

**BETWEEN POPULISM AND TECHNOCRACY.
THE IMPOVERISHMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL'S ROLE
IN ITS RELATION WITH POLITICS**

Keywords

Technocracy; Populism; Individual's Role in Politics; Democracy; Liberalism

ABSTRACT

Background and Aim of the Research

The **starting point** of this project is the assumption that the individual's role in the political organization is subject to a process of impoverishment. This matches with the populist and technocratic tendencies of many political projects. While the populist tendencies reduce the individuals' role through their involvement in massifying processes, the technocratic programs reduce this role in detaching the individuals from their active political sphere. Thus, some questions arise. Is there actually a connection among populism, technocracy, and the (impoverishment of the) individual's role? In which form does this connection manifest? Which consequences could have this connection for the socio-political organization?

Aim of this project is to tackle these questions in order to offer both a philosophical interpretation of a daily observable political stand and an equally founded proposal to "sublate" it.

General Presentation and Methodological Approach

The **first section** concentrates on the main schools of thought about populism, technocracy, and the individual's role as well as on their principal current interpretations.

The **second section** pursues a development of the results of the preliminary phase. This will succeed abandoning the study of socio-political examples to concentrate on a conceptual analysis of "populism", "technocracy", and "individual's role", ranging from ancient to contemporary philosophy. This analysis represents the philosophical core of the research and its innovation in comparison with the usual references, which concern their issues mostly separated and on the basis of specific exemplifications.

The **third section** focuses on the answers to the starting questions. In the first stage of this section, the results of the conceptual analysis serve to a philosophical definition of the phenomena usually described as "populism", "technocracy", and "individual's role", in order to understand if these descriptions actually apply. In doing this, the philosophical descriptions will be compared with the "common" ones by answering some further questions: which form do the philosophically defined concepts assume in the social reality? Which philosophical connotations of these concepts can be identified in their possible manifestations in this reality? If this identification occurs, how do these aspects connect to each other? At this stage, the practical examples come into play again and the philosophical inquiry merges with a sociopolitical perspective. Through this double point of view, the third section of the inquiry

will present both the form assumed by the relation in which the analysed phenomena have been manifesting and the effects which this relation produces.

Expected Results

Thanks to the actualisation of a philosophical inquiry, this project expects to tackle the (supposed) crisis of the individual's role as the basis of the democratic system from a less polarizing perspective than the perspective advanced by both populist and technocratic political projects. To gain this more inclusive and progressive point of view this inquiry is also expected to better elucidate the facets of "populism", "technocracy", and "the (impoverishment of the) individual's role" through an in-depth analysis of these concepts as an *ensemble*, showing how a theoretical inquiry can affect the practical, political sphere of the human social reality.

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Since 2013 I have been a Ph.D. at the Faculty of Philosophy of the Georg-August-University Göttingen, where I'm also research assistant (wissenschaftliche Hilfskraft) at the Department of Philosophy of Law and Social Philosophy.

In the last four years, I have been researching the connections between the system of concepts, the system of language, and the system of law, with a special focus on the role of "values" and on the current legal system in the EU. My Ph.D. dissertation "*On Concepts, Values, and Law: a Reflection upon the Relation between Law and Society from the Perspective of the Philosophy of Law Exemplified through the Case of the European Union*" presents the results of this research.

I have also been confronting the issues of hegemony and tyranny both in ancient and in contemporary philosophy, as well as the problem of the legal gap from a philosophical point of view. My new main research field concerns the impoverishment of the individual's role in its relation with populist and technocratic politics. This connects with the academic background I acquired at La Sapienza University (Rom), where I concentrated on political philosophy, philosophy of language, and the critical theory.