

Department of Anthropology and Sociology (ANSO)

Academic year 2019-2020

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 authoritarian 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 Europe, the US, and Latin America. In line with Anthropology, attention will be given to the social practices, subjectivities, political interpellations and cultural forms that characterise authoritarian populism as an inflexion of the democratic imaginary. All along, the question of whether recent populisms are assimilable to classical populism or whether they are a relatively emergent phenomenon corresponding to our highly globalized predicament will be kept in mind.

> PROFESSOR

Rafael Sánchez
rafael.sanchez@graduateinstitute.ch

[Office hours](#)

> ASSISTANT

Marie De Lutz
marie.delutz@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	%20
1 book or film review	%30

1 final paper proposal	%20
1 final paper	%30

The assignments will be posted on blackboard.

Lecture Topics and Assigned Reading:

- Wednesday **September 18** *Introduction: The Anthropology of Populism*
William Mazzarella, "The Anthropology of Populism: Beyond the Liberal Settlement,"
Annual Review of Anthropology, May 20, 2019
Margaret Canovan, *The People*, Cambridge: Polity Press 2005, pp. 40-112.
- Wednesday **September 25** *Theories of Populism I*
Margaret Canovan, *The People*. Cambridge: Polity Press 2005, pp. 122-138
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.
Chantal Mouffe, "The 'End of Politics' and the Challenge of Right-Wing Populism." In: Francisco Panizza ed., *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy*. London and New York: Verso, 2005, pp. 50-71.
- Wednesday **October 2** *Theories of Populism II*
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. 32-50
Benjamin Arditi, "Populism is Hegemony is Politics? On Ernesto Laclau's On Populist Reason." *Constellations* Volume 17, No 3, 2010, pp. 488-497.
Benjamin Arditi, "The People as Re-presentation and Event." In: *Perils of Populism*. Lexington: Kentucky U. Press, pp. 91-110.
- Wednesday **October 9** *Theories of Populism IV*
Eric Fassin, *Populism: Le Grand Ressentiment*. Paris: Editions Textuel, 2017, pp. 9-85.
- Wednesday **October 18** *Theories of Populism V*
Pierre Rosanvallon, *Counter-democracy: Politics in an Age of Distrust*. Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press 2008, pp. 249-318.
- Wednesday **October 16** *Crowds and Figures I*
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.
- Wednesday **October 23** *Crowds and Figures II*
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

- Wednesday **October 30** *“Real” and “Virtual” Crowds*
 Rafael Sánchez, “Channel Surfing,” In: *Religion and Media*. Stanford: Stanford U. Press. pp. 387-434.
 Charles Baudelaire, “Crowds“ (short poem); “To a Passerby (short poem).
 Song “Les Foules” by Edith Piaf.
 Claudia Ardaud and Tobias Blanke, “The Politics of Digital Crowds.” *Explorations in Space and Society* 33 Sept. 2014 Pp. 31-38.
 Andrea Mubi Brighenti, “New Media Sociofugal Spaces.” *Explorations in Space and Society* 33 Sept. 2014, pp. 45-47.
 Federica Castelli, “Bodies in the Streets.” *Explorations in Space and Society* 33 Sept. 2014, pp. 19-21.
 Geoff Cox, “The Digital Crowd: Some Questions on Globalization and Agency” *Design Issues*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (Spring, 1999), pp. 16-25.
 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*, 2013 Vol. 14, No. 2, 211–226.
- Wednesday **November 13** *Classical Populism I: Venezuela*
 Rafael Sánchez, “Introduction: Populist Governmentality,” “Epilogue: Dancing and the Return of the Crowds.” In: Rafael Sánchez, *Dancing Jacobins: A Venezuelan Genealogy of Latin American Populism*. New York: Fordham U. Press 2016, pp. 1-37, 331-335.
- Wednesday **November 20** *Classical Populism II: Argentina*
 Readings to be assigned.
- Wednesday **November 27** *Populism Today: Venezuela*
- Wednesday **December 4** *Populism Today I: Trump’s USA*
 Readings to be assigned.
 W. J. T. Mitchell, “Image, Space, Revolution: The Arts of Occupation,” pp. 8-32.
 Bernard E. Harcourt, “Political Disobedience, ” pp. 33-55.
- Wednesday **December 11** *Populism Today II: France*
 Readings to be Assigned
- Wednesday **December 18** *Conclusion*