

International Conference, University of Navarra, Spain, 22-24 November 2018

**In the  
name of  
the people**



**Representing  
the people in  
twenty-first  
century politics**

<http://www.unav.edu/web/instituto-cultura-y-sociedad/discurso-publico/representing-the-people>

In today's world, shaken by the effects of globalization, the aftermath of the financial crisis and widespread political corruption, people in many countries are reaching out for radical political solutions. In many parts of Europe, experts have perceived a **growing mistrust of conventional politics**: as the perceived gap between citizens and their representatives has widened, new political formations have arisen that promise to shake up the status quo and give more concrete expression to people's real needs and desires. Such groups vary according to region, taking on many different forms (right-wing, left-wing, nationalist), but many of them have been classified as "**populist**", in that they claim to give voice to "**the will of the people**". Their self-presentation gives importance to aspects of identity that position them as diametrically opposed to supposedly hegemonic groups, and the ensuing dichotomy is emphasized by heightened degrees of affect. Their multimodal messages provide a broad field of study for discourse analysts, as well as for experts in traditional and new media.

The three-year project "Imagining the people in the new politics: debates on the will of the people in public discourse across Europe" (MINECO project: FFI2015-65252-R El demos en el imaginario de la nueva política: el debate sobre la voluntad popular en el discurso público en Europa) has explored how the discourses of the new political parties and movements in Europe project the concept of "the people" ("demos") and articulate it with other ideas, centring on the period of instability following the financial crisis of 2008. In this final conference, In the name of the people: representing the people in twenty-first century politics, we propose to open up the debate on **discursive representations of the people to a broad cross section of experts in political discourse, discourse analysis, multimodal analysis, media studies and political communication**.

We welcome communications related to the main theme of the conference, preferably falling within the scope of one or more of the following broad thematic areas:

- Populism and performance
- Metaphors of the people, including multimodal metaphors
- Representations of the people and its enemies
- Celebrity politics and the figure of the leader
- Metapolitics and challenges to the political system
- Politics and/in the media
- Epistemological issues: common sense, fake news, etc.
- Theories of popular representation and challenges to the notion of the "sovereign demos"

We also ask for communications for the following three specialist panels:

## • Violence against Women in European Politics: Changes, Challenges and Solutions

**Organizer: Dr Eleonora Esposito**

In their ongoing journey towards full equality, women have been claiming their human right to actively participate in politics, often reaching positions of power, leadership and decision-making. As the prominence of women in politics increases, so does the incidence of multifaceted and multimodal phenomena of gender-based discrimination, harassment and assault against politically active women.

This panel explores manifestations of violence against women in politics, taking a European perspective and engaging scholars and practitioners from different disciplines across the Social Sciences. Potential themes include:

- gender-based violence and populisms;
- gender-based violence and the electoral process;
- misogynistic hate online (e.g. on social media platforms);
- sexist media coverage, gender stereotypes and voter bias;
- gendered political institutions and practices (e.g. internal and external barriers to candidate selection, gender quotas, gendered portfolio and committee assignments).

The event represents a space for sharing theories and data, as well as to propose and critically evaluate solutions to tackle gender-based political violence and promote greater gender equality in political life across Europe. Papers may be offered to this panel in **English or Spanish**.

## • Politics Beyond the Sovereign Demos?

**Organizer: Dr David Thunder**

Frustration with conventional political institutions has given rise to various movements that claim to speak more authentically for “the people” and its interests than traditional political parties and institutions. But few of these anti-establishment and anti-system movements put in question the coherence of the self-governing demos as a construct – rather, they claim that the establishment has failed to give voice to the “true” demos, and claim they, unlike others, are uniquely well placed to do so. This panel is devoted to exploring theories and discourses of politics and representation that get beyond populism insofar as they problematize or even reject the notion of a “demos” or collective that can be represented by a single political assembly or institution.

Contributions may consider forms of civic and governmental pluralism that assume a fragmented rather than unitary demos, and ideas of political order and representation that reject or transcend notions of representation anchored in a myth of the sovereign people along Bodinean or Hobbesian lines. Put succinctly, the goal of the panel is to attempt to imagine forms of politics and representation that do not presuppose a sovereign demos that rules itself through a single, general-purpose, people’s assembly. This panel will be conducted in **English**.

## • Medium and message in populist politics

**Organizer: Dr Ana María Fernández-Vallejo**

The communicative construction of “the people” lies at the heart of populist messages. Its importance is characteristically reinforced through reference to supposedly antagonistic social elements, such as elites and outgroups, and through strongly emotive language. Recent populist movements have exploited the potential of new media (social networks, twitter, Instagram, etc.) to build a sense of community along these lines. However, some critics have noted that these media themselves exert an effect on the political messages themselves: messages are now shorter, more emotive, increasingly reliant on multimodality, and so on. For this panel, papers are invited that explore the way the medium influences the message in populist politics, across a variety of languages and political groupings.

We welcome contributions about political discourse in any context, but papers should be given in **English** or in **Spanish**.

## PLENARY SPEAKERS

- **Beatriz Gallardo Paúls**  
University of Valencia, Spain  
'The discursive network in 21st century politics: simultaneity, limits and processes'
- **Majid KhosraviNik**  
University of Newcastle, United Kingdom  
Digital discourse, populism and social media communication
- **Benjamin de Cleen**  
Vrije Universiteit Brussel  
Populism and nationalism: on the intricacies of speaking in the name of 'the people'

- Proposals are invited for paper presentations of **20 minutes** + 5 minutes for questions.
- A title + abstract of maximum **250 words** should be submitted to the conference email ([demos@unav.es](mailto:demos@unav.es)) **before 31 July 2018**.
- Abstracts should report original research and should provide the context, objectives, method(s), and results of your study. The notification of acceptance will be on August 30th.
- The working languages of the conference are English and Spanish.
- In the case of proposals intended for one of the three specialized panels, the name of the panel should be stated clearly at the top of the page.
- A maximum of two proposals may be submitted per author provided that one of these is co-authored or a contribution to a panel.
- We propose to publish at least one volume of collected papers from the conference, from the main sessions or the panels. Details will be sent out at a later date.
- All proposed submissions (papers, posters or round table participation) will be blind peer reviewed, under the supervision of the scientific committee

### Scientific committee:

- Jan Zienkowski, Université Saint-Louis
- Miguel Ayerbe, University of the Basque Country
- Eleonora Esposito, University of Navarra
- David Thunder, ICS University of Navarra
- Ana María Fernández-Vallejo, University of Navarra
- Monika Kopytowska, University of Łódź
- Encarnación Hidalgo Tenorio, University of Granada
- Maarten van Leeuwen, University of Leiden
- Raluca Levonian, University of Bucharest
- Lasse Thomassen, Queen Mary University

### Organizing committee:

- Ruth Breeze, University of Navarra
- Carmen Llamas, University of Navarra
- Dámaso Izquierdo, University of Navarra