DEMOCRACY IN DIVIDED SOCIETIES

Central European University
MA Course, Fall Semester 2016

Instructor
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Classes
Mondays (TBA), 11.00-12.40

Office hours
Mondays, 14.30-16.30 & Thursdays, 15.30-17.30

Credits
2 CEU credits, 4 ECTS credits

Course description
What are the particular challenges that divided societies pose to democracy and how can they be met? This is the leading question guiding the examination of democracy in divided societies. The course will have an empirical focus and review the experience with a variety of political institutions around the world, revisiting the most important scholarly debates, familiarizing students with some of the main cases, and paying particular attention to democracy and social peace in post-conflict societies.

Course requirements
No prior knowledge is assumed. Students are expected to be present at all seminars and to come prepared. If you are unable to attend class, you should notify me via e-mail prior to the session.
Assessment

- Five position papers (5 x 18%)
- Active seminar participation (10%)
- Alternatively, one presentation (36%) can replace two position papers.

There are nine weeks that are marked “debate” in the syllabus. You are asked to choose five of these debates for a position paper of 800 words each. In this paper, you summarize and critically engage with the arguments and evidence in the reading for that week, concluding with your own evaluation. The position paper is due the day before class that week, at midnight. If you choose to do an extra position paper, the lowest grade will not count. A fail grade, though, will stay.

You have the option of doing three position papers plus one presentation (36%). The presentation is an individual presentation that should last not more than 15 minutes. For more information, see the appendixes to this syllabus. The presentation schedule is finalized in week three of the semester.

Active class participation is expected and graded. Some tips: participate regularly, make informed contributions, focus on the main points, formulate clearly, respond to others in the discussion, and demonstrate critical engagement.

Please note that for all assessments, late submission and violation of the word or time limit will result in a lower grade.

Reading material

All the course material is available in electronic form. The syllabus only contains the required reading. At the end of each week, suggestions for further reading will be discussed in class.

Learning outcomes

At the end of the course the student should be able to:

- Understand the specific challenges posed by socio-cultural divisions to democracy;
- Reflect critically on the notions of ethnicity and ethnic conflict;
- Make an informed choice of political institutions that help to prevent, mitigate, or channel ethnic conflict;
- Summarize arguments, assess evidence, and formulate an opinion;
- Communicate effectively his/her informed opinion on the topics covered in class;
Week 1 Introduction
The first week provides you with an overview of the main options in the menu of conflict management in divided societies.

Week 2 Ethnic Conflict (Debate)
When following the news, one often gets the impression that the world is full of “ethnic conflicts”. But what makes a conflict an ethnic conflict and when does ethnicity result in conflict?

Reading:

Week 3 Ethnic Democracy (Debate)
No term better captures the tension between ethnicity and democracy than the concept of “ethnic democracy”. This week we re-examine the case of Israel and scrutinize the wider applicability of the notion.

Reading:

Week 4 Self-Determination versus Pre-Determination (Debate)
Who are the “self” in “self-determination” and “self-rule”? Is self-determination always preferable to pre-determination?

Week 5 Ethnofederalism (Debate)
The debate about federalism in divided societies centers on the question whether subnational boundaries should follow or cut across the country’s main cleavages. We critically examine the arguments and evidence.

Reading:

Week 6 Partition (Debate)
Partition is a controversial solution to civil war, even though the right to autonomy and self-determination is well established. How can this discrepancy be reconciled and what does the empirical evidence tell us?

Reading:

Week 7 Electoral Systems (Debate)
In divided societies, the main choice is between electoral systems that promote cross-ethnic moderation and those that allow ethnic parties to win representation. Unfortunately, there is no consensus in the literature on the best electoral system for post-conflict societies.

Reading:
Week 8 Presentation
This week we do not have a regular class. Instead, all students are invited to my presentation in the departmental seminar series on "Centripetalism and Consociationalism: Friends or Foes?".

Week 9 Non-territorial Autonomy (Debate)
When scholars and policy makers think about autonomy, they usually think of (ethno)federalism, forgetting that autonomy can also be personal or functional. This session examines the potential of cultural autonomy.

Reading:

Week 10 Power Sharing (Debate)
Many civil wars are concluded by peace agreements that provide for power sharing by the former belligerents. Evidence suggests that power-sharing arrangements help to secure peace and, sometimes, democracy. But even if true, is that enough?

Week 11 Greed or Grievance (Debate)
Why do ethnic groups rebel? Is it because of greed or grievance?


Week 12 Conclusion and Outlook
Deliberative democracy represents the state-of-the-art in contemporary thinking about the way in which existing democracies can be deepened, the political competence of ordinary citizens can be increased, and the quality of collective decision-making can be improved. What promise does deliberative democracy hold for divided societies?

Appendix A: Suggestions for presentation

The starting point for each presentation is the reading for that week. In preparing your presentation, please choose one of the following four formats:

1. *A critique*, in which you critically evaluate the premises, argumentation, facts, sources, and/or conclusions of the reading and point out (potential) problems;
2. *A supplement*, in which you build on the reading to provide additional relevant information, for example by reviewing what other authors have said on this topic, the experience in other countries or other times, etc.;
3. *A deepening*, in which you select one particular point of the reading and treat this more fully than is done in the paper itself by developing the particular argument started in the paper and exploring its possibilities and limitations;
4. *A case study*, in which you highlight the facets of the theme dealt with in the paper through the selection and discussion of an illuminating empirical case or a fictitious problem that sharpens our thinking.

Presentations should take no more than ten minutes. Presentations will be evaluated and graded using the presentation assessment sheet below. You are expected to consult with the instructor in choosing your topic and preparing your presentation. Please note that you cannot do a presentation and position paper in the same week.
Appendix B: Presentation Assessment Sheet

CEU, Fall semester 2016
Democracy in Divided Societies (MA course)
Prof. Dr. Matthijs Bogaards

Student name:
Session:
Date:

### Academic content

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### Presentation skills

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