

This is an Accepted Manuscript of a book chapter edited by Toril Aalberg, Frank Esser, Carsten Reinemann, Jesper Strömbäck, and Claes H. de Vreese published by Routledge as *Populist Political Communication in Europe* on July 26, 2016. The book is available online at: <http://www.tandfebooks.com/doi/book/10.4324/9781315623016>

16. Israel. Right-Wing Populism and Beyond

Naama Weiss Yaniv and Keren Tenenboim-Weinblatt

Introduction

For observers of the Israeli political scene, populism may seem ubiquitous, an impression that could well be reinforced by the recent deluge of populist messages in the run-up to the 2015 general elections. Still, while there appears to be no shortage of populist manifestations in Israel's short political history, there is surprisingly little research on populism in Israel. Studies of populist political communication are even scarcer. The literature that addresses this phenomenon tends to be non-empirical or focused on specific case studies, and while there are some comparative studies (Filc, 1996, 2011), they are the exception. Furthermore, most of the literature on the subject is engaged with right-wing populism. Against the backdrop of recent developments in the Israeli political map, and given that populism, at least in its “thin” sense, has no political color (Jagers & Walgrave, 2007), we believe that some attention should also be paid to populist manifestations at other points on the political spectrum. Our objective in this chapter is to draw a map of populism in Israel and of the research carried out in this area as a basis for future research. This map is based on existing scholarship, which primarily focuses on right-wing populism, as well as on preliminary observations regarding centrist populist manifestations in Israeli politics, focusing in particular on the case of the Yesh Atid (YA) party and its leader, Lapid.

Research on Populism in Israel

A large share of Israeli literature that focuses on populism draws on Canovan's (1981, 1999) conceptualization. Peri (2004), for example, accepts Canovan's definition of populism as “an appeal to ‘the people’ against both the established structure of power and the dominant idea and values of society” (Canovan, 1999, p. 3), while stressing in his own conceptualization the unmediated bond of the populist leader and the people (Peri, 2004, p. 169). In agreement with Canovan, some Israeli scholars perceive populism as a political style. Shapiro (1996), for instance, describes it as a phenomenon in which politicians mobilize the support of the people in order to gain political power by employing rhetoric that claims to represent the whole people or at least most of them. However, there is no consensus over Canovan's approach. Filc (2010) claims that Canovan's “populism of politicians” (that is, populism as a political style) may apply to almost any political party that aspires to win an election. He suggests that populism may be divided into two types: inclusive and exclusionary. The differences between the two revolve around the inclusion (or exclusion) of subordinated groups, but they share similar features. Specifically, in both cases, populism serves as a tool for social groups to become political subjects, and it appeals to the people—whether defined as the whole nation, the plebs, or the ethno-cultural unit—“as a source of wisdom and virtue” (p. 11). As can be implied from his definition, Filc attributes the prevalence of populism in Israel to the centrality of conflicts over the inclusion of different groups into the political community. Throughout the years, marginalized sectors were excluded from the political center in Israel. While some of these groups (in particular Jews of Middle Eastern and North African

descent, known as Mizrahi Jews) were mobilized by populist actors to become political subjects, others (in particular Arab citizens of Israel) became a target of populists.

As mentioned above, the overwhelming majority of the academic literature about populism in Israel focuses on right-wing parties and leaders. The equation of populism with the right wing is well demonstrated in Pedahzur's (2012) characterization of the populist worldview in Israel, which "perceives the media, the civil society, the universities, and especially the judiciary as institutions controlled by small yet powerful left-wing elitist groups that manipulate the rest of society in accordance with their narrow interests" (p. 7). Even those who perceive populism as a political communication style and not as an ideology tend to focus on right-wing political actors and to interpret populist manifestations on the left as a reaction to the electoral success of right-wing parties that already employ such a style (Shapiro, 1996). This might result from the fact that during Israel's formative years, the left constituted both the establishment and the elite.

