

# Syllabus for the PhD Core Course

## “Democratic Theory”

### Lecturers

- Dr. Leonardo Avritzer
- Dr. Michele Grigolo
- Dr. Valerio Nitrato Izzo
- Dr. Mihaela Mihai
- Dr. Mathias Thaler (coordination)

### Contact

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### Dates

Every Saturday between October 8 and November 19, 2011 (unless otherwise specified)

### Place

Sala TBA, Faculdade de Economia, Universidade de Coimbra

### Language

Portuguese and English

### Course Description

What is democracy? Where does the idea of democracy come from? Has the idea one or many origins? Can democracy be justified, and if so, on what grounds? What are the limits of democracy? These, and many more, questions lie at the heart of democratic theory. Democratic theory helps us to critically reflect on democratic practices. The course will offer an introduction to democratic theory by focusing on the contemporary debate, starting in the 20th century. This introduction will be separated into four blocks. (1) We will trace down some of the most important conceptual innovations and transformations. (2) We will look at critical positions that have called into question the mainstream of democratic theory. (3) We will scrutinize concrete contexts in which democratic theory has been tested. (4) We will explore different scales of democracy, from the local to the global. The purpose of this course is to provide students with an overview of the complex discourses on democracy today. At the end of the seminar students should have a firm grasp of the theoretical literature on theories and practices of democracy today.

### Course Requirements

Since the course is a graduate seminar (and not an ex-catedra lecture), students will have to achieve two separate tasks in order to pass: (1) They ought to thoroughly prepare for each session by reading the assigned texts. A reader of all the assigned texts will be made available in the library of CES. It is expected

that all the students contribute to the discussion by raising questions and by engaging with the assigned readings. The individual participation will count toward 20% of the final grade. Mere attendance does not constitute participation. Students will have to be physically present in at least 70% of all sessions. Absences must be justified. (2) Students will have to write a seminar paper. This paper should reflect their autonomous research. The students are free to choose a topic of their own interest, always related to the main issues discussed in the seminar. It is expected that all the students are already familiar with the basic requirements of scientific research. (Students who have not yet written a seminar paper, must inform themselves about the requirements independently. In the seminar, we will not talk about how a book is quoted correctly, for example. If you do not know how this is done, please catch up on your own.) The paper ought to contain between 35.000 and 50.000 characters (including spaces) and can be written in English or Portuguese. The deadline for submitting, by email to the course coordinator, a one-page abstract of the paper is January 1, 2012. The students are encouraged to contact the lecturers within whose area of expertise they wish to write their seminar papers. The paper will count toward 80% of the final grade. Finally, although it might be redundant to state that clearly, we have to underline that plagiarism will be severely penalized. On what constitutes plagiarism, and how to avoid it, see for instance:

<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>

## **Deadline for Submitting Outline of Paper**

January 1, 2012

## **Deadline for Submitting Seminar Paper**

March 15, 2012

## **Core Readings for All Sessions**

These readings will be made available in the library of CES. Students will be able to make copies, but must leave the original in the library. As core readings, these texts offer excellent background and introductory sources for the course:

- Dahl, Robert, Ian Shapiro, and José Antonio Cheibub, eds. *The Democracy Sourcebook*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2003.
- Shapiro, Ian. *The State of Democratic Theory*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003.

## **Detailed Description of Each Session**

### **October 7, 2011: 10-00-13.00**

**Lecturer:** Mathias Thaler

**Topic:** Introduction

**Description:** In this session, the lecturer will quickly present the outline of the course. The main objectives and requirements of the course will be explained in detail.

### **October 8, 2011: 10.00-13.00**

**Lecturer:** Valerio Nitrato Izzo

**Topic:** Formal Theories of Democracy

**Description:** In this lecture we will examine formal theories of democracy, examining their main ideas and concepts while situating them in the theoretical and historical context in which they were developed. We will also take a brief look at the intersection of the political debate on capitalism/socialism and its consequences on the link between formal theories and democratic liberalism.

**Readings:**

- Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2003 (1942), or. ed.), chapters XXI-XXII.
- Hans Kelsen, “Foundations of Democracy”, in *Ethics* 66, No. 2, (October 1955): 1-101.
- Norberto Bobbio, *O futuro da democracia. Uma defesa das regras do jogo* (São Paulo: Editora Paz e Terra, 1997): 17-41.

**October 8, 2011: 14.00-17.00**

**Lecturer:** Valerio Nitrato Izzo

**Topic:** Constitutionalism

**Description:** In this lecture we will examine the idea of constitutionalism as a legal, political and philosophical fundamental concept for democratic theory. We will analyze the differences between ancient and modern constitutionalism in the Western World and then introduce some basic concepts related to the subject (the notion of the Constitution as a legal document; separation of powers; rule of law; judicial review). In the last part of the lecture special attention will be given to the link between constitutionalism and the focus on cultural diversity/postcolonialism in the contemporary debate.

