

EDITED BY

**ROBERT
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≡ The Oxford Handbook of
**POLITICAL
REPRESENTATION
IN LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES**

THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF

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Edited by
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and
JACQUES THOMASSEN

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PREFACE

THIS *Handbook* has been in the making for quite a long time. It started with a few discussions in academic year 2008–2009 when Robert visited the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies. After completing other projects, we spent many hours on Skype in the fall of 2016 to outline the conceptual framework for the *Handbook*. Needless to say, we have accumulated a great debt over the years. We are grateful to the authors of the various chapters for their patience and endurance and their willingness to respond to several rounds of queries and comments. As always, Dominic Byatt at Oxford University Press was a supportive and encouraging editor at all stages of the project. Céline Louasli guided us smoothly through the final stages of the process and Jen Hinchliffe meticulously copyedited the entire volume.

We both had the privilege to be inspired by, and to work together with, some of the best scholars in this field. Robert has had the good fortune to arrive as a graduate student at Florida State University in 1984 when Russell Dalton initiated much of his research on political parties and public opinion, which culminated in several leading representation studies. For over three decades, Russ's work has inspired Robert in his own research. Robert also learned a huge amount from his long-term collaborator Stephen Whitefield. This book would not have been possible if it had not been for these two scholars and friends. Finally, Robert would also like to acknowledge the support he received from the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies for inviting him to spend an academic year in academic bliss. Jacques Thomassen learned the ropes of political representation research at the University of Michigan in the late 1960s and early 1970s as an assistant study director to Philip Converse and Roy Pierce who then were working on their monumental *Political Representation in France*. His dissertation research was based on a study of political representation in the Netherlands, initiated by Warren Miller. Therefore, 'Michigan' has been formative for his academic career. Of the many academic brothers and sisters in arms he had the privilege to work with over the years, in the field of political representation his recurring collaboration with Sören Holmberg has the longest history. He and Hans-Dieter Klingemann participated in almost all of the many projects of comparative political research Jacques has been involved in over the years.

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INTRODUCTION

Political Representation in Liberal Democracies

ROBERT ROHRSCHEIDER
AND JACQUES THOMASSEN

THE objective of the *Oxford Handbook of Political Representation in Liberal Democracies* is to assess comprehensively how well the interests and preferences of mass publics become represented by the institutions of liberal democracies. By liberal democracies we refer to the institutional practices as they have evolved in Western democracies since the early nineteenth century where periodic elections safeguarded by a canon of liberties and rights authorize representatives to make decisions for those residing within nation-states. Our focus means that we do not consider representation in 'illiberal' democracies or autocracies, which would require the space of a separate volume.

We delimited the focus of the *Handbook* because, even within these confines, an overarching assessment of the quality of representation in advanced democracies constitutes a huge task. It requires that we consider the normative acceptance and possible decline of the idea of representation over time, their institutional manifestation as practised in Western democracies, the changing acceptance of these institutions among mass publics and the rise of new divisions among them, the performance of parties as the main agents of representation, the current challenges launched by populist parties, and the growing globalization and integration of economies. The contributors to this *Handbook* examine a specific aspect of this long list of 'must-analyse' because it became clear to us early on that only if we examine these perspectives together will we have a chance to take stock of the quality of representation in liberal democracies. No single book can possibly examine the entirety of the complex web that constitutes the way representation works, the performance of all actors, when it works best, and what factors impede it. However, a handbook provides us with the space to examine sufficiently diverse aspects so we can inch closer to a 'big picture' assessment of the state of representation in liberal democracies at this historical juncture.

In order to provide the motivation for the thirty-four chapters in this *Handbook*, we will first introduce the 'chain of representation' which, over the past century, has encoded the idea of representation as organized in liberal democracies. The second

part will highlight the organizational principles of the *Handbook*. In a third section, we will point to three broad challenges that reflect the overarching assessment the chapters imply for the current quality of representation in liberal democracies.

THE CHAIN OF POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

The unifying theme among the contributions to this *Handbook* is that they shed light on how well various parts of the ‘chain of representation’ work (Figure 1.1). The chain of representation institutes what Dahl (1966: xvii) once called ‘one of the greatest and most unexpected social discoveries that man has ever stumbled upon’. It inaugurates a ‘system of managing the major political conflicts of a society by allowing one or more opposition parties to compete with the governing parties for votes in elections and in parliament’. Thus, just as Schumpeter (1943) envisioned, competition constitutes the linchpin of politics in liberal democracies. The chain of representation connects citizens’ interests and preferences to public policies via competing parties that vie for governing offices on the basis of the main political divisions extant in a society. Victorious governing parties but also defeated opposition parties channel alternative policy visions into national institutions in the post-election context. Ultimately, the outcome of party competition shapes public policy in light of the preferences of citizens, and citizens adjust their attitudes in light of the policy outcomes, and the way actors behave.

However, the ease with which we can schematically depict the chain of representation obscures its complexities. For each step only works if a number of assumptions hold. These assumptions concern the preference formation of citizens (stage 1), the choice set offered by political parties (stage 2), the way institutions and parties collaborate in forming governments and deciding policies (stages 3 to 5), and how citizens respond to them. As the volume makes plain throughout, there are good reasons to ask whether the chain meets the challenges each set of assumptions implies. Thus, the one overarching question guiding this *Handbook* is: have the building blocks of the chain of representation become so fragile that it is in jeopardy of failure? Collectively, the essays in this volume provide information about the way liberal democracies currently work, where they work well, where they may fall short, and what the main challenges are for the future of liberal democracy. The overarching conclusion is that the chain currently works surprisingly well. Surprisingly because there is a large literature documenting the ‘crisis in democracy’ of which the chain is an

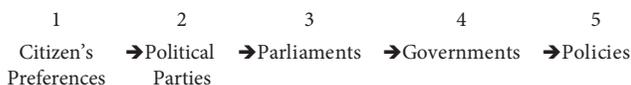


FIGURE 1.1 The Chain of Representation

integral part. But the chapters also identify several areas of concern that must be redressed in order to avoid a substantial decline in the capacity of the chain to represent citizens via parties.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE *HANDBOOK*

We organized the *Handbook* in seven conceptual parts, where each chapter addresses an aspect that we deemed central to a broader concept. Part I of the *Handbook* provides an overview of the normative and historical foundation of the idea of representation (Mansbridge, Chapter 1), its empirical manifestations in liberal democracies (Boix, Horne, and Kerchner, Chapter 2), the cultural preconditions under which they can function properly (Welzel, Chapter 3), the main institutional manifestations within the universe of liberal democracies (Andeweg and Louwerse, Chapter 4), and the extent of their electoral integrity (Van Ham, Chapter 5).

Parts II–IV examine how well various assumptions of the chain reflect reality. Part II examines the individual-level orientations of elite (Hug, Chapter 6) and their behaviour during election campaigns (Zittel, Chapter 7). Part III takes on the issue of ‘descriptive’ representation: to what extent can the interests of citizens be channelled into liberal institutions via shared demographic traits, such as individuals’ gender (Phillips, Chapter 8; Celis and Erzeel, Chapter 9), and ethnicity (Ruedin, Chapter 10)? Would alternative forms of elite recruitment through sortition contribute to better representation (Farrell and Stone, Chapter 11)?

Part IV covers the role of ‘party government’ as the central conduit through which public preferences influence policies. The chapters discuss the framework and its preconditions (Katz, Chapter 12), assess the degree to which parties offer appropriate choices (Dalton, Chapter 13), and whether citizens meet the requirements of the chain (Van der Brug, Hartevelde, and van Slageren, Chapter 14). Two chapters then examine the extent of intra-party unity (Hazan and Itzkovich-Malta, Chapter 15) and intra-party democracy and their contribution to representation (Poguntke and Scarrow, Chapter 16). The next chapters examine whether and when parties keep election promises (Thomson, Chapter 17), adequately represent constituent policy views (Lefkofridi, Chapter 18), and whether institutions connect the views of citizens to public policy (Powell, Chapter 19). The final chapters in this part investigate whether lower turnout impedes the quality of representation (Blais, Kostelka, and Dassonville, Chapter 20) and whether mass publics feel represented (Holmberg, Chapter 21).

Part V examines in what ways non-traditional actors enrich representative institutions. Increasingly, civic society has challenged the dominance of parties as the main agent of representation. This has led to vibrant social movements, and a growth in direct citizen involvement (Colombo and Kriesi, Chapter 22), whereas old and new interest groups also continue to contribute to representation (Richardson, Chapter 23). Two final chapters turn to the view of citizens about their own role: how activism

connects to evaluations of representative democracy (van Deth, Chapter 24) and the dynamic relationship between policies and public preferences (Wlezien, Chapter 25).

Part VI introduces the limits that traditional representation mechanisms face in liberal democracies. It discusses the inherent tensions that semi-autonomous regulatory agencies (e.g., central banks) create for the idea of representation. The independence these institutions require from political interference may conflict with the aim to control them democratically (Bovens and Schillemans, Chapter 26). The part also assesses the influence of the rising social media on the information content of constituent preferences (Peffley, Denison, and Taylor, Chapter 27). The multiplication of non-traditional forms of social media has the potential to increase the number of information sources available to citizens. But it may also lower the overall quality of the knowledge that individuals acquire over time.

Part VII examines the rise and implications of populism for the quality of representation in liberal democracies. The rise of anti-establishment parties at the left extreme and especially right-extreme end of party systems poses serious challenges to the well-functioning operations of representative democracies. What are the main claims by challengers (Norris, Chapter 28; Meyer and Wagner, Chapter 29)? To what extent do they aim to modify the core mechanisms of representative democracies? What is the normative and empirical threat to liberal democracies when viewed from the experience of Central-Eastern Europe (Enyedi and Whitefield, Chapter 30)?

Finally, Part VIII examines international challenges to the traditional mechanisms of representation within nation-states. This part begins with an assessment of how growing globalization may affect nationally organized institutions (Hellwig, Chapter 31). Electorates change because of growing international linkages; parties must respond to new international issues, and governments struggle to deal with the fallout from economic activities that often occur beyond national borders. Then, as an example, how does the EU help or impede the representation of constituents (Hobolt, Chapter 32; Magalhães and Fernandez, Chapter 33)? The growing economic linkages across national boundaries pose severe challenges to the nationally defined framework of representation. A final chapter draws out the various ways democratic institutions at a level above the nation-state could be designed (Bellamy, Chapter 34).

In sum, the core idea of the *Handbook* is to trace the normative basis of liberal representation, sketch the development of these institutions as manifested in Western democracies, describe and assess the extent to which their mechanisms work effectively, and evaluate the potential threats liberal democracy currently faces.

CHALLENGES TO REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY

Anyone who has the time to read the entire volume may come away with two broad conclusions. On one hand, the sum total message of the various chapters is, on balance,

rather positive. Several analyses—especially those in part IV—conclude that the chain often works as intended. On the other hand, there are some disturbing signs that not everything is working as intended in the chain of representation or—perhaps more accurately—there are signs that what worked well in the past may no longer do so in the near future. One may be tempted to point to the rise of new parties (populist and green parties, for instance) whose success indicates that many voters are dissatisfied with the programmatic offerings of mainstream parties. However, to take the rise of new parties *alone* as a sign of a representation failure would be too short-sighted. Nowhere does the chain of representation stipulate normatively or mechanically that mainstream parties have a monopoly on representing citizens. Indeed, the idea is precisely that if parties ignore mass preferences, existing or new parties may fill the void. We thus think that the rise of populist parties nowadays, or green parties in the 1970s, while challenging for historically grown mass parties, is not—and should not be mistaken for—a sign of the imminent collapse of the current system of political representation. To the contrary. Of course, it is another question whether new parties criticize not just the programmatic orientation of existing parties but question the rules of the electoral game in their entirety, or perhaps even the democratic framework altogether. If publics indeed have a preference for a new set of electoral rules or even another democratic regime, or if parties ever more intensely criticize elections as instruments of representation, then it would obviously signal that representation is seriously flawed.¹ But the rise of new parties per se does not reveal a problem. Instead, we think that the tremors spelling potential trouble for the chain of representation run deeper and more subtly. They concern the premises of the chain of representation (stage 1) as much or more as they reflect a failure of the central actors (i.e., parties, government, and voters). The chain of representation is embedded in an ecosystem of premises that leads to effective representation *under a specific set of conditions*. We detect signs in various chapters that the tacit premises, which the chain assumes so that the responsive behaviour of parties can lead to a successful representation, become undermined. In order to describe where we see these signs, we will highlight three closely linked challenges to the chain's premise: a functional challenge, an authority challenge, and a normative challenge arising from calls for alternative forms of democracy and representation. Again, none of these challenges signals the demise of the chain of representation. However, they require good decisions by current actors—especially parties—to sustain the current mechanism of representation.

FUNCTIONAL CHALLENGES TO REPRESENTATION IN LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES

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Representation-through-parties in liberal democracies first and foremost assumes that (1) institutions live up to their ideals most of the time; (2) the policy preferences and

orientations of citizens display traits that make representation via parties possible; and (3) political parties offer a choice on issues that reflect the policy preferences of voters. We highlight each in turn and point to the chapters that fully establish the nature of the challenge.

Institutional Characteristics. Institutional challenges can arise because the institutional framework of the chain (stages 3 to 5) does not deliver those policies it should deliver according to its *own* ideals. What are the ideals behind democratic institutions? In order to answer this question, we must distinguish between two general institutional types: a majoritarian and a consensus model. A *majoritarian model of democracy* prioritizes the will of the majority of the people, which means that the winning party after an election ideally receives unencumbered access to parliament and governments. A *consensus model of democracy*, in turn, places greater emphasis on minority protection, weakening the exercise of power by the victorious majority (Chapters 4 and 19 in this *Handbook*; Lijphart 2012; Powell 2018). Each type thus stresses a somewhat different balance between majority rule and minority protections and rights and each sets a somewhat different benchmark for how it should perform according to its own institutional logic.

There is evidence that both of the institutional types may fall short of their own ideals. For example, majoritarian visions institute, in as pure a form as may be possible, a ‘mandate’ version of representation. The mechanism assumes that a single party governs unencumbered in order to implement the ‘will of the majority’. However, this ideal is often missed when the governing ‘majority’ actually constitutes a plurality and the ‘majority’ of citizens therefore do *not* support the (often) single governing party. One consequence is that majoritarian institutions often fall short of representing the median citizen better than other forms of government (Powell 2000: chapter 8). Additionally, as Lijphart (2012) argues, from a democratic perspective, a majoritarian government is only legitimate in a homogeneous society where the dividing issues can be reduced to a single dimension of conflict. As the debates over Brexit in the United Kingdom, the prototype of majoritarian democracy, amply show, the British party system runs into great difficulty in handling a cross-cutting conflict dimension like Brexit.

In turn, the consensus model of democracy assumes that each link in the chain provides a check to constrain the uncompromising will of the majority of the people in order to secure the expression of minority views. At first sight the consensus model of democracy seems to perform much better than the majoritarian model according to its own standards. Because of one of its defining characteristics, a proportional electoral system, it gives more access to new movements and political parties representing policy views not yet represented in parliament. The early representation of right-wing populist parties in most European consensus democracies is an obvious case in point. However, according to the consensus model of democracy a broad representation of political parties and minorities should not only occur in parliament but throughout the

chain of representation, including the government. However, with a few exceptions like the ‘magic formula’ in Switzerland, this usually is not the case. After the elections most consensual democracies actually follow a majoritarian logic in the formation of the government, inconsistently combining elements from two opposite democratic systems, and often combining the worst of two worlds (Chapter 4 in this *Handbook*), that is, the lack of an electoral mandate for the government and its poor accountability in a consensual system, combined with the side-lining of the losing minorities after an election. Also, because several parties are needed to form a government, this process usually takes a long time. Belgium holds the world record of the longest government formation ever: the formation after the 2010 parliamentary elections took no less than 541 days. As a consequence, once a policy agreement has been reached after lengthy negotiations, it is cast in stone, making government policy inflexible and largely unresponsive to alternative views and changing circumstances.

Finally, just as in the case of majoritarian institutions, the quality of a consensus democracy is context dependent. In his early work, Lijphart advocated consociational democracy only for deeply divided countries (Lijphart 1968). Once these divisions lose their political relevance, the cooperation between political elites loses its function as well. It no longer serves the purpose of reconciling mutually hostile groups in society and might easily pervert into a cartel democracy. The lack of competition between the established parties deprives voters of a meaningful choice within the system. Opposition can only come from without the system and almost by definition takes the form of a voice against the established party system (Chapter 4 in this *Handbook*; Lijphart 1968). Therefore, it is probably no coincidence that populist parties first originated in consensus democracies like Austria, Belgium, and the Netherlands (Chapter 4 in this *Handbook*; Andeweg 2001), vehemently attacking the so-called ‘establishment’ for ignoring the common people (Schedler 1996; Barr 2009). Thus, it appears that consensual democracies tend to unfold their ‘kinder, gentler’ (Lijphart, 2012) qualities primarily in highly segmented societies with commensurate elite cooperation. But this may no longer be the case when societal changes dissolve deeply seated divisions so that elite cooperation now does not look as beneficial as it once did.

We thus see that the quality of representation, especially in stages 3 to 5, is substantially influenced by the way that institutions deliver those ideals they promise to produce, which, in turn, may lead citizens and elites to question whether the chain of representation can function as intended. As long as institutions fall short of these ideals, they may stimulate criticism of the chain of representation even if parties do all they can to deliver policies that (their) voters demand.

