

OSTROM WORKSHOP RESEARCH SERIES

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IU Bloomington

“Constitution and Coordination: Law, Democratic Consolidation, and Economic Development in the Aftermath of War in Classical Athens”



Wednesday, January 27, 2016

12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

Ostrom Workshop, 513 N. Park

At the end of the 5th century BC, a prosperous imperial democracy embarked on a long and demanding war. The conflict severely strained Athens' resources, compromised her commitment to democracy, and plunged the city into civil war. Within a few years, Athens was again a prosperous democracy. How did the polis manage to rebound so decisively? This article explores the dynamics of institutional change in ancient Athens by analyzing how beliefs affected institutional change, and how institutional change shaped long-term political and economic outcomes. I argue that, during the late 5th century crisis, the Athenians articulated the notion of *patrios politeia* (i.e., the constitution of the fathers), as a commitment to the laws of the polis. After the civil war, the commitment to law was weaved into the structure of a new, self-enforcing constitution. The constitution fostered political stability and economic recovery by enabling investments in institution building and infrastructure.



Federica Carugati is a Visiting Scholar at the Ostrom Workshop, the Political Science Department, and the Law School at IU Bloomington. She holds a PhD in Classics and an MA in Political Science from Stanford University. Her work focuses on two interrelated topics: (1) the development of political, legal, and economic institutions in pre-modern, citizen-centered governments; and (2) the lessons that the emergence, configuration, and breakdown of such institutions hold for rethinking institution building in today's developing world ([website](#)).

Presentations are open to the public (see our website for papers). You are welcome to bring your lunch. For questions, contact Allison Sturgeon (sturgeon@iu.edu; 812/855-3151).