

Circle U. European University Alliance

International and Interdisciplinary Autumn School

**The Social and Cultural Dimensions of Democracy: From the Interwar Years to the Present
(HUB, Monday, 29 August – Friday, 2 September 2022)**

Broadly speaking, the autumn school is concerned with the destabilisation but also the resilience of democratic structures on both macro- and micro-levels. Its temporal framework more or less spans the last 100 years and takes as its starting point the interwar years in Europe (and, to a lesser degree, the US), which is a particularly fruitful period to study 'democracy under pressure' and can therefore serve as a lens to assess later, and specifically present-day crises of democracy in a comparative perspective.

The focus of this event is on the social and cultural underpinnings of democratic systems. It investigates the internal structures of democratic societies and their ability to accommodate social change and respond to hierarchal social stratifications and unequal power relations between different social players and groups. The autumn school takes its inspiration from feminist political and legal theories that have consistently addressed the importance of social power relations and culturally rooted marginalisation and exclusion for political participation and agency. It explicitly targets *democracy as culture* (Beeman et al.) and investigates processes of social differentiation based on gender, class, race or sexuality to identify the potentially 'undemocratic' (ideological) undercurrents of democratic societies that may foster various forms of political disaffection but also political activism. Moreover, it also considers the role of culture itself and cultural representations as relevant means to gauge the chances and limits of democracy from the perspective of often marginalised subjects.

The autumn school will be organized around a variety of formats (e.g. reading groups, presentations, panel discussions, project presentations) and supplemented by a cultural programme.

Sections:

A: Concepts and Theories of Democracy (Reading Group)

B: Political Institutions and the Law

C: Democracy and the Political Spectrum

D: Intersectional Perspectives on Democracy: Gender, Sexuality, Class and Race

E: Cultural Politics and Cultural Practices - Social Stability and Social Hierarchies

F: Cultural Practices and Political Participation - Cultural Activism

G: Networking Hub: PhD students

H: Networking Hub: Faculty

Cultural events

Contact:

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