

University of Siena

Master Programme in Global Governance

Intercultural Relations and Peace Making Processes

EuroMaster – TAM

Academic Year 2017-2018

European Democratic Governance and the Elites – Crises and Challenges

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Goals: This module aims to discuss the recent literature in the field of Democratic Governance, with a particular focus on the European scenario.

A number of changes have recently characterized the evolution of democracy in Europe: the rise of populist and xenophobic claims, the growing instability of the elites and the hollowing out of many traditional governing parties, the claim for a bottom-up participatory democracy, the multiplication of social movements.

Three topics in particular will be covered during the introductory reading seminars:

1. The problem of elite change in Europe, and the analysis of the political and social profile of contemporary ruling elites,
2. The problems of credibility of political elites and their accountability, in a context of transformation of representative democracy.
3. The capability of elites to enforce democracy during a phase of difficulties, due to a new wave of democratic instability and to the growth of corruption.
4. The peculiar case of the European Union: emergence and difficult consolidation of a responsible *European Elite System*

The student presentations and their work of field research will follow. Students will have to present a number of case studies, focusing the relationship between elite change and democratic governance in different polities. The idea is to apply some of the notions introduced during the lectures and, at the same time, to socialize with the main instrument of measurement of the state of democracy in the contemporary age. Dr. Gianni Del Panta will assist the students in the work of data collection and presentation of the cases.

Outline

Seminar 1, 19/10/2017

Elite role and elites structure. Ministerial and representative Elites in Europe

Basic Readings:

- Dumont, P., L. Verzichelli, *Selection and de-selection of ministers*, in J. Magone (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of European Politics*, London, Routledge, 2014, pp. 451-465
- H. Best and L. Vogel, *The sociology of legislators and legislatures* in *The Oxford Handbook of Legislative Studies*, 2014.

Reading seminar

- Costa Pinto, A., Cotta, M. and P. Tavares de Almeida, *Beyond Party Government? Technocratic Trends in Society and in the Executive*, forthcoming.

Seminar 2, 24/10/2017

Elites and the crisis of Representative democracy

Basic Readings:

- Manin, B. (1997) *The principles of Representative democracy*, Cambridge University Press (Chapter 6)
- Mair, P. (2011), *Bini Smaghi vs. the parties*. EUI Working Papers

Reading seminar

- Tormey, S. (2015), *The crisis of representative democracy*, Polity Press (Chapter 6).

Seminar 3, 02/11/2017

Elites, Leaders and the future of democracy

- Plattner, M. (2015), *Is democracy in Decline*, *Journal of Democracy*
- Diamond, L. (2015), *Facing up to the Democratic Recession*, *Journal of Democracy*

Reading seminar

- Freedom House *Freedom in the world* (<https://freedomhouse.org/>)

Seminar 4, 09/11/2017

Laboratory: how to present a case study

- Choose a relevant case
- Formulate a problem (i.e. describe democratic instability)
- Choose a relevant set of evidences
- Present the evidences (max 2 slides)
- Implications (only a few lines, to be extended in the paper)

Seminar 5, 16/11/2017

The peculiar case of the European Union: emergence and difficult consolidation of a responsible European Elite System

- Peter Mair, *Ruling the Void*, London, Verso (chapters 1-4)
- M. Cotta, *Political Elites and a Polity in the Making: The Case of the EU*, "Historical Social Research"

Seminar 6, 6/12/2017

Students presentations