



INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH SEMINAR



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The Erosion of Democracy

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Abstract

While democratic theorists often argue that democracy is in crisis, they nonetheless maintain it retains the capacity to revive itself. I argue that instead democracy has been eroded – it has lost certain preconditions that are necessary for it to credibly make the promises long associated with it. Drawing on Michael Th. Greven, I make the case that modernisation and democracy have become opposed, such that the more modernisation intensifies, the more eroded or exhausted democracy becomes. This process of erosion involves “ratchet effects”, such that it becomes steadily less possible to restore lost capacities.