exception to those kinds of epistemological contestations that are more directed at the implementation rather than the foundational principles of liberal epistemology is, again, the Cuban Regime. In contrast to the other actors in this cluster, it is the only actor who puts forward an absolute truth, the truth of the Communist Party of Cuba (Interview 6).²²

Next to the normative focus on the market economy and inequalities and the contestation of epistemic injustices, two more defining features of this third, market-sceptic egalitarian cluster concern the actors' identity construction and their emotional repertoire. All but one actor in this cluster (the Cuban Regime (Interview 6))²³ have a pluralist view of society, the large majority (78,57%) have a non-essentialist conception of their collective identity and all of them allow for conversion into their in-group. Overall, this cluster is the cluster with the most inclusive identities, which is also coherent with their strong normative focus on material and, especially, moral equality.

When it comes to emotions, the actors in this cluster show by far the strongest focus on hope – around 86% of the actors, that is, all but two (the Five Star Movement and Levica), evoke or build on a notion of hope for a better future. By contrast, it has a comparatively low focus on nostalgia (which only Levica and the Cuban regime evoke in their discourse) and pride (35,71%). While anger is also a comparatively widely used emotion in this cluster (9 out of 14 actors evoke anger), it is directed

at different targets and is built on different justifications than the anger in other clusters, especially the first two. Contestants in this cluster thus mostly express anger at liberal hypocrisy or injustices (such as those resulting from a capitalist system), rather than at specific out-groups or a perceived moral decay.

With regards to the intensity of the contestation, the third cluster shows quite some heterogeneity but is overall characterised by predominantly medium intensity. Most actors do not use violence (only four of them do, the Yellow Vests Movement (Ehs/Mokre 2021), the ELN (Gruber/Pospisil 2015; Interview 9)²⁴; Pérez 2010, 2013; Sierra 2019; Zamora 2020), the Cuban Regime (Amnesty International 2022) and the YPG (Galvan-Alvarez 2020; Pavičić-Ivelja 2017; van Wilgenburg/Fumerton 2022); they contest on average 6 liberal principles, spanning a range from 3 to 10 (which is similar to Cluster 2) and there is quite a mixed picture when it comes to illiberal actions: while some actors (around 35%) either implement some of their normative critique or violate liberal principles that go beyond their normative critique; another 43% both implement their critique and go beyond their critique. Only around 20% of the actors do not engage in any illiberal actions at all.

To sum up, this third cluster is most clearly defined by its normative critique of market- and equality-related principles, which is also reflected in its epistemological contestation of epistemic injustices. It has strongly inclusive, pluralist identities and is the most hopeful of all clusters, despite its anger about the injustices of a capitalist system.

22 Interview 6 with Prof. Liosday Landaburo Sánchez, Professor at International University of Ecuador, Quito, interview by Fernández Rodríguez, Nieves (25 November 2022).

23 Interview 6 with Prof. Liosday Landaburo Sánchez, Professor at International University of Ecuador, Quito, interview by Fernández Rodríguez, Nieves (25 November 2022).

24 Interview 9 with Henry Ortega, Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular (CINEP), Bogotá, interview by Fernández Rodríguez, Nieves (11 December 2022).

3.4 CLUSTER 4: THE IDENTITY-FOCUSED CONTESTANTS (NEW RIGHT PARTY – AMAL MOVEMENT)

The fourth cluster (see Figure 6 below) is mainly characterised by its exclusivist identities²⁵, distinguishing these actors from those in Cluster 3, and by its lesser intensity compared to those actors falling under Clusters 1 and 2.

This cluster is the largest and most diverse in terms of ideology, political aims, and type of actors. It predominantly includes actors focused on either the formation or defence of a national identity or the representation of ethnic minorities in politically divided contexts along ethnic lines. Amongst the first group, the Rwandan regime (the “Rwandan Patriotic Front”) seeks to establish a national identity by promoting ethnic homogeneity (Waldorf 2017: 75); the Cameroonian regime (“Cameroon People’s Democratic Movement”) aims to suppress secessionist attempts from anglophone minorities (Interview 8²⁶); the Canada Conservative Party aims to build a Canadian national identity (Tolley 2017); the “Bangladesh Nationalist Party” seeks to form a national identity based on Islam (Hajjaj 2022); “Perú Libre” focuses on building a national identity based on Andean indigeneity (Interview 4²⁷); and the New Right Party in Israel seeks to define the national identity based on Jewish heritage (Cohen 2022: 162; Hoffman 2019). Amongst the second group, the Amal Movement represents the Shiite community in Lebanon (Shanahan 2005); the “Tigray People’s Liberation Front” (TPLF) represents the Tigray People in Ethiopia (Tessema 2020); the

“Palestinian National Authority”, holding power in the West Bank, and the “Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions” (BDS) represent Palestinian national sentiments (Abbas 2018; BDS Movement 2005; Stern 2022) and the “Irish Republican Army” (IRA) aims to form an independent country on Northern Ireland (Great Britain) (Whiting 2012). It also includes movements representing class, racial and gender minorities, such as the Brazilian “Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem-Teto”, the transnational “#MeToo Movement”, which specifically target sexual violence against women (Mendes et al. 2018; Xiong et al. 2019), and the “Fees Must Fall Movement”, which emerged in opposition to university tuition fee increases but later addressed issues of decolonization and racism in South Africa (Cini 2019; Hewlett et al. 2016). Finally, it includes the “Gülen Movement”, an Islamist transnational movement (Watmough/Öztürk 2018).

Their ideologies range from right-wing (such as the New Right Party and the “Conservative Party of Canada”) to left-wing, including political parties and social movements with Marxist roots in Southern contexts (Perú Libre, the Brazilian Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem-Teto, the Ethiopian TPLF, the “Communist Party of India (Marxist)”). Several actors, however, do not fit into these traditional ideological categories, including the Gülen Movement, the Cameroon People’s Democratic Movement, the Amal Movement, and the Rwandan Patriotic Front.

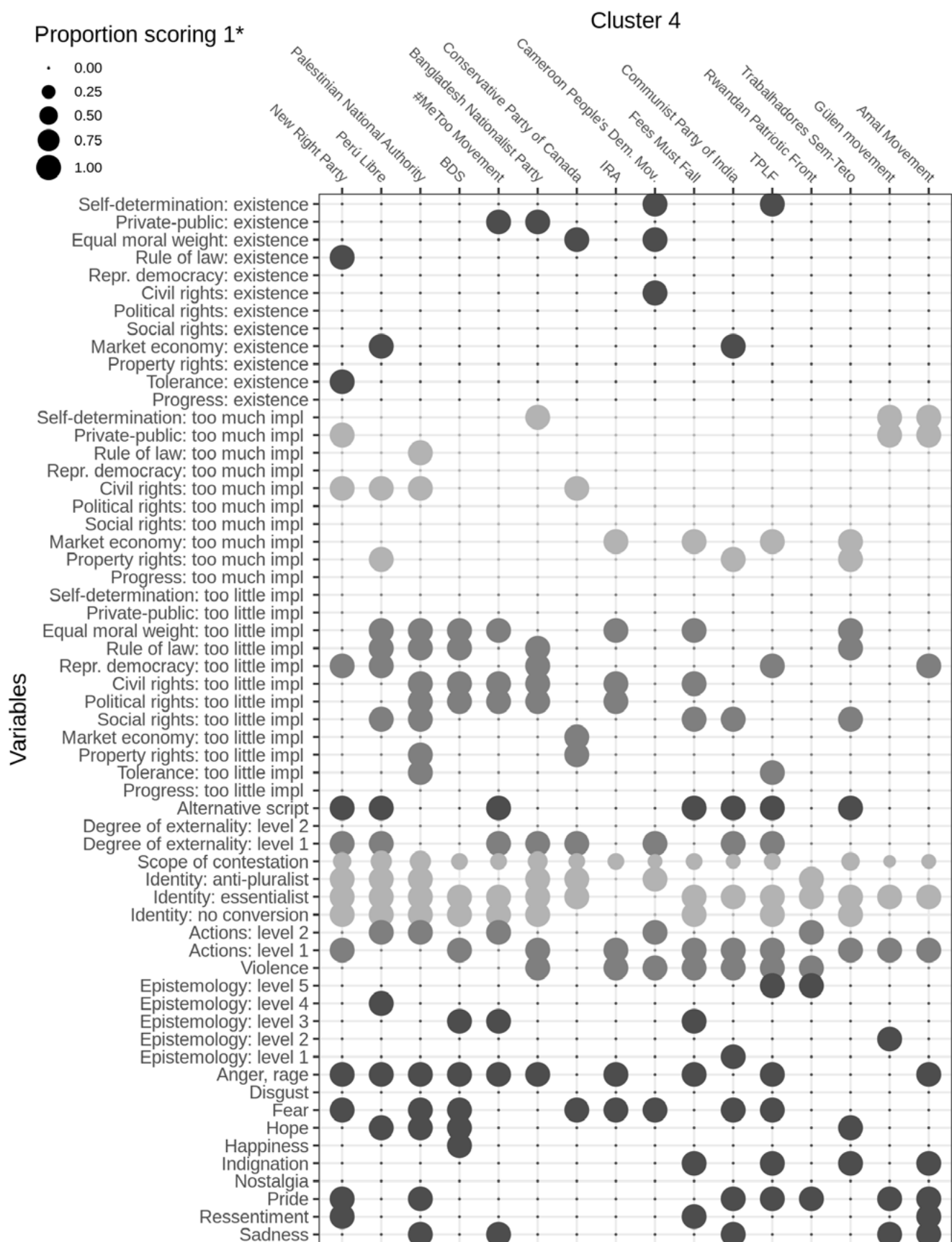
Given their predominant focus on identities, the majority of the actors falling under this cluster (87%) show an essentialist identity based on belonging to an ethnic group (Amal Movement, TPLF, Perú Libre, the Palestinian National Authority, BDS, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, the New Right Party) (Abbas 2018; Arnold 2019; Cofman Wittes/

