

17.588f13 Week 2 “Social Structure, Classes, and Political Regimes”

Questions for Class Discussion

What do Aristotle, Madison, Marx, Weber, and Rueschemeyer et al. mean by class? How does class differ from status? In what other ways might class be defined?

What is the relationship between class (on the one hand) and political identities or behavior (on the other)? Why, for Rueschemeyer et al., does class trump other social categories?

According to Rueschemeyer et al., what is the social basis for democracy? When will democracy be established? When will it break down? How is their argument different from that of pluralists (like Madison or Dahl)? From Acemoglu & Robinson?

Compare the methods used by Acemoglu & Robinson to those of the other authors. What do you see as the advantages or disadvantages of each?

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17.588 Field Seminar in Comparative Politics
Fall 2013

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