
CAAS (Croatian Association for American Studies) announces a Call for Papers for its 9th annual workshop

Tracing Populism in the U.S. and Comparative Perspective

The 2021 workshop will be hosted by the University of Zadar and will take place in Zadar, Croatia, on September 25, 2021.

Key-note speaker: Liam Kennedy (<https://www.ucdclinton.ie/our-staff/liam-kennedy>)

University College Dublin (topic, tba)

The topic of this year's American Studies workshop is "populism." Currently easily the central term in political debates, populism is equally applied to opposite poles of the ideological spectrum. As a social phenomenon, it is perceived as a dangerous anomaly, a symptom of crisis of political legitimacy, especially of liberal democracies. In the last decade, it has been associated with people's mass, but misguided reactions to austerity policies and the general precarization that followed the 2008 economic crisis. The "migrant crisis" in Europe and the global pandemic are said to further contribute to the populist trend. Populism thus presents us with a curious problem, namely, that the main threat to the present-day "rule of the people" comes from "the people" themselves. Populist mobilizations and populist politics -- internationally present, but confined to national contexts -- are therefore often qualified as "authoritarian" or "illiberal." The situation in the USA (the focus of our interest) both conforms to the above depiction and shows some distinctive features, since populism in the USA has a longer history, with roots in the complex late-19th c. agrarian and labor movements that called for a "democracy of producers." To these political and historical perspectives, we would like to add a cultural one, and ask the following questions: What is at stake in discussions of populism? How do the common binaries involved in our understanding of populism hold up to closer scrutiny (e.g. "the people" vs. "the elite")? Who are "the people" and how are they represented? What does populism tell us about liberalism, capitalism, and democracy? What are the technologies of populist mobilization? What kinds of affect does populism imply or demand? What sorts of cultural codes and symbolic practices are operative in populist contexts?

With these initial questions in mind, we invite contributions that would tackle any of the following problems (or add other relevant ones), both in the U.S.-American context and in comparative perspective:

- conceptualizing populism
- populism in historical perspective

- populism and crisis
- constructing "the people"
- liberalism and populism
- democracy and populism
- political economy of populism
- populism as political practice
- populism and capitalism
- nativism, nationalism and populism
- populism and class
- populism and race/ethnicity

- gender of populism
- populism and austerity
- populist sentiments, populist affects
- populism in literature
- performing populism
- aesthetic populism
- populism and the media
- populism and the Internet
- populism and nostalgia
- populism and manipulation
- populism and (dis)information
- fear of the masses
- "enemies" of the people
- representation and authenticity
- moral economy of populism
- conspiracy theories
- populism and identity politics

Titles and abstracts of **15-minute presentations**, accompanied by one-paragraph CV, should be sent to the workshop organizers by **June 1, 2021**, to **all the following e-mails**: Dr. Marko Lukić (mlukic@unizd.hr), Dr. Sven Cvek (scvek@ffzg.hr), and Dr. Jelena Šesnić (jsesnic@ffzg.hr).

Notifications of acceptance will be sent by June 15, 2021.

Due to public health emergency, we will plan for the following contingencies -- that the workshop take place partly on site and partly on-line, or fully on-line. The final decision will be announced as the workshop date approaches. We will make every possible effort to accommodate our participants, both local and international.

The workshop fee is 150 HRK (20 Euros). The fee is waived for the members in good standing of CAAS and of the AASSEE founding associations.

A selection of presentations will be published in a peer-reviewed, open access publication *Working Papers in American Studies* (hosted by the FF Open Press platform).