

## **The Integrated Agency-Communion Model of Collective Narcissism: Implications for intergroup relations, conspiracy thinking and support for the populists**

In recent years, there has been rapid scientific progress in the study of political ideology (including support for populist parties), intergroup relations and narcissism (i.e. a self-centered, dominant and exploitative attitude toward other people, manifested at both the individual and group levels). Although it seems that research on collective narcissism can no longer provide much new knowledge in understanding sympathy for populism and negative attitudes towards out-groups, many questions remain unanswered. Prejudice, belief in conspiracy theories, and support for populist parties create a vicious circle that seems to be particularly attractive to people who are blindly attached to their own group. However, we still do not know exactly what psychological mechanisms are responsible for the adoption of populist ideology and to what extent they are typical of people characterized by collective narcissism.

Our project is based on the newly proposed model of agentic-communal collective narcissism. According to this model, enhancing the group self (i.e., a positive image of the in-group) is based on both perceived agency (i.e., the exceptional competence or power of the in-group) and perceived communion (i.e., the exceptional morality or benevolence of the in-group), resulting in a distinct effects on intergroup relations. We posit that agentic collective narcissists are particularly sensitive to realistic threats (i.e. those to their personal safety), while communal collective narcissists are sensitive to symbolic threats (i.e. those to the values and norms that are important to them). As a result, they are prejudiced against those who threaten them, believe in those conspiracy theories that address their concerns, and support those political parties that offer solutions to those threats that are important to them. Agentic collective narcissists are prejudiced against economic immigrants, support conspiracy theories explaining the coronavirus as a biological weapon, and support populist movements proclaiming the size of their own group or the economic power of their nation, while communal collective narcissists are prejudiced against sexual minorities, supporting conspiracy theories explaining the coronavirus as an attack on Western lifestyle and support those populist movements that protect traditional worldviews or preach escape from the greedy establishment. Collective narcissists, both agentic and communal, can be found among both left-wing and right-wing voters, but agentic narcissists are interested in economic issues while communal narcissists are interested in ideological issues.

In the project, we plan cross-sectional, longitudinal and experimental research in countries with different political systems, varying stability of these political systems and different religious traditions. Our goal is to examine collective narcissism (both agentic and communal) in conjunction with different group identities (national, religious, and organizational) in order to systematically examine the “acting” of narcissistic in-group attachment.

The main research goals of our project are: (1) validation of our theoretical model, (2) examining the role of collective narcissism in the acceptance of populist ideology (3) examining the importance of situational, motivational and cognitive factors responsible for reluctance towards specific social groups, belief in conspiracy theories and supporting parties using populist rhetoric. To this end, we propose a series of 12 studies using correlational, longitudinal, and experimental designs. As part of the project, we will conduct research in various countries (Poland, India, Türkiye, the U.S.) with different political and religious traditions. We will combine quantitative and qualitative analyzes to understand how different types of collective narcissism influence prejudice, conspiratorial thinking, and support for populist parties. The results of our research will help explain the mechanisms of acceptance of disinformation and the processes leading to the growth of populist sentiments, while also indicating how their negative effects can be limited and even non-obvious positive manifestations of collective narcissism (such as humanitarian aid) can be detected.