The leader who appears most prominently in literature focusing on Israeli populism is former prime minister Begin (Filc, 1996, 2010; Keren, 1995; Peri, 2004; Shapiro, 1984, 1996). The party he headed, Herut (which later became the Likud), is also often characterized as populist (Keren, 1995; Shapiro, 1984, 1996; Sprinzak, 1989). Applying Jagers and Walgrave's (2007) classification framework, we might consider both Begin and Herut *anti-elitist populists*. From the establishment of the State of Israel until 1977, when they won elections for the first time, Begin and Herut were a major oppositional force against the hegemonic rule of the leftist Mapai Party. According to Peri (2004), Begin's electoral success came because he (and his colleagues) managed to build a counter-hegemonic group that included underprivileged people, mostly of North African and Middle Eastern origin, who felt alienated from the political establishment. He did so by claiming to embody the true will of the people (Shapiro, 1984) and by attacking the ruling elites (Peri, 2004). Begin's rhetoric had some exclusionary elements, including references to groups with little political power—such as Arabs and communists—as enemies (Filc, 1996). Compared with the denouncement of the elite, however, the exclusion of these groups was not a significant feature in his agenda.

Another Israeli prime minister who is often considered populist is Netanyahu, especially with regard to his first term as prime minister (1996–1999). In a sense, Netanyahu's political course forms a continuity with Begin's populism: Not only does he belong to the movement Begin established, but during his first term, he employed a similar rhetoric that positioned the people as the source of virtue (Filc, 2006). Anti-elitism also characterizes Netanyahu's populist style. Ever since his election as head of the Likud in 1993, throughout his national election campaigns, and even while in office, he attacked Israeli elites, such as the left wing, the Ashkenazi elite (Jews of Eastern European origin), the media, and even some figures in his own party (Filc, 2006; Peri, 2004). Although Netanyahu's populism is primarily anti-elitist, it should be noted that his rhetoric is also characterized by exclusionist features; occasionally he expressed such attitudes toward migrant workers and Arab citizens of Israel (Filc, 2006). Notably, both anti-elitist and exclusionary rhetoric characterized Netanyahu's 2015 election campaign (see below).

A party leader who seems to fit the category of *complete populism* (Jagers & Walgrave, 2007) is Liberman, head of the right-wing Israel Beitenu party (established in the late 1990s). Although at first considered a party for immigrants from the former USSR, Israel Beitenu presented a program for society as a whole (Filc & Lebel, 2005). Thanks to Liberman's background as an immigrant who does not belong to the old elite, he managed to build an

image of being one of “the people” (p. 91). Liberman occasionally attacks the democratic establishment, in particular, the judiciary, and the police (Pedahzur, 2001, 2006, 2012). His exclusionary attitudes are often directed toward Israel’s Arab citizens, with an emphasis on questioning their loyalty to the State of Israel. This was mostly salient during the 2009 election campaign, when Israel Beitenu launched a campaign entitled “No Loyalty— No Citizenship” (Khanin, 2010).

From 2003 to 2004, Liberman was head of the National Union—an alliance consisting of radical right-wing movements. This alliance underwent many transformations, but at the time Liberman was heading it, it was considered a populist party (Hirsch-Hoefler, Canneti, & Pedhazur, 2010). As of the beginning of 2015, this alliance no longer exists, but one of its factions, Otzma LeIsrael (Power to Israel), which merged with a faction of the religious Shas party in the 2015 elections (to form the Yachad party), can be classified under the category of *exclusionary populism*. It mines its power base from poor neighborhoods in large cities and development towns and demonstrates xenophobic attitudes toward Arab citizens and refugees from Africa.

Although there is generally agreement over the characterization of the political actors introduced so far as populists, the case of other right-wing parties is less clear. While Filc (2010) characterizes Shas as a populist party, Hirsch-Hoefler et al. (2010) define the party as religious fundamentalist rather than populist radical right. According to them, moral conservatism and not nationalism is the party’s core value. Based on Jagers and Walgrave’s (2007) classification, Shas might be called a populist party, and more specifically, a complete populist party, as it encompasses all three features of populism: (a) it appeals to the marginalized, (b) its leaders express an anti-elitist rhetoric (especially toward the secular Ashkenazi elite), and (c) the leaders hold xenophobic attitudes toward migrant workers (mainly from Africa), the Palestinian population in Israel (citizens and non-citizens alike), and Israelis of Russian origin (Filc, 2010; Pedahzur, 2000, 2001, 2012).

While the body of literature on right-wing populism in Israel is small, research on non-right-wing populism is virtually non-existent. However, we believe that this phenomenon, which has intensified in recent years, deserves consideration. Perhaps the most prominent manifestation of non-right-wing populism in Israel (at least until the 2015 elections) is the centrist Yesh Atid party, headed by former media personality Lapid.¹ Established by Lapid in early 2012, it became the second largest party in the Israeli parliament following the 2013 elections (the first elections in which the party participated), and Lapid became minister of finance in Netanyahu’s third government.

