

## **CfP: Political Discourse - Multidisciplinary Approaches #2: New discourses of populism and nationalism**

*21-22 June 2018, Edinburgh Napier University*

Since the Brexit vote in the United Kingdom and the rise of Trump, Orbán and Le Pen, to name but a few, 'populism' has re-emerged as a common keyword in international news coverage. This term has become highly contested, often used to stigmatise political opponents. The current conflation of new right-wing politics with 'populism' backgrounds leftist mass movements such as Syriza in Greece and Podemos in Spain, despite a rich history of left wing populism. Others have argued that recent populisms transcend ideological orientations of left and right and open up a new political divide: 'Farewell, left versus right. The contest that matters now is open against closed'. (The Economist on 30 June 2016).

The central common denominator of these diverse movements is an appeal to 'the people', often defined in ethno-national terms, which is contrasted with a corrupt, privileged and out-of-touch elite. Yet differences persist in how we understand populism, both in populist political approaches and in epistemological terms. What do politicians in different countries mean by 'the nation' and 'the people' and how are these signifiers discursively or rhetorically constructed? Which social and political conditions are conducive to the emergence of populist movements? Which policies are suggested in the name of 'the people' today and which discursive or rhetorical strategies are now employed to justify them? What exactly do we, as discourse and rhetoric researchers, mean by 'populism' and how can we analyse it? Does populism refer to a specific political/linguistic/rhetorical practice (style), ideology or political logic (antagonisms)? What are the social, discursive and political conditions of the so-called politics of 'post-truth'?

In collaboration with Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, Brussels Office, and DiscourseNet, we are calling for contributions for a two-day conference to explore these questions. In order to understand the mechanisms of populist discourses, their rhetoric as well as their contextual conditions, we invite contributions from all fields involved in the study of discourse and rhetoric. This conference aims to generate a conversation among the diverse approaches to studying political discourse and rhetoric as well as to promote a comparative approach to the study of populism and nationalism as a global phenomenon.

This conference seeks to build bridges between academia and the world of political practice. In support of an open discourse between academics and political activists the conference will feature a World Café (see for example <http://www.theworldcafe.com/key-concepts-resources/world-cafe-method/>) in addition to regular conference panels. All participants will be invited to produce a very short text (no more than 500 words) in 'plain English' to communicate key concepts and issues of populist and

nationalist discourse/rhetoric from their research/work to a wider audience. These serve as the basis for discussions in the World Café and will later appear on the conference website alongside other items. Deadline for submission of the 500 words for accepted participants is 29 May 2018.

### **Keynote speakers**

*Prof Michael Billig (Loughborough University)*

*Prof Yannis Stavrakakis (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki)*

*Prof Felicitas Macgilchrist (Georg-Eckert-Institut, Braunschweig)*

### **We invite contributions on (but not restricted to)**

- The language and rhetoric of populist and nationalist leaders and parties
- 'Post-truth' and 'post-shame': Political conditions of populist, nativist and nationalist discourse
- Mediatization of populism and nationalism
- Populist, nativist and nationalist narratives
- Populism as political style
- Elements of populist and nationalist discourse in mainstream party-political discourse
- Populism and political theory
- History of populism, nativism and nationalism
- Persuasive effects of populist discourse
- Pedagogical implications of discourse theory and studies on political discourse

Papers will be 20 minutes in length, with 10 minutes after each paper for questions and discussion.

The **deadline for abstracts** of 250-300 words (excluding bibliography) is **30 January 2018**. Please also indicate, whether you would be prepared to produce a short introductory text (no more than 500 words), introducing a key term or key concept for analysing populist discourse to a wider audience.

Abstracts and queries about the conference should be sent to the conference organiser, Michael Kranert ([populism2018@gmail.com](mailto:populism2018@gmail.com)).

### **Conference Fees (including lunches and refreshments, but excluding conference dinner):**

Full fee: £ 190 - early bird (before 1st May 2018): £ 160  
Post graduates: £ 100 – early bird (before 1st May 2015): £80  
Single day fee: £ 100 – Post graduate Single Day fee: £50

Conference Dinner: £ 40 (*to be booked separately*)

**ROSA LUXEMBURG STIFTUNG**  
BRUSSELS OFFICE

