

University of Mannheim
Chair of Quantitative Methods in the Social Sciences
Prof. Daniel Stegmüller, Ph.D.
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Spring 2016

The Politics of Inequality and Redistribution

Syllabus

Thursdays, 18 February 2016 - 2 June 2016, 3.30pm - 5pm

A5,6 B 317

Office: D7,27; room 312
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Course Outline

Economic inequality and its effect on democratization and democratic consolidation is widely discussed in comparative politics. Some argue that with increasing economic inequality in society, elites face higher costs for giving up authoritarian rule, which otherwise serves them as an institutional means for sustaining unequal class or group relations. Why then do autocratic regimes ever undergo processes of democratization? And how can we explain democratic consolidation? These are the fundamental questions we are going to address in the first part of the course.

In the second part, we turn the focus to the relationship between advanced democracies and redistribution. We discuss how economic inequality may manifest itself in political inequality, and how differences in the design of democratic institutions could interfere in this process. Generally, we ask why some democracies redistribute economic resources more equally than others, and effects of economic inequality on politics and political responsiveness.

Students will get familiar with the most influential contributions in the topics presented above. Furthermore, the course emphasizes research design and questions of causal inference in the discussed literature.

Requirements

Read the assigned literature thoroughly before class and **engage in discussions** during class. All required readings will be uploaded on ILIAS. Presentations are uploaded after class. I provide you with guiding questions that you might find useful when reading the literature in due time.

Students give a **presentation** based on one class topic. Literature for presentations is marked with *. Presentations should (a) take no longer than 15-20 minutes, (b) introduce

the main arguments and findings in the readings, (c) provide (at least) three critical discussion questions to class members.

Each student writes an **analytical summary** that accompanies the presentation and is handed in one week before your presentation, at the latest by Friday, 4pm. The analytical summary should (a) be no longer than 2-3 pages (double spaced, 12pt, formatted as justified text), (b) identify the main research question and argument, (c) discuss findings and conclusions, (d) present one or two questions that have not been answered by the authors but you would be interested in. Do not forget to write a brief introduction and conclusion.

Prepare **two versions**, one anonymized, the other with your name. The anonymized version goes to the presenters, the other goes to the instructor. The anonymized version will be uploaded on ILIAS. Each class participant reads the analytical summary of his or her class mates before class and prepares (at least) **one question for class**. The question can be (a) an argument or conclusion made in the literature that you either did not understand completely or that you would like to discuss further, (b) points in the analytical summaries that you would like to discuss further, (c) something you think is interesting but has not been questioned yet by either the literature or the presenters.

I will appoint **discussants** for each presentation. The discussants read all analytical summaries of the presenters they are assigned to. As a discussant, you provide valuable and constructive feedback to the presenters, based on their analytical summaries as well as the presentation. Emphasize points that you find interesting and points that you think could be clearer. Also discuss points that you think should be elaborated further.

The **final paper** is due on **Thursday, 30 June 2016 5pm** and has approximately **15 pages**. The final paper has the following structure: (a) an introduction where you present the topic of your paper, (b) an analytical summary of previous literature, (c) your research question and why you think it is important, (d) an argument that could answer your question, (e) empirical cases or data that supports your argument, (f) a conclusion. Points 1-3 can be a **revised** version of your analytical summary, where you consider my feedback, and your class' questions and comments. 2/3 of your final grade in the paper is based on (1) your understanding of the literature you worked with, (2) the structure and clarity of your argument, (3) the match between your argument and the research design you chose in order to support your argument empirically. 1/3 is based on structure (points 1-5), form (approximately pages), and style (1.5 spaced, Times New Roman 12pt/Arial 11pt, formatted as justified text).

Essays are submitted to the instructor via E-Mail in PDF format and include a pledge and cover page. Please submit a hard copy to the Lehrstuhl secretariat (D7,27; room 302).

You are always welcome to meet with me, either during office hours or by appointment. Please do come by at the latest in the week before your presentation.

- **Absences:** You are expected to attend every class. Please let me know in advance if you will not be able to attend a class session. The class is organized in a cumulative manner, it is therefore necessary that you catch up with the material in case that you miss a class.
- **Cheating:** The University's minimum penalty for plagiarism is to fail the course. Cheating or plagiarism can lead to expulsion (Exmatrikulation) from the University.
- **Suggestions:** Suggestions for improvement are welcome at any time!

Schedule

February 18 Introduction

Economic Inequality, Democratization and Democratic Consolidation

February 25 Inequality and Democratization
March 3 Inequality and Consolidation
March 10 Testing Causal Claims
March 17 Mobilizing the Masses (rescheduled to April 5)

Easter Break

March 24
March 31

Political Representation

April 7 Income Inequality and Preferences for Redistribution
April 14 Political Inequality
April 21 Democratic Institutions
April 28 Government Partisanship and Labor Interests
Mai 5 no class (Ascension Day)

Social Dynamics

Mai 12 Social Mechanisms and Group Loyalty
Mai 19 Social Identity and Social Distance
Mai 26 no class (Corpus Christi)

June 2 Summary and Paper Ideas

Session 1: Introduction

The first session provides you with a broad overview of links between economic development, economic inequality, democratic transition, and democratic stability.