The case study of Lapid and Yesh Atid links to several trends and phenomena in European populism. First, during the 2013 campaign, Lapid claimed that he and his party represented “new politics.” It is noteworthy, however, that despite a few similarities, Yesh Atid differs from what have been termed “New Politics” parties (Taggart, 1996). While both Yesh Atid and the New Politics parties reject what they call “old politics,” the tenets the latter oppose—class, industrialism, and the bureaucratic-professional state (Taggart, 1996)—are not really a part of Yesh Atid’s agenda. Lapid’s and Yesh Atid’s rhetoric contrasts its new politics with old politics characterized by decadence and corruption, and with politicians who “think only about themselves” (Lapid, cited in Hendler, 2012). In this sense, it seems that Yesh Atid resembles what some scholars (e.g., Pop-Eleches, 2010; Učeň, 2007) term *centrist* or *new/centrist populist parties*, to be found most prominently in Central and Eastern Europe. The anti-incumbent messages and the call for cleaner politics that is manifested in those

parties (van Kessel, 2014) is highly pronounced in Yesh Atid's discourse (as will be demonstrated below). Another similarity can be found in the background that set the stage for those parties to rise: Pop-Eleches (2010) attributes the rise of the new/centrist parties to the general disappointment of the Eastern European electorate with mainstream parties and the costs of economic reforms. In a similar vein, Peters (2013) writes that Lapid was "feeding off the legacy of the social protest movement" (p. 320) that swept Israel during the summer of 2011, a protest that gave voice to the disappointment of a large part of the Israeli public with the government's functioning regarding economic and social issues.

Public disapproval of the government's economic measures and its manifestation in mass popular movements is also associated with the rise of left-wing populism in countries such as Spain and Greece (Stavrakakis & Katsambekis, 2014). Indeed, there are some similarities between Yesh Atid and the left-wing populist parties of Spain and Greece: They all distinguish between the "pure people" and the corrupt political establishment that characterizes left-wing populism (Alonso & Kaltwasser, 2014) also exists in Yesh Atid rhetoric. The same is true for the call for material redistribution, which characterizes both left-wing populism (Alonso & Kaltwasser, 2014) and Yesh Atid. Yet, we should be cautious in pressing the analogy between Lapid / Yesh Atid and left-wing populist actors/parties, not only because Yesh Atid identifies itself as a centrist party (Rahat & Hazan, 2013) but also because it rejects what is considered core leftist policies. Or, in the words of Lapid in one of his early speeches, "We are the representatives ... of a public that does not want to live in a reckless socialist country that is controlled by unions and would probably get to the situation similar to the one that prevails in Greece" (Lapid, 2012).

Lapid and the party he founded are thus centrist actors that rose in the Israeli political arena in light of public frustration and alienation from politics, especially with regard to the economy. But what makes the political style of Lapid / Yesh Atid populist? Based on a review of the strategic communication of the party and its leader—including Yesh Atid's website and platform, and Lapid's Facebook posts and speeches—we can make the following preliminary observations regarding populist dimensions in the discourse of Lapid and Yesh Atid.

Applying the "thin" conceptualization of populism (Jagers & Walgrave, 2007), we find that Lapid frequently speaks about the people, mostly about ordinary people. In his speeches, a highly frequent marker of the people is the middle class. This reference is contrary to earlier Israeli populist leaders, who tended to address the lower classes of the Israeli public. Lapid's campaign rhetoric includes the employment of the first-person plural: "This country belongs to *us* ... to those who pay taxes, who do their reserve duty service, whose children serve in the military, who obey the laws" (The Marker Online, 2012).

Anti-establishment is also a central element in Lapid's rhetoric, but at the same time, it is difficult to describe Lapid as an anti-elitist figure. Contrary to former populist actors such as Begin and Netanyahu, his assaults are usually not aimed at elite groups of Israeli society (note that Lapid, and to a greater degree other members of Yesh Atid, themselves originate from elite Israeli strata). Instead, Lapid's attacks tend to be addressed to the establishment and, in particular, to politicians and to political norms and arrangements that have been established over the years. Politicians' self-centered behavior, according to his statements, is the cause of two major problems: the high cost of living in Israel (against which the Israeli public protested in 2011) and the prioritization of two sectors, namely, tycoons and ultra-Orthodox Jews. Lapid suggested that during its two years in the coalition, Yesh Atid was "the only buffer" against politicians' self-interested conduct (Yesh Atid, 2015).

