

Populism as a threat to liberal democracy and the role of media

Abstract

This master's thesis focuses on concept of populism as an ideology. The first part of this thesis is concerned with the analysis of a hypothesis that views populism as a threat to liberal democracy and this hypothesis is then proven on various individual aspects of liberal democracy as is defined by Andrew Heywood.

Next, this thesis is concerned with some critics of the concept of the liberal democracy itself such as Carl Schmitt or Chantal Mouffe. As shown on the example of an article by Belgian political scientist Chantal Mouffe it refutes the concept of left-wing populism as a „good“ populism. Then, it concerns with some of the critical remarks of Ivan Krastev and Stephen Holmes that were outlined in their book *The Light that Failed: A Reckoning*.

The next subchapter is concerned with some explanations as to why people are voting for populists – this includes the crisis of representation, then language used by populists and finally the desire to be recognized.

The last three subchapters of first part concerns with three different countries as representatives of three different types of populism, more specifically it concerns with Hungary (right-wing populism), Spain (left-wing populism) and the Czech Republic (technocratic populism).

The second part of this thesis is concerned with the influence of media and which methods media can use to work with their texts.

The last part of thesis concerns with an analysis of news articles which are dealing with an affair that was of interest to the media. Each country has its own subchapter with its own articles.

The aim of of this thesis was to show in which ways media can help populist politicians or how they can weaken them and whether media can weaken liberal democracy.

As was shown, reputable media really act a role of a watchdog of democracy and in general they did not help populists in the cases examined. If media weakened them, then it was mostly by contextualization of some information and not by lying or by labelling.

At the end, the thesis concerns with evaluation of observed outputs but also evaluates whether populism is such a threat to a liberal democracy.

Key words: liberal democracy, populism, media