

Volume 15 (Spring 2020) of *Iperstoria* (www.iperstoria.it)

Special Section Theme: **Populism and its Languages**

Editors: Massimiliano Demata (University of Turin)
Maria Ivana Lorenzetti (University of Verona)

Call for Papers

Today the term *Populism* is a trendy delegitimising term used by politicians to criticise the *modus operandi* of their opponents, portrayed as demagogues or manipulators. In political science, however, it is an ambiguous and complex phenomenon that ultimately entails putting into question the institutional order by constructing a dualistic view of society.

Populism has taken on many forms and connotations through time, also shifting from right-wing to left-wing orientation. Nowadays populist movements on both sides of the political spectrum exploit a feeling of disillusion, widely felt in the public sphere of many countries, in the traditional workings of representative democracy and in the establishment (or the “elite”) by claiming to represent the true will of the “people” and are founded on a divisive rhetoric (*us vs. them*).

Populism has been the subject of a vast literature and the source of intense scholarly debate. Many definitions of populism have been proposed, as it has been considered an ideology, or “thin-centred ideology” (Mudde), a discourse (Laclau), a style (Moffitt), a discursive style (Hofstadter) or a form of political strategy (Weyland). However, very little attention has been devoted to how populism is structured in discourse: while both media observers and scholars debate on who or what is truly “populist”, there are still gaps in the literature about the language – and most crucially the discursive strategies – used by populist actors as well as their electorate. This special section of *Iperstoria* on “Populism and Its

Languages” will focus on the discursive strategies used by those political leaders, movements and segments of the electorate who are ritually branded as “populist” within political and media discourses. The ultimate aim of this collection is to explore the possibility that there are certain common features in discourse that can be characterised as quintessentially populist.

We welcome contributions in English from scholars working within a wide range of theoretical approaches, both from a quantitative or qualitative perspective, addressing discourses (by leaders, parties, media as well as the public) in the Anglo-American public spheres that may be characterised as “populist”, that discuss populist performances, rhetoric and practices, or focus on different textual typologies (e.g. speeches, newspapers articles, social media posts). Papers may also include contrastive studies, but a focus on the Anglo-American perspective is required.

Abstracts, of no more than 300 words plus references and a short bio sketch of the author(s), should include a clear indication of the methodology used and should be submitted to both editors Massimiliano Demata (massimiliano.demata@unito.it) and Maria Ivana Lorenzetti (mariaivana.lorenzetti@univr.it) by 30 September 2019.

Papers will be subjected to a double-blind peer review process.

Submission Schedule:

30 September 2019: abstracts submission to the editors

15 October 2019: notification of acceptance

31 January 2020: first draft sent to the editors

30 March 2020: reviewers’ comments sent to authors

30 April 2020: submission of final manuscript

All inquiries regarding the issue should be sent to

massimiliano.demata@unito.it and mariaivana.lorenzetti@univr.it