Citizen Characteristics. Another functional challenge centres on the flaws in the information provided to and digested by individual citizens (stage 1). The starting point of the chain seems so simple. Individuals hold preferences, which they form on the basis of their values and beliefs, or in response to events and elite cues. These then become channelled via parties into institutions via party policies. On closer inspection, however, the simplicity vanishes. These preferences must display certain traits before

they can become aggregated and channelled into policies by parties and institutions (Chapter 14 in this *Handbook*; Dalton et al. 2011; Thomassen 1994). Thomassen (1994) has highlighted these assumptions that lie at the beginning of the chain: voters actually have preferences; they are aware of party positions and they support a party that most closely matches these preferences; the preferences of voters are not idiosyncratically distributed but reflect an overarching ideology that ideally represents a uni-dimensional structure (Chapters 13, 14, and 18 in this *Handbook*). The uni-dimensional premise is needed because if there is more than one dimension in the electorate it is nearly impossible for voters to systematically link their issue preferences to a specific party. However, there is evidence that the dimensionality of electorates, in particular, may approach a degree of complexity that raises huge difficulties for the representation of public preferences (Dalton 2018; Hooghe and Marks 2005; Prosser 2016; Chapter 14 in this *Handbook*). This research shows that the economic, cultural, and international issue dimensions often do not align neatly into one overarching ideology. As a consequence, when a voter holds left views on the economy she may hold a culturally conservative view, and vice versa. Because in most countries this particular combination of policy views is not offered by any of the parties, voters are forced to vote according to either one of these dimensions. As a consequence, voters must be poorly represented on some of the issue combinations that are theoretically conceivable. Because in several countries this applies to a sizable proportion of the electorate (Chapter 18 in this *Handbook*), it points to a serious challenge of representation.

From a different vantage point, the chain of political representation requires that voters are well informed and form their own independent judgement. Early empirical studies in the 1940s and 1950s seemed to confirm Schumpeter's judgement that this requirement implies 'the necessity of attributing to the will of the individual an independence and a rational quality that are altogether unrealistic' (Schumpeter 1943). The 'cognitive mobilization' (Inglehart 1977) from the 1960s onwards led to the far more optimistic view that 'more citizens now possess the political resources to follow the complexities of politics' and 'have the potential to act as the independent issue voters described in classic democratic theory' (Dalton 1988: 200–1).

However, the rise of commercial social media and the proliferation of media sources may reduce citizens' level of information (Carpini and Keeter 1996; Aalberg, Blekesaune and Elvestad 2013; Chapter 27 in this *Handbook*). In the context of a fragmented and partisan media environment, voters with a particular partisan proclivity may not look for new information about policies at all but mainly seek confirming news about policies that fit their predispositions. In fact, they may not only ignore inconvenient disconfirming information but not rely on policies at all. As voters ignore public debates and increasingly sort themselves into media usage that confirms their pre-existing partisan views, the formation of preferences may become more limited and not even be relevant to individuals. This may undermine the chain of representation at the very starting point that assumes that voters hold a modicum of preference 'content' in

the first place (Aalberg, van Aalst, and Elvestad 2013; Druckman et al. 2018; Chapter 27 in this *Handbook*).

All of this means that the kind of preferences citizens form at stage 1, and the extent to which they focus on preferences at all, may potentially institute barriers to the representation of the public interest as envisioned by the chain of representation.

Party characteristics. Not only do voters have to meet specific criteria for the chain to function, but political parties must meet certain characteristics as well. The research literature discusses the following aspects without which it is difficult for political parties to channel the preferences of mass publics under any institutional arrangement (Dalton et al. 2011; Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012; Thomassen 1994; Thomassen 2020). First, the preferences of voters must be reflected in the programmes parties offer to electorates. This seems so self-evident but historical examples abound where parties missed an opportunity to offer a choice on issues, including ecological issues in the 1970s, and integration and migration issues in more recent decades (Kitschelt 1989; Thomassen 2012). If voters do not see an outlet among parties and the issue is sufficiently important then voters either abstain, or vote for a party on the basis of other issues. Either way, the absence of a party choice on relevant issues brings to a halt the chain of representation (see also Chapter 13 in this *Handbook*).

Another criterion parallels that of the voter level: the choices offered by parties must be constrained by an overarching ideological dimension. The justification for this requirement is nearly the same as that for the dimensionality criterion for mass publics: if there is more than one dimension, it means that the position of parties on one dimension remains largely disconnected from their position on another dimension (Albright 2009; Bakker et al. 2012; Thomassen 2012; Prosser 2015; Dalton 2017). In that case, an unequivocal mandate of the voters is nearly impossible because they might like the position of a party on one dimension but not on the other. Given that multiple studies show that cultural issues tend not to fully align with economic issues and, moreover, international issues tend to cross-cut most domestic issue positions, it is likely that party policies contribute to the difficulties faced by the chain of representation.

This leads immediately to a third point: disunity within parties can substantially lower the ability of parties to translate their programmes into policies. We only need to point to the riveting debates in the British parliament over Brexit in order to understand how a cross-cutting division like integration can lay the idea of representation through parties to rest. Clearly, when parties are internally divided or if they have little capacity to enforce discipline over roll-call votes, the chain may well break down here (Sartori 1976; Hellström and Blomgren 2016; Chapters 6 and 15 in this *Handbook*).

Overall, none of these three functional challenges necessarily entails that representation as currently instituted is about to fail. But these challenges do point to several problems that lurk underneath the otherwise fairly positive assessment of the performance of parties by many contributors to this *Handbook*.

THE AUTHORITY CHALLENGE TO GOVERNMENTS

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A second challenge refers to the scope of governmental authority. At the end of the chain of political representation citizens and political parties depend on the government to translate their policy preferences into public policy. Clearly, the government can only do so if it can autonomously develop public policy. However, for at least two reasons national governments appear to lose their grip on public policy: first, because of the growing globalization of economies and the rising importance of such transnational issues as environmentalism and migration (Chapters 31, 32, and 34 in this *Handbook*). The core issue is that the “functional need for human co-operation rarely coincides with the territorial scope of community (Hooghe and Marks 2009, p. 2). At the heart of the territorial challenge lies the potential clash between the existing scope of authority that citizens have become accustomed to (typically the nation-state) and the international scope of authority that policy problems increasingly require. The challenging question here is not whether effective policymaking can be confined within national borders; it cannot because many policy problems require transnational solutions (e.g., the environment, migration). The real question is whether transnational decision-making can be democratic. This involves two questions: (1) Can one design political institutions beyond the level of the nation-state that are both effective, democratic, and legitimate? (2) should these institutions be similar to those at the level of the nation-state? So far, the European Union is the only example in the world of a hybrid international organization comprised of sovereign states with a dual system of political representation and democratic institutions. The design of the system of political representation at the European level—despite all of its shortcomings—is not very different from the chain of political representation as we know it at the national level and step-by-step the process of decision-making at the European level is becoming more democratic (Chapter 32 in this *Handbook*). In that sense one might see the European project as a success. But the real challenge is whether people across Europe will accept European political decisions on the grounds that these decisions were reached by a democratically elected European parliament. Brexit and the rise of euro-sceptic populist parties suggest many people do not. A more daring thought experiment is the design of democratic institutions and processes at an even higher level than the European Union, with the world level being the logical extreme. Obviously, if there is reason to doubt the feasibility of a supra-national system of democracy at the EU level, legitimate democratic institutions at an even higher level may well defy our imagination. Instead, as Bellamy convincingly argues in the final chapter, there is hardly an alternative to intergovernmental cooperation in most international organizations. Therefore, as Dahl argued many years ago, the third democratic transformation, from democracy in the national state to democracy in the transnational state, seems to be an illusion: ‘... the danger is that the third transformation will lead not to an extension of

the democratic idea beyond the nation-state but to the victory in that domain of *de facto* guardianship' (Dahl 1989: 320).

A second reason why governments—and therefore indirectly parliaments, political parties, and citizens a well—are losing their grip on public policy is the growing number of independent agencies that have a significant influence on policies. These so-called non-majoritarian institutions have often been placed outside the competence of governments and parliaments in order to remove political considerations from their decisions (Chapter 26 in this *Handbook*). To what extent this is a problem, is a matter of perspective. From a (majoritarian) democratic perspective the instinctive reaction might be that these institutions should be brought (back) under the control of the institutions of representative democracy. However, these institutions were developed in a world less complex than ours. Trying to control each and every policy decision from a single democratically legitimized centre of command requires a span of control that is unrealistic. 'Monitory democracy' in which all kinds of organizations and institutions supplement traditional democratic institutions as critical counterweights to governments might be a more realistic perspective (Chapter 26 in this *Handbook*; Keane 2009). From the perspective of consensus democracy this is not only more realistic but also more in line with its basic philosophy in which independent institutions like central banks are often seen as elements of the system of checks and balances, constraining the power of the majority.

A NORMATIVE CHALLENGE TO PARTY DEMOCRACY: THE CALL FOR ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF REPRESENTATION AND DEMOCRACY

The third challenge refers to the key characteristics of party democracy as embodied in the chain of political representation: the pivotal role of political parties in the process of political representation, and elections as the exclusive instrument of democracy. During their golden era, political parties were strongly rooted in civil society as they were based on the major cleavages in society, represented a particular group in society, and more often than not were a channel of political emancipation of that group. Because of the process of de-alignment from the 1960s onwards, political parties and in particular members of parliament gradually became disconnected from civil society. Populist parties even claim that many mainstream parties became so elitist that they increasingly ignored the interests of 'ordinary people' (Schedler 1996; Barr 2009; Chapters 28 and 29 in this *Handbook*). Empirical research confirms that representative democracy has been gradually transformed into a kind of *Diploma democracy* (Bovens and Wille 2017)—members of parliaments almost without exception are drawn from

the highly educated strata of democratic societies. Of course, representative democracy and elections in particular always have been an elitist project whereas direct democracy and sortition were seen as true democratic instruments (Chapter 1 in this *Handbook*; Manin 1997). The significance of the historically varied meaning of the term ‘democracy’, however, is that as a reaction to the presumed failing of party democracy, many critics find their inspiration once again in these ancient conceptions of democracy. First, there is the call for more descriptive elements in the selection of members of parliament to make them more representative (see Chapters 8 to 11 in Part III). Also, several experiments have been conducted in which the development of new legislation on important and sensitive issues is left to citizen assemblies whose members are selected by sortition rather than elections (Chapter 11 in this *Handbook*). Second, much of the criticism on the functioning of party government advocates direct democracy or forms of participatory democracy, if not as a replacement of representative democracy, then at least as an important supplement to it (Chapters 22 and 24 in this *Handbook*).

These alternative forms of elite recruitment and decision-making do not necessarily constitute a collapse of representative democracy. Essential for the legitimacy and sustainability of representative democracy is whether such additions constitute a supplement rather than a replacement of the mechanisms of the chain of representation. As the authors of the relevant chapters in this *Handbook* argue, it is more realistic and productive to see alternative forms of citizen engagement as a supplement and an enrichment of representative democracy. For example, citizen assemblies can be used as correctives for the failures of contemporary democracies (Chapter 11 in this *Handbook*). In a similar vein direct participation of citizens in political decision-making can be considered as a means to compensate for the deficits of representative democracy (Chapter 22 in this *Handbook*). Also, there is no question of a zero-sum game between electoral participation and the rise of new forms of engagement and non-state actors. On the contrary, the various groups of citizens using both institutionalized and protest modes of participation overlap substantially. Moreover, the politically most active parts of the population are also the strongest supporters of basic principles of representative democracy; they clearly do not participate because they reject major aspects of representative democracy (Chapter 24 in this *Handbook*).

Therefore, it would be ill-conceived to view these developments as a threat to the system of representative democracy or to see it as a harbinger of ‘the end of representative politics’ (Tormey 2015). Quite the contrary, we believe it is more constructive to see them as potentially enriching instruments of democracy, according to the classic adage ‘The cure for the ills of democracy is more democracy’. And this might be the most general and most important lesson to be learned from the many insights in the functioning of representative democracy produced by the authors in this *Handbook*. None suggests that party democracy is performing as badly as is often presumed. But it is also clear that representative democracy is unsustainable if it does not open up to civil society. A rigid interpretation of the chain of political representation stating that the will of the people could be inputted into it at one end which then results in an

agreed upon public policy at the other end, is at best wishful thinking as successive chapters in this *Handbook* show. In order to effectively represent the people, political parties and other political institutions need to be continuously responsive and accountable to the people rather than to pick up an all encompassing mandate every four years or so. People no longer accept a role in political decision-making that limits their input to choosing representatives every now and then in democratic elections. They demand democracy between elections as much as on election day (Esaïsson and Narud, 2013; Chapter 25 in this *Handbook*). Perhaps representative democracy as it evolves is not as orderly as the neatly raked paths of the chain of political representation might suggest. But political parties, and political elites in general better learn to share the political space with all kinds of other actors instead of trying to defend an unsustainable political order.

NOTE

1. One gap in the research literature is to assess with the precision of instruments developed by political culture research in the 1990s whether supporters of populist parties indeed hold political values that fundamentally clash with the requirements of a liberal democracy. The Central–Eastern European experience may be of limited guidance given the unique conditions of the post-communist context (Chapter 30 in this *Handbook*). However, before we accept this comforting conclusion, we would need more empirically grounded knowledge about the democratic orientation of populist party supporters and party elites.

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P A R T I

CONCEPTS AND
THEORIES OF
POLITICAL
REPRESENTATION

CHAPTER 1

THE EVOLUTION OF POLITICAL REPRESENTATION IN LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES

Concepts and Practices

JANE MANSBRIDGE

INTRODUCTION

CURRENT crises in political representation in the EU and many national democracies have prompted both new theories and new practices of representation in what has always been a work in progress. This chapter summarizes the evolution of political representation in liberal democracies, then sketches out some of the ways that current practices and thinking are responding to these crises.¹ The crises are serious. Few liberal democracies have sufficient legitimacy to sustain the levels of state regulation, with its accompanying coercion, that they need to manage the challenges of climate change and other increases in interdependence. Political representation is central to that legitimacy.

The chapter begins with a brief history of how ideas and practices of political representation evolved in liberal democracies, stressing certain critical periods. It ends with the current legitimacy dilemma. Human needs for legitimate state coercion have increased dramatically as nations have become increasingly interdependent (Mansbridge 2014b). This trend is almost certain to continue. Yet in the world of practice, liberal democracies face major declines in citizen trust of elected and administrative representatives, creating temptations to substitute direct democracy or representation through one strong leader. In the world of ideas, these democracies confront

a decline in the relevance of ‘consent’ and, with the growth of egalitarian sentiment, a decline in the legitimacy of hierarchical models of representation.

Both perceived and normative legitimacy thus require new thinking beyond the standard chain of representation, finding ways to create political representation in the three realms of elected representation, administration, and civil society, or what I will call the “societal realm.” The goal throughout is for citizens to connect better, through webs of justifiable obligation, to the laws that bind them.

Terminology

In this chapter I adapt the conceptual language of Hannah Pitkin to define ‘representation’ as making present some aspect of a person or group’s interests, opinions, perspectives, or simply assents or dissents, in a deliberative or decision-making arena when that person or members of that group are not literally present.² Despite the usual meanings of the prefix ‘re’, however, an aspect of an individual or group being represented need not have existed in its current state before the act of representation. Processes of representation can call into being aspects of an individual or collective self that did not earlier exist. The most frequent kind of representation discussed here is dyadic, the representation of one ‘constituent’ by one ‘representative’, although the full meaning of the term encompasses many individuals, groups, or collective actors such as political parties representing many other individuals, groups, and collective actors in a broad representative system. By the ‘political’ in ‘political representation’ I mean to encompass any matter of general interest that ‘the public ought to discuss’,³ although this analysis will focus primarily on representation related to the state. In defining the term ‘representation’, my analysis employs a ‘core-plus’ approach.⁴ It takes ‘making present’ as the core of representation and adds to that core varying attributes that produce different kinds of political representation. Thus political representation can include electoral representation, representation by lot, symbolic representation by kings and heads of state, and both formal and informal representation. I focus on three important realms of political representation—the electoral, administrative, and societal. In each, representation can take many forms: descriptive, promissory, anticipatory, gyroscopic, surrogate, advocacy, and recursive, among many others. Each realm and each form can help create political legitimacy through different ways of making the absent present.

The ‘liberal’ in ‘liberal’ democracy refers here to the constellation of constitutional principles and practices that protect the individual from the state. In today’s liberal representative democracies, these practices and the principles behind them are central to both perceived and normative legitimacy and, through normative legitimacy, the obligation to obey the law. They promote liberty in the senses of both self-government and the right to be left alone. The ‘democracy’ in ‘liberal democracy’ means a constellation of principles and practices, some of which conflict with one another, that underlie the larger legitimating principle that the people rule. Equality—a contested

mix of equal standing, equal respect, equal power, and the equal opportunity to exercise power— plays a central role among these principles. So does political liberty, in the sense of the power to act by making laws for oneself and one's collective. In addition, practical efficacy contributes to both perceived and normative legitimacy through consent. Equality, political liberty, and practical efficacy all contribute to legitimating both the 'chain of representation' institutionalized in liberal democracies and the broader liberal democratic representative system.

HISTORY

The Earliest Democracies and Forms of Representation

For 98 per cent of human history, humans in most parts of the world lived in small hunter-gatherer bands that left no written records. The best guess of anthropologists is that these relatively small bands operated with a form of direct democracy in which the adult males made decisions together by consensus, as equals in spirit but in practice giving greater weight to the ideas of the elders.⁵ Once humans turned to settled agriculture and consequently larger polities, they had to evolve forms of government that could handle greater scale: many monarchic, some oligarchic, some with direct democratic elements, and some with various forms of political representation.

