

Who are the people?

Populism, disruption, identity

7-9 October 2026

10th Annual Workshop of the Populism Specialist Group

in collaboration with

The Chaire Professeur Junior “*Discours Identitaires*” and the *Centre Interlangues Texte, Image, Langage*

Day 1 | Wednesday, 7 October

09:30-11:00 | Panel 1 – Populism, Parties & Democratic Politics

Amphitheatre, Maison des Sciences sociales et Humaines (MSH) Dijon

Populism, Technocracy, Nationalism and Citizenism: Studying the Realignment of Political Parties through Four Modes of Political Mobilisation

Arthur Borriello (Université de Namur, Belgium) and Arthur Groz (Université de Namur, Belgium)

Who Are “the People”? Parliamentary Representations of Workers and Working People in Britain (from the Victorian Secret Ballot Debates to David Cameron’s Prime Minister’s Questions)

Stéphane Revillet & Bitovenn Egnongui Tabaga (Université Bourgogne Europe, France)

Understanding populist support through dichotomous political thinking: affective polarisation, partisanship and populist attitudes

Steven Van Hauwaert (École européenne de sciences politiques et sociales [ESPOL], France)

Do Populists Defend Popular Self-Government? The Construction of “the People” in Belgian Parliamentary Debates on Democratic Innovations

Vincent Aerts (Université de Liège, Belgium)

11:00-11:30 | Break

11:30-13:00 | Panel 2 – The Sound & The Fury: Comedy, Music and the New Face of Populism

Amphitheatre, MSH Dijon

If the People Don’t Laugh, They’ll Cry (Out in Terror): The Comedy and the Horror of Populism

Freddie Larden (Queen Mary University of London, United Kingdom)

“People’s Sound”: Populism, Transgressive Aesthetics, and the Audible Politics of Caribbean Music

Théo Aiolfi & David Bousquet (Université Bourgogne Europe, France)

Left-wing Populism Goes to the (Big) City: Rethinking Populism through the Case of Zohran Mamdani
Laura Chazel (University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom) & Giorgos Venizelos (Cyprus University of Technology, Cyprus)

13:00-14:00 | Lunch Break

14:00-15:30 | Panel 3 – Performing “the People”: Authenticity & Embodiment

Amphitheatre, MSH Dijon

Performing “The People”: Authenticity, Masculinity and Populist Embodiment in Imran Khan's Political Persona

Esha Butt (Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, Germany)

Performing “The People”: The Moutza and the Embodied Politics of Anti-Elitism in the Greek Indignados Movement

Paris Aslanidis (National Centre for Social Research of Athens, Greece)

Performing “The People” in the Void: Affect, Embodiment, and the Structural Mutations of Representative Democracy

Filippo Palmieri (Università di Bologna, Italy)

15:30-16:00 | Break

16:00-16:30 | Keynote Speech

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Federico Tarragoni (Université Caen-Normandie, France)

Why Choose a Genetic Approach? A Critical Review of Populism Studies

Day 2 | Thursday, 8 October

09:30-11:00 | Panel 4 – Identity, Religion and the Construction of Peoplehood

Forum des Savoirs, MSH Dijon

Reinventing the Nation: Populist Identity-Work and the Rebranding of ‘the People’ in Giorgia Meloni’s Fratelli d’Italia

Mohsin Fareed Shah (National Defence University of Islamabad, Pakistan)

Reframing Religion in Populist Radical Right Discourse: A Socio-Cultural Analysis of Symbolic Religious Appeals

Konstantinos Papastathis, Stavroula Koskina, Yannis Stavrakakis & Sotiris Mitralaxis (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece)

Identity at War: Constructing ‘the people’ in Russian independent media (2022–2023)

Kirill Filimonov (Uppsala University, Sweden & École des hautes études en sciences sociales [EHESS], France)

Polarization and Political Discourse: The Essentiality of Identity

Teresa Velázquez García-Talavera & Lucía Nieto Maestre (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain)

11:00-11:30 | Break

11:30-13:00 | Panel 5 – Rethinking “the People”: Theory & History Beyond Antagonism

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Thinking the People Through (and Beyond) ‘Populism’

Felipe Linden (École des hautes études en sciences sociales [EHESS], France)

Constituted by Refusal: Anti-Establishmentism and the Limits of Negative Identification

Matin Nikookar Ardestani (University of Warsaw, Poland)

The Spectre of Hannah Arendt in Critical Populism Studies

Thomás Zicman de Barros (Sciences Po, France)

13:00-14:00 | Lunch Break

14:00-15:30 | Panel 6 – Conceptual Innovations: Transgression, Grotesque and Aesthetic Radicalism

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Mapping the Transgressive Turn in Populism Studies: Achievements, Limits and Avenues for Future Research

Giorgos Venizelos (Cyprus University of Technology, Cyprus), Théo Aiolfi (Université Bourgogne Europe, France) & Thomás Zicman de Barros (Sciences Po, France)

Theorizing Grotesque Populism with Foucault

Xenophon Tenezakis (Université de Liège, Belgium & Université de Strasbourg, France)

The Temptation of Accelerationism in Contemporary Transdisciplinary Performance: From Raw Intensity to Populist Aesthetics

Elsa Quintin (Université Rennes 2, France)

15:30-16:00 | Break

16:00-16:30 | Keynote Speech

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Annie Collovald (Université Paris-Nanterre, France)

From Sovereign to Useless: The People Disenfranchised by Populism

Day 3 | Friday, 9 October

09:30-11:00 | Panel 7 – Mediated Peoples: Platform, Data, Discourse

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Populist Discourse across the South African Political Spectrum: Finding Common Ground on X

Nicola Davies-Laubscher (University of Cape Town, South Africa)

Fractured Demos: Populism, Reified Metaphors, and the Algorithmic Reconstruction of "the People" in the Age of LLMs

Gašper Pirc (Alma Mater Europaea & Science and Research Center Koper, Slovenia)

Populism, Loss Framing and the Discursive Construction of "the People": The Case of France and Türkiye

Serhat Calimli (Sciences Po, France)

11:00-11:30 | Break

11:30-13:00 | Panel 8 – The Far Right and Otherness: Migration, Islam and Gender

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The Effect of "Anti-Migration Discourse" on the Integration of Third Country Immigrants in the EU: Far-right Populist Discourse towards Maghrebi Immigrants in France

Hamid Ait-El-Caid (Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary)

Defending "Our" People: Populism, Gender and Anti-Muslim Migration Discourse on Lega's Instagram

Chiara Caterina Arena (KU Leuven, Belgium) & Miriam Jawadi (Aarhus University, Denmark)

(De)constructing History and Invisibilizing the People: An Analysis of the Documentary Adaptation of Éric Zemmour's "Le suicide français"

Maxime Cayrou (Université Bourgogne Europe, France)

13:00-14:00 | Lunch Break

14:00-15:30 | Panel 9 – Insurgent and Transgressive Peoples: Populism at the Margins

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El Tigre, the 'respectable' Colombians and the internal enemy: elite populism in the 2026 Colombian elections

Juliana Marín Taborda (Université de Toulouse-Jean Jaurès, France & Universidad de Antioquia, Colombia)

Recomposing the People: Travesti Belonging, Territorial Transmutation and Populist Transgression in Rural Catalunya, Spain

Mariana De Angelis Licori (University of Coimbra, Portugal)

A Populist Guerrilla? Meet Colombia's M-19

Sebastian Ronderos (Université de Namur, Belgium)

15:30-15:40 | Closing Remarks