25 The only actors falling under this group with non-essentialist identities are the Cameroon’s People Democratic Movement, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the IRA.

26 Interview 8 with Prof. Jean-Germain Gros, Professor at University of Missouri-St. Louis, Saint Louis, interview by Crosland, Clare (08 December 2022).

27 Interview 4 with Prof. Alberto Vergara, Professor at Pacific University of Lima, Lima, interview by Fernández Rodríguez, Nieves (27 October 2022).

Figure 6: Cluster 4



* Except Scope, where dot size gives re-scaled (0-1) overall number of contestations.

Mizrahi-Arnaud 2019; Interview 4²⁸; Interview 10²⁹; Woldeyesus/Endris 2021), an oppressed minority based on gender and race (#MeToo and Fees Must Fall, respectively) (Fileborn/Loney-Howes 2019: 229; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018), or the working class (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem-Teto, the Communist Party of India (Marxist)) (Communist Party of India (Marxist) 2019; Ramírez-Orozco 2019).

In the case of ethnic identities, their essentialist nature emphasises the virtues of the represented group vis-à-vis the moral faults of other ethnic groups portrayed as the oppressors. For instance, Perú Libre represents the identities of the Indigenous peoples from rural areas whom they claim to represent as the true defenders of its homeland, while it depicts the white elites as the corrupted oppressors (Interview 4³⁰). Some of these essentialist identities (mostly ethnic) appear in contexts of open conflict. Amidst the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, actors including the New Right Party, the Palestinian National Authority and BDS construct Israeli and Palestinians as homogenous entities, with stable characteristics over time (Abbas 2018; Arnold 2019; Cofman Wittes/Mizrahi-Arnaud 2019). In the case of minority groups based on race and gender, the essentialisation comes with the narrative of a victimhood of the represented group that is commonly shared by all its members, but which overlooks the potential diverse experiences of individuals and sub-groups. For instance, within the #MeToo Movement all women are often presented as victims of sexual violence, sharing similar experiences across political and cultural contexts, without taking into consideration the particular experience of black, lesbian

women within the broader collective (Fileborn/Loney-Howes 2019). A final sub-group of actors essentialise the identity of a working class, drawing a strict discursive antagonism between the poor and the rich. This essentialist construction of identity distinguishes these actors from most of the market-sceptic actors in Cluster 3, which present more inclusivist identities. For instance, the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem-Teto constructed the identity of its constituents based on their status as homeless, poor, oppressed, and marginalised people, building a strong opposition between the working and non-working classes (Interview 1)³¹.

Essentialist identities often come with exclusive views of society (in 46% of the actors) and the impossibility of converting to the in-group (in 60% of the actors). Ethnicity-based actors often exhibit anti-pluralist views of society, either by denying the existence of other groups (e.g. the Rwandan Patriotic Front) (Purdeková et al. 2018) or by excluding certain groups from their nation (e.g. the Palestinian National Authority) (Interview 2³²). Both forms of anti-pluralist identities emphasise a need for a homogeneous society in terms of values. Exclusive societal views are also shared by certain Marxist actors (Perú Libre and the Communist Party of India (Marxist)), which perceive the “poor” groups that they represent as the only “real people”, further distinguishing themselves from other Marxist actors falling under Cluster 3 (Interview 4³³; Löfgren 2016). Other actors promoting anti-pluralist identities include the Cameroon People’s Democratic Movement, which does not allow diversity based on gender or sexual orientation (Ndjio 2016), or the Conservative Party of

28 Interview 4 with Prof. Alberto Vergara, Professor at Pacific University of Lima, Lima, interview by Fernández Rodríguez, Nieves (27 October 2022).

29 Interview 10 with “Anonymous”, interview by Fernández Rodríguez, Nieves (13 December 2022).

30 Interview 4 with Prof. Alberto Vergara, Professor at Pacific University of Lima, Lima, interview by Fernández Rodríguez, Nieves (27 October 2022).

31 Interview 1 with Izadora Xavier do Monte, FrameWorks Institute, Washington DC, interview by Röllicke, Lena (07 June 2022).

32 Interview 2 with Prof. Tariq Dana, Professor at Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, Doha, interview by Crosland, Clare (21 September 2022).

33 Interview 4 with Prof. Alberto Vergara, Professor at Pacific University of Lima, Lima, interview by Fernández Rodríguez, Nieves (27 October 2022).

Canada which shares a narrow understanding of the people as the ones truly sharing “Canadian values” (Chase 2015). Finally, a belief in the impossibility of non-conversion is commonly shared by ethnic-based groups, believing that those traits are acquired by birth, and is even shared by those actors who have more pluralist views of society (e.g. the TPLF), and by certain Marxist actors, such as the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem-Teto (Ramírez-Orozco 2019).

Although the actors in this fourth cluster are largely heterogeneous in their normative dimension, many of them share a critique of equal moral weight for being too little implemented (43%). These critiques are closely linked to the construction of essentialist identities as oppressed groups. Some of those actors consider that the capitalist and imperialist systems produce unjustified economic inequalities amongst people (Perú Libre, the Communist Party of India (Marxist), the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem-Teto) (Boulos 2012; Communist Party of India (Marxist) 2019; Interview 4³⁴); others challenge the oppression of sexual and racial minorities (#MeToo and Fees Must Fall Movement) (Cini 2019; Mendes et al. 2018); lastly, some actors specifically target the oppression of Palestinians by Israelis (BDS, Palestinian National Authority) (BDS Movement n.d.). Whereas the first critiques suggest an inconsistency between liberal principles (e.g. between market economy and equal moral weight), the latter simply point to the hypocrisy of liberal authorities for not living up to their promises of equality and for not protecting the rights of women, black people, and national minorities. Specifically, the BDS and the Palestinian National Authority believe that liberal authorities turn a blind eye to the situation of Palestinians, who are not treated equally to other nationals (Rasgon 2018). To a lesser extent, some of the actors (31%) also criticise social and

civil rights for being too little implemented. On the one hand, *social rights* are contested for being implemented too little by Marxist actors (Perú Libre, Cuban Regime, the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem-Teto, the Communist Party of India (Marxist)) and by the Palestinian National Authority and Fees Must Fall Movement. On the other hand, *civil rights* are contested for being implemented too little by actors that act in defence of minorities, including sexual, racial, and ethnic minorities (Fees Must Fall Movement, #MeToo, the Palestinian National Authority, Bangladesh Nationalist Party, IRA). For instance, although more strongly in the past, the IRA still challenges a perceived discrimination by the police towards Catholic people (Reinisch 2020).