With respect to the exclusionary dimensions, two main groups have thus been attacked by Lapid and Yesh Atid: ultra-Orthodox Jews, who are presented as parasites, and, to a much lesser extent, tycoons. The party's position is that these groups do not "own the country;" rather, it belongs to the "honest, hard-working people who pay their taxes and serve in the military" (Yesh Atid, 2015). However, unlike some populist actors in Israel and in other countries, its demand is for equalizing the rights and obligations of all groups rather than the expulsion of certain groups from the community.

Populist Actors as Communicators

Current knowledge of Israeli populist actors as communicators lacks three essential elements: First, most of the literature, including recent scholarship, focuses on earlier time periods, resulting in a scarcity of knowledge about contemporary populist communication styles. For some contemporary actors, the literature covers only a limited period of their political career. For example, scholarship that addresses Netanyahu's populist practices exists only with regard to his first term as prime minister (currently, in 2015, he is serving his fourth term as PM). Second, most of the studies that do exist describe only one or a few actors, usually not in a comparative context. Third, although the literature on Israeli populist actors refers to communicative dimensions, communication is neither the focus nor the disciplinary lens in these studies. Still, we can find in this literature several features that have been identified as characterizing the communication style of Israeli populist politicians.

A feature that recurrently appears in literature on populism in Israel is the populist leaders' ability to communicate with the masses. Both former prime minister Begin (Filc, 1996) and the late spiritual leader of Shas, Ovadia Yosef (Filc, 2010), are discussed with regard to their excellent oratory skills. Yet, even less eloquent populist political leaders (Filc, 1996, for example claims that Netanyahu's rhetorical skills are limited) manage to communicate with the "simple people" through means such as the employment of emotional language. As Shapiro (1996) writes, "Emotions and slogans become a central part in the activity of politicians, so that they cannot be released from them without impairing their constituencies' expectations" (p. 126). In the 1996 election campaign, for instance, a series of terror attacks intensified individuals' strong feelings of threat. Those feelings were readily translated by the rhetoric of the right wing, headed by Netanyahu, into a collective threat to "the people" (Filc, 1996, 2011). Another method that can be used to communicate with the masses, according to the Israeli academic literature on populism, is the employment of popular language. Yadgar (2003), for instance, describes the tendency of Ovadia Yosef to use a folksy language and a common style when delivering his weekly sermons. Lapid has also been described by some observers (Gabay, 2012; Hofstein, 2013) as an eloquent orator who generates messages that are easy to identify with. After all, he was the author of the opening column of the weekend edition of the Israeli newspaper with the largest circulation, where he offered readers his insights regarding everyday life as well as public matters. At the same time, Lapid is criticized for being too shallow, and as one commentator observed, "He is a man of nice big words that stand for nothing" (Misgav, 2013).

An ability to adapt to the television age is another element that is discussed with regard to populist actors' communication styles. This aspect is related to the tendency to associate populism with the weakening ties between citizens and parties and the rise of personalization. Netanyahu is the leader who is most often mentioned in this regard. As Filc (2006, 2011) describes it, Netanyahu's political style was a populist one that fitted the television era. He based his popularity on his ability to use television to form a direct bond with the audience in

an era of declining trust in political parties. One of his main endeavors in this context, which drew much criticism from journalists, was to appear on the news live and unedited (Peri, 2004).

Another, more recent, platform for direct contact with the citizenry is social media. The use of social media by Israeli populist actors has yet to be studied; nonetheless, the case of Yair Lapid and Yesh Atid in the 2013 election campaign serves as an interesting example of such practice. Although the use of social media for direct communication with voters became standard practice for many politicians in the 2015 campaign, in the 2013 campaign, Lapid was arguably the central player in this field. Lapid's use of this medium continued when the elections were over, and as minister of finance, he almost completely avoided interviews with the old media (Leshem & Limor, 2013). As with the criticism surrounding Netanyahu's penchant for unedited communication with the public through television (Peri, 2004), Lapid's tendency to avoid the traditional media drew criticism from journalists and media critics (Neubach, 2013; Shor, 2013).

Notably, the above-mentioned communication styles and strategies have not been systematically examined across populist and non-populist political actors. Therefore, the question of whether these characteristics are of a style that is unique to populist politicians and parties has yet to be answered. Some observers, however, do identify differences between specific political actors. For instance, Ehud Barak, head of the Labor Party during the late 1990s, is claimed to have had a "cold and remote relationship with television," in contrast to his opponent Netanyahu, who "understood the meaning of television politics and felt comfortable in the visual cultural space" (Peri, 2004, p. 190).

