# Department of Anthropology and Sociology (ANSO)

Academic year 2020-2021

## Anthropology of Populism

**ANSO085- Autumn - 6 ECTS**
**Schedule & Room**

## Course Description

Recently populist movements have gained prominence in both Europe and the USA, having inflected the political landscapes of these two regions in arguably irreversible ways. There are important differences between so-called right wing and left wing populism; the similarities, however, are equally salient: they both, 1/ appeal to a seamless "people" as the undivided source of sovereignty; 2/ draw on a friend/enemy political logic; 3/ reject all forms of mediation in favor of the direct communication between leaders and their followers. This course explores this emergent populism both empirically and theoretically. Theoretically, the main social theories addressing populism will be reviewed. Empirically, the second part of the course will examine comparatively case studies from various parts of the world, as well as the response of populist regimes to the current global pandemic. In line with Anthropology, attention will be given to the social practices, affective investments, subjectivities, political interpellations and cultural forms that characterize populist political formations as inflexions of the democratic imaginary. All along, the question of whether recent populisms may be assimilated to classical populism or whether they are relatively emergent phenomena corresponding to our highly globalized predicament will be kept in mind.

> **PROFESSOR**

Rafael Sánchez
rafael.sanchez@graduateinstitute.ch

Office hours

> **ASSISTANT**

Purbasha Mazumdar
purbasha.mazumdar@graduateinstitute.ch

Office hours

# Syllabus
## Evaluation

Active student participation is expected. Each week 1-2 students will be responsible for presenting the material in class (guidelines will be provided). The final grade will be based on the following assignments:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 in-class presentation and class participation | %20 |
| 1 book or film review | %20 |
| 1 final paper proposal | %20 |
| 1 final paper | %40 |

The assignments will be posted on Moodle.

## Evaluation and Grading

The evaluation aims to encourage personal thinking and enhance students' ability to integrate the concepts of the course while exploring their own personal interests. It is based on classroom participation, both generally and through specific presentations, demonstrating familiarity with the assigned readings that will be discussed in the class, as well as the quality and timeliness of the writing assignments. More precisely, students will be requested to:

- Actively participate in the discussion of the assigned readings.
- Submit a book or film review directly relevant to the class topic of no more than 1500 words (excluding references).
- Submit a final paper proposal of no more than 1000 words (excluding references) by Wednesday 20 Nov 2019. It should set out the theme that will be developed in the final work, the problematique, the theoretical or practical issue, and explain the research questions. The topic chosen must be related to populism and build on the anthropological or sociological perspective, but is not limited to the topics addressed explicitly in the course and in the assigned readings.
- Submit a final paper of 3000 words maximum (excluding references and any appendices) developing the theme of the outline essay, by         Dec 2019.
- The final grade will be calculated as follows: 20% for the class presentation and general participation, 20% for book or film review, 20% for the final paper proposal, and 40% for the final paper. The course provides 6 ECTS. Attendance is mandatory and represents 1 ECTS, the readings, presentation and discussion 2 ECTS, and the written papers 3 ECTS.

## Course Policies

- Papers should be written in English, double-spaced, using standard 12 point font. The student's name, the paper's title, the date, the course's title and page numbers must be mentioned.
- Quotations and bibliography must follow the Chicago Manual of Style or the Harvard Referencing System.
- Students must hand in papers on time electronically as a Word file (no need to provide hard copies).
- Papers that are submitted with an unjustified delay, significantly exceed the word limit (i.e., more than 10%) will be graded down.
- Students who miss more than two classes without being excused by the instructor will not receive anything higher than a 4.0.
- Papers without clear links to the anthropological and sociological approach proposed in the course could be put at a disadvantage.

- Plagiarism constitutes a breach of academic integrity and will not be tolerated. Students who present the work of others as their own will receive a 0.
- All of the articles and book chapters indicated in the course schedule will be made available as electronic reserve on the course site.

## Course Schedule and Reading List

Please note that the theme of each week and the reading list might be modified during the semester. Students will be informed in due time.

### WEEK 1 Introduction: The Anthropology of Populism                    (September 16)

William Mazzarella, "The Anthropology of Populism: Beyond the Liberal Settlement," *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 48, October 2019, pp. 45-60.

Duncan Kelly, "Populism and the History of Popular Sovereignty." In: Kaltwasser et al eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Populism*. Oxford: Oxford U. Press, 207, pp. 511-530.

### WEEK 2  Theories of Populism I                    (September 23)

Ernesto Laclau, "Populism: What's in a Name." In: Francisco Panizza ed., *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy*. London and New York: Verso, 2005, pp. 32-50.

Benjamin Arditti, "Populism as an Internal Periphery of Democratic Politics." In: Francisco Panizza ed., *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy*. London and. New York: Verso, 2005, pp. 72-99.

Paulina Ochoa Espejo, "Populism and the Idea of the People." In: Kaltwasser et al eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Populism*. Oxford: Oxford U. Press, 20i7, pp. 607-624.

Recommended :
Benjamin Arditi, "The People as Re-presentation and Event." In *Perils of Populism*. Lexington: Kentucky U. Press, pp. 91-110.
Benjamin Arditi, "Populism is Hegemony is Politics? On Ernesto Laclau's On Populist Reason." *Constellations* Volume 17, No 3, 2010, pp. 488-497.

### WEEK 3 - Theories of Populism II                    (September 30)

Cass Mudde, "Populism: An Ideational Approach." In: Kaltwasser et al eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Populism*. Oxford: Oxford U. Press, 207, pp. 27-41.

Kurt Weyland, "Populism: A Political Strategic Approach." In: Kaltwasser et al eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Populism.* Oxford. Oxford U. Press, 207, pp. 48-68.