The critique of these actors has a lesser scope and degree of externality than that of actors falling under Clusters 1 and 2, with no actor criticising the existence of more than four principles. For example, the lesser scope of contestation, along with the absence of a contestation of liberal epistemology, is what makes the Conservative Party of Canada fall under this cluster instead of Cluster 2, where most other right-wing actors within democratic regimes are. Despite posing a less strong critique than actors within Clusters 1 and 2, half of the actors in this fourth Cluster contest at least one principle for its existence and two of them challenge more than one principle (Cameroon’s People Democratic Movement, the New Right Party).

Almost half of the actors within this cluster (43%) defend an alternative script. Some actors propose a version of Marxism adapted to their regional specificities (Perú Libre, TPLF, Communist Party of India (Marxist), Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem-Teto). For instance, Perú Libre (2020) promotes “Mariateguism”, based on the ideas of the Peruvian writer and philosopher José Carlos Mariátegui, who combined Marxist-Leninist concepts with anti-imperialist principles. Other

34 Interview 4 with Prof. Alberto Vergara, Professor at Pacific University of Lima, Lima, interview by Fernández Rodríguez, Nieves (27 October 2022).

than those, the Fees Must Fall Movement promotes an alternative script termed as “Fallism” combining ideologies of black-African identity, feminism and anti-colonialism (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018), while the New Right Movement advocates for “right-nationalism”, which emphasises the security of the Land of Israel (against the Palestinian threat) (Hoffman 2019). In this cluster, there is a group of actors (the Cameroon’s People Democratic Movement, the Amal Movement, the Bangladesh National Movement, and the Rwandan Patriotic Front or the TPLF, New Right Movement) who do not directly target the liberal script but rather criticise certain principles we consider liberal as a “by-product” of other political goals. For instance, the Cameroon Democratic Movement seeks to distinguish itself from the regime of its predecessor, Ahmadou Ahidjo, by emphasising community values above individual ones but does not relate this critique of individual self-determination as a critique of “liberal” values (Interview 8³⁵).

Almost half of the actors within this cluster do not contest liberal epistemology, including, e.g. the New Right Party or the Canadian Conservative Movement. Amongst the remaining actors, some promote absolute truths (TPLF, Rwandan Patriotic Front) and others criticise liberal epistemic injustices (Fees Fall Movement, #MeToo, BDS). Unlike religious groups falling under Cluster 1, the absolute truth promoted by the TPLF does not come from any absolute cosmology, but rather from the vanguard party (Woldeyesus/Endris 2021). Somewhat differently from other actors promoting an absolute truth, the Rwandan Patriotic Front defends an absolutist interpretation of Rwanda’s history, essential in its discourse, which outrightly denies the genocide of *hutus* (Interview 3³⁶; Reynjtens 2011). Those actors contesting epistemic

injustice generally criticise the exclusion of certain minorities in knowledge production and the use of knowledge to perpetuate power structures.

The actors are also mixed in terms of their actions, with most of the actors (62%) carrying out some sort of illiberal actions and some (31%) implementing their critique *and* carrying out illiberal actions which go beyond the implementation of their criticised principles. Almost half of the actors (43%) resort to violence within this group. Violence is mostly inflicted by authoritarian regimes (Cameroon’s People Democratic Party, the Rwandan Patriotic Front, and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party) towards the population that deviates from their rules – often illiberal – and, occasionally, in the case of Fees Must Fall and IRA, towards what they identify as the oppressors, the elites or the police (Everything Must Fall 2018; Morrison 2020).

Regarding their emotions, most of the actors (62%) invoke anger, though to a lesser extent than in other clusters. In addition, half of the actors invoke pride and fear (50%), feelings which are usually connected with their essentialist identities: whereas the object of pride is the in-group, the object of fear is the out-group. For instance, the TPLF takes pride for the “heroic” actions of the Tigray ethnic group in their struggle against military governments, while invoking fears towards minorities such as the Amahra disputing their power (Riggan 2020; Tsega 2018).

In sum, the actors within this cluster differ from those falling under Cluster 3 in their more exclusivist identities (including essentialist forms of identity construction, anti-pluralist views of society and non-conversion) and from actors under Clusters 1 and 2 in their lesser scope of contestation, degree of externality and intensity, and – in many cases – in their defence of the principle of equal moral weight. As such, it encompasses a broad spectrum of different actors, including

35 Interview 8 with Prof. Jean-Germain Gros, Professor at University of Missouri-St. Louis, Saint Louis, interview by Crosland, Clare (08 December 2022).

36 Interview 3 with Prof. Filip Reynjtens, Professor at University of Antwerp, Antwerp, interview by Crosland, Clare (10 October 2022).

Marxist, secessionist, ethnic-based political parties, and regimes, as well as social movements targeting the oppression of minorities.

4 DISCUSSION

After presenting the characteristics of the different clusters, we can observe that, in their engagement with the liberal script, actors from different ideological families, types or regions are grouped together. Cluster 1 includes Islamist, far-right and socialist actors, militant organisations and governments from the Global South and the Global North; Cluster 2 is formed by different types of far-right and right-wing actors from both the Global North and the Global South; Cluster 3 is mostly composed of left-wing actors, including socialist and anarchist variants, and environmentalist movements, across different regions; Cluster 4 includes right-wing and left-wing contestants and ethnic-based actors, who cannot be easily situated along the right-left spectrum, mainly from the Global South. This indicates that our clusters make a theoretical contribution to classify actors based on ideologies, organisational form, and geographical scope when it comes to their engagement with the liberal script. The inductive extraction of different groups of contestants helps to get a more systematic understanding of the contestation of the liberal script.

Each of the clusters reflects a different starting point from which their other contestations follow. *Fundamentalist* actors, for example, largely adhere to some sort of absolute authority, which stands in stark contrast to the principle of individual determination, and which serves as the basis of their contestation of most of the other liberal principles and their promotion of an absolute. For *Authoritarian Populists*, the point of departure is their critique of equal moral weight and the related principles of tolerance and civil rights, which can be traced back to a perceived threat of

minority groups. This critique is frequently followed by a contestation of democracy and the rule of law or by the spreading of alternative facts. The starting point of *Market-Sceptic Egalitarians* is a critique of the capitalist market economy and a demand for a better implementation of the principle of equal moral weight. Finally, *Identity-Focused Contestants* primarily seek the construction of a national identity or the empowerment of a minoritarian group, often followed by a critique of equal moral weight, civil or social rights for being too little implemented.

This already shows that the four clusters are formed based on similarities across diverse dimensions. As explained above, Clusters 1, 2 and 3 are based on the normative principles they challenge. At the same time, Cluster 1 is not only characterised by the targeted principles – mostly all, except for the ones along the economic dimension – but also by the intensity of their critique. Finally, Cluster 4, which shows more variation in the normative dimension, constructs a more exclusivist identity than Cluster 3 and, overall, contests the liberal script to a lesser extent than Clusters 1 and 2. Cluster 3 is also characterised by the inclusive identities of most of its actors. The fact that the clusters are formed based on similarities in different variables thus implies the relevance of the selected variables for the formation of the Clusters.

The different clusters arguably also vary in terms of depth or the degree to which they challenge the liberal script externally. In order to identify the *actual* challenge that the actors pose to the liberal system, one would need to take into account additional characteristics of the actors, such as their power, their position in the world system and their capacity to influence it. Analysing those factors go beyond the scope of this working paper. However, certain elements from our study can inform a first, tentative assessment of the varying degrees of challenge that each of the clusters

pose, particularly the scope of contestation, the degree of externality, their use of illiberal actions, and their epistemological standpoint.

The degree of externality refers to the actors' distance to the liberal script. It reflects the number of liberal principles that the actors reject as such. The more principles the actor rejects, the greater the challenge that actor poses to the liberal script. Exclusive identities, which are based on anti-pluralist societal views, essentialist identities and the impossibility of conversion to the in-group, also pose a greater challenge to the liberal script than inclusive ones, given that the liberal principle of tolerance assumes and protects the existence of diversity within societies. Finally, the critique of first-layer liberal principles, including individual self-determination, equal moral weight, and a private-public distinction, can entail a greater challenge to the liberal script than others, given their foundational nature and the fact that they constitute the origin of other principles.

