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***Platform for Dialogue***

**Crises of democracy in Latin America: exploring challenges and alternatives**

November 25-27, 2021  
University of Guadalajara (Mexico)

Democracy as a political regime is experiencing a global crisis. The generalized diagnosis points towards an institutional failure in the organization of life in common in our contemporary societies, linked with growing demands of economic welfare, recognition and inclusion, justice and security. In this context, and despite its national particularities, countries in the Latin American region share a common denominator: the questioning of liberal-democratic regimes and the moral bankruptcy of the prevailing economic system in each case. Democratic disenchantment in the region involves major deficits of governmental legitimacy, welfare and distributive justice, and democratic-political representation. Citizens' protests against insufficient and bad representation, growing social and political polarization, the expansion of populism in its different manifestations (leaderships, movements, governments) are expressions of both democratic challenges and alternative understandings of democracy as an ideal and as practice. In analyzing them we must critically question dichotomic thinking (democratic and anti-democratic) founded in universalistic models of democracy, as well as in ahistorical narratives of the present in order to reinstate the experimental character of democracy.

While current academic debate has produced a wide and sophisticated range of literature, we consider that the dominant interpretative frameworks which have prevailed in the analysis of the crises of democracies are insufficient for a critical assessment of current conditions and unsatisfactory for igniting alternative projections of democratic societies. Reflecting upon the complexity of these processes is an urgent task to grasp alternatives emerging as responses to the various tensions and challenges inherent to democracy. What we see today in Chile, Argentina, Mexico, Brazil, Venezuela, in the United States



demonstrates the urgency of rethinking democracy's conceptual and normative presuppositions, the practical dilemmas of political organization, negotiation of interests, and the complex nature of democratic legitimacy. Naturally, these are problems question the paradigms of thought and analysis, and that become intersected with our traditions of discourse and public discussion, our political cultures, our utopian imaginaries and aspirations of transformation and social progress. In this sense, the current experiences of democracy urge us to discuss, analyze, examine and deliberate altogether, particularly to those of us engaged in academic life.

This platform is an invitation to deepen our understanding regarding the nature and meaning of democratic deficits in the region, to revisit the analytic categories with which we operate, and to collectively think about the existing and desirable alternatives to the current state of democracies. We are interested in discussing how we should analyze the current state of democracies and conduct the necessary critique to re-democratize contemporary societies. The purpose is to generate an interdisciplinary dialogue, interregional and intergenerational, that contributes to the configuration of more critical narratives of the current conditions from different disciplines, perspectives, and concerns.

This platform invites scholars and researchers to participate in this international event with papers addressing one or various of the following areas:

1. Deficits and/or key dynamics of the democratic “crisis” in Latin America
2. International perspectives on deficits and/or key dynamics of the democratic “ crisis”
3. Narratives: trans-disciplinary interpretive and analytical frameworks
4. Alternatives: political thought and theory, institutions and experiences of democratic revitalizing.



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### **Application guidelines:**

- The call aims to bring together researchers working from various disciplines and traditions of social and political thinking, who can bring solid theoretical and empirical reflections about one of the four areas mentioned in the call.
- Application: Fill out the [application form](#) with a title and summary (300-400 words) of the proposal and a brief academic sheet indicating professional career path and relevant publications.
- Language: Spanish or English
- Deadline for submission of proposals: May 09, 2021
- An academic committee will select works following a criteria of excellence. Applicants will be notified before June 15, 2021, on the decisions regarding their works.
- The symposium is conceived as an in-person event. However, if sanitary conditions don't allow for travel during these dates, the event will take place in a digital or hybrid format.
- CALAS will assume all accommodation costs for the participants. Additionally, limited resources for traveling to Guadalajara, Mexico will be available.

### For more information:

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