Athens, the most important of the early Greek polities organized as democracies (Robinson 1997), combined a face-to-face assembly with other institutions in most of which citizens were represented by other citizens randomly selected by lot from those who qualified and volunteered. After 507 BCE, when a 'revolution' of the poorer citizens in Athens brought in the reformer Cleisthenes, the political system had four major components. The first was an assembly that met approximately every ten days and made the major decisions for the polity. That assembly was open to all adult male citizens, with no property qualification and, from the early fourth century, pay for attendance. Decisions, whether by consensus or majority vote, were made by a show of hands. The second component consisted of juries composed of 200 to 500 or more people (the largest panel we know of had 6000 members). These panels were chosen anew almost every day, and were 'representative' in that the jurors were selected by lot from the citizens who applied. From the 450s, jurors were paid for their participation. They made their decisions by majority vote in secret ballots, without deliberation. The third component, a Council of 500 that set the agenda for the Assembly and acted as executive, combined an ingenious geographical distribution with representation by lot. For this component of the system, Cleisthenes divided the entire Athenian polity into ten artificially created tribes, each composed of three non-contiguous areas: one coastal, one inland, and one from the city of Athens. The members of each of these tribes fought together in Athens' many wars, as well as attending festivals and rituals together, each tribe having its own mythical tribal hero. Once a year each village

(deme) chose by lot, from all qualified citizens who put themselves forward, a number of councillors proportional to the deme's size to be members of the Athenian Council of 500. Over their lifetimes, perhaps 35 to 45 per cent of all full Athenian citizens served on the Council. Combining the artificial tribes with representation by lot broke up previous local loyalties and potential organization by urban, agricultural, or coastal interests. It also allowed the three very different areas within each tribe to share information and insight with one another and the other members of the Council. In a fourth component, all military officers and (starting in the fourth century) some other important officials such as the city's treasurer were elected by the assembly. Aristotle reports that the lot was considered democratic and the elections aristocratic.⁶ The elements of representation by lot in the Athenian system were governed by the norm that each should 'rule and be ruled in turn' (Aristotle, *Politics*, Bk 6, pt 2) in bodies concerned with the good of the whole. The election of magistrates and generals was governed by the norm of selecting the best qualified individuals for these sensitive positions. Neither, however, was governed by the norm in some democracies today that those chosen for these positions should represent the interests of the majority that elected them.⁷

The first written record of political representation without lot but exhibiting the characteristics of proportionality to population and binding power over the represented derives from about 400 BCE in the Greek Mediterranean. In the Boeotian Confederacy, each of eleven units sent sixty councillors to a federal council that had the power of final decision over all. In confederacies like this, representative government, defined by the criteria of proportional representation and binding decision, seems to have been 'the accepted form of government' from at least 400 to 27 BCE (Larsen 1966: 40). After the Roman Empire succeeded the Roman Republic in 27 BCE, these federal states and leagues continued their representational structure but lost their independence. At this point they primarily maintained the imperial cult, although the assemblies could review a governor after his term of office. Early in the Empire the European provincial assemblies included both former high priests and delegates chosen in some way by the municipal councils of the different tribes. By the late Empire, these delegates were only notables or an hereditary aristocracy (1966: 123–59).

The Roman Republic itself in the classic period of 264 to 133 BCE had a complex structure of limited direct democracy, with only two arguably representative elements. In one, the 'centuriate' assembly, the whole citizenry elected high magistrates, such as the two consuls, according to a system that gave more heavily weighted votes to the wealthiest citizens. In the other, the 'tribal' assembly, the common people (possibly excluding patrician citizens) elected, through a somewhat more majoritarian process, the ten 'tribunes of the plebeians'. The tribunes had the power to act on the plebeians' behalf to veto acts of the Senate, the consuls, and other magistrates, and to intercede in legal matters to protect plebeian interests.⁸ The structure of representation thus openly acknowledged class conflict, with the consuls tending to express the preferences of the wealthy and the tribunes, in principle, representing plebeian interests.

Evolution in Medieval and Early Modern Europe

The disintegration of the Western Roman Empire over the course of the fifth and sixth centuries, propelled by disease, civil war, and waves of invaders from the north and east, wiped away most of the Roman institutions in western Europe, leaving remnants in Church institutions and a massive legacy in Roman law. Three features of Roman law, preserved in the Emperor Justinian's Codex of 528 CE, proved particularly important for the later theory and practice of representation, especially after the revival of Roman law in Western Europe in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. First, Roman private law held that a principal could give an agent 'full powers' (*plena potestas*) with full discretion to act on the agent's behalf. Second, Roman private law held that a received understanding or contract could not be changed without the consent of the contracting parties because 'that which touches all should be decided by all' (*quod omnes tangit ab omnibus approbetur*). Third, Roman public law treated 'natural law' (*lex naturalis*) as a form of law that courts should take into account along with the written law. Combined with divine law and the 'law of peoples' (*jus gentium*), natural law would, over time, create significant exceptions to the otherwise powerful concept that the king had full authority (*plenitudo potestatis*).⁹

In the European provinces conquered by Rome and in the waves of settlement toward the end of the Empire, each of the peoples in the Empire had, or had brought with them, their own customary law, which they did not consider 'enacted' but simply as taken from 'our fathers', binding the king as well as all members of the kingdom. For example, in the process of moving from family-oriented blood-feud to a more centrally organized system of security and justice, Rothair, an early elected king of the Lombards, compiled the laws of his people in 643, 'after seeking out and finding the old laws of our fathers which were not written down, and with the equal counsel and consent of our most important judges and with the rest of our most happy nation assisting'.¹⁰ Liutprand, a later Lombard king, wanted to abolish trial by battle in homicide cases but believed that he could make only a few changes in the interpretation of the law, stating that 'we have heard that many men have unjustly lost their cause by combat; however, on account of the customs of the Lombard people we are unable to abolish this law'.¹¹ The Frankish kings promised in coronation oaths to rule 'in accordance with law' (meaning the customary law now often codified in writing). Still later, as kings began to change existing law in major ways, the language of consent continued. After Charlemagne, King of the Franks, was crowned 'Emperor of the Romans' by the Pope in 800, he used the formula: 'Charles the Emperor . . . together with the bishops, abbots, counts, dukes, and all the faithful subjects of the Christian Church, and with their consent and counsel, has decreed . . .'.¹² This early tradition of consent and counsel, often meaning the counsel and consent of notables from many parts of the kingdom in assembly, would feed into a crucial line of social contract thinking, with its implicit, if weak, theory of representation.

The first preserved social contract theory comes from 1085, when, in the heat of the Investiture Controversy over whether the pope or secular powers had the right to appoint clergy, the monk Manegold of Lautenbach attacked the legitimacy of the Holy Roman Emperor. Regarding any person who ‘is to bear the charge of all and govern all’, Manegold wrote,

the people do not exalt him above themselves in order to grant him a free opportunity to exercise tyranny against them, but that he might defend them against the tyranny and unrighteousness of others. Yet when he who has been chosen for the coercion of the wicked and the defense of the upright has begun to foster evil against them, to destroy the good, and himself to exercise most cruelly against his subjects the tyranny which he ought to repel, is it not clear that he deservedly falls from the dignity entrusted to him and that the people stand free from his lordship and subjection, when he has been evidently the first to break the compact for whose sake he was appointed? Nor can anyone justly and rationally accuse them of faithlessness, since it is quite evident that he first broke faith (1085/1954: 164).

Social contract theories like this proliferated (Gough 1957). Two hundred years later, in his treatise *On Kingship* (1265–1266), even Thomas Aquinas, who otherwise went to great lengths to provide arguments for monarchy over other forms of government, conceded in one sentence that ‘in cases where it belongs by right to a community to provide a ruler for itself, that community can without injustice depose or restrain a king whom it has appointed, if he should abuse royal power tyrannically’.¹³ Aquinas did not specify the institutions through which the ‘community’ might act. By this time, however, many local areas and larger polities in Europe had developed certain assemblies of nobility and clergy drawn from all relevant territories (Wickham 2017), while the Italian city-states of the eleventh and twelfth centuries had developed what we would call representation by both election and lot (Manin 1997).

About the time of Aquinas the word ‘representation’ in the English and French languages began to be applied to human beings acting for others (in contrast to representation in art).¹⁴ At about this time as well, in 1215, article 14 of the English Magna Carta specified that no tax could be imposed on the kingdom ‘unless by common counsel of our kingdom’, and for obtaining that counsel the king was to summon together ‘the archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls, and greater barons... and others who hold of us in chief, for a fixed date... and at a fixed place’.

Subsequently the English kings slowly but increasingly frequently began to call the knights and burgesses of the realm to their courts to get their consent whenever the kings wanted more taxes. In asking for extra money on the grounds of a national emergency (usually a war), the kings had an interest in the delegates from the shires having full powers (*plena potestas*) to bind those they represented (Post 1943). The kings also began to adopt language that could be used in later representative theory. In 1295, in a writ ordering the Archbishop of Canterbury to summon representatives of the clergy to an assembly to grant more taxes, Edward I used the phrase from contract law, ‘what touches all should be approved by all’, to justify the assembly, as had

Emperor Frederick II in 1231 in inviting the Tuscan cities to send him delegates. The French King Philip IV did the same in 1302, when summoning the Estates General (Monahan 1987: 98–100). Having been preserved and developed through lawsuits in private law, this principle was now being applied in public law (Post 1946).

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the gradually increasing royal control over the realm in both England and France, the increasing unification and formalization of the law as between locales and as between Roman and customary law, and even the increasing number of university graduates who could act as clerks in local affairs, all combined to produce an increasing formalization of the concepts and practices of representation at both national and lower levels. The formalization of representation occurred at the very time that kings, demanding from their subjects ever more money to wage the wars that increased royal control and unified their kingdoms, depended ever more on getting consent to such taxation from those with powers to represent their communities.

Assemblies that can be considered parliamentary (having ‘deliberative powers’ and being ‘recognized as an established part of the process of government’) took place first in the Spanish kingdom of Leon in 1188 and in Spanish Castile and Catalonia in the late 1200s. In France, having first been called together by Philip IV in 1302, the Estates-General in 1355–1357 for the first time demanded, in return for granting their consent to greater taxes, promises of periodic future assemblies and a certain control over levying those taxes. Italian and German kingdoms saw similar developments.¹⁵

In this era, theories of consent and representation evolved along with the development of institutions of representation within both the Church and secular authority in many parts of Europe. In 1324, Marsilius of Padua, in a document that included several articles the Pope condemned as heretical, argued that ‘the “legislator”, i.e., the primary and proper efficient cause of the law, is the people or the universal body of the citizens or else its prevailing part.’ This ‘people’ could then establish ‘through election’ a ‘principate’ with ‘coercive force’ whose authority ‘depends solely on the express will of the legislator’ (1324/2002: 66, 549). By 1433, Nicolas of Cusa had fleshed out a social contract theory beginning with the principle that ‘by nature all men are free’, so that any authority restricting their freedom must come ‘from the consent of the subjects’ (1433/1991: 98–9).

In the next century, the Protestant Reformation’s break from authority and the civil wars that ensued gave even greater impetus to social contract theorizing.¹⁶ The practice of representation was also evolving. In England, for example, as the power and prestige of Parliament had grown, selection to attend that body evolved from an often onerous duty to a privilege. By the early 1600s the selection of individuals for Parliament had become a local matter of honour, with the choice of two members from a county or borough being either obvious or a matter of discrete enquiry and informal decision among the gentry before the celebratory act of selection by popular acclamation. Few ‘elections’ were contested, and these were usually settled by ‘voice’ (the number of voices raised for each candidate), or, if that was unclear, by ‘view’ (supporters of each clustering in different areas). Only rarely did a contest require a

formal poll, conducted at least once by making notches on an undersheriff's stick (Kishlansky 1986: esp. 54, 180).

1650–1700 in England

Significant changes took place around 1650 in England. After the suspension of Parliament for the decade from 1629 to 1640 and the subsequent civil wars, many thinkers and political actors in several domains began to expect conflict instead of unanimity on a common good. Selection to Parliament became increasingly contested, with growing numbers of formal votes: a move from selection to election (Kishlansky 1986: 134 and *passim*). Political parties emerged, first as factions around particular individuals and later with ideological content gradually identified as 'Whig' and 'Tory' (1986: 16, 173). Parliament moved from making decisions primarily by consensus to primarily by majority rule (Kishlansky 1977). Economic theories moved slowly from expecting consensus on a just price and wage to considering it just to set prices and wages through conflicting interests in the market (Appleby 1978). Thinking on religion moved slowly from demanding and expecting only one true religion to some degree of toleration for competition among conflicting religions. As people began to accept conflict in these realms, issues of procedural justice arose for arbitrating the conflicts. In the political realm, some argued for apportioning electoral districts more fairly. In 1647, the Levellers, an eventually repressed radical movement, even wanted to extend the suffrage to all adult men (except servants and alms-takers) in a government with representation through election. In their argument, 'all government is in the free assent of the people. If so, [each must] . . . by his free consent be put under that government' Therefore all 'ought to have a voice in elections.'¹⁷ A Leveller manifesto in 1649 demanded:

That the Supreme Authority of England . . . shall be and reside henceforward in a Representative of the People consisting of four hundred persons . . . in the choice of whom (according to naturall right) all men of the age of one and twenty years and upwards (not being servants, or receiving alms . . .) shall have their voices . . .¹⁸

In the midst of this widespread discussion of representation, in 1642 and 1651 Thomas Hobbes formulated the first elaborated theory of political representation.¹⁹ A scientist by disposition and an interlocutor with Descartes and Galileo, Hobbes employed what he called the 'resoluto-compositivè' method of breaking things down to their atoms, in this case the fundamental atom of self-interest, and building up from there. Men born free and sufficiently equal in capacity to kill one another, he argued, will in their own self-interest contract among one another 'every one with every one' [not with a king] to give a 'man or assembly of men . . . the right to present the person of them all, that is to say, to be their representative', and in so doing every one 'shall authorize all the actions and judgments of that man, or assembly of men, in the same

manner, as if they were their own' (Hobbes 1651/1996: 125). In Hobbes's theory (although not in that of subsequent theorists), after this one stroke of authorization, the authorizers had no more power over their representative, who spoke and acted in their name but was accountable only to God.²⁰

Implicitly building on Hobbes's account, Locke in 1679–1689 made a case for revolution by summing up the prevailing theory on taxation: 'It is true, governments cannot be supported without great charge, and it is fit every one who enjoys his share of the protection, should pay out of his estate his proportion for the maintenance of it. But still it must be with his own consent, i.e., the consent of the majority, giving it either by themselves, or their representatives chosen by them' (*Second Treatise*, section 140). The words 'themselves, or their representatives' identified one's 'own' consent with the consent of one's representative. That conjunction would become a staple of English and American constitutional thought in the next century. A hundred years after Locke, in the United States, the cry 'No taxation without representation', which first appeared in print in 1768, launched the American Revolution.²¹

1750–1800

At the time of the first written national constitution enacting representative government, in North America, representation did not necessarily mean democracy. The term 'representative democracy' did appear in a 1777 letter by Alexander Hamilton and in print by Noah Webster in 1785 (Tuck 2015: 7). But the meaning and practice of representation were contested.

On the one hand, some envisioned the deciding governmental assembly as a precise 'image' of the people. Edmund Burke maintained in 1770 that 'the virtue, spirit and essence' of the House of Commons lay not only in its getting its power from the people, because other bodies also shared that source, but in its 'being the express image of the feelings of the nation'. The Federalist John Adams argued in 1776 that a 'representative legislature should be an exact portrait, in miniature, of the people at large, as it should think, feel, reason, and act like them'. In the debates on the constitution in June 1787, James Wilson argued that a 'legislature ought to be the most exact transcript of the whole society. Representation is made necessary only because it is impossible for the people to act collectively.'²²

On the other hand, some saw the representatives as ideally having more virtue than the average citizen. In November 1787, James Madison argued against 'pure democracy' and for creating a 'republic, by which I mean a government in which the scheme of representation' acts as a 'cure' for the factional and tyrannical evils of pure democracy. Although Madison considered the direct election of at least one branch of the Legislature by the people a 'clear principle of free government', the mechanism of electoral representation, in contrast to direct democracy, would 'refine and enlarge the public views, by passing them through the medium of a chosen body of citizens, whose

wisdom may best discern the true interest of their country, and whose patriotism and love of justice will be least likely to sacrifice it to temporary or partial considerations'. In this process, 'it may well happen that the public voice, pronounced by the representatives of the people, will be more consonant to the public good than if pronounced by the people themselves, convened for the purpose'.²³

The new republican government would thus be representative, and therefore not a 'pure democracy'. It would also be constrained. Although Madison and some of the others planning for the US constitution believed in a 'true interest' of the country that representatives of 'wisdom' could discern and follow, they were also highly aware of conflicting interests within the polity and possible conflicting interests between the representatives and their constituents. They accordingly tried to design their institutions so that, in addition to selection for virtue, the reliable motive of self-interest would guide the representatives' actions towards the common interest. In this design, they followed a century of theorizing marked early by the Duc de Rohan's 1638 maxim, 'interest cannot lie'.²⁴ Economic writers had been arguing for more than a century that in the free market 'The advancement of private persons will be the advantage of the publick' (1656).²⁵ In the political parallel, writers such as Mandeville, Vauvenargues, and Helvetius had seen 'the State's Craft', 'the science of those who govern', and 'the art of the legislator' as designing political institutions to be machines into which self-interest could be fed at one end and the common good emerge from the other.²⁶ Thus for Madison and his colleagues, even representatives motivated in large part by the true interest of their country, patriotism, and love of justice had to be surrounded by 'effectual precautions for keeping them virtuous' (Madison 1788/2008: 282).

The separation of powers and bills of rights were two key constitutional means by which systems of political representation became 'liberal', constraining both representatives and democratic majorities.

