

Abstract

The main purpose of this master thesis is to examine the concept of populism in the post-Gutenberg era. The research stems from a premise that the evolution of the political milieu and change of the media landscape implies a need for a different approach to analyzing populism. The decline of traditional political parties, the disappearance of political cleavages, and the personalization of politics precipitate the need to re-evaluate the debate about the right definition of populism. Based on a comparative case study of two leaders – Andrej Babiš and Donald Trump, this thesis examines how various theories of populism explain their behavior and tries to determine the most suitable option. Three definitions of populism are studied – populism as an ideology, populism as a discourse, and populism as a political style. While comparing political programs, discourse, and marketing strategies of both candidates, this thesis offers a complex insight into political campaigning on both sides of the Atlantic. At the same time, this research discusses the relationship between the concept of populism and personalized politics. These two concepts form a personalized leadership where the combination of populism and personality traits of the leader might influence the political programs, discourse, and marketing strategies of the party. In the conclusion, the author offers the most suitable definition of populism and while assessing the results of the comparative case study of two leaders, it opens a few questions for further research related to behavioral sciences in the future.