The Media and Populism

Research on the media and populism is even more limited than research on populist actors as communicators. Many relevant dimensions for our understanding of populist manifestations in the media have not been addressed, from the broad characteristics of populist media discourse to the treatment of populist actors and communications by different types of media outlets. In the studies that do exist, the term "populism" is not even mentioned.

One of the only relevant studies examined the television news coverage of four leading parties during the 2009 election campaign (Tsfati, Sheaffer, & Weimann, 2011). It found that the relationship between the Jewish population and the Arab population in Israel—an issue prompted by Liberman—was the second most salient issue in television news broadcasts during the campaign. Tsfati et al. (2011) contend that Liberman succeeded in setting the media agenda during that campaign. In a similar vein, the study found that both Liberman and his party were widely covered in television news broadcasts. The scholars suggest that this visibility may be attributed to both the party and its leader meeting the news criteria of negativity and confrontation.

Yet, salient coverage does not necessarily mean positive coverage. Tsfati et al. (2011) found that unlike other parties that were studied and that received a relatively balanced coverage, Israel Beitenu received mostly critical coverage. The same was true for Liberman, who received the most critical coverage among heads of parties. Furthermore, criticism of Liberman focused on his ideology, whereas other leaders were criticized mainly for their traits and performance. The authors conclude that journalists possibly interpreted their attack on Liberman as a pro-democratic bias and not as a mere political bias: At least some

journalists perceived Liberman's plans regarding the Arab population as illegitimate and anti-democratic, and therefore found it necessary to respond with disapproval.

A critical approach toward populist actors was also identified in other studies. In particular, the literature describes early media treatment of Netanyahu as scornful (Filc, 2011; Peri, 2004). According to Peri (2004), the reasons for this were twofold: First, it was the result of his political stances and his position as an outsider in his party; and second, it was a reaction to Netanyahu's attacks on the media (as part of his antielite rhetoric) and his efforts to dominate the media. The media had to attack him "in order to prevent their obliteration as significant political players" (p. 252). In his later campaigns (2009, 2013, 2015), although some news outlets remained highly critical of Netanyahu, he had on his side the popular newspaper *Israel Hayom*, established in 2007 by Sheldon Adelson, a U.S. tycoon and close associate of Netanyahu (for discussions of political parallelism in the contemporary Israeli news media, see Peri, 2012; Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2014).

The relationship between Yair Lapid and the Israeli media is complex as well. On the one hand, Lapid was a popular columnist and TV anchor before becoming a politician, and several media critics have pointed to the ways that his former employer—the popular newspaper *Yedioth Ahronoth*—covered Lapid positively during the 2013 campaign and during his tenure as minister of finance (Horvitz, 2013; Persico, 2013; Tausig, 2012). On the other hand, Lapid has been heavily criticized by the media for his vague messages and occasional inaccuracies (Levi, 2012; Maiberg, 2013; Misgav, 2013) as well as for his inexperience (Hatishbi, 2012; Shefer, 2013; "Yair Lapid's Initiation," 2013). However, the media coverage of Yair Lapid in comparison to other populist and non-populist actors requires an empirical assessment.

Citizens and Populism

The effects of populist messages on citizens' emotions, attitudes, knowledge, and political behavior have not been systematically examined in the Israeli context. That said, some scholars suggest that populist messages seem to have an influence on Israeli citizens. Filc (2006) asserts that Netanyahu's anti-elitist style produced empathy toward him among Likud supporters. As for Liberman and Israel Beitenu, Khanin (2010) claims that many of the party's voters responded to Liberman's call "to change the situation in which underprivileged social groups are alienated from power and property" (p. 115).

There are also a few empirical studies that attempt to characterize voters for populist parties. Generally speaking, compared with other countries, in Israel, economic factors—in terms of personal status and economic concerns—are apparently less significant in explaining voting for radical right-wing parties (Freedman, Kaner, & Kaplan, 2014; Hirsch-Hoefler et al., 2010). More significant are ideological factors—nationalism, exclusionism, and conservatism (Hirsch-Hoefler et al., 2010)—as well as security views regarding war and peace (Freedman et al., 2014). Another factor found to be significantly associated with voting for radical right-wing parties is political dissatisfaction (Freedman et al., 2014). Hirsch-Hoefler et al. (2010) investigated voting motivations for different types of radical right-wing parties, distinguishing between the National Union (representing a *populist radical right* party [PRR]), and Shas, United Torah Judaism, and the National Religious Party (representing *fundamentalist religious* parties [FR]).² They discovered that voting for PRR parties was mainly motivated by nationalism, whereas voting for FR parties was motivated by moral conservatism. In addition, perceived security threats contributed significantly to voting for the PRR party but not to voting for FR parties. Exclusionism also contributed (albeit modestly) to the likelihood of voting for an FR party but not to the likelihood of voting for the PRR party (Hirsch-Hoefler