The separation of powers did not resemble Aristotle's concept of a 'mixed constitution', which had the few and the many each contributing what they did best to the polity. Rather, it derived from Polybius, who around 150 BCE had distilled a theory of separation of powers from the practice of a Roman Republic that had sedimented class conflict into the institutions of government itself. He had reasoned that because kingships naturally degenerate into tyranny, aristocracies into oligarchy, and democracies into mob-rule, the best constitution would preserve liberty by mixing elements of each, 'the force of each being neutralized by that of the others'. Each branch could then 'be counterworked and thwarted by the others, none of them will excessively outgrow the others or treat them with contempt' and 'any aggressive impulse is sure to be checked... by the others' (Polybius c. 150 BCE/2011: 345–6). In 1531, Machiavelli returned to Polybius, concluding that with a separation of powers, each part 'would keep watch over the other' (Machiavelli 1531/1970: 109). In 1748, Montesquieu stressed the positive effects on liberty of what he thought was the British separation of powers: 'When the legislative and executive powers are united in the same person, or in the same body of magistrates, there can be no liberty.... Again, there is no liberty,

if the judiciary power be not separated from the legislative and executive' (Montesquieu 1748/1989: 157).

The framers of the US constitution relied heavily on Montesquieu's analysis as they developed their precautions to keep the representatives virtuous. In Madison's view those precautions included a widely extended republic, where personal factions would be less likely to dominate. They included elections, to promote a 'dependence on the people', in which each representative is 'compelled to anticipate the moment when their power is to cease, when their exercise of it is to be reviewed'. Centrally, they included a separation of powers in which each branch had 'the necessary constitutional means and personal motives to resist encroachments of the others', so that 'ambition must be made to counteract ambition' and the institutions would supply 'by opposite and rival interests, the defect of better motives' (Madison 1787/2008: 283, 257). These institutions embodied some trust in the representatives and the people, but also some distrust.

Beyond the separation of powers, political representation became 'liberal' in a second way, through the constraints of bills of rights, including the rights of property. The US and French bills of rights, promulgated within months of one another in 1789, differed in some respects. The US Bill of Rights drew from both 'ancient rights' and natural law traditions. The ancient rights strand restated many of the 'rights of Englishmen' held against kings in theory from time immemorial. Some had been codified in 1215 in the Magna Carta and others called 'ancient rights and liberties' in the 1689 English Bill of Rights. The natural law strand derived conceptually from Roman law. The French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen drew almost entirely from the Roman law tradition, with its emphasis on reason. Both the ancient rights and the natural law traditions restricted the capacity of representatives and majorities to act.

This period also saw the consolidation of political parties. Although the framers of the US constitution did not discuss or, as far as we know, even consider political parties in their plan for representative government, the Whig and Tory parties were by then well established in England and the factions in the American Revolution had adopted those names. A theory of parties was developing more than a decade before Madison, Hamilton, and Jay wrote the US Federalist Papers. In 1770, for example, Edmund Burke defined a party as 'a body of men, united for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest, upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed' (Burke 1770/1998: 271). Political parties would go on to play a central, although often undertheorized, role in liberal democratic systems of political representation.

Finally, this period saw intense controversy over the role of the representative. In England, Algernon Sidney in 1698 and John Willis in 1734 had made an argument that Edmund Burke picked up in 1774 when he told his Bristol electors that a representative ought not to sacrifice his 'unbiased opinion, his mature judgment, his enlightened conscience' to any specific instructions from his constituents, but rather, 'Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion.'²⁷ A decade or so later the US Federalists

argued for such independence in representatives, while the Anti-Federalists argued for instructed representatives. Both Burke and the Federalists had a second emphasis on the representative's duty to represent the whole nation in contrast to local interests. So too in France the Abbé Sieyès argued in 1789 both that the representatives were not bound by the instructions of their constituents and that the Third Estate represented the entire nation (Birch 1971: 46). These two points also appeared in article 3.7 of the 1791 French constitution and in many subsequent West European constitutions (for example, article 38 of Germany's 1949 constitution).

Looking back on this period, Bernard Manin has pointed out that almost no mention of what some now call 'civic lottery' (alternatively termed the lot, random selection, or sortition) appeared in the wide-ranging public discussions of representation as these practices and concepts were emerging in the US, England, and France. The elision occurred despite Italian city-republics from the eleventh and twelfth centuries having continued to use civic lotteries mixed with elements of election for many offices and despite the explicit identification of the civic lottery with democracy and election with aristocracy in Harrington, a contemporary of Locke who influenced the American founders, Montesquieu, who also influenced the Americans, and Rousseau, who influenced the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen in 1789 and the French constitution in 1791.²⁸

Manin gives two main reasons for the almost complete erasure of civic lottery by election. First, elections produce a simulacrum of 'consent' (Manin 1997: 79–93). As medieval theories of consent evolved into acclamation for selected representatives and as the legitimacy of monarchical succession came into question, consent became the anchor of a state's legitimacy and its critical power of levying taxes. Although a civic lottery may, at least in theory, allow every individual to rule and be ruled in turn, it requires no active consent from those not selected. By contrast, in the social contract theory of Hobbes, Locke, and many subsequent theorists, even minorities were in theory bound by their ancestors' (or hypothetical ancestors') original unanimous agreement to majority rule. In addition to simply partaking in the benefits of the polity, participation in elections, even on the losing side, slowly came to signify consent to the rule of the winning side. Second, elections marked the triumph of what Manin calls 'the principle of distinction' (1997: 94–131). Since Aristotle, civic lotteries had been seen as an instrument of democracy and election an instrument of aristocracy. When the Italian republics debated the two mechanisms, the hereditary aristocracy soon learned to support the elective mechanism over the lottery (1997: 57–63).²⁹ The American Federalists were not shy about their hope that elections would select men of 'wisdom', or what Jefferson called a 'natural aristocracy'.³⁰

1848–1865: Evolutions, Revolutions, and Mill

In practice, the nineteenth century as a whole saw an evolution of political representation in liberal democracies that included extending the male suffrage to most non-property-

holders in most countries and, formally, to Black male citizens in the US after the Civil War; raising the question of suffrage for women; expanding the number of people allowed to be representatives (in Britain, for example, those outside the Church of England); designing and beginning to adopt proportional representation in European countries; building up party systems that in some countries would claim the allegiance of adherents from adolescence to the grave; seeing uptake in other nations of at least the external forms of the political representation that had developed in Europe and the US, usually with little incorporation of little interaction with indigenous traditions; and confronting the challenges of both communism and anarchism.

The second half of the nineteenth century began, roughly speaking, in 1848 with a wave of revolutions across France, the German states, Sicily, Poland, Lithuania, Ireland, Switzerland, Hungary, Romania, and Brazil, and Chartist violence in Britain. The causes of this tumult were many: industrialization and the resulting immiseration of workers and urban slums; economic crises and the resulting unemployment; potato blight and the resulting famine in Continental Europe, Ireland, and the Scottish Highlands; and the weakness of the Hapsburg Empire. The causes were also ideological. The responses of existing polities to these crises made liberal democratic political representation look like a sham. In 1840, Proudhon, developing a theory of anarchism, had argued that the existing representative democracies were ‘acting on the very principles against which [the people] had fought’, and that even ‘with the most perfect democracy, we cannot be free’. Marx and Engels (1848) wrote with some reason that ‘the executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie’. The failures of some liberal representative democracies, such as England, to extend the right to vote to most working men also triggered deep anger.

With these crises as background, John Stuart Mill wrote *On Representative Government* in 1861 to argue for extending the franchise in England to most adult men. This work provided the fullest theory of democratic representation to date. Of particular resonance subsequently were his arguments for descriptive representation and for political participation as a means to developing citizens’ “moral, intellectual, and active” faculties (Mill 1861/1975: 321).

Mill had been greatly influenced by H.R. Hare’s proposal for proportional representation four years earlier, primarily because of its fairness but also for its descriptive benefits.³¹ Believing that proportional representation would bring to Parliament members of the working class, who could best defend their own interests, Mill argued that ‘in the absence of its natural defenders, the interest of the excluded is always in danger of being overlooked’. To ensure that ‘every person in the country may count upon finding somebody who speaks his mind, as well or better than he could speak it himself’, Mill thought a properly constituted representative body should include ‘a fair sample of every grade of intellect among the people which is at all entitled to a voice in public affairs’ (Mill 1861/1975: 433; Mill omitted from the ‘entitled’ category those who could not read, write or do common arithmetic, or who did not pay any taxes, were on ‘relief’, or were bankrupt). A Parliament so constituted proportionately and descriptively would act as an informational ‘Committee of Grievances’ and a

deliberative ‘Congress of Opinions’, while the Prime Minister and Cabinet did what ‘popular assemblies . . . cannot do well’, namely ‘govern and legislate’ (1861/1975: 433).

Mill also played a key role in the nineteenth-century evolution of the theory that participation in politics develops the citizens’ faculties, most importantly by making them more concerned with the common good. This theme had first emerged in written form when Aristotle’s students transcribed his lectures on *Politics*. It was continued by Machiavelli and other Renaissance humanists. Rousseau had made the concept central to his work, setting off an important strain in nineteenth-century Romantic thought that came to see such individual development as the goal of life. Alexis de Tocqueville had returned from America to proclaim enthusiastically in 1835 that the New England ‘town meetings are to liberty what primary schools are to science’, teaching self-government and political cooperation.³² Even Marx and Engels in 1848 concluded that the aim of communist society was ‘an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all’. Inspired by this wave of thought among the continental Romantics and particularly Tocqueville, Mill used the educative function of participation in representative elections as a major argument for extending the franchise.

One problem in Mill’s argument was that, as he acknowledged, taking direct responsibility for others through jury service or some small ‘parish office’ was more likely to extend one’s faculties than checking a ballot in a system of representative government (Mill 1861/1975: 197). Other thinkers at the time, however, pointed out that the dignity conferred by the ballot changes both the citizens’ perceptions of their own rights and responsibilities and society’s perceptions of them, each change contributing to individual political development. As Fredrick Douglass (1865) stated in a major speech, Black men want the vote first as a matter of right, and second ‘as a means for educating our race’, because ‘Men are so constituted that they derive their conviction of their own possibilities largely by the estimate formed of them by others’. Earlier the Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments & Resolutions (1848) had argued for women’s suffrage first on the grounds of simple right and second on the grounds of each individual’s growth in the capacities of responsibility, ‘confidence in her own powers’ and ‘self-respect’.

Nineteenth-century democracy struggled with the domination of political representation by unfettered capitalism and the consequent political inequalities that undermined the legitimacy of the laws. It struggled with the injustices of Single Member Plurality (SMP, or ‘First Past the Post’ FPP) electoral systems that could, and often did, give a minority in the polity a majority in the legislature. It also struggled with the injustices created in segmented polities that lacked enough cross-cutting cleavages to ensure that a minority losing on one issue had a good chance of winning on another. In segmented polities a large group of people might find itself a permanent minority on many issues of its greatest concern; they could not thus be said to consent.³³ Accordingly, when the American South found itself a permanent losing minority to the North on both slavery and issues that pitted agriculture against industry, Calhoun argued in 1851 that such a minority should have a veto (see Chapter 4 in this *Handbook*). On these grounds, some segmented countries instituted constitutional mechanisms, such

as rotation in power, that Lijphart (1980) later dubbed ‘consociationalism’. Some consociational mechanisms provided a veto for permanent minorities; others aimed beyond proportional representation in legislatures to produce proportional outcomes in state-provided goods. In consociational systems, unlike Single Member Plurality systems, the act of voting could be considered a partial act of consent because each vote had an effect on the outcome.

The Twentieth Century

The twentieth century extended many nineteenth-century trends, granting suffrage to women, to citizens above eighteen years of age, and sometimes even to non-citizens. It also showed greater concern with reapportionment and the equality of each vote, further development of party systems, and further experimentation with the design of representative institutions, for example, as countries outside the US and Europe began to take the lead in different forms of quotas for women and other groups in parliament.

The triumph of ‘democracy’ over fascism in the Second World War strengthened a growing international conviction that liberal representative democracy was the only legitimate form of government. In many of the industrialized democracies, the strong governments, solidarity, and egalitarian practices created by the war effort plus the post-war economic boom enabled high taxes and collective investment in both infrastructure and the welfare state. This combination of economic prosperity with the relative equality promoted by strong welfare states created what the economist Thomas Piketty (2014) and others have called ‘the glorious thirty years’.

However, the second half of the twentieth century eventually brought on a crisis in representation and representative theory. The very prosperity of the post-war period had given the young citizens of many countries an optimism, a sense of capacity, and a demand for justice to which few existing representative systems could respond adequately. In the US, the civil rights movement, in which Southern Black people struggled to win voting rights, and the Vietnam War, which was never officially declared by Congress and drafted young men who could not yet vote, prompted the ‘Call to Resist Illegitimate Authority’ (1967). A wave of protest movements against existing representative governments spread quickly to France, where student protests in 1968 were aimed at the Gaullist government, and to Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Spain, Germany, and Sweden, as well as non-democratic countries such as Poland, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and China (Kurlansky 2004).

The ensuing years saw increasing distrust of governments in many European countries and the US, generated by a combination of new demands that governments could not handle without increasing taxes, an increasing number of multicultural and social issues that could not be easily settled by negotiations between business and labour, extraordinary increases in economic inequality beginning in the late 1980s,

attacks on governments from the left and the right, increasingly negative coverage of government in the press (and later in social media), and many other factors. Protest became commonplace (Rosanvallon 2006/2008; Norris 2010). Parties on the left slowly became the parties of the more educated and professional classes, no longer playing significant roles in workers' lives (Piketty 2018). The traditional left–right economic distinction decreased in salience (Thomassen 1994), while centre-left and right parties in Europe moved toward the centre and often became 'hollowed out' (Mair 2013). In a polity like Denmark, robust representation in the societal realm, with peak associations for both business and labor, combined with assiduously responsive representation in the administrative realm and significant decentralization to municipalities in the legislative sector produced strong public support for liberal democratic political representation. But in most nations the legitimacy of the chain of representation was fraying.

The theories and practice of political representation in the second half of the twentieth century responded to these trends by introducing participatory innovations as either replacements or supplements to traditional representation, formalizing the traditional chain of representation with theoretical models based on self-interest, and increasing experimentation.

The first development, participatory innovation, arose from the bottom up. Outside the formal political system and inspired at the outset by the 1962 Port Huron Statement, young people organized self-governing 'participatory democracy' collectives first in the US but soon elsewhere. Each collective hoped to 'prefigure' a world in which workplaces, schools, and neighbourhoods would run themselves by direct, not representative, democracy (Boggs 1977; Polletta 2002). Influential political theorists argued that only direct participatory democracy in the workplace or in neighbourhood assemblies, rather than representation, could respond adequately to democracy's egalitarian and developmental norms.³⁴ Building on the frequent correlation between direct participation and individual political efficacy, Carole Pateman argued in 1970 for a virtuous circle in which direct participation led to efficacy, which led to more participation. Yet it is hard to demonstrate not just correlation but causality with small numbers of cases, small and subtle effects, and no procedures for randomization. It was not until 2010 that a study with sufficiently large numbers of cases, an approximation to randomization, and appropriate controls was able to support Pateman's 'participatory hypothesis' by showing that one form of participation (jury duty) causally produced another (higher rates of voting).³⁵ With delayed empirical support and a conservative political upswing, participatory theory lost much of its early momentum.

A second theoretical development arose from within political science, taking the post-war settlement as given and proposing a theory of a chain of representation grounded formally and prominently in self-interest. Towards the end of the Second World War in 1945, the economist Joseph Schumpeter had provided a frame for understanding political representation as based on self-interest. Schumpeter first rejected what he described as the 'classical' theory of democracy (Schumpeter 1942/1962: 252), in which representatives represented a 'will of the people', on the straightforward grounds that 'irreducible differences of ultimate values' meant 'there is no such

thing as a uniquely determined common good that all people could agree on or be made to agree on by the force of rational argument' (1945: 251). He proposed a new definition: 'the democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote' (1942/62: 269). In Schumpeter's new understanding of representative democracy, a candidate makes a bid for office by offering voters policies the way a merchant offers goods for sale. For their part, '[v]oters confine themselves to accepting this bid in preference to others or refusing to accept it' (1942/63: 282). They play no other participatory role. Schumpeter also explicitly rejected Burke's definition of political parties as bodies of men united in promoting the national interest through their own principled understandings of that interest. Instead he defined a party as only 'a group whose members propose to act in concert in the competitive struggle for political power' (1942/62: 283). With this understanding of the representative and party process, politics could be modelled the way post-war economists were modelling economic behaviour, assuming self-interest as the sole motive of both representatives and voters. In 1957, the economist Anthony Downs influentially modelled two-party political competition on competition in the private market.³⁶ In 1974 two key works cemented this approach in US political science by depicting a representative's primary motivation as the desire for re-election.³⁷ The traditional view of accountability as 'giving an account', with a trusted agent explaining deviations from constituents' expectations, gave way to a newer understanding of accountability as monitoring and sanctioning, based on the expectation of conflicting interests between the principal and agent (Mansbridge 2014a). This new model did not require Manin's 'principle of distinction'.

Perhaps the most important post-1945 development involved growing experimentalism in the practice of representation. In framing the German and Japanese constitutions after the war, and again in framing the constitutions in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s, constitution-makers were usually conservative, wanting to adopt only elements that had proven their viability elsewhere. Even in the newly independent countries of Africa, where it might have been useful to adapt long-standing indigenous traditions, constitutions mostly followed the standard liberal representative model. Yet Germany was willing to experiment in one way, adopting what is now called a Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) system, which gives each voter two votes, one for a 'personal' representative in a single-member district and one for a party list at the state level, with seats apportioned in the federal assembly in proportion to the distribution of party list votes. Later, countries around the world experimented with different kinds of quotas for women (see Chapter 8 in this *Handbook*), with candidate selection through primaries, with sending more issues to referenda (see Chapter 22 in this *Handbook*), and with participatory budgeting, in which some cities allowed citizens to decide relatively directly how to spend a small portion of a city's budget.³⁸

In this post-war period, experimentation with representation flourished, particularly in the administrative and societal decision-making realms. (By representation in the "societal" realm I mean, as noted below, formal, informal, or non-existent representative institutions in the many organizations such as unions that act to represent citizens

in policy-making or attempts to influence policy-making.). Although these two arenas are seldom considered in discussions of representation, Hannah Pitkin has pointed out that what matters most, both normatively and from the perspective of a citizen, is the representative system as a whole. Political representation, she wrote, 'is primarily a public, institutionalized arrangement involving many people and groups, and operating in the complex ways of large-scale social arrangements. What makes it representation is not any single action by any one participant, but the over-all structure and functioning of the system, the patterns emerging from the multiple activities of many people.'³⁹ Decision-making in the administration of laws, both at the policy level and the street level, is an important part of that system. So is decision-making in the many organizations that represent citizens in the societal realm.