**Readings:**

- Charles McIlwain, *Constitutionalism: Ancient and Modern*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1947): chap. 1.
- Richard Bellamy, “The Political Form of the Constitution: The Separation of Powers, Rights and Representative Democracy” in *Political Studies*, 44, No. 3 (1996): 436-456.
- James Tully, *Strange Multiplicity: Constitutionalism in an Age of Diversity* (New York/Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995): chaps. 1, 2, 6.

**October 22, 2011: 10.00-13.00**

**Lecturer:** Mihaela Mihai

**Topic:** Deliberative Democracy

**Description:** We will examine a few perspectives within deliberative democratic theory today. Conceptions of deliberative democracy were formulated in response to thinner, more formal conceptions of democracy that we studied in the previous lectures. Deliberative democrats celebrate the epistemic, moral and political value of deliberation and currently dominate mainstream democratic theory.

**Readings:**

- Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson, *Why Deliberative Democracy*, (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004). Chapter 1: “What Deliberative Democracy Means”: 1-63.
- Jürgen Habermas, “Three Normative Models of Democracy,” in Seyla Benhabib (ed.), *Democracy and Difference* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996): 21-30.
- Seyla Benhabib, “Towards a Deliberative Model of Democratic Legitimacy” in Seyla Benhabib (ed.), *Democracy and Difference* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996): 67-94.

## **October 22, 2011: 14.00-17.00**

**Lecturer:** Mihaela Mihai

**Topic:** Critical Voices I: The Politics of Difference and Critical Theory

**Description:** This lecture examines the criticisms that theorists of difference/recognition raised against deliberative models of democratic politics. The strict proceduralism and individualism promoted by deliberative democrats is thought to disadvantage a variety of ways of life and it does not account for significant differences of deliberative power between groups.

### **Readings:**

- Charles Taylor, “The Politics of Recognition,” in Colin Farrelly (ed.), *Contemporary Political Theory A Reader*, (London: SAGE Publications, 2004): 269-281.
- Nancy Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy,” in Craig Calhoun (ed.) *Habermas and The Public Sphere* (Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press, 1992): 109-142 or in *Social Text* 25/26 (1990), pp. 56-80.
- Young, Iris Marion. “Polity and Group Difference: A Critique of the Ideal of Universal Citizenship.” *Ethics* 99, no. 2 (1989): 250-274.

## **October 29, 2011: 10.00-13.00**

**Lecturer:** Mihaela Mihai

**Topic:** Critical Voices II: Feminism and Gender Critiques

**Description:** Here we examine the objections raised by advocates of subordinated groups against the model of democratic politics proposed by deliberative democrats. Reducing justice to the observance of validity conditions for claims expressed in public obscures severe inequalities between the various participants to deliberation and disqualifies non-rational modes of communication from the public sphere of democratic societies.

### **Readings:**

- Lynn Sanders, “Against Deliberation” *Political Theory* 25, no. 3 (1997): 347-376.
- Young, Iris Marion. “Communication and the Other: Beyond Deliberative Democracy.” in Seyla Benhabib (ed.), *Democracy and Difference. Contesting the Boundaries of the Political*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), pp.120-136.
- Cheryl Hall, “Recognising the Passion in Deliberation: Towards a more Democratic Theory of Deliberative Democracy” *Hyapatia* 22, no. 4 (2007): 91-95.

## **October 29, 2011: 14.00-17.00**

**Lecturer:** Valerio Nitrato Izzo

**Topic:** Critical Voices III: Agonistic Democracy

**Description:** This lecture examines the focus on the ideas of conflict and agonism in contemporary democratic theory and philosophy. The link between agonism and pluralism will be highlighted as well as the variety of approaches to agonism that characterize contemporary scholarship in the field.

**Readings:**

- Claude Lefort, *Essais sur le politique. XIX-XX siècles* (Paris: Seuil, 1986), chap. 1;
- Chantal Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox* (London/New York: Verso, 2000) chap. 4;
- Jacques Rancière, *La haine de la démocratie* (Paris: La fabrique, 2005), chap. 1, 4, 5.

**November 5, 2011: 10.00-13.00**

**Lecturer:** Michele Grigolo

**Topic:** Democracy and the City I: Exploring Urban Citizenship

**Description:** This is the first of two lectures focusing on urban democracy. Some of the accounts presented here rehearse theories discussed in previous modules. The first lecture introduces and dissects the concept of urban citizenship. The legal, political and social dimensions of urban citizenship are discussed, as well as issues of rights and responsibilities, governance, participation and policy.

**Readings:**

- Rainer Bauböck, “Reinventing Urban Citizenship” *Citizenship Studies* 7, no.2 (2003): 139-160.
- Robert Beauregard and Anna Bounds, “Urban Citizenship”, in Engin F. Isin (ed) *Democracy, Citizenship and the Global City* (London, New York: Routledge, 2000): 243-256.
- Marisol García, “Citizenship Practices and Urban Governance in European Cities” *Urban Studies* 43, no.4 (2006): 745-765.

