

«Lessico di Etica Pubblica»
Call for papers

History and Political Discourse
Rhetoric, Ideology and Truth

Edited by Gabriele Vissio

In his last work, *The Historian's Craft*, written in captivity during the Second World War, Marc Bloch stated that «the mania for making judgments» is a «satanic enemy of true history». In the same years, in another prison, Fernand Braudel was giving to his cellmates some lectures on history, later published as *L'Histoire, mesure du monde*, and affirmed that we cannot accept a «Tribunal of History» no more. In the middle of the Second World War, these two famous French historians posed an historical problem which turned out to be crucial for the following generations: the political and public role of history. After the emergence of a distorted revisionism and the spread of negationist theories, contemporary historians had to deal with the so called “public use of history”. Today, the situation is even more complicated by the presence of a large community of non-professional historians like journalists, commentators and bloggers, which produce popular historical information. Furthermore, the advent of the internet and the widespread access to new opportunities, enabling a lot of people to produce and consume historical culture, have complicated the situation.

At the same time, if the majority of historians is aware of the risks implied by a history too deeply connected to contemporary ideologies, it is also true that writing history has often been conceived as a political activity. In this sense, in their pursuit of truth, historians make use of different epistemic resources, mixing different kinds of narrative tools, proofs, rhetoric and even ideological elements. To what extent are these argumentative tools justifiable as appropriate epistemological tools of history and under what circumstances they risk to allow an improper use of the historical discourse?

Essays on the following themes are expected:

1. Essays concerning the methodological and epistemological issues related to the main problem of the political and public role of history (the problem of historical objectivity and neutrality; the presence of rhetorical, narrative and ideological elements in the historical writing; the epistemological meaning of the “historical judgement”, etc.)
2. Essays which aim to clarify the relevance of history for current political and social problems: the importance of special histories (i.e. Women History, Queer History, History of Migrations, etc.) for the political debate; the role of history in the

transformation of the public sphere; the importance of historical memory for contemporary democracies; etc.

3. Essays concerning the problem of the “public use of history”, the *Historikerstreit* and the historical negationism, also with reference to specific case studies related to the current political debate (i.e. the reappearance of Fascism in the European public sphere).

4. Essays which aim to clarify how an historical education can promote democratic political values in multicultural contexts and complex societies (for example: how the introduction of a non-nationalistic historical education could positively develop democratic tolerance and intercultural dialogue?).

Deadline for essays: 15th October 2018

Publication: within the 31st December 2018

All articles must be submitted **no later than 15th October 2018**, in a form already prepared for blind review procedures. Texts in Italian, English and French are accepted; they must conform to the editorial guidelines that can be found at the following address <http://www.eticapubblica.it/>; the maximum allowed length is 30.000 characters (that also include footnotes and an abstract of max. 150 words to be written both in English and Italian).

Please submit your essay here: lepcfpstoria@gmail.com

For any further information please contact gabriele.vissio@live.it