In the administrative realm, late twentieth-century policymakers became aware that the legitimacy carried over from the legislative arena was no longer sufficient to bear the weight of all the regulations that societies now required as they tried to handle their increasing interdependence. Creative administrators began to devise, and legislators began to institute, more ways in which the making of administrative policy could involve at least the biggest stakeholders. The US adopted and expanded procedures for 'negotiated rule-making' and 'notice and comment' (Coglianese 1997; Freeman 2000). The European Union adopted procedures of consultation and negotiation that Sabel and Zeitlin (2010) dubbed 'experimentalism'. These procedures made some progress towards increasing legitimacy, but they did not build in ongoing and reciprocal ways of communicating with the smallest stakeholders, namely ordinary citizens. Nor did the reforms of the 'new public management' movement, which aimed at reorganizing administrations to respond to the power of citizens as consumers of governmental products, increase perceived legitimacy significantly.⁴⁰

In the societal realm, in the second half of the twentieth century the neo-corporatist democracies of Northern Europe successfully used associations of primary labour force workers and businesses to organize their interests into representative bodies working closely with both the legislative and the administrative branches of the state. Yet interests other than labour and capital were far less well represented. Even when such interests did manage to organize, their practices tended to veer towards the interests of the middle and professional classes, whose money and volunteer efforts supported them (Strolovitch 2007). Some theorists, such as Jürgen Habermas (1962/1989), saw neo-corporatist arrangements as undermining democracy and drew sharp normative lines between the legislative, administrative, and societal spheres. Others, such as Phillippe Schmitter, saw neo-corporatist arrangements as valuable supplements to democratic legitimacy and sought ways to reduce their built-in inequalities in interest representation.⁴¹

By the end of the twentieth century, the societal realm had come to play a relatively large role in the ways citizens could be represented politically. Social movements in Latin America were becoming part of the recognized political system of representation, neo-corporatist associations were a recognized part of state decisions in many West European countries, decision-making in concert with societal associations such as unions was locked into the EU negotiating structure, and even in the resolutely anti-

corporatist US, major decisions, such as the development of accounting standards, were delegated to private associations.⁴²

Both the distribution of these associations and their internal structure raise significant normative questions. Distributionally, large corporations continue to dominate the societal sphere, often producing democratically unacceptable results. Regarding internal structure, although voluntary associations in the societal arena usually should not be either legally or normatively required to conduct themselves as formal representative democracies (Rosenblum 1998). Yet the tighter their formal relationship with the state, the greater becomes the normative requirement for some democratic representative process within the organization, such as equal votes for all members, formal and uncorrupt elections, some transparency in process, and perhaps even competing candidates (Mansbridge 2019).

The Twenty-first Century

By the early twenty-first century, distrust of legislatures was soaring in many countries, in part because of the palpably greater influence of the wealthy on those legislatures (e.g. Gilens and Page 2014 for the U.S.), but also in part because corruption in many places had become less tolerated without seeming to become less common. Ironically, greater transparency and tighter controls on corruption exposed scandals that further increased distrust. Changing media norms regarding privacy were also revealing more sordid details of legislators' personal lives, and social media were amplifying more negative news. As unions lost members, left parties lost their anchors in the working class, and traditional party ties began to fray, citizens lost trustworthy links between themselves and the policies that would eventually coerce them.

One occasional response in many democracies was to revive the practice of ancient Athens and eleventh- to sixteenth-century Italian city-states: representation through a civic lottery (see Chapter 11 in this *Handbook*). Contingently, legislators might welcome the input of citizen groups chosen by lot on issues that seemed electorally threatening (such as reducing the number of hospital beds in Rome, Fishkin 2009). Administrators might use such groups either to give legitimacy to an innovation (such as introducing windpower in Texas, Fishkin 2018) or, less reputably, to challenge the legitimacy of advocacy groups (as in the National Health System in Britain, Parkinson 2006). The executive branch might occasionally use such civic lottery groups to deliberate, decide on, and endorse new policies or institutions that elected legislators might predictably oppose (such as a new electoral system in British Columbia, Warren and Pearce 2008). Citizens might use such groups as 'trusted proxies' when they had come to distrust elected officials (MacKenzie and Warren 2012). Several theorists also suggested either transforming the second legislative branch or adding a third legislative branch drawn by civic lottery (Dahl 1985, Leib 2004, Gastil and Wright 2019; per contra, Lafont 2020).

Legislative and administrative bodies also employed an assortment of other participatory devices. Administrators experimented with the 'co-creation' or 'co-production'

of government policy with citizens (e.g. Voorberg et al. 2015). The Finnish government experimented with crowdsourcing snowmobile regulation. The Pirate Party, based on direct internet mandates, arose and gained constituents in Sweden, Germany, Austria, and other countries. Participatory budgeting, begun in Brazil in the 1980s, spread to other countries. Referenda multiplied. Each of these mechanisms supplemented or circumvented formal electoral representation, in a process that Landemore (forthcoming) calls ‘open democracy’.

Yet the waves of populism in Europe and the US in the current era signal that experimentation with new representative structures has not yet met the needs of many citizens. Populism, defined as a movement or party that portrays ‘the people’ in a moral battle against ‘the elites’, assumes that the elites control existing representative structures with little regard for the people (see Chapters 28, 29, and 30 in this *Handbook*). An important theme in these movements is that ‘the people’ are not being ‘heard’. Populist parties and leaders around the world have gained support on the grounds that they (finally) speak for the people and (finally) represent the people properly, even when the form of representation ends up being a single strong leader (‘direct representation’, Urbinati 2019) or eliminating liberal constitutional protections.

THE FUTURE: AVAILABLE CONCEPTS

Today neither the practices of political representation nor the conceptual apparatus available for understanding those practices seem adequate for analysing current experimentation or suggesting reforms that might create sufficient legitimacy to sustain the amount of state coercion we will need in the near future.

In that future, increasing global interdependence will make political representation exponentially more difficult (see Chapter 34 in this *Handbook*). Combating climate change will require levels of taxation and regulation that most polities today treat as politically unacceptable. Nuclear proliferation will demand undreamed of levels of international agreement and reciprocal monitoring. The vulnerability of interdependent technical systems to computer hacking will require global coordination of coercive responses that are currently far beyond reach. As global warming creates droughts, local wars, and increasing migration from war-torn or starving countries, nation states as currently organized will find it increasingly hard to help other countries rebound, to devise acceptable ways of integrating immigrants, or to create humane alternatives to immigration. Developing the level of state coercion required to sustain the crucial core of mutual solidarity and duty both nationally and internationally will be a gargantuan and perhaps insurmountable task (Mansbridge 2014b).

In this crisis, the ideas of consent and the principle of distinction that Manin (1997) identified as central to legitimating electoral representation are no longer sufficient, yet new ideas are either arising too slowly or being applied too cautiously to keep pace with the political need.

The idea of ‘consent’ once played the central role in both the perceived and normative legitimacy of the chain of representation. Indeed, both classic social contract theory and much liberal political philosophy made consent the only source of political legitimacy. John Rawls’s (1971) theory of ‘hypothetical consent’ (regarding the governing institutions to which one would consent if one did not know where in a social order one would one find oneself) made consent more plausible but less tangible as a legitimating device. Today ‘consent’ has lost much of its legitimating power. In its most restrictive meaning, few individuals literally consent (Simmons 1979); the legitimacy that derives from that kind of consent is minuscule. In its broadest meaning, mere presence in a country can be taken as consent (Puryear 2019); the legitimacy that derives from that kind of consent is ubiquitous but not compelling. Yet both kinds of consent contribute their bit to overall legitimacy. In addition, ‘output legitimacy’ (Scharpf 2003) or ‘performance legitimacy’ (perceived legitimacy based on the effectiveness of a political system in delivering desired outputs) produces a normatively defensible kind of consent as a rational response to such effective delivery. Today it seems most useful to consider all of these forms of consent not as the sole source of legitimacy but as parts of a package of legitimating features that make governments more or less normatively acceptable.

The ‘principle of distinction’, and with it the concepts of ‘delegate’ and ‘trustee’, also no longer help us understand or legitimate political representation.⁴³ The ‘delegate’ form of legitimation rarely responded to actual political practice. Despite the Pirate Party’s recent attempts to revive the concept, few representatives have served solely as instructed delegates, and many current constitutions specifically forbid this practice. The ‘trustee’ concept has also waned, along with the principle of distinction, because many voters today want their representative to be ‘someone like me’ who nevertheless has the background and skills to forward their policy desires in the legislature. This current model, based on a relatively egalitarian division of labour, has no place for superior and inferior.

The fading usefulness of the ‘trustee vs. delegate’ concept does not, however, entail the disappearance of all the tensions this concept denotes. Representatives and their political parties often still face a similar but slightly different tension between their views of good policy and the slogans or oversimplified logic they know will be attractive to voters. The tension of ‘policy vs. slogan’ derives partly from the voters having insufficient time or interest to absorb complex explanations and partly from the institutional incapacity of current electoral processes or the media to enable representatives to explain their actions to their constituents in more than one or two sentences. Although both political parties and the press could play a larger role in explaining to both activists and ordinary constituents why their representatives act as they do, parties have incentives to focus on what hurts the other parties, and media have incentives to focus on all of the parties’ mistakes. With the loss of the principle of distinction and the failure to develop compensatory avenues of mutual explanation and listening, and given a background of increasing and hardening inequality, the road opens to populist distrust and condemnation of ‘elites’.

If consent is no longer at the centre of the package that makes political representation legitimate and if we can no longer count on the principle of distinction, then what concepts and practices can sustain political legitimacy? Despite Pitkin's significant intervention in 1967, democratic theorists have not given significant attention to the chain of representation, including political parties, until the last few decades.⁴⁴ Many of the most useful concepts that have emerged from this increased scrutiny focus on the relationships between representatives and constituents and on the attributes of the representative system.

One analysis compares 'promissory', 'anticipatory', and 'gyroscopic' relationships (Mansbridge 2003, 2009, 2014a). The public has traditionally focused on the promissory relationship between an individual constituent and a single representative or party: a candidate for office or a party makes promises before an election and is morally bound to fulfil those promises when in office. This relationship is inflexible and often shallow. In a more flexible anticipatory relationship, representatives and their political parties anticipate the rewards or punishments that they might expect in the next election if they act in different ways, while voters monitor the representatives' behaviour and threaten sanctions in the next election to induce the behaviour they want from their representatives. Such a 'sanction model' requires no more than self-interest from all parties. In an even more flexible relationship, representatives and their parties are 'gyroscopic', acting on internal, not induced, motivation. In such a 'selection model', voters first select representatives they think from reputation will represent them well and then replace representatives whose performance they judge unsatisfactory rather than trying to affect the representatives' future behaviour. This relationship derives its legitimacy from the expected consistency, usually ideological, in a representative's actions. On both the party and the individual levels, gyroscopic representation in a selection model lends itself better than the other relationships to legislative negotiation. Gyroscopic representatives can usually be trusted behind the closed doors required for negotiation. Their accountability can consist of 'giving an account', explaining deviations from constituents' expectations on the basis of assumed, largely common, interests. Most actual representative-constituent relations mix elements of promissory, anticipatory, and gyroscopic relationships in greatly varying degrees, contingent on the available degree of warranted trust.⁴⁵

Sometimes citizens want power itself less than the respect and appropriate policy-making that power brings. When making power more equal in a given instance has costs, such as the negative effects on policy of ill-informed votes in a referendum, it may be better for democracies to find other institutional ways of meeting citizens' needs for respect and good policy. 'Descriptive representation', in which individual representatives' experiences and backgrounds resemble their constituents' in relevant respects, often produces some nuanced and substantive attentiveness to constituents' needs (Swers 2002; Burden 2007; Carnes 2013; Mügge et al. 2019). Descriptive representation need not always come from representatives in one's own district. Descriptive representatives from other districts ('surrogate representatives'), can still give citizens the feeling, often warranted, of having a contact and an advocate on their behalf in the

government who understands their backgrounds, perspectives, and interests. Citizens may have no power over these surrogate representatives, but may contact them and see them correctly as advancing their collective interests in the legislature.⁴⁶ The same is true for descriptive representatives in administrative agencies (Selden 1997) and non-governmental groups. Vocal, sensitive, descriptive representatives, ideally connected through recursive communication with their constituencies, surrogate or otherwise, can serve as trusted interlocutors with both their constituents and other representatives (see Chapter 8 in this *Handbook*).

Contingency theory indicates which descriptive characteristics (e.g. class, ethnicity, gender, region) become normatively important in which circumstances. When the interests of groups with different descriptive characteristics conflict, aggregative democratic theory prescribes that those groups be represented proportionately, to give each group power proportionate to its numbers. When public problem-solving requires multiple perspectives derived from experience, deliberative democratic theory prescribes that the affected groups be represented at least through ‘threshold representation’ (Kymlicka 1993), so that at least one voice in the deliberation can express the relevant perspective.⁴⁷ When making representation more descriptive has costs, contingency theory also suggests paying more when the needs are greatest. For example, when the relevant interests are ‘uncrystallized’ (not already recognized in the political process), constituents most need representatives who have had the relevant experiences and are thus more likely to understand and promote those interests. When a history of distrust impedes communication between groups, constituents most need representatives they can contact more easily, members of their own descriptive group. When constituents from marginalized groups need individual attention, they are more likely to get it from representatives of their own group. The costs of producing descriptive representation are also contingent, often being highest with quotas (the most rigid method and one with the unfortunate side-effect of implying essentialism) and lowest with more fluid measures such as targeted training and encouragement to run for office.⁴⁸ Citizen assemblies drawn by civic lottery, as supplements to legislatures and administrations, can also redress many descriptive imbalances (see Chapter 11 in this *Handbook*).

Democratic theorists have also recently turned attention to the quality of deliberation and negotiation among legislative, administrative, and societal representatives as well as the quality of communication between those representatives and their constituents. From Habermas’s ([1962] 1989) early concerns for standards of rational justification, through the Discourse Quality Index, through more sophisticated forms of measuring and mapping, theorists have added storytelling and various forms of emotional communication to the more obviously rational standards for good deliberation, while retaining the early stress on equal respect and on approximating as closely as possible the absence of power in communication (Sanders 1997; Young 2000; Steiner et al. 2004; Bächtiger et al. 2018; Bächtiger and Parkinson 2019). Many theorists also now recognize self-interest, traditionally excluded from the ideal of deliberation, as an important component of the deliberative ideal, at least when constrained by fairness (Mansbridge et al. 2010). The legitimacy of good legislative negotiation, not to be

denigrated as mere ‘bargaining’, follows from the contingent acceptance of self-interest (Warren and Mansbridge et al. 2016).

The quality of communication between constituents and representatives also affects legitimacy. In single-member district systems, at least in the US, constituents prize communication with their representative. The one researcher who has simply asked constituents what they wanted from their elected representative in an open-ended question found that citizens in the small US sample with whom he spoke wanted most that their representative listen to and be available to them (Grill 2007). Fenno also concluded, on the basis of work in the US, that ‘Access and the assurance of access, communication and the assurance of communication—these are the *irreducible underpinnings of representation*’ (1978: 239–40, emphasis in original). To improve both perceived legitimacy and the deliberative quality of such communications, Neblo and colleagues (2018) have devised and tested a ‘directly representative’ process in which elected representatives discuss important topics on the internet with randomly selected groups of 175 or so constituents. Future research will show whether representatives as well as constituents change their views through this process. The ideal should be continuing mutual responsiveness, or recursivity, in which representatives listen to and hear constituents, respond directly and change their minds appropriately, and constituents do the same, in back-and-forth processes that resemble conversations (Mansbridge 2019).

The traditional concept of ‘linkage’ is also too static and mechanical for current analytic needs. It implies fixed qualities in separate linked entities. Recent representative theory points out that representation includes advocacy (Urbinati 2006) and that the very activity of representing ‘mobilizes constituencies by the interests it claims in their name’ (Disch 2012: 599). In the legislative, administrative, and societal realms, representatives and the represented are co-constituted. That is, the represented help create the representatives in some part, directly or indirectly, by selecting for and encouraging certain traits and ideas in them. This process changes who the representatives are and want to be. In turn, the representatives help create the represented in some part by inciting them to action, providing many of the ideas and choices available to them, blocking other ideas, channelling their self-sorting, and motivating their self-image, political identification, and the ways they interpret their lives.⁴⁹ In the societal or non-governmental realm, whenever interest groups or individuals explicitly or implicitly claim to represent others, they have to make both claims *about* the character of those they claim to represent and claims *to* some audience (which may be those they claim to represent and/or others, such as donors, or the public, who will fund or support those they claim to represent).⁵⁰ These interactions can create and change the underlying interests as well as the preferences of both the representatives and the represented, as both their identities and their political, economic, and social relations change.

Representation in the societal realm is particularly fluid. Many interest groups and individuals are ‘self-appointed’, competing for legitimacy as representatives with audiences that possess unequal capacities for selection and accountability through voluntary entrance and exit (of selves and of money) far more than through formal voting

(Montanaro 2012). Even more fluidly, individuals in the societal realm represent others informally, by attending meetings (Mansbridge 1980: 251) or just speaking to the press. Such informal representatives may be ‘conscripted’, their voices and actions taken to represent the interests of others without their having any desire to have their actions so interpreted (Salkin forthcoming).

