Date & Venue

The conference will take place at the *Université Saint-Louis – Bruxelles*, 1000 Brussels, Belgium between **May 18th and May 20th, 2020**.

Travel instructions and other information can be found on the conference website (www.discourseanalysis.net/en/DN24) .

Call for Papers:

This conference provides a forum for researchers who seek to analyze, challenge, and (re)think the concept and the practice of propaganda in the light of contemporary forms of discourse and communication across the ideological spectrum.

We invite authors to examine the relationship between concepts such as propaganda, ideology, hegemony and discourse in today's digital environment. Both empirical and theoretical contributions are welcome.

The notion of propaganda was seminal to the field of communication studies in the beginning of the 20th century. It derives its negative connotations from the way mass media have been intentionally used by state and corporate actors for partisan interests. Even though the term 'propaganda' may have grown out of fashion – both inside and outside of academia – its practices have not.

Notions such as 'public relations', 'advertising', 'political marketing', 'public diplomacy', 'political marketing' and 'advocacy' have now transplanted propaganda even though they often refer to similar discursive strategies of persuasion or (dis)information. As the term 'propaganda' grew less popular new terms emerged in order to label similar communication strategies that shape contemporary discourse and communication until this day.

Many critical approaches in discourse studies have treated propagandistic modes of communication through the lenses of 'ideology', 'hegemony', 'discourse' and 'power'. However, whereas all propaganda is ideological, not all ideology manifests itself as propaganda. Likewise, whereas all propaganda operates through discourse and communication, not all discourse or communication performs the function of propaganda.

Different forms of critical discourse studies have paid attention to ideological phenomena, but the term propaganda is remarkably absent from this field of inquiry. This may be explained with reference to underlying theoretical premises of specific discourse theoretical and discourse analytical approaches, a hypothesis that may also be explored at this conference.

In a global context marked by 'a return of the political', by an intensification of political debates across the political spectrum, and by a (re-)articulation of old and new political fault lines crossing local, regional, national and/or transnational contexts, the seemingly outdated notion of propaganda may provide a useful entry point for examining the (partially) strategic modes of communication practiced by activists on all sides of the ideological spectrum.

If propaganda is no longer associated exclusively with traditional institutional actors such as the state or corporations, the political and communicative strategies of social and political actors such as eco-activists, AltRight trolls, neoliberal think tanks or the peace movement may be (re)thought in terms of propaganda. This brings us back to the old question whether (specific forms of) propaganda hinder or facilitate democracy. It also leads us to explore uses of digital and algorithmic propaganda in contemporary populist projects.

Regardless of the question whether and how the term propaganda is used, 'strategies' of white, black and grey propaganda are practiced on an everyday basis while new ways of doing propaganda continue to be developed. In fact, propaganda practices are constantly being adapted to specific social, political and technological developments. As new technologies become available, the range of actors able to practice propaganda expands.

We welcome contributions that focus on the multimodal propaganda strategies and material (text, images, video, digital content, digital education, algorithms, Virtual Reality) of states, political parties, and corporate actors. We equally welcome contributions focusing on the communicative activities of social movements, think tanks, algorithms, advertising agencies, social media and public relations counselors. All abstracts fitting one or more of the following themes will be considered but we also leave space for interesting contributions that may not be that easy to classify:

- Theme 1: Conceptual and methodological issues for studying activism and propaganda

- Theme 2: Historical and contemporary transformations in activism and/or propaganda

- Theme 3: Democratic and anti-democratic modes of discourse, communication and ideology

- Theme 4: Digital and multimodal forms of activism, persuasion and disinformation

- Theme 5: Transdisciplinary dialogues on discourse and communication as propaganda and/or activism

- …

We especially welcome papers that rethink the notions of propaganda and activism in relation to key concepts in discourse studies. Such notions include power, subjectivity, reflexivity, critique, identity, context, language use and multimodal communication. Papers may also focus on the ethical problems that come with propagandistic activities. For instance, what does

propaganda mean for notions such as knowledge, political correctness, freedom of speech or critical awareness?

As the field of discourse studies is inherently transdisciplinary, we welcome authors from disciplines as varied as communication science, psychology, sociology, philosophy, literature, media studies and linguistics. Likewise, we seek to provide a forum for all methodological and theoretical orientations provided that the authors connect with the themes outlined in this call for papers.

Website: https://discourseanalysis.net/en/DN24

Contact: for all questions concerning the conference please contact discoursenet24@gmail.com .

Deadlines:

- Deadline for submitting abstracts: December 16th, 2019
- Notification of acceptance for abstracts: January 27th 2020
- Deadline for payment of registration fee: April 1st, 2020

Submission of abstracts

All other information concerning the conference can be found on www.discourseanalysis.net/en/DN24 .

Please **submit your abstracts** on the **conference registration website** on https://dn24.sciencesconf.org .

Payment of fees

Fees include (a) catering expenses for coffee breaks and lunches throughout the conference and (b) a one-year obligatory DiscourseNet membership fee worth 30 euros which enables you to participate in DiscourseNet events.

- **Regular fee**: 100 euros
- **Reduced fee** (for participants without institutional funding only): 80 euros

Payment instructions will be published after the notification of acceptance for abstracts (after January 27th, 2020).

Organizing committee

The **head of the organizing committee** for DN24 is **Jan Zienkowski** (PReCoM, Université Saint-Louis – Bruxelles, Belgium).

The 24th DiscourseNet conference is **hosted by PReCoM** (*Pôle de Recherches sur la Communication et les Médias / Université Saint-Louis – Bruxelles*. The conference is organised **in partnership with ReSIC** (*Centre de Recherche en Information et Communication / Université Libre de Bruxelles*) and with **DESIRE** (*Centre for the study of Democracy, Signification and Resistance / Vrije Universiteit Brussel*).

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- Carine Manimoye (communication PReCoM, Université Saint-Louis – Bruxelles, Belgium)
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