

Democracy, Theory and Practice

JANUARY-JUNE 2013

Global Democracy and the Obsolescence of Nation-States

José Luis Martí (Pompeu Fabre University, Barcelona)

Centro Einaudi, Via Ponza 4/e, Turin – January, 17th – 2:30-4:30 pm

In academic and public discourses, democracy is usually considered as the best and fairest political system. On the one hand, it has been suggested that democracy is valuable and democratic decisions legitimate because democracy conveys an ideal of egalitarian society in which citizens are acknowledged by institutions and in turn acknowledge one another as free and equal. Citizens are free because they are bound only by the outcomes of democratic decision-making (thus, they are acknowledged as the only source of legitimacy for the rules that govern them); they are equals because no-one is ruled out, or their claims considered less worthy within the decision-making process.

On the other hand, it has been argued that democracy is legitimate and fair because, among the various institutional systems, it is the one more likely to pursue the common good. According to this epistemic justification, however, in order to achieve the common good citizens need not simply to aggregate their preferences by voting or bargaining over proposals, they must also deliberate. The participants should listen to one another and give reasons that they think others can comprehend and accept. These requirements rule out exercise of power, propaganda, expression of mere self-interest, threats (all of which characterize bargaining).

Despite these powerful justifications of democracy and the broad public consensus on the value of democratic institutions, actual democracies – and contemporary theories of democracy as well – have to address many challenges. Given the development and influence of global institutions, can the idea of democracy be confined to national states? How can democracy deal with the claims of migrants who are not citizens but are governed by democratic decisions?

Democracy, Theory and Practice, organized by Enrico Biale (enrico.biale@lett.unipmn.it), aims at addressing these type of questions by involving scholars in the field of democratic theory who will present their work on the most relevant topics currently discussed in the international debate.

Programme

January 17th

Global Democracy and the Obsolescence of Nation-States

José Luis Martí (University Pompeu Fabre, Barcelona) will give a talk about the possibility to extend the democratic model to global institutions.

February 14th

Procedural foundations of democracy

Valeria Ottonelli (Genua University) will discuss her recent book on “Principi procedurali della democrazia” (Il Mulino, 2012).

May

Richard Bellamy (University College of London) will develop a republican perspective for the democratization of the European Union.

June 13th

Migrants and Welfare

This final workshop will involve scholars such as Maurizio Ferrera (Milan University and Centro Einaudi), Eszter Kollar, (Münster University), Valeria Ottonelli (Genua University), Ferruccio Pastore (Fieri, Turin), Tiziana Torresi (Adelaide University).