In short, legitimacy derives normatively, and to some degree perceptually, from the larger system of executive, legislative, judicial, administrative, and societal representation in which specific constituent-representative relationships are embedded. Taking a collective, rather than a dyadic, view of legislative representation (Weissberg 1978), many theorists point out that purely territorial forms of electoral representation do not meet many citizens’ needs (Rehfeld 2005; Urbinati and Warren 2008), although territory does reflect, in part, some of the urban/rural and ideological splits that animate right-wing populism today. Some suggest as an alternative norm neither proportional representation nor even proportional outcomes (one person, one equal amount of government investment, adjusted for need and common utility), but rather an ‘all-affected principle’, in which power over outcomes is allocated equally to all affected, or proportionately to the degree that each person is affected, regardless of territorial boundaries (Goodin 2007). This principle, although worthy of inclusion in the contested panoply of democratic norms, should be applied as a subsidiary, rather than a dominant, principle in practice today. Its conceptual cosmopolitanism takes insufficient account of the fragility of the mutual collective trust, solidarity, and shared historical interdependence that stand behind citizens’ commitments to any representation or to any decision rule other than unanimity in a democracy. The principle reminds us, however, that any systemic view of political representation may take as its boundaries not only the nation-state but the globe.

CONCLUSION

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As human relations have grown increasingly more interdependent over the centuries, the collective action problems that this interdependence creates have come to require more and more collective coercion to resolve. They need, accordingly, more and more legitimacy to sustain that coercion.

At the same time, the institutions for producing that legitimacy are weakening. The sources of legitimacy in the various parts of any representative system are plural, ranging from consent in its many varying forms to the quality of representative-constituent communication in the processes of election and legislative representation, in administrative policymaking and street-level implementation, and in the many societal groups and media that engage in public opinion formation, pressure, and even delegated law-making. Today, in all of these realms, the increasing need for legitimacy coincides with decreasing supply.

Faced with decreasing trust in government, the public, legislators, political scientists, and political and legal theorists have often wanted to ‘tighten the reins’—stressing the

direct legitimacy of the legislative branch and trying to reduce the number and magnitude of issues delegated to the administrative and societal sectors. Yet the legislative branch is the context least susceptible to experimentation, and we need experimentation for innovation. Legislatures also cannot come close to providing all the regulations we need or all the legitimacy that must sustain these regulations. As the number of laws and regulations necessarily grows in response to the increasing need for interdependent collective action, citizens and theorists alike need to think beyond the traditional chain of liberal democratic legislative representation to newer ways of linking citizens together. Laws and regulations should emerge from processes designed so that, when citizens feel the bite of coercion, they nonetheless rightly perceive that coercion as relatively legitimate. They will need to feel, with warrant, that in all three parts of the representative system—legislative, administrative, and societal—they, and their interests, perceptions, and opinions, are adequately represented. To achieve even partial success in this task, the theories and processes of liberal political representation in the future must address all three arenas of representation. They must draw from the past and recognize which past concepts are no longer as relevant. They must draw constructively from different global traditions not mentioned here, aided by broader experience and the new field of comparative political theory. Liberal representative democracy must innovate or die. It has evolved slowly over many centuries. Now it must evolve much faster.

NOTES

1. Although the title of this chapter specifies 'liberal democracies', the analysis here focuses primarily on the Anglo-American history of political representation. Developments in Latin America and most of the eastern hemisphere are almost entirely missing and most European developments are treated, with regret, cursorily. This narrowness stems only from limitations in time, space, and the currently available knowledge of the author, not from any conviction that the Anglo-American history is the most significant for the development of the field. For a broader European treatment, see, for example, Manin (1997). For broader treatments still we may turn to the flourishing new field of comparative political theory (see e.g. Mathew, 2018 on representation in India). This chapter also focuses on political representation in legislatures, with some reference to the administrative and the societal, or non-governmental realm; it does not discuss presidents, prime ministers and their cabinets, or the judiciary, although these are important parts of the full representative system. Nor does it discuss in any detail the processes of decision-making by representatives, whether in the legislative, administrative, or societal realms, although these processes are crucial to the meaning and operationalization of representation (Williams 1998). Finally, in focusing on the ideas I know best in the section on contemporary thought, I have also left out much that a more comprehensive study would cover.
2. This formulation, deriving from the etymology of the word, has a long pedigree. See, for example, Fairlie (1940: 236), Pitkin (1967: 9).
3. The meaning of 'the political' is much contested; this definition is intentionally inclusive and avoids identifying the concept with power, commonality, or the state. See Mansbridge 1999a for what 'the public ought to discuss'.

4. For the concept of a ‘core-plus’ definition, see Mansbridge and Macedo (2019).
5. Richerson and Boyd (1999); also cited in Mansbridge (1980/1983: 10–13).
6. *Politics*, Bk 4 for Aristotle’s own more complex position. The term ‘democracy’ continued to mean direct assembly democracy through the eighteenth century. For Athens, see Hansen (1991), Ober (2008), especially on the artificial tribes’ epistemic benefits, and Cammack (2013, forthcoming) on juries. Although most full citizens would have passed the rather easy test of minimal moral standing, not every one would have had the time to participate in the Council. Rhodes (1972) indicates that the more well off were probably more likely to participate; so too the farming and fishing residents outside the city of Athens would have been less likely to participate in the assembly or the juries. I thank Daniella Cammack for helpful comments on this paragraph.
7. For more, see Manin (1997: 8–41) and Hansen (1991).
8. See Staveley (1972: 122, 130) for the complex processes of group vote and Lintott (1999) for other details and the background of internal conflict. McCormick (2011: 32) reports Machiavelli’s conclusion on representative independence that the tribunes sometimes attempted to act in the interest of the plebeians but against the plebeians’ expressed wishes. I thank Rachel Goodyer for help in the section on the Roman Republic.
9. In the Codex, “that which touches all...” appears as *quod omnes similiter tangit, ab omnibus comprobetur*. The words in the text are a later formulation. Pennington (1995) analyses evolving juristic thought from 1000 to 1600 on the ways and contexts in which a blend of natural law, divine law, and *jus gentium* (together including property rights and later a growing list of due process rights) restricted the power of ‘princes’ (i.e. the Pope, the emperor, and kings).
10. Drew (1973, 129). When King Liutprand in 713 revised and expanded Rothair’s code, he used the following version of this introductory formula: ‘I, Liutprand, ... together with all my judges ... and my sworn Lombard followers (*fideles*), and the rest of the people attending, with the common counsel of these people and with the fear and holiness of God, [decree] these laws as suitable’ (145). Later, the prologue to his additions in 763 explained further, ‘The judges and our *fideles* from the bounds of Austria and Neustria [the two other provinces in Lombardy besides Tuscany] have been present with us and have discussed all these things among themselves, reporting to us, and they have established and defined these laws equally with us. Since the following titles were pleasing to all, and since those present offered their consent, we have decreed ...’ (173–4). The kings of the Lombards and some other Germanic peoples were elected by the dukes of their kingdom and perhaps others. (In Lombardy, lack of consensus in some cases caused strife-filled interregnums [15–18].) In this era, the kings of other Germanic peoples also issued codes of their laws (13) and had varying degrees of ease in getting assent from their assemblies (Wickham 2017).
11. Drew (1973: 196). Drew notes, however, that in other instances the king, with his judges, etc., could and did explicitly change the existing law (e.g. 219).
12. Sabine (1950: 204). See also examples in Monahan (1987: 56), with his comment that in phrases like that in the Edicto of Pista (864), ‘the law is to be made with the consent of the people and formulation by the king’, the ‘people’ in almost every case the nobility (and high clergy).
13. Aquinas (c.1267/2002: 20). This category of cases remained live at least in the minds of scholars; in 1625 Grotius described a category of kings ‘who are invested with a precarious Power, and which may be at any Time recalled, as were the Kings of the ancient Vandals in *Afrik*, and of the Goths in *Spain*, whom the People might depose, upon any Dislike’ (*De Jure Belli ac Pacis* 1625, cited in Tuck 2015: 71).

14. Pitkin (1967: 3, 243); see also Monahan (1987: 111–18) for the growth of theories of representation before this time that did not use the word. For reasons of space, I do not consider here the medieval theories of representation in which certain institutions, including the church council and the king, represented the Church or the nation symbolically and corporately (see, e.g. Pitkin 1967; Black 1970; Tuck 2015: 52–6).
15. Birch (1971: 25–6). At Leon in 1188, the king undertook to ‘follow the counsels of his bishops, nobles and wise men in all circumstances in matters of peace and war’, language more deferential than that of Charlemagne in 800 (quotation from Marongui 1968: 62, in Birch 1971: 25). I thank Daniel Smail for helpful comments on the preceding seven paragraphs.
16. For examples, see Brutus, Junius (pseudonym) (1579) and Knox (1558); for brief overview, see Kingdon (1991).
17. Wildman, in *The Putney Debates* (1647).
18. Lilburne et al. (1649) (the Third Agreement of the People, 1 May, article 1). Universal male suffrage would not be achieved in England until 1925.
19. *De Cive* 1642, *Leviathan* 1651; see Pitkin (1967), Skinner (2005), Tuck (2015, esp. 105–6 n. 41) for Hobbes’s use of the term ‘representation’.
20. See Pitkin (1967: 29–31) for an interpretation. This theory of consent via selection plus future abdication was to some degree implicit in the practice of Parliamentary selection at the time, with the major difference that in Hobbes’ theory mandated one selection for all time. See also Tuck (2015).
21. For an early mention of the concept see Sir Thomas Smith (1583), quoted in Fairlie (1940: 239); also Otis (1764); Charles Pratt, 1st Earl Camden 1766, quoted in Reid (1989: 15). For the exact phrase, see headline to *The London Magazine* printing of Lord Camden’s *Speech on the Declaratory Bill of the Sovereignty of Great Britain over the Colonies*, February (1768: 89), available at: <https://www.notaxationwithoutrepresentation.com>. Some on the British side argued that the American colonies were represented in Parliament ‘virtually’, through the theory that the inhabitants of one place could be represented by those of another when they had the same interests. Edmund Burke declined to apply this theory to the capacity of members of Parliament in England to represent the American colonies (see also note 46).
22. Burke (1770: 244), quoted in Tuck (2015: 7); Adams (1776), quoted in Pitkin (1967: 60); Wilson in *Debate in the Committee of the Whole*, 6 June 1787.
23. Madison, *Federalist Ten*, November 22 (1787/2008: 53); ‘clear principle’ from *Debate in the Committee of the Whole*, 6 June 1787.
24. Duc de Rohan, *De l’interest des princes et estates de la Chrestianité* (1638, Engl. trans. 1640), quoted in Gunn (1969: 36).
25. Lee [1656] *A Vindication of a Regulated Enclosure*, quoted in Appleby (1978: 62).
26. Mandeville, ‘The Grumbling Hive’ in *Fable of the Bees* (1705), Vauvenargues, *Reflexions et maximes* (1746), and Helvetius, *Poesies* (1781) quoted in Gunn (1969) and Lovejoy (1961).
27. Burke (1774). See Birch (1971: 38–9) for Sidney and Willis, pointing out that at this moment ‘[t]he Tory attitude was the traditional one that the function of M.P.s was to represent local interests and to seek redress for particular grievances, it being assumed that the king and his ministers had the main responsibility for interpreting the national interest. In contrast, Whig spokesmen insisted that Parliament was a deliberative body, representing the whole nation...’ (Birch 1971: 38).

28. That Harrington fully and Montesquieu and Rousseau partially rejected the lot may have influenced later thinkers in not even considering this possibility. See Cronkright and Pek (2019) for “civic lottery.”
29. A few later writers revived the possibility of the lot on occasion, but only conjecturally. For example, F. W. Maitland in 1908 pointed out that ‘representation does not necessarily imply election by the represented; representatives may be chosen by a public officer or by lot’ (*Constitutional History of England*, cited in Fairlie 1940, 458–9); see also Luce in 1930, Swabey in 1937, Laski in 1953, and Di Grazia in 1959, as reported in Pitkin (1967: 73–4).
30. Jefferson (1813). In this letter Jefferson combined despair that natural eugenics would ‘produce a race of veritable ἀριστοί [aristocrats]’ with hopes that a free school system selecting for merit at each higher level and the practices of local self-government would produce at least a workable ‘natural aristocracy’.
31. Hare (1857). Earlier thinkers had also proposed proportional representation, beginning with Hill in 1818 and Gilpin in 1844, but Mill was aware only of Hare’s system (see Colomer 2004; Noiret 1990).
32. Rousseau (1762/1997: 53); Tocqueville (1835–1840/1954, Bk. I, ch. 5); Marx and Engels (1848); see also Lukes (1973) on ‘Self-Development’, 46–9.
33. Earlier theorists had not addressed these issues. See the exceedingly brief treatment of majority rule in Hobbes (1651), and Locke (1679–1689, ch. 7, sect. 96), possibly relying on common wisdom but possibly on the slightly more extensive discussion in Grotius (1625/2005: 545 (Bk 2, ch. 5, sect. 17), 1553 (Bk 3, ch. 22, sect 4). For more on majority decision, see Manin (1997: 188–9), and for the logic of majority rule, May (1952), Waldron (1999), Risse (2004), and Goodin and List (2006). For supermajorities, see Schwartzberg (2014).
34. Kaufman (1960), building on Mill (1861/1975); Barber (1984); Pateman (1970). Although Pitkin’s classic work appeared in 1967, it did not then inspire much representative theory.
35. Gastil et al. (2010); the researchers further discovered a ‘dose response’: the more complex the jury decision, the more likely the increase in voting turnout.
36. On this basis, Downs (1957), building on Hotelling (1929) and Black (1948), developed the median voter theorem.
37. Mayhew (1974) and Fiorina (1974); see Mansbridge (2009) for the historical dynamic.
38. On quotas, see, for example, Dahlerup (2006), Krook (2009); on participatory budgeting, Abers (2000), Sintomer et al. (2008).
39. Pitkin (1967: 221–2); see Habermas 1992/1996; also Mansbridge (2003) and Disch (2011) on the ‘representative system’.
40. On the decline of the ‘non-delegation’ principle in the US, see Freeman (2000). For an introduction to the large literature on new public management, see Hood (1995) and Kaboolian (1998).
41. Schmitter (1992) suggested, for example, that citizens be empowered to select up to ten interest organizations to represent them, with the organizations receiving both taxpayer support proportionate to the citizens’ choices and a formal say in relevant government decisions, provided that these organizations were structured internally as representative democracies.
42. Garay (2016) on Latin America; Martin and Swank (2012) on Nordic neo-corporatism; Sabel and Zeitlin (2010) on the EU; Freeman (2000) and Rudder et al. (2016) on the US.
43. Andeweg and Thomassen (2005). Eulau et al. (1959), picking up the eighteenth-century controversy over the role of the representative (see note 27 above and accompanying text) and perhaps inventing the terms ‘trustee’ and ‘delegate’ for their analysis, joined Burke,

Sieyes, and the Federalists in disaggregating the function of ‘trustee’ into two components: (1) acting for the constituents’ interests in contrast to their expressed desires and (2) acting for the nation in contrast to the local constituency. I use ‘trustee’ here to refer only to the first component, which Pitkin (1967) calls ‘independence’ in her chapter on ‘the mandate-independence controversy’.

44. See, for example, Phillips (1995), Plotke (1997), Williams (1998), Urbinati (2006), Dovi (2007); see Urbinati and Warren (2008) for the history; Rosenblum (2010), Muirhead (2014), and White and Ypi (2016) for parties; Rosenbluth and Shapiro (2018) for electoral systems. Recent theorists are more likely to engage extensively with empirical political science than in Pitkin’s era.
45. Andeweg and Thomassen’s (2005) congruent typology combines *ex ante* and *ex post* constituent control with bottom-up and top-down policy initiation. See Warren and Mansbridge et al. (2016) on the normative conditions for non-transparency in negotiation.
46. Surrogate representatives, a form of ‘gyroscopic’ representative, differ from Burke’s ‘virtual’ representatives (see note 22 above) in 1) representing not only through deliberation but also through aggregate voting and ‘constituency’ service (see, e.g. Broockman 2013) and 2) having no relation to fixed and objective interests, morally right answers, wisdom rather than will, or the good of the whole (Mansbridge 2003: 522; 2011: 627). In the US, out-of-district donors problematically have considerable power over their surrogate representatives and are an exponentially increasing political force.
47. The norm of threshold participation rapidly becomes a norm of proportional representation when a descriptive group has significant internal diversity (as most groups do) or when a deliberative arena has many subgroups or committees each of which requires threshold representation (as in most legislatures and organizations).
48. On descriptive representation, see, e.g., Phillips (1995), Williams (1998), Mansbridge (1999b; 2005a); Dovi (2007).
49. Williams (1998) on mutual constitution; Disch (2012) develops ideas in Pitkin (1967), Derrida (1973), Young (2000), Laclau (1996), Saward (2006), and Urbinati (2006), pointing out how systemically this constituting process mobilizes bias. It also prevents any easy distinction between ‘education’ and ‘manipulation’ or reliance on ‘responsiveness’ (Disch 2011). Cf. Warren and Castiglione (2019) on the ‘entrepreneurial’ role of representatives and Urbinati (2006, 28, 198–9) on the ‘circumstances of opinion formation’.
50. Saward (2006), also discussing other dimensions and arguing that successful claims-making must be anchored convincingly in the appropriate local cultural codes.

