

Call for papers

1st International Conference on Aporophobia

30-31 October 2023

IQS – Barcelona

‘Aporophobia’ is a neologism created by the renowned Spanish philosopher Adela Cortina to refer to the phenomenon of ‘rejection of the poor’. It takes different forms and it is not unusual to see the non-poor expressing indifference, disregard, superiority, contempt, antipathy, aversion, fear and even hate towards the poor. The concept of aporophobia helps us to appreciate how a series of social phenomena are interconnected and are part of the same narrative.

Aporophobic speeches target their victims not for their personal features, but exclusively for the fact that they are poor (independently of how we evaluate and measure poverty). Aporophobia flourishes in unequal environments where social relations are quintessentially asymmetric. Cortina argues that much of what we currently classify as xenophobia (in particular, but not only, within the European context) is in fact aporophobia: whereas well-off foreigners are welcome, poor immigrants that cross the Mediterranean are inhumanely rejected. This means that contemporary debates about immigration in Europe and elsewhere are in fact about rejecting the poor.

Cortina’s book about aporophobia, published in 2017 in Spanish and later translated into English, is a *tour de force*. That same year the word aporophobia was elected ‘word of the year’ by the BBVA Foundation and was included in the Dictionary of the Royal Academy of Spain. It is typified as a hate crime in Spain’s Penal Code and the Ministry of Domestic Affairs’ supports production of aporophobia statistics. In the recent history of social and human sciences very few concepts have produced a greater impact in such a short period of time.

However, aporophobia is not only an academic issue, quite the opposite. It is a real problem that impacts on the dignity of the most vulnerable people in our societies, making the lives of the poor much harder and the work of the institutions that try to help them. Aporophobia adds discrimination, prejudice and stigma to the burden of poverty. It diminishes societies’ support for social policies. It weakens the degree of progressivity of governments’ taxes and public spending. Aporophobia magnifies other kinds of discrimination, such as gender and racial discrimination, among others.

This conference has two main objectives. The first is to invite researchers from around the world to explore in depth issues related to the phenomenon of aporophobia: What are the main characteristics of aporophobia? How can we produce reliable indicators of aporophobia?, What is the exact relationship between aporophobia and other kinds of discrimination? Should aporophobia be classified as a hate crime as it is done in Spain? How do people become aporophobic? Can we classify institutions (schools, hospitals, etc) as aporophobic? Can we consider some countries more aporophobic than others? Could companies use aporophobia indicators to monitor what happens to their poorest workers?

This is an interdisciplinary conference; participation is invited from a wide range of fields of knowledge including philosophy, economics, sociology, political science, management, health,

education, history, criminology, and others. The keynote addresses will be given by **Professor Adela Cortina** and **Professor Jesús Conill**, both from the University of Valencia, Spain.

The second objective of the conference is to engage also with practical proposals about how to translate the analyses and diagnostics produced by its different sessions into concrete actions to make the world less aporophobic. To this end, proposals are also invited for workshops that explore aporophobia as a real-world problem and that can take place at IQS or in a collaborating institution. On the same line, the conference will conclude with the reading of a 'manifesto against aporophobia' elaborated by the institutions that organise this conference.

In order to produce a fully inclusive event no conference fees will be charged. However, places are limited and early registration is recommended. Participants will be responsible for their own expenses, such as meals and refreshments, accommodation, travel, etc.

Submission of proposals:

1. For academic articles: send a summary of up to 1000 words, the title of the article, names and affiliations of authors and contact details of corresponding author.
2. For practical workshops: send a summary of up to 1000 words, the title of the workshop, names of coordinators and organisations involved, proposed venue and duration of the workshop.

All proposals should be sent to aporophobia@iqs.url.edu until 31 July 2023. The announcement of accepted proposals will be sent by email by 15 August 2023.

Organising Committee:

Flavio Comim, Llorenç Puig, Xavi Casanovas, Oriol Quintana, Mihály Borsi, Octasiano Valerio, Cristina Montañola (IQS/URL); Bea Fernandez (Fundación Arrels); Míriam Feu (Càritas); Juan-Andreu Rocha Scarpetta (Pere Tarrés/URL); José Ignacio Garcia (Cristianismo y Justicia); Jesús Ruiz (Fundación Assis); Susanna Salvador (ESADE)