Based on those criteria, Cluster 1 arguably poses the greatest challenge to the liberal script, not only for its outright rejection of liberal principles and its defence of absolute truths along the epistemological dimension (the strongest critique of liberal epistemology) – elements contributing to an external contestation –, but also for its reliance on illiberal actions (including violence) and their exclusive identities. Cluster 2 also appears as a considerable challenge to the liberal script, as most of the actors reject a first-layer principle, namely equal moral weight, and put forward alternative facts (which contests the foundational principles of the liberal epistemology script), constituting external contestations. Furthermore, they are based on exclusive identities. However, their fewer illiberal actions, encompassing less violence, the lesser scope of contestation and degree of externality and less critique of first-layer principles make their challenge less comprehensive than that of the first Cluster. Actors in Cluster

4 pose a moderate challenge to the liberal script. On the one hand, several actors reject liberal principles, and they present exclusionary identities hardly compatible with the liberal script. On the other, their challenge is less strong than that of Clusters 1 and 2, insofar as their contestation has a narrower scope of contestation and degree of externality, is softer on the epistemological dimension and rarely concerns the validity of first-layer principles. Cluster 3 entails the least substantive challenge to liberal script, given its lesser scope of contestation and degree of externality, the less foundational nature of the challenged principles, notably of market economy, their inclusive identities, and the softer critique of the liberal epistemological script. The different depth or degrees of challenge posed by Clusters 1, 2 and 3 could appear striking if we consider that several actors in Cluster 3 identify with some variant of Marxism. However, unlike the Workers' Party of Korea (in Cluster 1), most of the current versions of Marxism defended by actors from Cluster 3 are less critical of specific liberal principles than the authoritarian populists in Cluster 2. At the same time, several actors from Clusters 3 and 4 advocate for a better implementation of liberal principles, including equal moral weight, also suggesting a lesser challenge of the liberal script.

With the exception of Cluster 1, in which all the actors except for Modi also explicitly identify as anti-liberal, all the clusters include actors who, while contesting liberal principles, specifically relate to the liberal script and others who do not specifically address the liberal script. Regardless of their critique of liberal principles, Cluster 2 includes actors who themselves identify with liberalism (particularly with its economic dimension, which distinguishes them from left-wing anti-liberal actors). At the same time, it also includes actors who explicitly reject the liberal script, particularly its defence of minorities and pluralist identities. In Cluster 3, most of the actors directly target the liberal script, notably its principle

of market economy for coming at the expense of other principles, with some of the actors even advocating for alternative scripts to liberalism. Finally, Cluster 4 includes both actors who either criticise liberal hypocrisy or whose critique constitutes a by-product of other political goals that they pursue in their respective political contexts.

By considering the actors' justifications and whether they explicitly engage with the liberal script and criticise it as such, we can introduce more nuance into our conclusions regarding the extent to which each of the analysed actors poses a challenge to the liberal script beyond our more formal clusters. However, it can also be argued that the liberal script is fundamentally defined by its principles, and that, in practice, what matters in evaluating the actors' challenge to the liberal script is their alignment with or deviation from these principles, both in the actors' discourse and in their actions.

The clusters that we discussed in this paper provide a better and more nuanced understanding of the contestations of the liberal script. In this way, we have moved towards a typology of contestations of the liberal script that shows how polyphonic the contestations are. At the same time, we could not identify a cluster that could be seen as a universal challenger of the liberal script. Nevertheless, more research is needed to empirically investigate the respective consequences – as well as causes – of the various contestations of the liberal script. We hope to have provided a starting point for such an endeavour by offering a more systematic approach to studying different types of contestants, which each share distinct features with regard to their normative and epistemological standpoints, the intensity of their contestation, as well as their use of emotions and identity construction.

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APPENDIX: SUMMARIES OF THE CASE NARRATIVES

Case	Summary
Occupy Wall Street	Occupy Wall Street is a social movement that started in September 2011 in New York City but quickly spread to other cities in the USA and worldwide. It consisted of people occupying public spaces to protest against socio-economic inequality in the aftermath of the 2008 global economic crisis and to prefigure more direct democratic, non-hierarchical, and participatory democratic communities. While the critique of the power of money in politics was a common core of the movement, its decentralised, anti-hierarchical and leaderless structure also manifested in the expression of a multitude of different concerns and demands, representing the theme of “we are the 99%”. Given the substantial critique of the capitalist system and its negative view of liberal democracy, Occupy Wall Street could be considered a contestant of the liberal script. United States, North America
#MeToo Movement	The #MeToo Movement started on 15th October 2017, after a tweet by US-American actress Alyssa Milano using the #MeToo hashtag went viral, prompting women from around the world to tweet about their experiences of sexual harassment and assault. Its main objectives are to support victims of sexual assault and to raise awareness about sexism and rape culture. Despite the diffuse nature of the movement, #MeToo discursively – and behaviourally – contests principles of the liberal script: it criticises the relegation of stories of sexual harassment to the private sphere, accuses the patriarchal structure of undermining equality and defends the political rights of victims of sexual abuse. Global
Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF)	The analysis of the Ethiopian regime is focused on the TPLF, the party that led the government coalition named Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) from 1991 to 2018. It represented the interests of the Tigray ethnic group, based on the Tigray region and constituting 6% of the population in Ethiopia. The party initially held an ethno-nationalist and Marxist-Leninist ideology but later accepted some liberal principles. Nowadays, the TPLF maintains its ethno-nationalist character and proposes the “Developmental Democratic State” as its political project. This project links development and democracy and argues that the State (in practice, the ruling party) should centralise its decision-making power and mobilise its resources in order to fight poverty. Ethiopia, Sub-Saharan Africa
Syriza/Independent Greeks Coalition	The left-wing populist party Syriza (Coalition of the Radical Left) and the right-wing populist party Anel (Independent Greeks) first formed a coalition government in January 2015. Our analysis of the coalition focuses on the positions of the head of government Alexis Tsipras and his party Syriza (which was the majority partner). Syriza has moderated its positions and has almost become a centre-left, social-democratic party. Although it does not contest the existence of any liberal principles, the party has criticised EU institutions for their lack of democratic accountability and has put a spotlight on the old establishment's corruption. One of the party's most central points of contestation was its critique of austerity politics introduced in the context of the European debt crisis. It also defends the need to defend social rights from the threat of the European Troika. Greece, Western Europe
New Right Party	The New Right Party is a right-wing, Zionist party that was created in December 2018 by Naftali Bennett and Ayelet Shaked with the intention of attracting both religious and secular Jews. It is the only member of the Yamina Alliance, which won 7 seats in the March 2021 election and formed a coalition government with left-wing, centre, right-wing and Arab parties. Yamina's leader, Bennett, was Prime Minister until the coalition collapsed in June 2022. One of this party's main contestations of the liberal script is its criticism of the judicial branch: the party believes the Supreme Court is politicised and defends the need to limit its power. It has justified this criticism in populist, pro-democracy terms. Another important part of their contestation is their rejection of the principle of tolerance. Israel, Middle East and North Africa

