



# Populism and Theopolitical Charisma

## Graduate Student Competition

### Call for Abstracts

From Occupy Wall Street to Brexit, contemporary, global forms of populism have allied with claims and counter-claims to sovereignty and territorial borders. In 2019, demonstrations in Chile, Hong Kong, and Lebanon have further attested to political crises of representing “the people” across liberal-democratic and authoritarian states. Imaginaries of public opinion and the vox populi loom large in the upcoming 2020 elections in the U.S, having already attracted electorates this past year in Brazil, Italy, Britain, and Canada. Throughout these contexts and elsewhere, the rise of populisms has intensified discussion around critiques of authority, expertise, individualism, and liberalism.

Our workshop invites abstracts for original research papers that address the theopolitical elements of populist movements and expressions worldwide. We are interested in papers dealing with past as well as present forms of populism. What histories of charismatic politics and theology shape the promises and perils of populism? What forces of authority unsettle and exceed the normative political imagination of “the people”? What forms of media, technology, and representation mobilize populist imaginaries and movements? How are such populisms shaped into scenes of protest, potential anarchic formations, and demagogic images of “the people”? We welcome work on various topics including but not limited to the following: nationalism, migration, diaspora, climate change, public culture, aesthetics and architecture, race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, native and indigeneity studies, political theology, and religious movements.

### Eligibility

Graduate students (masters and doctoral level) from the University of Chicago and the University of Toronto are eligible. The competition is open to papers from all fields and all disciplines. Selected participants will be expected to: 1) pre-circulate their **papers of 5,000 words minimum by April 17, 2020** and; 2) participate in a workshop to be held at the **University of Chicago on May 8 and 9, 2020**. Travel and lodging expenses for University of Toronto participants will be covered, and University of Chicago participants will receive a modest honorarium.

### To Apply

Applications must include the following: 1) 750-word abstract for your proposed paper; 2) 250-word statement of your paper’s relevance to the workshop themes, and; 3) full CV. The deadline is **January 24, 2020**. Submit your materials as one PDF file via email to: [heo@uchicago.edu](mailto:heo@uchicago.edu). In the subject heading of your email, please write: “Populism 2020.” Selected participants will be notified by the first week of February. This workshop is co-organized by Simon Coleman (Toronto), Angie Heo (Chicago), and Valentina Napolitano (Toronto). It is supported by the **Connaught Global Challenge Initiative** and the Office of the **Dean at the University of Chicago Divinity School**.

For information relating to this research initiative, see <https://entangledworlds.utoronto.ca/>. Further inquiries may be sent to: [entangledworlds.anthropology@utoronto.ca](mailto:entangledworlds.anthropology@utoronto.ca).