

Democratic Theory and Practice

Winter Term 2024/2025

Time: Tuesday 10:00-11:30 AM

Location: IBW Gebäude, Hörsaal H112

Instructor: Jun.-Prof. Chitrlekha Basu, PhD

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Office Hours: by appointment

Overview. In the 21st century, the status of Western liberal democracy appears under threat at home and abroad. While populist movements gain ground in Europe and North America, the rising economic and diplomatic clout of non-democratic regimes like China and Russia presents the world with seemingly successful alternatives. In this course, the questions we will return to time and again are: what is democracy? Why is democracy worth defending? And what institutions and social conditions are necessary for the realization of the democratic ideal? The lecture course will be divided into two parts. The first half of the course will provide students with an overview of the development of democratic thought, ranging from liberal democracy to more recent radical and deliberative alternatives. The second half of the course will consider if and how considerations like economic growth, inequality and multiculturalism present a challenge for the democratic ideal.

Prerequisites. A good foundational knowledge of general political science concepts, theories, and basic qualitative and quantitative methods is expected. Moreover, students should be able to understand and express themselves in English, as this will be the classroom language – though perfection is neither expected nor required. The final exam will also be in English.

Assessment. Your grade in this class will be based on a 60-minute written examination which will take place on **11 February 2025** (Tuesday), between 13.00 and 14.00 in Lecture Hall II. For the exam, students should be familiar with all topics and texts covered during the course. The exam will have two components: (i) definition of key terms and concepts, and (ii) an analytical essay.

Required Readings. Course materials will be made available to enrolled students via ILIAS. Students will be expected to have completed all the assigned readings for the week before each session.

Course Schedule

Part I: The Democratic Ideal

29 October: The Value of Democracy

- Amartya Sen. 1999. 'Democracy as a universal value.' *Journal of Democracy* 10(3): 3-17.
- Laura Valentini. 2012. 'Justice, disagreement and democracy.' *British Journal of Political Science* 43: 177-199.

5 November: Classical Theories of Democracy I

- David Held. 2006. *Models of Democracy*, chs. 1, 3.

12 November: Classical Theories of Democracy II

- David Held. 2006. *Models of Democracy*, chs. 2, 4.

19 November: The Empirical Turn in Democratic Theory

- Joseph Schumpeter. 1953. *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, chs. 21-22.
- Robert Dahl. 1956. *A Preface to Democratic Theory*, chs. 3 and 5.

26 November: Alternatives to Electoral Democracy

- Carole Pateman. 1976. *Participation and Democratic Theory*, pp. 1-44.
- Joshua Cohen. 1997. 'Deliberation and democratic legitimacy', in James Bohman and William Rehg (eds.), *Deliberative Democracy: Essays on Reason and Politics*, pp. 67-92.
- Alexander Guerrero. 2014. 'Against elections: The lottocratic alternative.' *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 42(2): 135-178.

Part II: Democracy in Practice

3 December: Democracy and Capitalism

- Milton Friedman. 1962. *Capitalism and Freedom*, ch. 1-2.
- Charles Lindblom. 1982. 'The market as prison.' *Journal of Politics* 44(2): 324-336.
- Torben Iversen and David Soskice. 2019. *Democracy and Prosperity: Reinventing Capitalism Through a Turbulent Century*, ch. 1.
- Helen Milner. 2021. 'Is global capitalism compatible with democracy? Inequality, insecurity, and interdependence.' *International Studies Quarterly*.

10 December: Democracy, Growth and Redistribution

- Daniel Treisman. 2020. 'Economic development and democracy: Predispositions and triggers.' *Annual Review of Political Science* 23: 241-257.
- Carl Knutsen. 2021. 'A business case for democracy: Regime type, growth, and growth volatility.' *Democratization* 28(8): 1505-1524.
- Michael Albertus and Victor Menaldo. 2013. 'Gaming democracy: Elite dominance during transition and the prospects for redistribution.' *British Journal of Political Science* 44: 575-603.
- Mads Andreas Elkjaer and Torben Iversen. 2023. 'The Democratic State and Redistribution: Whose Interests Are Served?' *American Political Science Review* 117(2): 391-406.

17 December: Democracy and Conflict

- Donald Horowitz. 1993. 'The challenge of ethnic conflict: Democracy in divided societies.' *Journal of Democracy* 4(4): 18–38.
- Kanchan Chandra. 2005. 'Ethnic parties and democratic stability.' *Perspectives on Politics* 3(2): 235-252.
- Adam Przeworski. 2011. 'Divided we stand? Democracy as a method of processing conflicts.' *Scandinavian Political Studies* 34(2): 168-182.
- Jan Rovny. 2023. 'Antidote to backsliding: Ethnic politics and democratic resilience.' *American Political Science Review*, 1-19.

7 January: Multiculturalism and Minority Rights

- Will Kymlicka. 1996. *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*, chs. 2-3.
- Brian Barry. 2001. *Culture and Equality: An Egalitarian Critique of Multiculturalism*, ch. 2.
- Susan Okin. 1999. *Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?*, pp. 7-24.

14 January: Descriptive Representation

- Anne Phillips. 1998. *The Politics of Presence*, chs. 1-2.
- Jane Mansbridge. 1999. 'Should blacks represent blacks and women represent women? A contingent yes.' *Journal of Politics* 61(3): 628-57.
- Lea Elsässer and Armin Schäfer. 2022. "(N)one of us? The case for descriptive representation of the contemporary working class." *West European Politics*.

21 January: The Problem of Citizen Competence

- Jason Brennan. 2011. 'The right to a competent electorate.' *The Philosophical Quarterly* 61(245): 700-724.
- Helene Landemore. 2021. 'An epistemic argument for democracy', in M. Hannon and J. de Ridder (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Political Epistemology* pp. 363–372.
- Dimitri Landa and Ryan Pevnick. 2020. 'Representative democracy as defensible epistocracy.' *American Political Science Review* 114(1): 1-13.

28 January: The Future of Democracy

- Daniel Bell. 2015. *The China Model: Political Meritocracy and the Limits of Democracy*, chs. 1-2.
- Samuel Bagg. 2018. 'The power of the multitude: Answering epistemic challenges to democracy.' *American Political Science Review* 112(4): 891-904.