



Call for Papers

“Conspiracy Theories, Populism, and the War Against Ukraine: Manifestations and Consequences” Third International Conference of the “Populism and Conspiracy Theory” Project (PACT) Tallinn, 25-27 September 2024

The final conference of the ERC-funded project “PACT: Populism and Conspiracy Theory” will take place in Tallinn, Estonia on 25-27 September 2024. It is organized in collaboration with the Institute of Philosophy and Semiotics at the University of Tartu. Situated at the crossroads of Eastern and Western influences, Estonia serves as a poignant backdrop for this event, having historically witnessed the interplay of diverse narratives and ideologies. Keynotes will be delivered by Anastasiya Astapova, Elżbieta Drajżkiewicz, Peter Knight, Scott Radnitz, and Paul Taggart.

The conference will have both a theoretical and a thematic focus. We are interested in theoretical investigations of the relationship between conspiracy theory, on the one hand, and populism, polarization, tribalism, democracy and democratic back-sliding, and/or extremism, on the other, from disciplines across the social sciences and humanities. We seek papers that employ qualitative methodologies as well as quantitative studies or mixed-methods. However, we are particularly interested in online or offline ethnographies of conspiracist communities.

At the same time, we invite submissions that specifically address conspiracy theories about the Russian war against Ukraine. As the pandemic ended, the invasion began. What remained were the conspiracy theories. In some cases, new narratives about bio labs and U.S. interference replaced older ones about lockdowns and vaccines. In other cases, the pandemic and war were integrated into overarching superconspiracy scenarios. What also did not change was that these conspiracy theories were and are truly believed by many who spread them, whereas there are also others who cynically used them as disinformation to achieve their goals. This interplay of genuine belief and strategic deployment is of special interest to us. So are the transnational flows and specific regional or national manifestations of conspiracy theories about the war, and the resonance that they have found in populist discourses in many countries.

Please send your **paper title, abstract** (max. 200 words) and a **short biographical note** (max. 70 words) as one PDF file to pact@es.uni-tuebingen.de by **30 November 2023**. Successful applicants will be notified by 20 December 2023.

PACT will cover the travel and accommodation costs of all speakers and provide most of the meals throughout the conference. There will be no registration fee.



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