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CHAPTER 2

THE FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES

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LIBERAL (mass) democracy is a modern phenomenon. Athens and several other classic Greek polities combined voting procedures with selection through sortition to rule themselves. Late medieval and early modern European burghs also resorted to lottery to choose their governing bodies. Yet, up until the French Revolution, elections were confined either to very small territories, such as a few Swiss cantons governing themselves through popular assemblies, or to very narrow social strata (the case of the British House of Commons). Rather exceptionally, the right to vote was fairly extensive in several North American colonies. At the time of independence, about three-quarters of adult white males could vote in Connecticut, Georgia, New Hampshire, rural Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and South Carolina, and around one half did in Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, Philadelphia, and Virginia (Keyssar 2000). In fact, political theorists, such as Montesquieu, thought republican or democratic institutions to be only possible in a ‘small territory’, predicting that monarchies were the only system that could govern territories of ‘un grandeur mediocre’.¹

The Jacobin constitution of 1793 shattered that world by extending the right to vote to all French adult males. Still, its electoral provisions were never implemented. The introduction of liberal democracies did not occur until several decades later. Figure 2.1 displays the proportion of democracies among sovereign nations across the world every year from 1800 to 2015.² A liberal democracy is understood as a political regime in which governments are directly elected or voted by parliaments, in turn chosen through free and competitive elections with universal or quasi-universal suffrage. The concept of free and competitive elections involves the presence and protection of such elements as civil liberties and freedom of the press. More specifically, in Figure 2.1, a country is defined as a democracy if it meets three conditions: (1) the legislature is

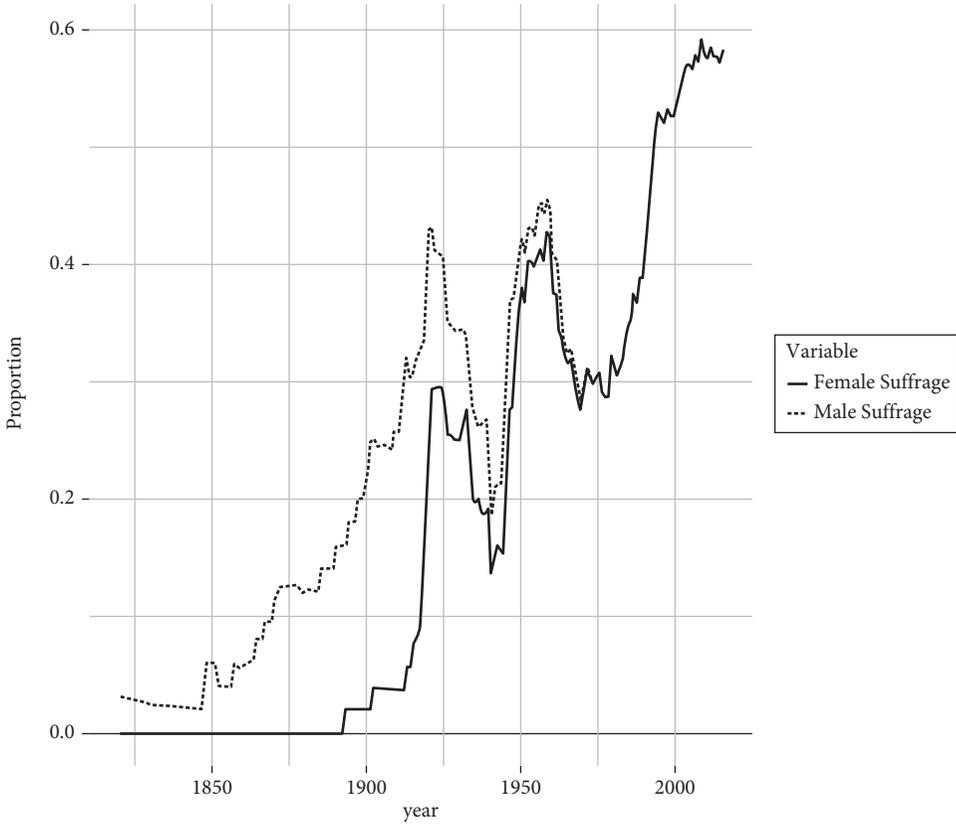


FIGURE 2.1 Proportion of Democracies in the World, 1800–2015

elected in free multi-party elections; (2) the executive is directly or indirectly elected in popular elections and is responsible either directly to voters or to a legislature elected according to the first condition; (3) a majority of the population has the right to vote.³ The majority is defined in two ways. The dashed line represents the proportion of democracies when a country is a democracy if it grants the right to vote to at least 50 per cent of adult males. The solid line represents the proportion of countries where more than 50 per cent of adult females also have the right to vote. After the 1970s, the two lines coincide fully, while they do not before. As is well known, in the majority of countries men were granted the vote earlier than women. If women's franchise is excluded from the definition of democracy, democratization took off in the second half of the nineteenth century. If it is included, then democratization happened after the First World War. Given that women's suffrage is normatively important and that it is hard to argue that a state could be truly democratic without it, in this chapter we specify our models both with and without female suffrage as a requisite to be a democracy. Due to space considerations, we report the results for the definition of democracy based on the male franchise. Using the female franchise, the results are substantively the same in almost every case: we explicitly discuss those few instances where they are not.⁴ We also

test the robustness of our results using the ‘liberal democracy’ variable from the Varieties of Democracy (V-DEM) dataset (Coppedge et al. 2018), discussed in the empirical section below.

During much of the first half of the nineteenth century, only the United States (taken as a whole) qualified as a democracy (defined according to the looser condition of male suffrage), even though some of its states did not. Following the revolutionary wave of 1848, the number of democracies grew from three countries that year (France, Switzerland, and the United States), that is, less than 6 per cent of all independent states, to eighteen nations, that is, about one-third of all countries, in 1914, and to twenty-eight countries, or 42 per cent of all states, in 1921. After peaking in the early 1920s, the number of democracies experienced an absolute decline to thirteen countries by 1940. This represented around 18 per cent of all the cases. A second and rather fast wave of democratization took place right after the Second World War. By 1950 there were thirty-four democracies, more than in the peak year of 1921. Nonetheless, due to an increase in the number of independent states, the proportion of democracies remained at around 40 per cent, similar to the level three decades earlier. The number of democratic regimes stayed put, with a slight decline due to the authoritarian backlash experienced in several Latin American countries, until the mid-1970s. By contrast, it underwent a dramatic fall in relative terms in that same period to about 26 per cent of all states by 1969. A third democratization wave started in Southern Europe in the mid-1970s, extended to Latin America in the following decade, and culminated with the fall of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. In the early 2000s, the share of democracies plateaued at around 60 per cent of all sovereign countries.

Figures 2.2A and 2.2B report the annual number of transitions to and away from democracy (as defined with the 50 per cent male franchise threshold) in already sovereign states. Until the First World War, most democratic transitions occurred in

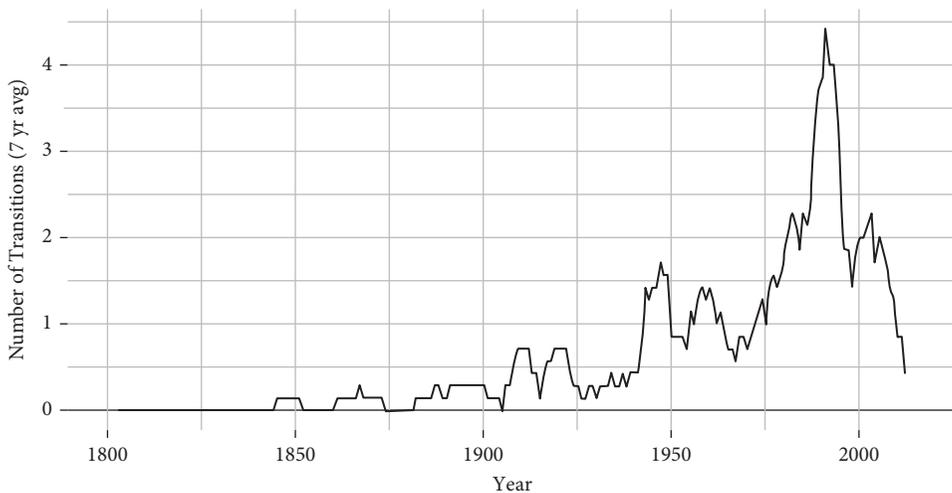


FIGURE 2.2A Annual Number of Transitions to Democracy, 1800–2015

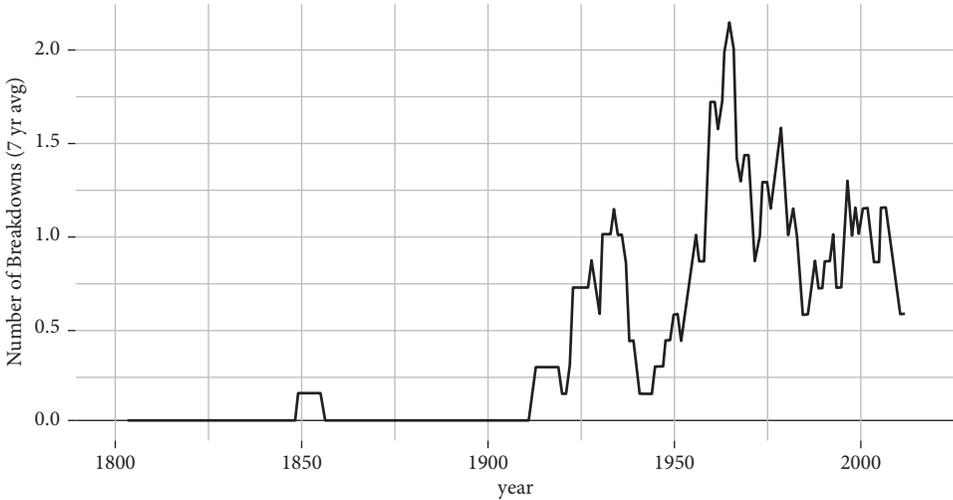


FIGURE 2.2B Annual Number of Democratic Breakdowns, 1800–2015

already independent states—the exceptions were several former British colonies and Norway. After 1918, democracy expanded both through the collapse of previously authoritarian regimes, such as Germany and Austria, and the birth of new countries in Eastern Europe resulting from the collapse of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires. The relative decline of democracies in the postwar period occurred for rather different reasons than the democratization reversal in the interwar period. In the interwar period, democracy broke down in Italy, Germany, Spain, and most Eastern European countries in the 1920s and early 1930s. In the postwar period, the decline in the relative number of democracies resulted from the organization of most newly born countries into one-party or military dictatorships.

DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT

The rise of democracy took place hand in hand with unprecedented levels of economic development (also see Chapter 3). At the beginning of the nineteenth century, 95 per cent of the world population earned less than the equivalent of two dollars (of 1990) per day and over 80 per cent lived on one dollar per day (Bourguignon and Morrisson 2002). Following the industrial revolution, per capita incomes in 1820, which were slightly above \$1,700 in Britain and around \$1,200 in other Northwestern European economies and in the United States, had doubled in the north Atlantic region by the end of the nineteenth century. By the eve of the Second World War, they had more than doubled again. In 2008, per capita income in advanced countries was about twenty times larger than in the early nineteenth century. Income growth came in tandem with a relative process of social equalization. Primary school coverage

expanded from less than 30 per cent of the population in France and England (twice as much in Germany, Scandinavia, and the United States) to covering everyone. Economic inequality fell, mainly during the first three-fourths of the twentieth century. The share of national income in the hands of the top one decile declined from about 50 per cent or more in the middle of the nineteenth century to below 35 per cent in 1970 in advanced economies.

In light of those extraordinary changes, Table 2.1 explores the potential relationship between democracy and development as follows. Along its horizontal dimension, it classifies the number of country-years (of sovereign countries) by historical period: 1820–1848; the first democratization wave (1849–1920); the first reversal (1921–1944); the first part of the Cold War period (1945–1975); and the last democratization wave (1976–2015). Along its vertical dimension, Table 2.1A splits the data into per capita income quintiles for the whole distribution: for instance, the top row includes all those country observations whose per capita income belongs to the top 20 per cent of all per capita incomes between 1820 and 2015.⁵ In addition, Table 2.1A reports (in parentheses) the percentage of country-years in each quintile with respect to the specific historical period. By way of example, take the bottom left-hand side cell. In 1820–1849, there were 582 country-year observations with a per capita income in the bottom quintile (of all the distribution of country-years between 1820 and 2015). That corresponds to 47.5 per cent of all observations of that historical period (1820 to 1848). Table 2.1B then reports the proportion of democracies (defined through male suffrage) in each cell. Again, as an example, none of all countries in two lowest quintiles were democratic before 1848. By contrast, 15 per cent of country-years with incomes in the third quintile were democratic before 1848. (The last row in Tables 2.1B and 2.1C give the proportion of democracies for the whole period.)⁶ Table 2.1C reports the same

Table 2.1A Number of Country-Years by Historical Period and Income Quintile (in the World Income Distribution) and their Proportion in each Quintile by Historical Period

Quintile	1820–1848	1849–1920	1921–1944	1945–1975	1975–2015
Fifth	0 (0%)	5 (0.1%)	88 (5.9%)	593 (20.6%)	2314 (40.5%)
Fourth	0 (0%)	607 (16.5%)	453 (30.4%)	699 (24.2%)	1240 (21.7%)
Third	205 (16.7%)	862 (23.4%)	406 (27.3%)	674 (23.4%)	854 (14.9%)
Second	438 (35.8%)	942 (25.6%)	342 (21.8%)	517 (17.9%)	779 (13.6%)
First	582 (47.5%)	1268 (34.4%)	217 (14.6%)	400 (13.9%)	532 (9.3%)
Total	1224	3684	1388	2883	5720

Source: Boix, Miller and Rosato (2013).

information for female suffrage. The relationship between income and female suffrage is equally striking, as women gained the vote essentially only in countries above the third quintile until the most recent period.

Table 2.1A shows how the world developed over the last two centuries. Take the first historical period (1820–1849). Half of all our observations are in the bottom quintile, confirming that countries were poor (relative to today’s income). No countries had a per capita income that would have placed them in the top 40 per cent of the whole distribution. Following the economic take-off of several north Atlantic countries, the distribution of observations became more heterogeneous. By the interwar period, 27 per cent of all country-observations were in the third quintile and 30 per cent in the fourth quintile. Notice that the data overestimates the proportion of rich countries until about 1960 because it only includes sovereign nations: colonies are not part of Table 2.1. Still, economic growth pushed incomes up so that, in the last period, two-fifths of all our observations were included in the top quintile of the whole distribution.

Table 2.1B and 2.1C show also that democracy became widespread over time, primarily among richer countries. Between 1849 and 1944, all country-years in the

Table 2.1B Percentage of Democratic Country-Years by Historical Period and Income Quintile, with Democracy Defined by Proportion of Male Individuals Enfranchised

Quintile	1820–1848	1849–1920	1921–1944	1945–1975	1975–2015
Fifth	–	100%	100%	79.6%	71.9%
Fourth	–	69.5%	63.4%	44.3%	46.2%
Third	15.1%	18.6%	20.2%	23%	26.9%
Second	0%	1.8%	1.2%	9.7%	19.3%
First	0%	0%	0%	11%	22.9%
Proportion over whole period	2.5%	16.4%	31%	35.8%	47.9%

Table 2.1C Percentage of Democratic Country-Years by Historical Period and Income Quintile, with Democracy Defined by Proportion of Male and Female Individuals Enfranchised

Quintile	1820–1848	1849–1920	1921–1944	1945–1975	1975–2015
Fifth	–	0%	80.7%	75.2%	71.9%
Fourth	–	11.9%	47.5%	43.1%	46.2%
Third	0%	1.4%	12.8%	19.6%	26.9%
Second	0%	0.1%	0%	9.3%	19.3%
First	0%	0%	0%	9.5%	22.9%
Proportion over whole period	2.5%	2.3%	22.7%	33.6%	47.9%

top quintile and over two-thirds in the fourth quintile were democratic (following the less demanding definition of male suffrage). By contrast, fewer than 2 per cent were democratic in the bottom 40 per cent. After the Second World War, the proportion of wealthy democratic countries fell—due to a string of military coups in Latin America and the decolonization of resource-rich countries. Overall, however, we observe a strong correlation between economic development (proxied through per capita income) and democracy. Between 1820 and 2015, whereas 74 per cent of the countries in the top quintile in the world distribution of per capita income held free and competitive elections, only 6 per cent in the bottom quintile did. The same structure remains in place for each separate historical period (except for the two bottom quintiles during the third democratization wave).⁷

DEMOCRACY WITH DEMOCRATS

Per capita income has been widely used as a proxy for development: its wide coverage and intrinsic comparability makes it particularly convenient to use in our empirical studies on democratization. Yet, why do a higher income and more development affect the chances of transiting to and sustaining democracy? The scholarly literature is split between two camps. The first argues that stable democracies require a population of democrats, that is, individuals normatively committed to the idea of democracy, and that their commitment grew through the expansion of the idea of toleration as development led to a process of secularization and/or higher levels of education. The second camp claims, instead, that democracy does not require actors intrinsically committed to democracy: they simply prefer the latter because it makes them better off relative to any other system of governance.

Although the first literature was more prominent among the initial generation of democratization scholars (cf. Almond and Verba 1960; Inglehart 1990; Huntington 1990), it is still influential today (Geddes 2007; Welzel and Inglehart 2007; Chapter 3 in this *Handbook*). Generally speaking, it comes in two variants. According to the first, the process of development resulted in (or, at least, included) a process of secularization. With modernization, religion lost its ideational grip on growing parts of the population: religious practice declined; religious authorities lost control over their flocks; reason and cultural relativism replaced pre-modern appeals to values sustained by divine revelation. As a result, democracy, understood as a space where all ideas had an equal standing and could be accommodated through bargaining and voting, could finally flourish. Such a strict definition of secularization is sometimes replaced by the claim that, even when religious practice did not drop, liberal religious ideas (such as Protestantism or post-Vatican-Two Catholicism) were foundational to the development of democracy—in ways non-liberal or fundamentalist denominations were not. In either of its two formats, the secularization hypothesis is weak from an empirical point of view. Democracy prevailed in highly religious countries with highly politicized

religious cleavages, such as the Netherlands, for many decades before religious practice collapsed in the 1970s. Relatively high levels of religiosity in the United States continue to be compatible with wide adherence to liberal democratic values. In turn, the argument that the prevalence of certain denominations reduces the likelihood of having democratic institutions has not been confirmed using panel data (cf. Boix 2003).