**November 5, 2011: 14.00-17.00**

**Lecturer:** Michele Grigolo

**Topic:** Democracy and the City II: Participatory and Alternative Approaches

**Description:** The second lecture explores accounts of urban democracy grounded in people’s direct engagement in politics. Participatory democracy expects this engagement to produce empowerment and better government. In alternative approaches, social action re-defines both democracy and the city in opposition to their occupation by neoliberal ideology and forces. The various approaches to the right to the city, both in their conceptual and practical dimensions, are presented and discussed here.

**Readings:**

- Archon Fung, *Empowered Participation: Reinventing Urban Democracy* (Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004), Chapter 1: Democracy as a Reform Strategy: 1-30.
- Mark Purcell, *Recapturing Democracy. Neoliberalization and the Struggle for Alternative Urban Features* (New York, London: Routledge, 2008), Chapter 3: New Democratic Attitudes: 75-108.
- Erminia Maricato, “Fighting for Just Cities in Capitalism’s Periphery,” in Peter Marcuse et al. (eds.) *Searching for the Just City. Debates in Urban Theory and Practice* (London, New York: Routledge, 2009): 194-213.

## November 12, 2011: 10.00-13.00

**Lecturer:** Mathias Thaler

**Topic:** Persons, not Citizens? From Moral to Political Cosmopolitanism

**Description:** In this session we will analyze (more or less radical) proposals for rethinking the framework within which global (in)justice is discussed today. Our focus will lie on the powerful intuition that the primary unit of concern for theories of justice should be individual persons, not citizens of nation states. We will also look into political configurations of cosmopolitanism, and more particularly into the idea of a “cosmopolitical democracy”.

### Readings:

- Daniele Archibugi, “Cosmopolitan Democracy and its Critics: A Review,” *European Journal of International Relations* 10, no. 3 (2004): 437-473.
- Held, David. “Cosmopolitanism: Globalisation Tamed?” *Review of International Studies* 29, no. 4 (2003): 465-480.
- Kleingeld, Pauline, and Eric Brown. “Cosmopolitanism.” Edited by Edward N. Zalta. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2006. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/cosmopolitanism/>.
- O’Neill, Onora. “Bounded and Cosmopolitan Justice.” *Review of International Studies* 26 (2000): 45-60.

## November 12, 2011: 14.00-17.00

**Lecturer:** Mathias Thaler

**Topic:** Critical Perspectives on World Citizenship

**Description:** In this session we will rehearse some of the main criticisms of the idea that justice requires a cosmopolitan transformation of world politics. We will focus on objections grounded in the notion of national responsibility, the significance of societal belonging and in the realist critique of cosmopolitan law.

### Readings:

- Craig Calhoun, “‘Belonging’ in the Cosmopolitan Imaginary,” *Ethnicities* 3, no. 4 (2003): 531-553.
- Miller, David. “National Responsibility and Global Justice.” *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 11, no. 4 (2008): 383-399.
- Zolo, Danilo. “A Cosmopolitan Philosophy of International Law? A Realist Approach.” *Ratio Juris* 12, no. 4 (1999): 429-444.

## November 19, 2011: 10.00-13.00

**Lecturers:** Michele Grigolo, Valerio Nitrato Izzo, Mihaela Mihai, Mathias Thaler

**Topic:** Summary

**Description:** In this session, the lecturers will summarize the course. Questions regarding the exam paper will also be addressed.

## November 29/30, 2011

**Lecturer:** Leonardo Avritzer

**Topic:** Special Lecture

**Readings:**

- Avritzer, Leonardo. “Sociedade civil, instituições participativas e representação: da autorização à legitimidade da ação.” *Dados* 50, no. 3 (2007): 443-464.
- O'Donnell, Guillermo A., Philippe C. Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead, eds. *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986.
- Rosanvallon, Pierre. *La Légitimité Démocratique: Impartialité, Réflexivité, Proximité*. Livres du Nouveau Monde. Paris: Seuil, 2008.
- Santos, Boaventura de Sousa, ed. *Democratizar a Democracia: Os Caminhos Da Democracia Participativa. Reinventar a Emancipação Social 1*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2002.

**January 24, 2012: 17.00-20.00**

**Invited Lecturer:** Alessandro Ferrara, L'Università di Roma “Tor Vergata” (Italy)

**Topic:** Democracy and Openness

**Description:** Alessandro Ferrara will present a chapter from his book *The Democratic Horizon* (forthcoming with Columbia University Press). The students will be asked to read the chapter ahead of the session and prepare questions about the text.

**Further Readings:**

- Ferrara, Alessandro. “Of Boats and Principles: Reflections on Habermas’s ‘Constitutional Democracy.’” *Political Theory* 29, no. 6 (2001): 782-791.
- ———. “Two Notions of Humanity and the Judgment Argument for Human Rights.” *Political Theory* 31, no. 3 (2003): 392-420.
- ———. “‘Political’ Cosmopolitanism and Judgment.” *European Journal of Social Theory* 10, no. 1 (February 1, 2007): 53-66.
- ———. “Reflexive Pluralism.” *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 36, no. 3-4 (2010): 353-364.
- ———. *The Force of the Example: Explorations in the Paradigm of Judgment*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.
- ———. “The Separation of Religion and Politics in a Post-Secular Society.” *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 35, no. 1-2 (2009): 77-91.