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Panel Proposal

Political Cultures and Elites: The Portuguese Networks

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Participants:

Paulo Vicente and Francisco Vicente (OP / FCSH-UNL) – *The consolidation of Portuguese contemporary democracy and the role of political communication (1986-2013)*

Carlos Vargas and Patrícia Oliveira (OP / FCSH-UNL) – *Governing Culture: democratic political elites*

Bruno Bernardes (OP) – *Clientelism and democratization in the Portuguese and Brazilian political cultures*

Abstract

The study of elites comprises the study of political cultures, which means the analysis and understanding of a set of beliefs that give context and content to political process and behaviour. Looking at elites as a set of individuals with their own strategic positions, it is possible to describe and explain what kind of political culture has been created and recreated by those elites. In this sense, it is possible to trace behaviours which constitute formal and informal institutions. Moreover, elites display and try to rule networks in different times and spaces, albeit divergences and convergences between and within them. This scenario becomes more crucial in times of democratic transition and consolidation with the ability to control information and networking structures, political phenomena and democratic institutions. In this milieu, the Portuguese elites' networking comprises a number of settled rules and norms which are possible to illustrate, and are common to both Portugal and Brazil.