et al., 2010). As for Lapid and Yesh Atid—the centrist populist actors—their success in the 2013 election was based on a different constituency from that of rightwing populist actors. Based on data from the Israeli National Election Study (Shamir, 2013), Yesh Atid voters had higher levels of income and education in comparison to both the general population and voters for the right-wing populist Shas party. Yesh Atid voters also seem to be moderate regarding economic issues. All in all, they place themselves around the middle point on the axis of social democratic versus capitalist approaches. Interestingly, the same is true for both the general population and Shas voters. When it comes to the axis of dovish versus hawkish stances, on the other hand, Shas voters are much more hawkish than Yesh Atid voters, who again reflect moderate views.

Summary and Recent Developments

The 2015 election campaign seems to have been infused with populist rhetoric. Benjamin Netanyahu, who won the elections despite polls predicting to the contrary, stressed during the campaign his affinity with the people as a distinguishing characteristic (“They have V15, we have the people,” he declared in a rally, referring to the association between his competitors and a group of anti-Netanyahu activists [Kahana, 2015]). He used in his statements both anti-elitist and exclusionary discourse. Thus, he accused parts of the media of a coordinated, slanderous campaign against him and his wife in order “to replace the Likud government with a left-wing government” (Netanyahu, 2015), and on the day of the election, he urged his supporters to vote by issuing a warning that “Arab voters are heading to the polling stations in droves” (Zonszein, 2015). Exclusionary and anti-elitist populist rhetoric also marked the discourse of other right-wing actors, with Liberman and his party targeting the Israeli-Arab sector, while the religious party Shas foregrounded the people-elite binary along ethnic lines (Mizrachi Jews as the people and Ashkenazi as the elite). Yachad Haam Itanu (Together the People Is With Us)—a radical right-wing populist party headed by former Shas leader Eli Ishai—failed to pass the electoral threshold for entry to the Knesset (the Israeli parliament).

In the center, Yair Lapid capitalized on his dismissal from the government by Netanyahu a few months before the elections, which allowed him to present himself once again as an outsider in regard to the political establishment and to call for the return of Israel to the hands of its citizens (Yesh Atid, 2015). A new centrist party (Kulanu), headed by former Likud member Moshe Kachlon, addressed the close relationship between politicians and tycoons, and promised to fight corporates and monopolies on behalf of the simple citizen. As with Lapid in 2013, Kachlon became the minister of finance in Netanyahu’s new government.

In conclusion, Israel presents a rich context for the study of populist political communication: Its dynamic party map and media system, its deep social cleavages, and the struggles over the very definition and identity of “the people” all make it a site of intense and constantly evolving populist discourses. At the same time, these characteristics make the study of populism especially challenging in the Israeli context. How does one trace patterns of populism when the Israeli party map is constantly changing, with new parties rising and falling, and old parties merging, splitting, and reconstructing their identities to fit new political circumstances? Furthermore, it is difficult to isolate and pin down populism in Israel, precisely because it is so ubiquitous, while at the same time, no political actor or party defines itself as populist, nor do political actors and parties tend to be consistently populist over time.

These reasons may partially explain the scarcity of research on mediated populism in Israel, despite the great relevance of this phenomenon. The need for systematic cross-cultural, cross-party, and cross-media investigations of populist political communication in Israel is thus

acute, and as we suggested in this chapter, such an examination should include all contemporary political actors, regardless of their positions on the political spectrum.

Notes

1. A more recent manifestation is the Kulanu Party, headed by former Likud Party member Kachlon. Since the party was in its formation stage at the time of writing, running for the first time in the 2015 elections, we decided to focus on the more developed case study of Lapid and Yesh Atid.
2. Note that unlike Hirsch-Hoefler et al. (2010), the present chapter classifies Shas as a populist party, based on Jagers and Walgrave's framework (see above).