Case	Summary
Gülen Movement	The Gülen Movement (also called Hizmet) is an Islamist social movement led by Fethullah Gülen that consists of a transnational network of schools, media outlets and other enterprises. After aligning itself with the AKP throughout the 2000s, its relationship with Erdogan's party became hostile in 2013. Erdogan has accused Gülen of being behind the coup attempt in July 2016. The movement's ideology is guided by three pillars: a modernist understanding of Islam, nationalism, and the theology of Said Nursi. Gülen stresses the role of the collective over the individual and believes that Islam should play a bigger role in public life. Turkey, Middle East and North Africa
Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the West (PEGIDA)	PEGIDA is a right-wing populist social movement from Germany. The movement formed in October 2014 in Dresden and relied on weekly demonstrations – called “evening walks” (<i>Montagsspaziergänge</i>) by participants – protesting against “Islam”, migration, and the political elite. Demonstrations grew quickly over the course of several months, attracting tens of thousands of protestors at their height in Dresden, and also spread (at a, however, smaller scale) to other cities and even other countries. Its discourse is marked by racism and xenophobia, thus contesting the principles of equal moral weight, tolerance, and civil rights. It has also argued for a more direct form of democracy, pointing to Switzerland as an example of the country's use of referendums. Germany, Western Europe
Republican Party	The Republican Party is one of the two major political parties in the United States. The party was in power during our period of analysis and has been therefore sampled as a regime. While precedents to its current illiberal tendencies existed for a long time, there was a significant ideological shift throughout the Trump administration. Trump and the party's anti-immigrant discourse contests the principles of equal moral weight, civil rights, and tolerance. Trump has claimed that elections in the US are rigged, has delegitimised judicial inquiries and has positioned himself as the only solution against the “deep state”. Republicans have attempted to limit social rights, have contradictory stances on the market economy and have criticised the state's infringement on the right to self-defence. United States, North America
Haqqani	Haqqani is a militant organisation connected to the Taliban which is located in the southeast of Afghanistan and several districts in Pakistan. It has been in charge of domestic security and a central power holder within the 2021 Taliban government. Haqqani contests the equal status and civil rights of women and minorities and is against the principle of tolerance. The Taliban network has failed to create an inclusive government or write a constitution and has resorted to public executions, which violates Afghans' political rights. Haqqani places religious rules above individual self-determination and has fought for an Islamic state that controls citizens' adherence to religious rules, thus contesting the existence of the division between the private and the public spheres. Afghanistan, Asia and Pacific
Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)	The origins of the Jihadi-Salafist group ISIS lie in the global jihadist movement and the Iraq insurgency against US forces present in the country. It was initially affiliated with Al Qaida and after the Arab uprisings in 2011, it created its own branch in Syria with the goal of erecting a caliphate that would be independent from other political actors. In 2014 it established a caliphate as a proto-state. It has targeted other denominations and religions, carried out terrorist attacks and relied on extreme forms of violence. It contests the existence of liberal principles related to equality, individual self-determination, the division between the public and the private realms, democratic institutions, and political rights. Global
Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem-Teto	The Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem-Teto is one of the most important housing movements in Brazil. The main objective of the movement is to fight against the severe housing crisis in Brazil and for a more equal implementation of the right to housing. Following a predominantly Marxist ideology, it also puts forward a more general critique of inequality and property relations in Brazil. One of its central strategies is to occupy unused land and to construct temporary accommodation (usually black tarps and/or shacks) there – both to actually provide informal housing to the homeless and as a symbolic and political strategy to put pressure on the government to construct formal housing. Given the strong systemic critique of the capitalist market economy and resulting inequalities, this movement could be considered a contestant of the liberal script. Brazil, Latin America and the Caribbean

Case	Summary
Fees Must Fall Movement	The Fees Must Fall Movement or #FeesMustFall Movement is the name of a student revolt that took place in late 2015 and 2016 in South Africa. It is part of a wider series of movements that can be put under the umbrella of “fallism”. Kicked off by the student uprising #RhodesMustFall, which had taken down the statue of the British coloniser Cecil Rhodes in front of the University of Cape Town in early 2015, fallism calls for decolonisation and an end to racism, social injustice and exclusion. The movement critiques systemic racial inequality in post-Apartheid South Africa and unequal access to social rights. They argue that the cost of tuition fees puts a disproportionately high burden on Black students, who are structurally more economically disadvantaged and thus either practically excluded from higher education or at risk of falling into debt traps. South Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa
Communist Party of Cuba	Since the Cuban Revolution overthrew the military dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in 1959, Cuba has had a socialist regime, formally identified as a “popular democracy” but a dictatorship in practice, ruled by one single party: the Communist Party of Cuba. The regime adapts Marxist-Leninism to the Latin American context, combining it with nationalism and the rejection of colonialism and imperialism. Its contestation mainly targets the economic principles of liberalism and criticises the prioritisation of capital accumulation over the protection of social rights. The party contests the existence of the merit principle, as it does not believe that goods and services should be allocated based on merit and criticises the hegemonic system – capitalism and imperialism – for not considering and treating all peoples as equal, particularly those coming from the Global South. Cuba, Latin America and the Caribbean
National Liberation Army (ELN)	The ELN is a revolutionary, Marxist-Leninist guerrilla group in Colombia which emerged, together with the FARC, in the 1960s, at the end of a period identified as “la Violencia” (1946–1966). Its ideology is inspired by the Cuban Revolution and influenced by Liberation Theology, a branch of Catholicism which emphasises the liberation of the oppressed. The ELN’s main aim is to free Colombian peasants from oppression. It positions itself against Colombian oligarchies and imperialism and promotes social justice: more specifically, it contests liberalism’s economic principles and criticises the Government’s inability to satisfy the population’s social rights. The ELN also criticises liberal authorities for not being democratic enough and advocates for collective self-determination over capitalism’s individualism. Colombia, Latin America and the Caribbean
Working Families Party	The Working Families Party is a US American third party founded in 1998 in the state of New York by organisers of the now defunct New Party, community advocacy groups and labour unions. The party has a progressive ideology and describes itself as “multiracial left-populist”. It is known for its use of fusion voting, a strategy employed by third parties whereby major party candidates are co-nominated by a smaller party. We consider this party to be a contestant because it is critical of the way representative democracy functions in the country: it argues that the electoral system systematically favours the wealthy and the mainstream parties. Furthermore, they criticise Democrats who allegedly work to protect the interests of corporations instead of the interests of “the people” and have campaigned for higher levels of state intervention to guarantee social rights. United States, North America
People’s Protection Units (YPG)	The YPG is the military arm of the Kurdish political party PYD. It defends the Rojava Revolution, which is inspired by Democratic Confederalism. Democratic Confederalism is presented as an alternative to nation-state-based ideologies and, thus, as a solution to the “Kurdish problem” (the oppression of Kurdish people across different states of the Middle East). The Rojava Revolution fights for a stateless society, gender equity, sustainability, and ethnic and religious pluralism. The YPG contests the private/public distinction as part of its feminist critique because it advocates for the intervention of the state in the private realm in order to fight against patriarchal structures. It also defends the role of the community over capitalism’s individualism, rejects humans’ domination over nature and calls for more direct forms of democracy. Syria, Middle East and North Africa

Case	Summary
National Democratic Alliance (NDA)	The NDA is an Indian political alliance founded in 1998 and led by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its leader and current Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Since the BJP is the strongest party in the alliance, the analysis is focused on Modi and the BJP. Since Modi's election in 2014, the country has transitioned from an electoral democracy to an electoral autocracy. The BJP promotes Hindutva, a Hindu-nationalist ideology which has led to a "Hinduization" of the public sphere, resulting in the systematic oppression of religious minorities. Modi and his regime contest the equality of non-Hindu Indians, especially Muslims, who are portrayed as infiltrators. The combination of Modi's self-presentation as the immediate representative of the will of the people and his party's ethno-religious nationalism contests the fundamental idea of equal representation at the heart of representative democracy. India, Asia and Pacific
Perú Libre	Perú Libre is a Peruvian leftist political party created in 2008 by Marxist doctor Vladimir Cerrón. Its current leader, Pedro Castillo, won the 2021 Presidential Elections with a radically leftist and anti-establishment discourse. Perú Libre is a Marxist party which stands against neoliberalism and the highly centralised Peruvian system, marked by deep gaps between the capital city of Lima and the Andean and Amazonian regions: for example, one of its main critiques of the neoliberal system is the exclusion of people from the rural areas and urban working classes to education. In its ideological manifesto, it defends a system called "Popular Economy with Markets", characterised, amongst other elements, by the nationalization of strategic sectors and limited private economic competition. Perú Libre claims that liberal authorities control the media in order to perpetuate their economic system. Peru, Latin America and the Caribbean
Union of Greens and Farmers	The Union of Greens and Farmers is a Latvian political alliance formed by the Latvian Green Party and the Latvian Farmers' Union in 2002. It headed a coalition government from 2015 to 2018, alongside Unity and the National Alliance. It has become a right-wing populist party, shifting its attention away from its original focus on environmental and agrarian issues. Its ideology includes nationalism, soft Euroscepticism, and social conservatism. Under the leadership of Aivars Lembergs (an oligarch and de facto leader of the party), it became particularly critical of cosmopolitan liberalism, embodied by George Soros. This alliance's form of nationalism defends traditional Latvian values and implies the exclusion of Russian-speaking minorities and the LGBT community. Latvia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia
Ansar Dine	Ansar Dine was a Salafist-jihadist terrorist group, created in 2011 in Mali by Iyad Ag Ghaly, one of the most prominent leaders of the Tuareg's rebellion. It emerged as a result of the discontent of the Tuareg people, who did not see their demands met after the peace agreements between the ethnic group and the State of Mali. In the context of Touré's coup d'état in 2012, Ansar Dine and the MLNA took control over the northeast regions of Mali. Ansar Dine's ideology is strongly influenced by Salafist Islamism, and its goal is to establish Sharia law across Mali. They also reject the principles of representative democracy and the rule of law, insofar as the laws are not approved by an elected government. The group promotes communal values over individualistic ones, defends a radical form of patriarchy, and denies the rights of minorities (religious, LGBT). Mali, Sub-Saharan Africa
Communist Party of India (Marxist)	The Communist Party of India (Marxist) is a Marxist-Leninist party and the world's second largest communist party. It was founded in 1964 when a group of members of the Communist Party of India split from it to form a more revolutionary party. Since 1977, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has led coalition governments in West Bengal and Tripura. It is currently part of coalition governments in Kerala (called the Left Democratic Front coalition) and Tamil Nadu. The party is opposed to imperialism, foreign direct investment, and the privatisation of key sectors of the economy and favours stronger regulation of the private sector. It accuses capitalism and corruption of depleting resources that could be used to provide social services. India, Asia and Pacific

