



SUMMER SCHOOL IN GLOBAL POLITICS, DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITY 2021

Democracy and Inequality in the Age of Polarization

Instructor: Pablo Beramendi (Duke University)

Date: June 21 – 22

Time: 4.00 pm – 7.00 pm (CEST, Barcelona time)

Format: online

The era of polarized politics is also the era of extreme inequality. In this seminar we revisit the historical relationship between the democracy and inequality. We discuss the mechanisms through which democracy conditions the allocations of assets and income in society over time and the channels through which inequality shapes the way democracies work. Revisiting these links provides solid grounds to address the following questions in an analytical and informed way: Is democracy in danger in the era of polarized politics? What makes democratic regimes stable? What undermines democracy and the way it fulfills its basic functions of control, representation, and responsiveness? What makes democracies die or survive?

Session 1. Inequality and Democracy in the Long Run

In this session we revisit the central arguments about the two-way relationship between inequality and democracy and set the stage for an analytical treatment of the way they condition each other.

Required reading:

Boix, Carles 2003 *Democracy and Redistribution*, Cambridge University Press (selections)

Ansell, Ben and David Samuels 2010 *Inequality and Democratization*, Cambridge University Press (selections)

Amat, Francesc and Beramendi, Pablo 2019 "Democracy under High Inequality: Political Participation and Public Goods" *Journal of Politics*, 82-3

Session 2. Crisis of Democracy?

Are polarization and inequality undermining democracy? If so, how? In this session we review and discuss recent arguments about the scope in the erosion of democracy, the channels driving it, and the scope conditions for arguments predicating the "death" of democratic regimes.

Required reading:

Przeworski, Adam 2019 *Crises of Democracy*, New York, Cambridge University Press

Graham, Matthew and Svobik, Milan 2020 "Democracy in America? Partisanship, Polarization, and the Robustness of Support for Democracy in the United States" *American Political Science Review* 114, 2: 392-409

Beramendi, Pablo; Boix, Carles; and Stegmueller, Daniel 2021 "Development, Inequality, and the Survival of Democracy". Working Paper, Duke University and Princeton University