References

- Alonso, S., & Kaltwasser, C. R. (2014). Spain: No country for the populist radical right? *South European Society and Politics*, 20(1), 21–45.
- Canovan, M. (1981). *Populism*. New York, NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Canovan, M. (1999). Trust the people! Populism and the two faces of democracy. *Political Studies*, 47(1), 2–16.
- Filc, D. (1996). Post-populism in Israel: The South-American model of Netanyahu 96'. *Theory and Critique*, 9(2), 217–232. (In Hebrew).
- Filc, D. (2006). *Populism and hegemony in Israel*. Tel Aviv, Israel: Resling. (In Hebrew).
- Filc, D. (2010). *The political right in Israel: Different faces of Jewish populism*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Filc, D. (2011). Post-populism: Explaining neo-liberal populism through the habitus. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 16(2), 221–238.
- Filc, D., & Lebel, U. (2005). The post-Oslo Israeli populist radical right in comparative perspective: Leadership, voter characteristics and political discourse. *Mediterranean Politics*, 10(1), 85–97.
- Freedman, M., Kaner, O., & Kaplan, I. (2014). Voting for extreme right parties in Israel: Evidence from the 2009 elections. *Electoral Studies*, 34, 68–77.
- Gabay, S. (2012, January 17). Dancing with the bigwigs. *Haoketz*. Retrieved from <http://www.haokets.org>. (in Hebrew).
- Hatishbi, E. (2012, January 10). Yair Lapid—The balloon that will blow out. *News 1*. Retrieved from <http://www.news1.co.il> (In Hebrew).
- Hendler, S. (2012). Yair Lapid presented the bomb figure of Netanyahu: “This is what politics has done to the middle-class.” *Calcalist*. 25 December. Retrieved from <http://www.calcalist.co.il> (In Hebrew).
- Hirsch-Hoefler, S., Canneti, D., & Pedhazur, A. (2010). Two of a kind? Voting motivations for populist radical right and religious fundamentalist parties. *Electoral Studies*, 29(4), 678–690.
- Hofstein, A. (2013). There is a future. *The Seventh Eye*. 23 July. Retrieved from <http://www.the7eye.org.il> (In Hebrew).
- Horvitz, A. (2013). What Dan Shilon really thinks of Miri Shilon. *Mako*. 14 March. Retrieved from <http://www.mako.co.il> (In Hebrew).
- Jagers, I., & Walgrave, S. (2007). Populism as political communication style: An empirical study of political parties' discourse in Belgium. *European Journal of Political Research*, 46(3), 319–345.
- Kahana, A. (2015). Netanyahu at the rally: “The left has V15—we have the people.” *NRG*. 15 March. Retrieved from <http://www.nrg.co.il> (In Hebrew).
- Keren, M. (1995). *Professionals against populism: The Peres government and democracy*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