Pierre Ostiguy, "Populism: A Socio-Cultural Approach." In Kaltwasser et al eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Populism*. Oxford: Oxford U. Press, 207, pp. 73-92.

### WEEK 4   Does Populism = Fascism?                    ( October 7 )

Claude Lefort, "The Permanence of the Theologico-Political?" In Hent de Vries and Lawrence Sullivan, eds., *Political Theologies. Public Relations in a Post-Secular World*. Fordham: Fordham U. Press, 2006, pp. 148-187.

Enzo Traverso, *The New Faces of Fascism*. London and New York: Verso, pp. 2-27.

**WEEK 5 – Left and Right Wing Populisms**                                 **(October 14)**

Federico Finchelstein, "Returning Populism to History." *Constellations*, Vol. 21, Issue 4, December 2014, pp. 467-482.

Pierre Ostiguy and María Esperanza Casullo, "Left versus Right Populism: Antagonism and the Social Other." Article in progress, 25pp.

Jacob Hamburger, "Can there be a Left Populism." *Jacobin*, 2018

Recommended:
Eric Fassin, Populism *Le Grand Ressentiment*. Paris: Editions Textuel, 2017, pp. 9-85.

**WEEK 6  Crowds: The collective flesh of the social (mimesis, affect, contagion)**     **October 21**

William Mazzarella, "Sense Out of Sense: Notes on the Affect/Ethics Impasse." *Cultural Anthrop*ology, Vol. 32, Issue 2, pp. 199–208.

Peta Michel and Felix Victor Munch, "Contagion." In Christian Borch ed., Imitation, Mimesis, Affect: On Mimesis and Society. Routledge 2019.

Anna Gibbs "Panic! Affect Contagion, Mimesis and Suggestion in the Social Field." *Cultural Studies Review,* vol. 14, Number 2, Sep. 2008, pp. 130-142.

Hsu, Hua. "Affect Theory and the New Age of Anxiety." *The New Yorker* (2019).

Federica Castelli, "Bodies in the Streets. Assembling, Performing, Making and Taking the Urban Space." In *Explorations in Space and Society*, Num. 33, Sept. 2014: 19-21

**WEEK7  Crowds and Figures I: Crowds and the Political**                         **October 28**

Ernesto Laclau, *On Populist Reason*. London and New York: Verso, pp. 21-64.

Lacoue-Labarthe, Philippe and Jean-Luc Nancy, "La Panique Politique." In: Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy, *Retreating the Political*. London: Routledge 1997, pp. 1-31.

Passage on Crowds from the diaries of Thomas Hardy.

**WEEK 8  Crowds and Figures II: Crowds and the Retreat of the Political**         **November 4**

Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen, "The Primal Band" in *The Freudian Subject*, pp. 127-163; 226-237.

Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy, "The 'Retreat' of the Political." In: Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy, *Retreating the Political*. London: Routledge, pp. 122-134

Elias Canetti, Crowds and Power. New York: Continuum, pp. 15-21

Charles Baudelaire, "Crowds" (short poem); "To a Passerby (short poem).
Song "Les Foules" by Edith Piaf.

**WEEK 9 - "Real" and "Virtual" Crowds**                                    November 11

Rafael Sánchez, "Channel Surfing," In: *Religion and Media*. Stanford: Stanford U. Press. pp. 387-434.

Carsten Stage "The Online Crowd: a Contradiction in Terms? On the potentials of Gustave Le Bon's crowd psychology in an analysis of affective blogging." *Distinktion: Scandinavian Journal of Social Theory*, 2013Vol. 14, No. 2, 211–226.

Claudia Aradau and Tobias Blanke, "The Politics of Digital Crowds." In: *Explorations in Space and Society* 33 Sept. 2014 Pp. 31-38.

**WEEK 10 Populism (Old and New) : Venezuela**                              November 18

Rafael Sánchez, "Introduction: Populist Governmentality," In: Rafael Sánchez, *Dancing Jacobins: A Venezuelan Genealogy of Latin American Populism*. New York: Fordham U. Press 2016, pp. 1-37.

Rafael Sánchez, Humpty Dumpty Populism. Theopolitics and the Retreat of the Theologico-Political in Venezuela (and Elsewhere)." Unpublished paper to appear in *Social Analysis* in Fall 2020.

Recommended :
Carlos de la Torre, "Populism in Latin America." In: Kaltwasser et al eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Populism*. Oxford: Oxford U. Press, 207, pp. 194-210.

**WEEK 11 New Populism: India**                                             November 25

Christoph Jaffrelot and Louise Tillin, "Populism in India." In: Kaltwasser et al eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Populism*. Oxford: Oxford U. Press, 207, pp. 178-192.

Nitin Govil & Anirban Kapil Baishya, "The Bully in the Pulpit: Autocracy, DigitalSocial Media, and Right-wing Populist Technoculture." Communication Culture & Critique 11(2018) 67–84.

Max Rodenbeck, "A Mighty Wind." *The New York Review of Books*, 6 pp.

Dexter Filkins, "Blood and Soil in Narendra Modi's India." *The New Yorker*, 37pps.

**WEEK 12  Pandemic Populism I**                                           December 2

Robert Peckham, Viral Chatter and the Afterlife of Contagion." In Christian Borch ed., *Imitation, Contagion, Suggestion: On Mimesis and Society*. Routledge 2019.

More readings to be assigned.

**WEEK 13  - Pandemic Populism II**                                        December 9

Sebastian Vehlkeu, "Contagion Agents" Epidemics, Networks, Computer Simulations." In Christian Borch ed., *Imitation, Contagion, Suggestion: On Mimesis and Society*. Routledge 2019.

More readings to be assigned.

**WEEK 14 – Conclusion**                                                   December 16