

# SPS

PROF. HUGO CANIHAC

*The Struggle Within: Illiberals' liberal practices in the EU*

23 Gennaio 2024, ore 15 Aula Di Virgilio



The emergence of populist regimes in the EU – self-defined as champions of “illiberal democracy” – has fostered an important debate about the possibility of “illiberal” democracy and constitutionalism. This debate has largely revolved around the values of constitutional democracy. In this presentation, Prof. Canihac emphasizes a different, but nonetheless important, feature of these regimes: In their struggles against the EU, their arguments are not rarely couched in the liberal language of EU values and law, and they occasionally borrow from liberal judicial practices. Based on a close analysis of legal and official documents on the reform of the judicial system in Poland and the ‘asylum controversy’ in Hungary, it will be contended that populists are able to mobilize typically liberal discourses and practices to attack liberalism, thus highlighting the multiple ways in which the ‘illiberal challenge’ relates to the ‘populist challenge’. This approach is not only necessary to accurately understand the entanglements between these two challenges, but also to reflect on the weaknesses of contemporary liberalism.

Discussant: Prof.ssa Sabrina Ragone



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM  
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA  
DIPARTIMENTO DI SCIENZE POLITICHE E SOCIALI