- Khanin, V. (2010). The Israel Beiteinu (“Israel Our Home”) Party between the mainstream and “Russian” community politics. *Israel Affairs*, 16(1), 105–123.
- Lapid, Y. (2012). Lapid’s speech at a conference of party activists [Facebook post]. 10 May. Retrieved from <https://he-il.facebook.com/YairLapid> (In Hebrew).
- Leshem, B., & Limor, Y. (2013). *Yair Lapid and the Facebook: New politics and new media*. Retrieved from ISPRA website: <http://www.ispra.org.il/> (In Hebrew).
- Levi, G. (2012). Where is the content? *Haaretz*. 10 February. Retrieved from <http://www.haaretz.co.il> (In Hebrew).
- Maiberg, R. (2013). Ron Maiberg harshly attacks Yair Lapid. *Maariv*. 29 May. Retrieved from <http://www.maariv.co.il> (In Hebrew).
- Misgav, U. (2013). Yair Lapid—the end. *Haaretz*. 10 May. Retrieved from <http://blogs.haaretz.co.il> (In Hebrew).
- Netanyahu, B. (2015). The time has come to put this out on the table: The main element behind the wave of smear attacks against my wife and myself is [Arnon] Mozes, publisher of the newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth and of the Ynet website [Facebook post]. 8 February. Retrieved from <https://he-il.facebook.com/Netanyahu> (In Hebrew).
- Neubach, K. (2013). Have Yair Lapid yet to realize that he is the minister of finance of the entire public and not of only those who liked his Facebook page? [Tweet]. 27 March. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/kereneubach/status/316960540570288128> (In Hebrew).
- Pedahzur, A. (2000). Supporting conditions for the survival of extreme right-wing parties in Israel. *Mediterranean Politics*, 5(3), 1–30.
- Pedahzur, A. (2001). The transformation of Israel’s extreme right. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 24(1), 25–42.
- Pedahzur, A. (2006). The new Israeli right: From territorial nationalism to national ethnocentrism. In M. Al-Haj & U. Ben-Eliezer (Eds.), *In the name of security: The sociology of peace and war in Israel in changing times* (pp. 535–556). Haifa, Israel: University of Haifa Press. (In Hebrew).
- Pedahzur, A. (2012). *The triumph of Israel’s radical right*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Peri, Y. (2004). *Telepopulism: Media and politics in Israel*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Peri, Y. (2012). The impact of national security on the development of media systems: The case of Israel. In D. C. Hallin and P. Mancini (Eds.), *Comparing media systems beyond the Western world* (pp. 11–25). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Persico, O. (2013). A big white elephant. *The Seventh Eye*. 12 May. Retrieved from <http://www.the7eye.org.il> (In Hebrew).
- Peters, J. (2013). Israel’s new government. *Mediterranean Politics*, 18(2), 318–324.
- Pop-Eleches, G. (2010). Throwing out the bums: Protest voting and unorthodox parties after communism. *World Politics*, 62(2), 221–260.
- Rahat, G., & Hazan, R. Y. (2013). Increased personalisation in an unstable party system: The 2013 elections in Israel. *Representation*, 49(3), 375–389.
- Shamir, M. (2013). *The 2013 Israel national elections data* [Data file]. Retrieved from <http://www.ines.tau.ac.il/2013.html>.
- Shapiro, Y. (1984). *An elite without successors: Generations of political leaders in Israel*. Tel Aviv, Israel: Sifriat Poalim. (In Hebrew).
- Shapiro, Y. (1996). *Politicians as an hegemonic class: The case of Israel*. Tel Aviv, Israel: Sifriat Poalim. (In Hebrew).
- Shefer, H. (2013). Lapid will be manipulated if he doesn’t get familiar with the numbers. *Calcalist*. 10 March. Retrieved from <http://www.calcalist.co.il> (In Hebrew).

- Shor, E. (2013). Minister of likes: Why does Yair Lapid address his supporters only via Facebook? *NRG*. 23 March. Retrieved from <http://www.nrg.co.il> (In Hebrew).
- Sprinzak, E. (1989). The emergence of the Israeli radical right. *Comparative Politics*, 21(2), 171–192.
- Stavrakakis, Y., & Katsambekis, G. (2014). Left-wing populism in the European periphery: The case of SYRIZA. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 19(2), 119–142.
- Taggart, P. (1996). *The new populism and the new politics: New protest parties in Sweden in a comparative perspective*. London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Tausig, S. (2012, January 11). The integrity of the host newspaper. *The seventh eye*. Retrieved from <http://www.the7eye.org.il> (in Hebrew).
- Tenenboim-Weinblatt, K. (2014). Producing protest news: An inquiry into journalists' narratives. *International Journal of Press/Politics*, 19(4), 410–429.
- The Marker Online (2012, February 16). Lapid—first political speech [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tw86L1ABocI> (in Hebrew).
- Tsfati, Y., Sheaffer, T., & Weimann, G. (2011). War on the agenda: The Gaza conflict and communication in 2009 election. In A. Arian and M. Shamir (Eds.), *Elections in Israel 2009* (pp. 301–332). Jerusalem, Israel: The Israel Democracy Institute. (In Hebrew).
- Učeň, P. (2007). Parties, populism, and anti-establishment politics in East Central Europe. *SAIS Review*, 27(1), 49–62.
- van Kessel, S. (2014). The populist cat-dog: Applying the concept of populism to contemporary European party systems. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 19(1), 99–118.
- Yadgar, Y. (2003). SHAS as a struggle to create a new field: A Bourdieuan perspective of an Israeli phenomenon. *Sociology of Religion*, 64(2), 223–246.
- Yair Lapid's initiation. (2013, March 10). *Calcalist*. Retrieved from <http://www.calcalist.co.il> (In Hebrew).
- Yesh Atid. (2015, January 4). Lapid: “Enough corruption; give us back our country” [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ejWchHn9qq0&feature=youtu.be> (In Hebrew).
- Zonszein, M. (2015, March 17). Binyamin Netanyahu: ‘Arab voters are heading to the polling stations in droves.’ *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <http://www.theguardian.com>.