

CALL FOR PAPERS

Populism and Anti-Europeanism. From the Interwar years to the European Union's Crisis (1920-2020)

University of Siena (May 2021) – University of Rome "La Sapienza" (October 2021)

The Department of Communication and Social Research (CoRis) of the University of Rome "La Sapienza", and the Department of Social, Political and Cognitive Sciences (Dispoc) of the University of Siena promote an interdisciplinary conference on anti-Europeanism and populism.

The current crisis of the European Union is both the cause and the effect of the emergence of populist anti-Europeanism (or anti-European populism) that has updated the dichotomy between people vs. elite in the opposition between demos and supranationality. The analysis of populism and Euroscepticism as related phenomena raises various interpretive and methodological issues. Depending on the disciplinary perspective, they can be seen as having autonomous relevance or as the product of long-term processes, which require the scholar to shift his attention to the underlying "historical problems". For this, it is essential a) to reject the idea, often put forward by the theorists, that populism is a concept "without history", i.e. that history plays a minor role in the drawing of its theory (F. Finchelstein), and b) to become aware that anti-Europeanism conveys a political and cultural stance shaped before the birth, in the 1950s, of the first European Communities (M.-T. Bitsch). The relevance of history for the understanding of populism, and the existence of forerunners of the so-called "Euroscepticism", requires the analysis of the two phenomena to be placed in a long-term perspective and within an interdisciplinary frame. Such analysis will be promoted through the organisation of two distinct but scientifically complementary international conferences.

The first conference on "Anti-Europeanism, Populism and the Crisis of the European Union (1992-2020)" will be held at the University of Siena in May 2021.

The French and Danish referenda in 1992 and the intricate debate in the British Parliament on the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty mark a turning point in the process of supranational integration. They made the "permissive consensus" an obsolete formula, in a twofold sense: because the protest against the EU is now a deeply rooted phenomenon, and because - in turn - such a rootedness has forced pro-Europeans to transform their careless assent into an explicit and active commitment. The result has been an intensification of the debate "on Europe" in the EU's countries .

The sequence of crises recently experienced by the EU has highlighted the merging of contemporary populism and anti-Europeanism. The conference in Siena aims to analyse this phenomenon.

The Scientific Committee will examine historical, political, economic and sociological proposals aimed at analysing issues such as: the development of anti-Europeanist populism in the specific political-institutional-normative context established in the EU since Maastricht; the effect that the economic crisis has had on the EU's legitimacy; the inefficiency of the EU (with consequences on its "popularity") due to the imbalance between market integration, on the one hand, and the growing weight of the intergovernmental method in the European decision-making system, on the other.

The second conference on "L'Anti-Europa. Politics, society, culture (1920-2020)" will take place at the University of Rome La Sapienza in October 2021.

The inter-war period saw the growing weakness of representative democracy, one of the assumptions of contemporary populism, and the nationalist closure, degenerated into authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, and supported by impulses that opposed inter (supra)-national political power. These processes explain the choice of the term *quod*. From here unravels the history of "various anti-Europeanisms", which manifests itself in an uneven way, with greater or lesser intensity depending on historical periods, and with changing arguments depending on the environments and actors. The paradigm shift of contemporary Europeanism is increasingly embodied by the constitutionalisation of progressively stricter public finance rules, which are far away from the democratic culture of the EC "founding fathers" (who never ceased believing in the role of the democratic state and the sovereign demos). This paves the way, paradoxically, to an update of the populist anti-Europeanism of the past.

The Scientific Committee will examine historical, economic, political and sociological proposals aimed at analysing the emergence of anti-Europeanism in European politics, society and culture over the period under consideration. Particular attention will be paid to proposals aimed at analysing the following macro-themes: a) the nexus between anti-Europeanism and the crisis of legitimacy of politics in an institutional framework characterised by the growing cultural and decision-making weight of legal and financial technocracies; b) comparative analysis of the consequences of financial globalisation on the democratic legitimacy of political power (sovereign debt crisis, management of financial crises, harmonisation of fiscal policies and drawing of public finance rules, relationship between the ECB and national governments, etc.). c) anti-Europeanism in political parties, the media, intellectuals, civil society, public opinion (possibly through an interpretive key that takes the comparative dimension into account).

Papers - no more than 1000 characters long (including spaces), specifying the Conference (Rome or Siena) in which you wish to participate - must be submitted **by 28 February 2021** to the following addresses: andrea.guiso@uniroma1.it and daniele.pasquinucci@unisi.it.

Conference Papers will be selected by a scientific committee composed of Elena Calandri (University of Padua), Daniele Caviglia (University of Enna), Umberto Gentiloni (University of Rome La Sapienza), Andrea Guiso (University of Rome La Sapienza), Valentine Lomellini (University of Padua), Michele Marchi (University of Bologna), Lorenzo Mechi (University of Padua), Gerardo Nicolosi (University of Siena), Daniele Pasquinucci (University of Siena), Daniela Preda (University of Genoa) and Antonio Varsori (University of Padua).

Working languages: English and French.

Travel and accommodation expenses will be covered by the conference organizers.