Case	Summary
House of Saud	The House of Saud consists of the descendants of Mohammed bin Saud, the historic founder of Saudi Arabia. It includes the King of Saudi Arabia and further influential positions, who rule Saudi Arabia as an absolute monarchy. The Saudi monarchy has embraced Wahhabism ever since Mohammed bin Saud's established an alliance with Hanbali scholar Mohammed bin Abdul Wahhab in the 1740s. The regime is still characterised by the cooperation between worldly and religious leadership. The Saudi legal system is not based on individual self-determination, but on subservience to religious rules, and does not allow for a distinction between the private and the public spheres. Islamic minorities and women do not enjoy equal status and their civil rights are denied. Given that Saudi Arabia is an absolute monarchy, the separation of powers, representative democracy and political rights do not exist. Saudi Arabia, Middle East and North Africa
United Patriots	The United Patriots is a coalition of three Bulgarian nationalist parties founded in 2016: Ataka (Attack), the National Front for the Salvation of Bulgaria (NFSB), and the Bulgarian National Movement (VMRO). In the 2017 parliamentary election, it won 9.3% of the votes and became the minority partner in the coalition government with GERB. The parties that form this coalition are Eurosceptic, share anti-immigrant and anti-minority attitudes and advocate for a strong state that sets limits to capitalism and neoliberalist austerity. The United Patriots does not regard all people as equal and have attempted to limit the civil rights of Turks. Their aversion to economic neoliberalism also stems from their resentment towards multiculturalism and minority rights. Some members of the coalition reject democracy and rights as "Western values". Furthermore, this coalition sees the rule of law as an encroachment on majority rule. Bulgaria, Eastern Europe and Central Asia
Extinction Rebellion	Extinction Rebellion is an environmental grassroots movement started in 2018 in the United Kingdom which aims to achieve systemic change through non-violent civil disobedience. It puts forward three main demands: for governments to declare a climate and environmental emergency, to "act now" in order to reduce net emissions to zero and to stop biodiversity loss and to "go beyond politics" by creating and listening to the demands of a citizens' assembly on climate and ecological justice. XR believes that individual self-determination should not come at the cost of animals or the environment. Furthermore, they argue that the principle of equality should be extended to future generations, the planet, and other living beings. XR refrains from taking an explicit anti-capitalist stance, although they criticise corporations for not acting to stop climate change and claim that the economic system is broken. Global
Conservative Party of Canada	The Conservative Party of Canada is a neoliberal conservative federal brokerage party with a strong anti-immigrant discourse. It contains multiple wings with different ideologies, namely social conservatives, regional populists, and the more centrist and neoliberal Red Tories. However, externally it tries to tamp down narrow ideological appeals to increase its voter base. The party was in power between 2006 and 2015 under Harper's leadership. Harper's defeat against Justin Trudeau in the 2015 federal election triggered a leadership race that was won by Andrew Scheer. Since then, the party has experienced internal struggles between the factions and has thus become more ideologically volatile. It criticises Trudeau's government for increasing taxes and "attacking" small businesses and argues for the need to reduce regulations on corporations. Canada, North America
Karni Sena	Karni Sena is the name of a movement comprising several Rajput Hindu-nationalist organisations based in the north of India. Their main goal is to protect the rights and interests of Rajputs, an upper caste originally from northern and central India. Karni Sena came to national prominence in 2017 and 2018, when they tried to ban the Bollywood film Padmaavat. The group claimed that the film distorted history and was disrespectful towards Rajput's honour. Although they did not succeed in getting the film banned, the Central Board of Film Certification did force the filmmakers to make changes to the movie to appease the violent protesters led by Karni Sena. The group expresses an anti-Muslim sentiment and disapproves of inter-faith marriages between Hindus and Muslims. Furthermore, they reject affirmative action legislation that serves to support members of lower castes. India, Asia and Pacific

Case	Summary
Palestinian National Authority/ Fatah Government in the West Bank	The Palestinian National Authority was created through the Oslo Accords in 1994 to govern the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Since the 2006 election, the Gaza Strip has been controlled by Hamas, leaving the Palestinian National Authority with control over areas A and B of the West Bank. Since its first elections in 1996, it has been dominated by Fatah, a secular, nationalist political party, whose stated goal is to achieve a two-state solution and a peace deal with Israel. Fatah shows a strong focus on nationalism and an ambiguous ideology. Fatah and the Palestinian National Authority accuse Israel of violating the civil, political and property rights of Palestinians and accuse the USA and the international community of legitimising the oppression of its people. Although the Palestinian National Authority discursively expresses its commitment to the rule of law and separation of powers, in practice it violates this principle. Palestine, Middle East and North Africa
Jaish al-Fatah	Jaish al-Fatah was established in March 2015 to fight against Syria's leader Bashar al-Assad. It is an alliance of mainly two bigger Islamist and Salafist groups in Syria, the Nusra Front and Ahrar al-Sham. The alliance also aims to establish an Islamic state in which Sharia law would regulate people's private and public lives. Therefore, in their view, religious principles should be above the principle of individual self-determination. It oppresses religious minorities and non-Muslims such as Christians, Alawites or Shiites and violates their civil rights. Their promotion of Sharia law would also rule out the creation of representative democratic institutions, the separation of powers and the protection of political rights. Syria, Middle East and North Africa
Fuerza Popular	Fuerza Popular is a right-wing, conservative political party in Peru, created in 2010 and led by Keiko Fujimori, the daughter of former dictator Alberto Fujimori. Although she tried to distance herself from her father's legacy, Keiko Fujimori has strongly upheld the 1993 Constitution approved under Fujimori's mandate, which significantly restricts checks and balances. She has also failed to recognise the human rights violations committed during her father's dictatorship and has denied the existence of an armed conflict in Peru. Fuerza Popular has usually advocated for neo-liberal policies, free markets, and private investment. Like other conservative parties with authoritarian tendencies, it emphasises the importance of order and security (against terrorism and crime). Under the influence of Evangelist Churches, it opposes same-sex marriage and the right to abortion, although it has moderated its stance on these issues. Peru, Latin America and the Caribbean
Five Star Movement	The Five Star Movement is an Italian populist party. It has its origins in a political blog, started by former comedian Beppe Grillo in 2005, and was officially founded in 2009. In 2013, it achieved the best election result as a political newcomer in post-war Europe, gaining 25% of the votes in the general election. It became the strongest party in the 2018 elections and has since been part of different coalition governments with both the right and the left. The party is difficult to place ideologically but can be described as anti-establishment. It combines demands for universal basic income with anti-taxation and Eurosceptic stances and puts forward a systemic critique of representative democracy, defending a more direct form of democracy. It has a strong anti-corruption discourse and has accused politicians and journalists of being part of a corrupt system. Italy, Western Europe
Yellow Vests Movement	The Yellow Vests Movement is a social movement that started in 2018 as an online petition demanding a reduction in fuel taxes. When Macron instead announced an increase, the petition turned into a movement, with weekly protests and road blockades taking place all over France. It soon became concerned with a wider range of issues, with a list of demands being developed via polls on Facebook and in meetings. The movement has a strong anti-elite rhetoric and is not easy to place ideologically. Its discourse includes a strong systemic critique of representative democracy, which they believe should be combined with direct democratic approaches. They put forward a critique of neoliberalism and the market economy, which they view as unfair. Both the critique of representative democracy and the critique of market economy have at their core a more fundamental critique of inequality. France & Belgium, Western Europe

