

Descriptif d'enseignement / *Course descriptions*

Etudiants internationaux / International undergraduate program

2022-2023

Titre du cours – *Populism in a global perspective*

Titre en français **Le populisme : regards comparatifs**

Titre en anglais *Populism in a global perspective*

Type de cours : **électif**

Langue du cours/Language of instruction : Français ou Allemand, Anglais, Espagnol ...

Enseignant(s) – *Professor(s)*

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Titre ou profession MCF HDR

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Résumé du cours – **Objectifs** - *Course description – Targets*

Course description

From the Philippines to Poland, from India to the United States, it seems that we are currently witnessing a global, populist trend with different local manifestations. But what is populism? Is this term relevant to understand the apparent democratic malaise? What are the stakes linked to its different uses in the political arena, in the media sphere, in academia? Why does it emerge in very different historical, political and cultural contexts? Does it represent a threat for democracy or is it a healthy and necessary component of democratic debate?

Adopting a global perspective, this seminar aims at better understanding the various forms of populism that have existed across time and space, as well as their consequences for liberal understandings of democracy. The analysis does not only include parties and party leaders but also social movements and organizations (e.g. agrarian, conservative, alter-globalist, progressive, religious movements, etc.), as well as public opinion makers (e.g. different media outlets and media “entrepreneurs”, intellectuals).

Moreover, the course assesses the transformative impact of different varieties of populism on legislation and public policies (e.g. criminal law, fiscal and immigration policies), as well as on institutions (e.g. the use of direct democracy, the reform of the judiciary, etc) and on the broader evolution of democracies. By thus doing, it aims at shedding light on the double-edged nature of populism: while, in some cases, populism can pave the way for authoritarian rule or dictatorship, in other cases it can be a powerful mode of mobilization to voice the concerns of under-represented groups, to articulate democratic claims or to bring about democratic revolutions.

Learning objectives

1. Clarify the concept of “populism” - notably, in relation to other, frequently used notions such as “extremism”, “radicalism”, “demagoguery”, “authoritarianism”, etc.
2. Acquire a taste for comparisons, by inserting the debate on populism in a global perspective, on the basis of an international literature; understand that our personal understanding of “populism” is grounded in a specific, context-based socialization
3. Develop a taste for methods in the social sciences, by de-constructing the different uses made of this notion (in the political, media, academic fields)

Evaluation - Assessment

An oral presentation (20', ppt presentation, 3-4 students - tbc) on a topic chosen from a pre-selected list of topics.

Plan – Séances - Course outline

Class 1. Introduction to the topic and work assignments

- Are we experiencing a “populist” moment?
- A contested concept: scientific notion or Kampf begriff?

Class 2. Definitions and historical origins

- The US and Russia as cradles of populism?
- Conditions of emergence and opportunity structures

Class 3. Populism and democracy: a complex relationship

- Populism as a “pathology “ of democratic politics
- Populism as a reaction to depoliticized governance

Class 4. Theoretical models and types of populism

- Modernity, post-modernity & competing theoretical models
- Types of populism

Class 5. Populist leaders: male and charismatic?

- The “charismatic thesis” reconsidered
- The gendered dimension of populism

Class 6. Populism, changing media landscapes & polarized public spheres

- *Populism and types of media outlets*
- *Populism and conspiracy theories*

Class 7. Is there a specific, populist voter type?

- Debating the “anywheres vs somewheres” theory
- The different constituencies of the “populist” parties

Class 8. Populism and social movements

- Populism and « new » social movements »
- Populism and status-based movements

Bibliographie - Bibliography

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Bale, Tim and Cristobal Rovira Kaltwasser (2021) *Riding the populist wave. Europe’s mainstream Right in crisis*, Cambridge University Press.

Bobba, Giuliano and Nicolas Hubé (2021), *Populism and the politicization of the Covid-19 crisis in Europe*, Palgrave.

Canovan, M. (2005) *The People*, Polity press.

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- Tarragoni, Federico (2019), *L'esprit démocratique du populisme. Une nouvelle analyse sociologique*, La Découverte.