

PS397 Germany as Leader of the Liberal West?

Seminar Leader: Timo Lochocki
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Seminar Purpose

This seminar will be an exercise in applied policy consulting. We will focus on a scenario that political scientists deem probable in the coming few years: that Germany will become the key pillar of the Liberal West. If anti-democratic leaders are reelected in the USA (2024) and elected in France (2027), Germany will unquestionably be the most powerful liberal democracy in the world. Although exceeded by Japan in economic resources, Germany will be the most influential democracy in foreign policy terms due to its role in Europe. Our seminar will focus on the implications of this scenario for Liberal Democracy in Germany. Primarily, we address domestic and foreign policy dimensions: firstly, what policy approaches are necessary for safeguarding Liberal Democracy in Germany and in the EU if the US and France degenerate into anti-democratic regimes? And secondly, under what conditions can Germany even become a lighthouse of Liberalism for the liberal opposition in the US, France and other former liberal democracies? Ideally, students taking this class already have a strong knowledge of Germany's history and social structure, and of its financial and political systems.

Learning goals and structure

The seminar has four goals:

- 1) to gain a fundamental understanding of the current political developments in our democracies and how Germany stands out in being much less effected by cultural polarization and anti-democratic forces;
- 2) to understand how global politics and party-political processes might lead to Germany becoming the most powerful liberal democracy in the coming decade;
- 3) to define the reforms that are necessary to defend the Liberal Democracy in this hostile global context and eventually even becoming a liberal lighthouse for other democracies;
- 4) to formulate possible recommendations in a fruitful way to German decision makers.

Student requirements

To obtain 8 ECTS (4 U.S. Credits), the performance in the seminar is evaluated according to three criteria: active participation, a short presentation (max. 15 minutes) and a final seminar paper (10 pages). The form of the final work will be discussed in the seminar.

About the lecturer

Dr. Timo Lochocki studied interdisciplinary social sciences in Würzburg, Leipzig, the University of Washington, the Humboldt University in Berlin and the Universitet i Bergen. His

doctoral thesis "Hard Times in the Lands of Plenty" at the Humboldt University in Berlin explains the media and party-political processes of contemporary western democracies. It was rated "summa cum laude"; "The Rise of Populism in Western Europe. A media analysis on failed political messaging" was published by Springer University Press in 2014.

Until 2017 he worked for the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF) as a Transatlantic Fellow in political consulting in Berlin and Paris. His research dealt primarily with the nexus of foreign and party politics. In 2018 he wrote "The Trust Formula. This is how our democracy wins back our voters" (Herder) and went to Davidson College in the USA as James Knox Visiting Professor for European Politics and Political Communication.

In 2019, he moved to the management staff of the German Federal Ministry of Health (BMG) with the task of pushing for long-term social reforms. From 2020, these had to step back behind the management of the Covid-19 pandemic of the century. He headed the division "Strategic Planning" department and was responsible for International Relations, Reforms at Large and the Covid-19 Policies of the Federal Government of Germany.

Since 2022, he is working for the Mercator and Open Society foundations as a senior fellow. He is the head of the project "Democratic Resilience in Western Europe".

Office hours can be arranged flexibly. Contact via: lochocki@hu-berlin.de

January 29th, 2-5pm: Introduction to seminar

February 5th, 2-5pm: No class, replacement class will be scheduled in the seminar.

February 12th, 2-5pm: Culture War

Abrahams, Stacy. *E Pluribus Unum? The Fight over Identity Politics*. Foreign Affairs, March/April 2019

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2019-02-01/stacey-abrams-response-to-francis-fukuyama-identity-politics-article>

Heinze, Anna Sophie (2022). Zwischen Etablierung und Mainstreaming: Zum Stand der Forschung zu Populismus und Rechtsradikalismus. *Zeitung für Vergleichende Politische Wissenschaft*. February 17, 2022.

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12286-022-00517-9#citeas>

Herold, Maik / Joachim, Janine / Otteni, Cyrill / Vorländer, Hans. *Polarization in Europe. An Analysis of Ten European Countries*. Mercator Forum Migration and Democracy (MIDEM), Dresden, 2023.

<https://forum-midem.de/2023/08/24/policy-brief-meloni-und-die-italienische-migrationspolitik-copy/>

February 19th, 2-5pm: Party Politics – Basics

No readings

February 26th, 2-5pm: Party Politics – The Threat to Liberal Democracy

Kagan, Robert. *Our Constitutional Crisis is already here*. Washington Post Opinion, September 23, 2021.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/09/23/robert-kagan-constitutional-crisis/>

Levitsky, Steven, and Daniel Ziblatt. *How Democracies Die*. Penguin Books, 2019.

<https://www.eui.eu/Documents/DepartmentsCentres/SPS/ResearchAndTeaching/How-Democracies-Die.pdf>

Sewer, Adams. *The Capitol Rioters Won*. The Atlantic, June 3, 2021.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2021/06/capitol-rioters-won/619075/>

Saletan, Williams. *Why won't they listen?* (Review of *The Righteous Mind* by Jonathan Haidt), New York Times, March 23, 2012.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/25/books/review/the-righteous-mind-by-jonathan-haidt.html>

Weiler, Jonathan (2006) Book Review: The Authoritarian Dynamic. *Comparative Political Studies*. 39(7):935-938.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0010414006287614?journalCode=cpsa>

March 4th, 2-5pm: The Nexus Foreign Policy – Party Politics (1/2)

Balfour Rosa (et al.). (2016). Europe's troublemakers. The populist challenge to foreign policy. EPC Policy Paper.

<https://www.epc.eu/en/Publications/EUROPES-TROUBLEMAKERS--The-p~257da8>

Barkin, Noah (2022). Europe's Sleeping Giant Awakens. The Atlantic, March 1, 2022.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2022/03/germany-putin-ukraine-invasion/623322/>

Snell, J. (2016) The Trilemma of European Economic and Monetary Integration, and Its Consequences. *European Law Journal*, 22: 157– 179.

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/eulj.12165>

March 11th, 2-5pm: The Nexus Foreign Policy – Party Politics (2/2)

Kern, Rebecca and Scott, Marc. *Social media platforms on the defensive as Russian-based disinformation about Ukraine spreads*. Politico, February 24, 2022.

<https://www.politico.com/news/2022/02/24/social-media-platforms-russia-ukraine-disinformation-00011559>

Spahn, Susanne (2021). *Russische Medien in Deutschland*. Analyse im Auftrag der Friedrich Naumann Stiftung.

https://shop.freiheit.org/download/P2@1210/564260/Russische-Medien_Deutschland_final.web.pdf

US Department of State: *Russia's Top Five Persistent Disinformation Narratives*. January 20, 2022.

<https://www.state.gov/russias-top-five-persistent-disinformation-narratives/>

March 18th, 2-5pm: The peculiar German case

Readings tba

March 25th, 2-5pm: Germany's National Interest: an anti-fragile liberal Democracy

Readings tba

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antifragile_\(book\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antifragile_(book))

April 1st, 2-5pm: No class, Easter break

April 8th, 2-5pm: First Priority: Institutional Reforms to safeguard Liberal Democracy

Readings tba

April 15th, 2-5pm: Second Priority: State Reforms to allow for an Active State

Readings tba

April 22nd, 2-5pm: Thirds Priority: Increase of Agency for Citizens and Companies

Readings tba

April 29th, 2-5pm: No class, replacement class will be scheduled in the seminar.

Readings tba

May 6th, 2-5pm: Fourth Priority: Reforming the German Executive to allow for global force projection

Readings tba

Two replacement classes to be scheduled (see above) for summary of seminar.