

Co-Directors

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Faculty Members

Payal Arora. *Department of Media Culture Studies at Utrecht University, Netherlands.*

Zsolt Enyedi. *Democracy Institute, Central European University, Budapest, Hungary.*

Eva Fodor. *Gender Studies and Democracy Institute, Central European University, Budapest, Hungary.*

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Ingo H. Warnke. *German and Interdisciplinary Linguistics, University of Bremen, Germany.*

Aishwary Kumar. *Democracy Institute, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, USA.*

Group A: Graziela Ares, Sergio Barbosa, Yamin Chowdhary, Jawhar Cholakkathodi, Zhea Katrina Estrada, Kristijan Fidanovski, Romee Klis, Hiu Laam Lam, Muhammed Manjappulan, Holly Narey, Palesa Nqambaza-Lebea, Safa Poovallur, Varvara Prodai, Muhammed Salih Vilakkath Palliyali, Doha Tamri.

Group B: Carla Akil, Rachel Risako Asano, Million Kassa Bekele, Tristan Brelage, Clarisse Charlier, Temitope Famodu, Philip Egbule, Eirini Ktori, Charles Kleinfeld, Apala Mandal, Tomas Nociar, Vita Raskeviciute, Jan Schulze Buschoff, Willa Rae Witherow-Culpepper, Zsafia Veszely.

Course Overview

Conservative governments and right wing regimes across different country contexts today share a set of strikingly similar strategies that can be summed up as 'demographic imaginaries'. They are nurtured by anxieties and conspiracy myths such as the narrative of the 'great replacement', as well as other forms of majoritarian identity politics which imagine the majority (white, Christian and heterosexual, Hindu, Turkish Sunni Muslim, or 'European' etc.) as threatened by minorities and their struggle for equal rights. These anxieties are at the core of soft authoritarian attempts to reconstitute the body politic, transforming the population along ethnic and social lines to uphold the electoral majority. A wide range of tactics from gerrymandering to neo-Malthusian development policies and population control, anti-abortion legislation, anti- and pro-natalist discourses and policies, are used to secure power.

This Summer School will address the central role of these demographic imaginaries in facilitating soft authoritarian politics in different parts of the world. It aims to approach this topic from an interdisciplinary and globally comparative perspective. Looking into the specific political, juridical, cultural, technological, and discursive practices in the different country contexts, it will problematize how these narratives and policies remain entangled with longstanding nationalist, racist, and sexist notions and colonial fantasies. It will examine how they are reframed today and the technological infrastructures and data-political presumptions they involve. The Summer School therefore has the overall goal of grasping the extent of these politics, their contradictions and effects, and the dangers that they entail for democratic and peaceful living together.

Demographic Imaginaries

Soft Authoritarianism, Majoritarian Identity Politics and Demographic Anxieties

*Central European University
Budapest, Hungary
July 15–20, 2024*



DAY 1 - Monday, July 15

9:00 SUN Orientation
Location: Auditorium B

9:30 Course administration
in classroom

10:00 Keynote Lecture plus Q&A:
Demographic Anxieties &
Soft Authoritarianism (Part1)
Randeria & Enyedi

11:30 BREAK

11:45 Workshop: Demographic
Anxieties & Soft
Authoritarianism (Part 2)
Randeria & Enyedi, Chair:
Flader

13:15 LUNCH

15:45 Office Hour

DAY 2 - Tuesday, July 16

9:00 Keynote Lecture plus Q&A
Discourses of De/
Marginalization (Part1)
Scharloth & Warnke, Chair:
Steinhauer

10:30 BREAK

10:45 Workshop: Discourses of
De/Marginalization (Part2)
Scharloth & Warnke
Chair: Steinhauer

12:25 LUNCH

13:45 Student Presentations
Group A: Muslim & Other
Marginalised Communities
in India; Hindu-Nationalism
Faculty: Ram, Randeria
Chowdhary, Poovallur,
Vilakkath Palliyali
Group B: Thread to the
Ethnostate
Faculty: Fodor, Saluk
Nociar, Raskeviciute, Famodu

15:15 BREAK

15:45 Student Presentations
Group A: Neoliberalism &
Racial Othering
Faculty: Scharloth, Warnke
Tamri, Lam
Group B: Re/Presentation
of Women*
Faculty: Steinhauer, Enyedi
Egbule, Charlier

DAY 3 - Wednesday, July 17

9:00 Keynote/Panel Discussion plus
Q&A: Gender Regimes & Anti-
Liberal State (Part1)
Fodor & Saluk

10:30 BREAK

10:45 Workshop: Gender Regimes &
Anti-Liberal State (Part 2)
Fodor & Saluk

12:25 LUNCH

13:45 Student Presentations
Group A: Gender & Sexual
Minorities
Faculty: Fodor, Flader
Narey, Klis, Nqambaza-Lebea
Group B: Women* &
Reproductive politics
Faculty: Saluk, Polat
Ktori, Akil, Mandal

15:15 BREAK

15:45 Student Presentations
Group A: Politics of Fertility
Faculty: Ram, Zoanni
Fidanovski, Manjappulan
Group B: (Queer) Minorities &
Heteronormativity
Faculty: Steinhauer, Warnke
Bekele, Veszely

DAY 4 - Thursday, July 18

10:45 Keynote: Kumar, Chair: Ram

12:25 LUNCH

13:45 Student Presentations
Group A: Disinformation
Faculty: Arora, Steinhauer
Prodai, Cholakkathodi,
Barbosa
Group B: Media/
Communication Strategies
Faculty: Polat, Scharloth
Witherow-Culpepper, Schulze
Buschoff, Asano

15:15 BREAK

15:45 Student Presentations
Group A: Construction of
Memory & Sociopolitical Identity
Faculty: Ram, Kumar/Zoanni
Estrada, Ares
Group B: Climate Discourse
Faculty: Randeria, Flader
Kleinfeld, Brelage

DAY 5 - Friday, July 19

9:00 Keynote/Panel Discussion plus
Q&A: Politics of Data and
Infrastructures (Part 1)
Arora, Chair: Polat

10:30 BREAK

10:45 Workshop: Politics of Data and
Infrastructures (Part 2)
Arora, Chair: Polat

12:25 LUNCH

13:45 Field Trip: Academia meets
Activism - Budapest Pride
Rainbow Mission Foundation

18:30 Dinner
VakVarjú

DAY 6 - Saturday, July 20

9:00 Keynote/Panel Discussion plus
Q&A: 'Demographic
Imaginations' and Imagining
Democracy
Ram & Zoanni, Chair: Flader

10:30 BREAK

10:45 Workshop: 'Demographic
Imaginations' and Imagining
Democracy
Ram & Zoanni, Chair: Flader

12:25 LUNCH

13:45 Roundtable: 'Demographic
Imaginations' and Imagining
Democracy
Ram & Zoanni, Chair: Flader

15:15 BREAK

15:45 Roundtable: Feedback
Randeria & Ram