Case	Summary
Irish Republican Army (IRA)	The name IRA is used to refer to the Provisional IRA, which used to be the main armed group fighting British rule in Northern Ireland between the 1970s and up until the Good Friday Agreement. It is a heterogeneous set of political actors, with some not agreeing with demobilisation and the Good Friday agreement. This analysis focuses on violent dissident republican (VDR) groups still active after 2010, who are committed to continuing armed conflict. VDR are critical of Sinn Féin in Northern Ireland (alongside other “constitutional nationalists”) for abandoning the armed struggle against British rule. Their contestation of the liberal script is articulated on the equality and rights dimensions. They criticize the unequal treatment suffered by Republican dissidents and claim that access to civil rights is dependent on religious beliefs and class. They also denounce the violation of political prisoners’ political rights. Northern Ireland, Western Europe
National Socialist Underground (NSU)	The NSU was a neo-Nazi terrorist trio consisting of Beate Zschäpe, Uwe Mundlos and Uwe Böhnhardt, active from 1998 until 2011. The NSU was supported by a wider neo-Nazi network consisting of up to 150 people and other neo-Nazi organisations, such as the <i>Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands</i> and the European White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. The group committed at least fifteen armed robberies, two bomb attacks and nine murders of people of colour as well as the murder of a female police officer. The NSU is against the existence of equality, civil rights, and tolerance. Furthermore, their actions go against the principle of the rule of law. Germany, Western Europe
Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS)	The BDS was launched in 2005 by Palestinian civil society organisations in order to promote the boycott of Israeli institutions and events, the divestment from the State of Israel and companies that support Israeli occupation and “banning business with illegal Israeli settlements, ending military trade and free-trade agreements, as well as suspending Israel’s membership in international forums” (BDS Movement n.d.). The movement demands that Israel retreats from its occupied territories, grants legal equality to Palestinian citizens, and lets Palestinian refugees return. The movement criticises Western governments for not fulfilling the promise of universal human rights towards the Palestinians. In particular, they claim that the equality, civil, and political rights of Palestinians are not respected and that international human rights legislation, international humanitarian law and treaties surrounding the Israel-Palestine conflict are not being upheld. Palestine, Middle East and North Africa
Fidesz – Hungarian Civic Party / Christian Democratic People’s Party	Our analysis of the Hungarian coalition government focuses on Fidesz – Hungarian Civic Party. Fidesz was founded in 1988 as a liberal party. However, it has moved significantly to the right and pushed more and more for conservative policies: since Fidesz came to power, the integrity of elections, the autonomy of the judiciary and opposition parties as well as media and civil society organisations have all come under increasing pressure. Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán has described the political project of his party as explicitly anti-liberal. The party claims that individual rights erode public as well as private authority and advocates a stronger role of the state in order to strengthen community and national values. It has an anti-immigration discourse, opposes representative democracy, and has restricted the welfare system. Hungary, Eastern Europe and Central Asia
Islamic Defenders Front	The Islamic Defenders Front was an Indonesian radical religious organisation founded by Muhammad Rizieq Shihab in 1998 and officially dissolved by the government in 2020. Since its inception, the organization had been supported by Islamic political actors in the military and government policing and religious departments and served as a thug of those actors during the democratization of Indonesia. However, it did develop its own ideological script. The Islamic Defenders Front called for the implementation of Sharia in all Muslim communities and promoted social moralisation through violent means. They demonised and attacked religious minorities, women and establishments suspected of engaging in “vice”. Rizieq Shihab has argued that accepting democracy is equal to giving up the core of the Islamic faith. Furthermore, the group expressed sympathy towards armed jihad and willingness to collaborate with terrorist groups such as ISIS. Indonesia, Asia and Pacific

Case	Summary
Workers' Party of Korea	The Workers' Party of Korea was founded in 1949 and rules North Korea as a totalitarian dictatorship. It is currently led by Kim Jong-Un as General Secretary, successor of Kim Jong-Il and Kim Il-Sung and the current leader of the Kim dynasty. The party promotes Juche ideology, which is an ideology rooted in Marxism-Leninism, with a particular emphasis on national self-reliance and a quasi-religious personality cult around the country's leadership. The regime further relies on a rigid stratification of society in which opportunities do not depend on individual efforts or capabilities, but are assigned at birth, and secure the privileged position of the ruling class. Although the country was moving towards a market-based economy in the 2000s, markets are still officially contested. North Korea's surveillance apparatus infringes on freedom of thought, freedom of speech and freedom of movement and dissidents are imprisoned in internment camps or executed. North Korea, Asia and Pacific
Sunrise Movement	The Sunrise Movement is a youth-led environmental grassroots movement based in the USA. It started in 2017 and has become known for its large-scale demonstrations and sit-ins. The movement's main goals are to put the climate emergency on the agenda, elect leaders who will protect the interests of all people and limit the fossil fuel industry's influence over politics. It has become one of the primary advocates for a "Green New Deal", a policy resolution which proposes concrete goals and mitigation strategies to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. In its fight for climate justice, the Sunrise Movement not only focuses on the environment itself but also tries to reduce inequality, racial injustice and class exploitation and calls for the creation of a "people-centred economy". United States, North America
Green Belt Movement	The Green Belt Movement is a Kenyan environmental grassroots NGO founded in 1977 by Wangari Maathai. Its main aim is to fight environmental degradation, food insecurity and their consequences for rural communities, in particular women. The central strategy is to mobilise women to plant seedlings and establish public greenbelts. On the national level, it could be seen as a defender of the liberal script rather than a contestant: They have been fighting for democracy, development, and human rights in a post-colonial context of deepening authoritarianism. However, while not the main focus of their work, on the international level, Maathai has repeatedly criticised the impact of colonialism, the global capitalist economy and their resulting injustice and inequalities. Furthermore, Maathai questions a Western paradigm of progress and epistemology that is characterised by a domination of nature and a neglect of Indigenous cultures and sources of knowledge. Kenya, Sub-Saharan Africa
Vox	Vox is a Spanish radical right-wing party and, since 2018, the third biggest parliamentary group. The party emerged as a political force to counteract Catalanian secessionism, cultural globalization, and immigration. Thus, the main distinctive aspect of Vox is its defence of centralism and "Spanish Nationalism". The party is in favour of restricting the political and minority rights of linguistic minorities, women, and LGBT+ people and rejects migration based on the idea of social and racial homogeneity. Vox argues that the state has gone too far with its intervention in the private sphere and believes that the family should have a more prominent role in governing society. At the same time, their defence of traditions also entails the promotion of certain private values, particularly catholic values, in the public sphere. A less prominent part of their discourse is their alleged defence of the right of expression against leftists who promote "cancel culture". Spain, Western Europe
Movement for Socialism Party (MAS)	MAS is a political party in Bolivia that held governmental power from 2005 to 2019 and again since 2020. It was created in 1999 by former President Evo Morales and emerged from peasant organizations with the goal of "refounding" a multiethnic and pluricultural sovereign state. MAS combines different ideologies (indigenism, socialism, anti-imperialism, and populism) and works to strengthen Indigenous rights, economic justice, popular democracy, and environmental protection. One of MAS' main critiques of liberalism is the atomization of society that Western economies supposedly want to impose in the Global South. The party calls for more direct forms of democracy and defends the access of certain actors, that is, Indigenous groups, to representative institutions. Economically, it embraces a model of a market economy with a stronger state intervention to strengthen social rights. Bolivia, Latin America and the Caribbean