Session 2: Inequality and Democratization

Some scholars argue that inequality harms both democratization and consolidation, others that inequality inhibits consolidation but predicts democracy in an inverted U-shaped curve.

Seymour Martin Lipset. 1959. "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy." *American Political Science Review* 53 (1): 69–105

Carles Boix. 2003. *Democracy and redistribution*. Cambridge studies in comparative politics. Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, *Ch. 1, p. 19-47*

Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson. 2006. *Economic origins of dictatorship and democracy*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, *Ch. 2, p. 22-47*

Session 3: Inequality and Consolidation

We focus on the consolidation of democratic government and distributional conflicts.

Adam Przeworski. 2000. *Democracy and development: Political institutions and well-being in the world, 1950-1990*. Cambridge studies in the theory of democracy. Cambridge [U.K.] and New York: Cambridge University Press, *Ch. 2*

- * Christian Houle. 2009. "Inequality and Democracy: Why Inequality Harms Consolidation but Does Not Affect Democratization." *World Politics* 61 (04): 589–622

Session 4: Testing Causal Claims

Today we discuss how to design research in order to getting closer towards identifying causal pathways.

Ross E. Burkhart. 1997. "Comparative Democracy and Income Distribution: Shape and Direction of the Causal Arrow." *The Journal of Politics* 59 (01): 148

- * Stephan Haggard and Robert R. Kaufman. 2012. "Inequality and Regime Change: Democratic Transitions and the Stability of Democratic Rule." *American Political Science Review* 106 (03): 495–516

Session 5: Mobilizing the Masses

Demands for redistribution may increase with increasing inequality, but without mobilizing the masses there is no pressure for elites.

- * Eva Bellin. 2012. “Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring.” *Comparative Politics* 44 (2): 127–149
- * Vincent Durac. 2015. “Social movements, protest movements and cross-ideological coalitions – the Arab uprisings re-appraised.” *Democratization* 22 (2): 239–258

Session 6: Income Inequality and Preferences for Redistribution

Why are some democracies less egalitarian and redistribute little while others are more egalitarian and redistribute a great deal?

- * Karl O. Moene and Michael Wallerstein. 2003. “Earnings Inequality and Welfare Spending: A Disaggregated Analysis.” *World Politics* 55 (4): 485–516
- * Torben Iversen and David Soskice. 2009. “Distribution and Redistribution. The Shadow of the Nineteenth Century.” *World Politics* 61 (3): 438–486

Session 7: Political Inequality

Political inequality as an outcome of economic inequality?

- * Martin Gilens. 2005. “Inequality and Democratic Responsiveness.” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 69 (5): 778–796
- * Nathan J. Kelly and Peter K. Enns. 2010. “Inequality and the Dynamics of Public Opinion: The Self-Reinforcing Link Between Economic Inequality and Mass Preferences.” *American Journal of Political Science* 54 (4): 855–870

Session 8: Democratic Institutions

How do democratic institutions influence levels of redistribution?

- * Jacob S. Hacker and Paul Pierson. 2010. “Winner-Take-All Politics: Public Policy, Political Organization, and the Precipitous Rise of Top Incomes in the United States.” *Politics & Society* 38 (2): 152–204
- * Elizabeth Rigby and Gerald C. Wright. 2013. “Political Parties and Representation of the Poor in the American States.” *American Journal of Political Science* 57 (3): 552–565

Session 9: Government Partisanship and Labor Interests

Does it make a difference, which party governs?

- * Walter Korpi and Joakim Palme. 2003. “New Politics and Class Politics in the Context of Austerity and Globalization: Welfare State Regress in 18 Countries, 1975-95.” *American Political Science Review* 97 (3): 425–446
- * David Rueda. 2005. “Insider–Outsider Politics in Industrialized Democracies: The Challenge to Social Democratic Parties.” *American Political Science Review* 99 (01): 61–74

Session 10: Social Mechanisms and Group Loyalty

The rich as advocates for the poor: How institutions shape political coalition groups.

- * Walter Korpi and Joakim Palme. 1998. “The paradox of redistribution and strategies of equality: Welfare state institutions, inequality, and poverty in the Western countries.” *American Sociological Review*: 661–687
- * Erzo F. P. Luttmer. 2001. “Group Loyalty and the Taste for Redistribution.” *Journal of Political Economy* 109 (3): 500–528

Session 11: Social Identity and Social Distance

We change the focus from levels of inequality to the structure of inequality and social characteristics.

- * Moses Shayo. 2009. “A Model of Social Identity with an Application to Political Economy: Nation, Class, and Redistribution.” *American Political Science Review* 103 (02): 147–174
- * Noam Lupu and Jonas Pontusson. 2011. “The Structure of Inequality and the Politics of Redistribution.” *American Political Science Review* 105 (02): 316–336

Session 12: Summary and Paper Ideas

In our final session, each of you gets the chance to present ideas for the final paper. Don’t forget think about how to test your argument empirically.

Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing social inquiry: Scientific inference in qualitative research*. Princeton paperbacks. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, *Ch. 1*