Case	Summary
Amal Movement	The Amal Movement is a former militia and the largest Shia party in the Lebanese parliament, which was originally founded to represent the interests of the economically and politically disenfranchised Shia population. Amal is politically positioned slightly at the centre-right and has a moderate conservative ideology based on sectarianism. Its main goal is the abolishment of political confessionalism in Lebanon. Although Amal has advocated for the abolishment of sectarianism, they defend a political system in which individuals are only represented if affiliated with a specific religious identity – Shiite, Sunite, or Christian. Lebanon, Middle East and North Africa
Jamaat-e-Islami	Jamaat-e-Islami is a religious movement founded in British India in 1941 by Abul A'la al-Mawdudi, with the purpose of establishing an Islamic State. Our analysis focuses on the branch in Pakistan. Its main purpose is to reform society according to Islamic Law. Specifically, the movement seeks to implement Islam in all spheres of life, including the private sphere and political institutions, and stop the processes of Westernisation and secularisation in Muslim societies. Unlike other Islamic fundamentalist movements, Jamaat-e-Islami embraces modernity but distances itself from Western values. It does not believe that individuals should be protected from the power of God – the only sovereign, as everyone should act according to His mandates – and does not employ violent means to carry out its political project. Their important presence in society is based on community-based projects of charity and moral revival. Pakistan, Asia and Pacific
Levica/The Left	Starting off as a social movement and coalition of parties, Levica/The Left was founded as a party in 2017. Levica defines itself as democratic eco-socialist and qualifies as a contestant of the liberal script due to its opposition to neoliberal and austerity policies and its demands for more freedoms for the people (including minority rights). Moreover, it wishes for Slovenia to exit NATO and calls the EU an “ordoliberal hell”, although it does not ask for an exit. Levica has participated in protests against the government criticizing the arbitrary use of power and the lack of the rule of law, and advocates for a more direct democracy. It promises to offer more public housing and fight against the privatization of healthcare. Slovenia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia
Cameroon People's Democratic Movement	Cameroon is a one-party state dominated by the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement and led by President Paul Biya since 1982. Over the past ten years, civil war between government forces and Anglophone separatists, and violence perpetrated by Boko Haram has meant that the regime's political discourse has been dominated by references to security and stability. Biya's regime demonises homosexuality and associates it with evil witchcraft. Biya has claimed to want to liberalise the country – although in practice his liberalisation has been limited. His regime's idea of liberalism for Cameroon is different from Western liberalism – there is no emphasis on liberal freedom and the community is placed above the individual. Cameroon, Sub-Saharan Africa
Malawi Congress Party	The Malawi Congress Party is a political party founded in 1959 which ruled Malawi from independence until 1994. In 2020, it formed a government led by Lazarus Chakwera, a minister in the Assemblies of God church. This party lacks an ideology that can be easily defined with an ideological label. It describes itself as pro-democracy and, although it is not against the market economy, it believes that the state should play an important role in achieving national development. The Malawi Congress Party has proposed the introduction of the death penalty to punish abductions and killings of people with albinism, which would go against liberal political rights. Furthermore, it stresses the importance of making individual sacrifices for the common good. Malawi, Sub-Saharan Africa
Danish People's Party	The Danish People's Party is a national conservative party with a nativist worldview and a strong anti-immigration and anti-EU discourse. Since 2001, it has had a pivotal position in parliament, lending its support to various coalition governments. This party has promoted welfare chauvinism, that is, the belief that access to welfare should be reserved for their in-group: Danes. It portrays migrants (particularly Muslim migrants) as morally inferior and perceives the multiculturalism and diversity of cities as threats against Danish culture. Over the years, it has shifted economically from the right to the centre or centre-left; nowadays it supports the expansion of the welfare state (for its in-group), with a particular focus on pensions. Denmark, Western Europe

Case	Summary
Rwandan Patriotic Front	The Rwandan Patriotic Front is a Rwandan political party led by Paul Kagame. It was founded as a reform insurgency in 1987 by Rwandan Tutsi refugees in Uganda, with the goal of removing the Hutu elite in their homeland and replacing it with a non-ethnic elite. In 1990, this party invaded Rwanda, triggering the beginning of the Rwandan Civil War. It has been in power since 1994, when it defeated government forces, putting an end to the Civil War and the Rwandan genocide. The party's insistence on erasing ethnic identities in favour of a common Rwandan identity is said by some scholars to be a way to deflect from the current Tutsi monopoly over political power. We consider it to be a contestant due to its epistemological standpoint – the party adheres to an absolutist conception of the truth regarding the Rwandan genocide and the country's pre-colonial history. Rwanda, Sub-Saharan Africa
Lord's Resistance Army	The Lord's Resistance Army is a heterodox Christian militant organisation which operates mostly in northern Uganda. It emerged in the 1990s and claims to fight for multiparty elections, democracy, national unity, education for all, an independent judiciary, the formation of an ethnically balanced national army, and the promotion of the Ten Commandments to end witchcraft. One of its central beliefs is that its leader (Joseph Kony) is possessed by a number of spirits which introduce to him the rules and goals of the organisation. This introduces a complex system of control over its members' personal and sexual conduct. The Lord's Resistance Army carries out child abductions as a way to forcibly recruit them, as well as forced marriages. It sees non-Acholi people (including non-Lord's Resistance Army Acholi; meaning everyone except people inside the organisation) as people who can be killed by the insiders. Uganda, Sub-Saharan Africa
Bangladesh Nationalist Party	The Bangladesh Nationalist Party is a Bangladeshi political party founded in 1978 by Ziaur Rahman, who was President of the country between 1977 and 1981. It is a centre-right umbrella party which has brought together a wide range of political actors who are against the Awami League (AL), the other main party in Bangladesh. The Bangladesh Nationalist Party is economically liberal and culturally anti-secular, as it believes that Islam should play a central role in political and social life. It has questioned the possibility of having free and fair elections under an AL government – one of its main demands in this respect has been the re-introduction of the caretaker government system. The party is credited with pioneering Bangladeshi nationalism, in opposition to the Bengali nationalism advocated for by the AL. Bangladesh, Asia and Pacific
Russian Orthodox Church	The Russian Orthodox Church, also known as the Moscow Patriarchate, is an autocephalous and self-governing local Orthodox church led by the powerful Patriarch Kirill. Its hegemony spreads over multiple other orthodox churches, including the Ukrainian Orthodox Church although it was declared independent of Moscow by the Patriarch of Constantinople in 2019. The church has close ties with the Russian governing political class and tries to impact the political life in Russia. The ideology of the Russian Orthodox Church in its core is characterised by anti-Westernism, the rejection of liberal values and a strive to protect the Orthodox <i>Russkiy Mir</i> (Russian world) from its downfall. It perceives “the West” as corrupt and opposes the implementation and expansion of rights for traditionally disadvantaged groups such as members of the LGBTQ+ community. Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia
C14	C14 (also known as S14 and Sich) is a neo-Nazi group founded in 2009 that garnered attention during the violent part of the Euromaidan protests against former President Yanukovich in 2013. It used to be the unofficial youth wing of Svoboda, a formerly neo-Nazi party that has since moderated its views. The group has several hundred members, and its leader is Yevhen Karas, a far-right activist who ran on the far-right Svoboda party's list in the 2014 Kyiv City Council elections. Its ideology is centred around ethnicity, their perceived superiority of Ukrainians as the true Arians and therefore the true representation of the “white” race and their wish for a homogenous white society. This has led them to declare minority groups and activists promoting the rights of minority groups as their primary targets of aggression, which in April 2018 led to the prominent attack on a Roma camp in Kyiv. Other targets are Russians, other immigrants, sexual minorities, and also Ukrainian separatists. Ukraine, Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Case	Summary
Proud Boys	The Proud Boys are an ultra-nationalist, male supremacist organization mainly present in the USA and with chapters in Canada, the UK, Australia, and Ireland. They are described as an extremist group with ties to white nationalism. The Proud Boys was created by Gavin McInnes (also a co-founder of Vice magazine) in 2016 in the United States. The group engages in violence and was part of the January 6th insurrection in the USA. They claim to defend Western values and stand for patriarchal traditionalism and traditional gender roles. While the group perceives itself as a “boys-club”, it is united by a misogynistic, anti-Semitic, Islamophobic, white-supremacist and anti-LGBTQ+ agenda that it expresses and glorifies with the use of violence. Violence against a member of Antifa is, for example, a prerequisite for joining the group. Meanwhile, other social groups such as Antifa or Feminists are seen as the enemy and declared as the true enemies of Western civilization. The group promotes a return to patriarchal traditionalism and an outstanding position for white men within society while promoting libertarian values such as a minimal state and absolute freedom of speech. United States, North America

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