The second variant of the development-toleration theory identifies the expansion of schooling as the ideational mechanism that enabled the process of democratization to happen. Formal education arguably entailed the expansion of rational deliberation, the scientific method, and the internalization of liberal, pluralistic values. This argumentation runs, however, into two problems. First, education has been used as a tool of indoctrination by totalitarian regimes and, more generally, to construct national identities to the point of excluding (and assimilating) cultural and linguistic minorities. Second, despite their relatively high levels of education, ruling elites in many developing economies have been adamantly opposed to the expansion of universal suffrage. Consider, for example, the case of John Stuart Mill, who acknowledged that everyone may have had an interest in the ‘due representation’ of workers, but only ‘so long as [they were] not admitted to the suffrage so indiscriminately as to outnumber the other electors.’ A plan proposed by Walter Bagehot’s plan to ‘giv[e] up the representation of the large towns to day-labourers, by establishing, in them, equal and universal suffrage’ was, he added, a ‘violent remedy’ because it implied ‘disfranchising the higher and middle classes of those places, who comprise the majority of the most intellectual persons in the kingdom.’⁸ More systematic evidence linking the norms of political elites to regime survival is lacking, except for one study by Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán (2013), who code the key political agents in different periods in twenty countries between 1945 and 2005, and then rate them each on two scales: the agent’s normative preference for democracy and the radicalism of their policy positions. Although they find that lower commitment to democracy correlated with democratic breakdowns in the countries studied, the relationship is not robust to the exclusion of specific cases (Treisman 2018).

DEMOCRACY WITHOUT DEMOCRATS

A recent and growing literature explains democratic stability as a political equilibrium in which political actors, who may not be necessarily committed to democracy from a normative standpoint, accept fair and competitive elections because the expected policy losses from shifting to democracy and losing control over government with some non-negative probability (what Robert Dahl (1971) referred to as ‘costs of toleration’ in his seminal book *Polyarchy*), are smaller than the ‘costs of repression’ incurred to maintain a dictatorship (Dahl 1971; Przeworski 1991; Weingast 1997; Boix 2003; Ansell and Samuels 2014).

A simple way to develop that general insight would be as follows. In a democracy, voters determine their policymaker, the tax rate, and the level of redistribution. In the

standard democratization literature, that means that taxes are set by the median voter, who is generally a low-income voter. By contrast, in an authoritarian regime, decisions are made and taxes are set by a fraction of the electorate. Authoritarianism is, logically, not cost-free: the ruling clique incurs a cost to exclude low-income voters from rebelling, establishing a democracy (or an authoritarian regime that excludes the old elites), and potentially imposing some onerous redistribution scheme on the old elite. Accordingly, the incentives of authoritarian rulers to oppose democratization will increase when the redistributive threat of a democratic system (where everybody votes) increases or, more generally, when the likelihood that the majority may vote for policies highly divergent from the interests of authoritarian rulers rises.⁹

As shown at the beginning of this chapter, authoritarian rule was the almost universal point of departure at the turn of the nineteenth century. There were no representative democracies anywhere, except for a few North American states—and even there, the franchise was limited to property owners. Political participation was extremely limited—ranging from countries in the hands of a very small clique (Tsarist Russia or imperial China) to polities run by political elites elected by a narrow stratum of citizens (between 5 and 7 per cent of the adult population in Britain before 1832). In addition, and with hardly any exceptions, ruling elites tended to correspond to the wealthy strata of society.

In the medium to long run, the process of economic development attenuated the economic differences and redistributive tensions of the pre-industrial world, opening a window of opportunity for democracy. The first industrial revolution entailed the substitution of unskilled workers employed in the modern factory for artisans working in small workshops. As a result of low wages, overcrowded housing, and bad sanitation conditions, living standards experienced a sharp decline in the new industrial towns—at least for the first decades of the industrial revolution. By contrast, profits rose and capital accumulated steadily. Full democracy and its one-person-one-vote rule looked incompatible with the philosophy of economic *laissez-faire* that defined nineteenth-century liberalism and with the growing inequalities generated by Manchester capitalism. Over time, however, the invention of the assembly line and of mass production techniques as well as the use of electricity and electric motors reduced the demand for unskilled workers, instead making semi-skilled and skilled labour complementary to capital. Strong productivity gains (GDP per hour worked was ten times higher in 1973 than in 1870 in constant dollars in the United States and Western Europe) fostered the growth of low and median salaries, much higher living standards, and more equal wage and income distributions (Davies and Shorrocks 2000; Morrisson 2000). Political conflict lost its past intensity. As the American sociologist Daniel Bell wrote in ‘America as a Mass Society’ in 1955, ‘in the advanced industrial countries, principally the United States, Britain, and northwestern Europe, where national income has been rising, where mass expectations of an equitable share in that increase are relatively fulfilled, and where social mobility affects ever greater numbers (...) extremist politics have the least hold’ (Bell 1988: 31).

Economic development probably led to democratization through a second channel as well. Industrialization and globalization entailed a fundamental shift in the nature of

wealth: from fixed assets (land) to mobile capital. In 1700, agricultural land represented about half of all wealth in France and the United Kingdom. By 1900, it was less than one-tenth. Capital mobility altered the ability of governments to tax and/or expropriate existing income and assets and, as a result, the redistributive threat of democracy. More mobile assets enabled their holders to threaten to leave in response to excessive taxation, effectively restraining the capacity of states to raise taxes, and therefore making capital owners less concerned with a transition to democracy. By contrast, in economies characterized by immobile assets, such as agricultural, mines, and oil wells, the threat of high taxes under democracy made high-income individuals more likely to support authoritarian regimes.

INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

In addition to the ‘costs of toleration’ (the cost of losing office and control over policymaking), the incentives to maintain an authoritarian regime vary with its ‘costs of repression’. The latter are determined by a multitude of factors: the strength of the regime (its military and police as well as its internal cohesion); the political consciousness of the opposition; and the latter’s level of political organization.

The resources of all those political agents are shaped by domestic conditions. Nevertheless, they may be also the result of international conditions and strategies that international hegemony follow. More precisely, authoritarian great powers tend to support authoritarianism among their client states for two reasons. First, dictators guarantee the status quo (i.e. the patron–client relationship) better than democracies because the electoral victory of the opposition under free elections may result in the client reneging from a pact with the great power. Second, a democratic regime in a small country may be used as a base to spread democratic ideas and to support a democratic movement within the authoritarian great power.

By contrast, a democratic hegemon faces the following strategic dilemma. On the one hand, it may prefer democracy, due to a relatively strong ideational commitment to human rights and elections among its public opinion.¹⁰ On the other hand, it may support a dictatorship if the alternative is an unstable democratic regime that could lead to open violence, civil wars, and the introduction of a (communist or populist) revolutionary regime aligned with an authoritarian great power. In developed countries, where the probability of having a stable democracy is high, the democratic superpower will probably favour democratization. In poor countries, with a small middle class and a thin political centre, politics oscillates between authoritarianism and revolution and the chances of consolidating democracy are low. In the presence of an authoritarian great power, the democratic great power will lean towards supporting authoritarian institutions in its client states—especially if the competing great power benefits from and supports a revolutionary movement. By contrast, in the absence of an authoritarian competitor, the chances that a democratic hegemon will support a

democratic solution will be much higher because there is no alternative great power that can co-opt a revolutionary government, making the costs of a democratic collapse low.

The successive waves and reversals identified in Figure 2.2 can be traced back to epochal transformations of the world order in 1848, 1918, 1945, and 1990. Until 1848, the world system was dominated by authoritarian hegemons. With Britain taking a neutral, non-interventionist stance, the members of the Holy Alliance acted as a de facto unified great power in continental Europe to suffocate liberal rebellions across the continent. By contrast, the (temporary) collapse of authoritarian great powers in 1918 and again in 1990 led to the rapid expansion of democratic regimes in middle- and some poor-income countries. During the postwar period, the strategy of the democratic hegemon varied as a function of the domestic conditions of its allies: Washington supported authoritarian regimes in Latin America and South Asia at the peak of the Cold War but favoured democratic openings in Southern Europe in the late 1970s and Korea and Taiwan in the late 1980s.¹¹ The United States' support for most authoritarian regimes in the Middle East after the fall of the Berlin Wall, and its recent (and extremely costly) pro-democracy interventions in the area, are two sides of the same coin: Washington deemed liberal oppositions in the Arab world too weak to succeed on their own, especially under the shadow of Islamic terrorism and the regional status of Iran (Jamal 2012).

EMPIRICS

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To examine the relationship between development and democracy more precisely, columns 1 and 2 in Table 2.2 regress the level of democracy on logged income per capita (lagged ten years), employing the universe of sovereign countries from 1820 (a time when there were hardly any democracies) to 2015, and a standard pooled OLS regression with country fixed effects (to control for country-specific traits) as well as year dummies (to capture any common shocks to all countries). The democracy variable is a dummy, following the dataset in Boix et al. (2013), updated through 2015. To maximize the number of observations, data on GDP per capita is based on Bourguignon and Morrisson (2002) and Feenstra et al. (2015).

In column 1, the dependent variable is male suffrage. In column 2 we require suffrage to have been extended to both men and women. The coefficient of per capita income, which is statistically significant, implies that doubling per capita income leads to a long-run increase in the democracy index of 0.1 points on a scale from 0 to 1.¹² Given that income per capita has risen by more than ten times in developed countries in the last two centuries, development appears as a powerful correlate of the general process of democratization.¹³

Models 3 and 4 engage in a direct Granger test between income and political regime with a two-lag model to explore the direction of causation between income and democracy. In column 3, where the dependent variable is democracy, the lagged values

Table 2.2 Testing Causality Between Income and Democracy, 1820–2016

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Democracy (over 50% male enfranchised)	Democracy (over 50% male & female enfranchised)	Granger Test Democracy	Granger Test Log GDP capita
Democracy t-10	0.361*** (0.028)	0.385*** (0.029)	0.305*** (0.032)	−0.033 (0.026)
Democracy t-20			0.074** (0.034)	−0.032 (0.028)
Log GDP Per capita t-10	0.064** (0.023)	0.073*** (0.023)	0.066^^ (0.042)	0.858*** (0.034)
Log GDP Per capita t-20			0.002^^ (0.000)	−0.133*** (0.037)
Observations	1,401	1,401	1,157	1,157
R-squared	0.646	0.691	0.5288	0.903
F-Statistic	14.816***	14.170***	37.51***	525.67***

Notes: Fixed effects OLS regressions with country dummies, time dummies, and robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses. *** $p < 0.01$; ** $p < 0.05$; * $p < 0.10$; standard errors clustered by country in parentheses. In joint test with all per capita income variable: ^^ $p > 0.01$, ^^ $p > 0.05$.

of income affect the level of democracy in the expected direction and are jointly statistically significant. In column 4, where the dependent variable is income per capita, the lagged values of democracy are not statistically significant (either individually or in a joint test).¹⁴ This provides evidence that income, at least in the medium term (10–20 years), influences the level of democracy. By contrast, we find no evidence of the opposite relationship—that democracy directly affects income.

Did development trigger the process of democratization? Or did development simply stabilize democratic regimes that had been established for reasons unrelated to economic and social change? Figure 2.3A displays the probability that a country transits to a democracy conditional on its per capita income. Figure 2.3B does the same for the probability of having a democratic breakdown. The probability of democratic transitions (breakdowns) is calculated as the number of democratic transitions (breakdowns) divided by the number of democratic (authoritarian) country-years within each per capita income segment. The probability of a democratic transitions rises with income up until about \$15,000. It then falls and remains flat at around 2 per cent. As Boix and Stokes (2003) argue, that drop is likely the result of having few authoritarian cases (most rich countries are already democracies) with particular traits (such as owning natural resources that incentivize their control by traditional elites). The probability of democratic breakdown consistently declines with income. While in countries with a per capita income below \$4,000 there is a 4 per cent chance of a transition to authoritarianism in any given year, that probability drops to less than 1 per cent among countries with incomes above \$10,000.

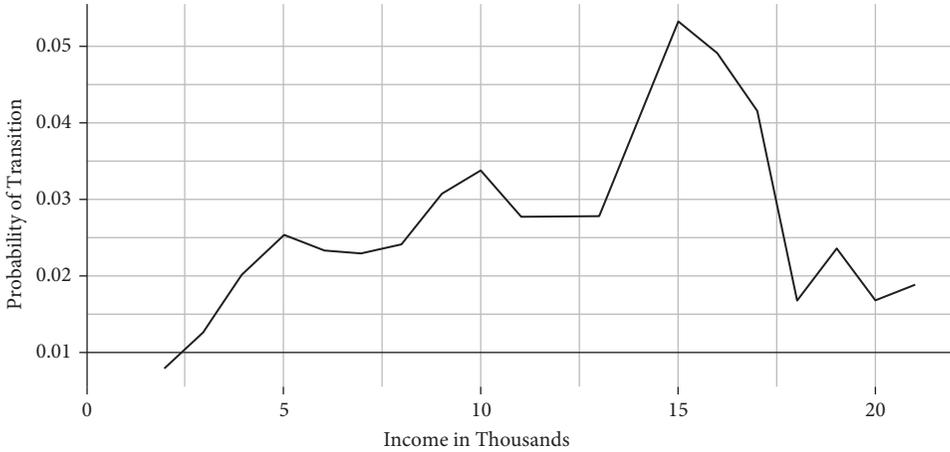


FIGURE 2.3A Annual Probability of Democratic Transition by Income

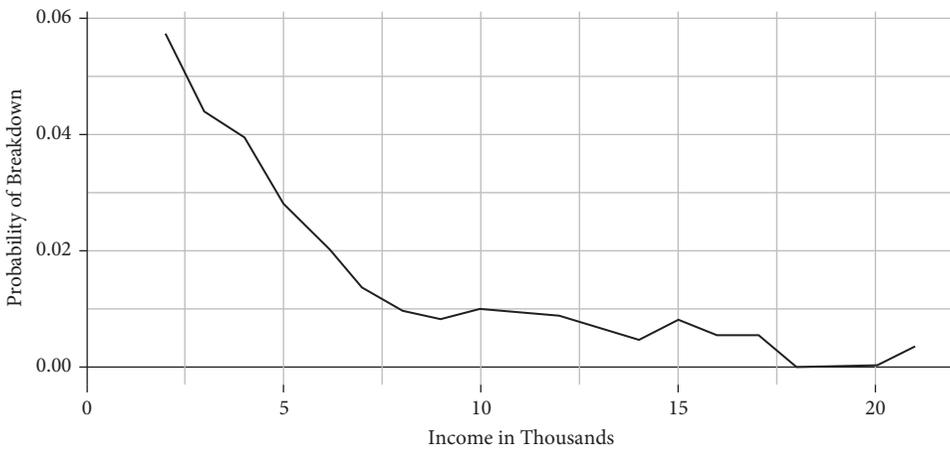


FIGURE 2.3B Annual Probability of Democratic Breakdown by Income

Figures 2.4 and 2.5 report the point estimate (and confidence intervals) of the effect of logged income per capita (lagged ten years) on democratic transitions and breakdowns. The estimations employ standard pooled OLS regressions with country fixed effects (to control for country-specific traits) as well as year dummies (to capture any common shocks to all countries). The set of country-years corresponds to sovereign countries from 1820 (a time when there were hardly any democracies) to 2016.

Figure 2.4 displays the impact of income on democratic transitions for the whole period and for each historical period (democratization waves and reversals). Per capita income is positive for the whole period. When we split the data by periods, per capita income strongly predicts transitions for the first and second democratization wave.

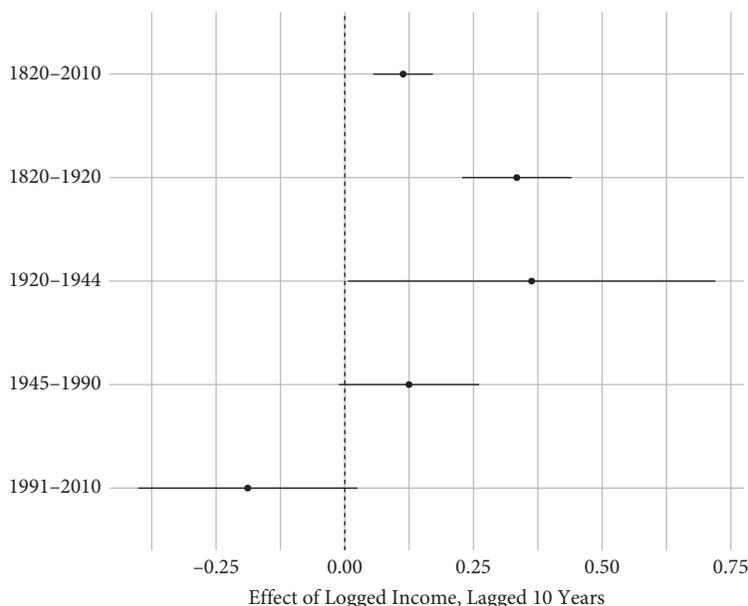


FIGURE 2.4 Predicted Effects of Income on Transitions

It does for the whole interwar period although with less statistical precision (due to having a smaller number of observations). The rise of democracies had a distinct endogenous structure: as countries developed, they transitioned to competitive elections with quasi-universal or universal suffrage. However, higher income levels reduced the probability of transitions to democracy in the period after 1990. That effect was due to the fact that, by 1990, the majority of wealthy countries were democratic. Those that were not democratic were defined by a set of conditions (mainly, having very fixed assets such as oil wealth) that reinforced their elites' opposition to democratization (Boix 2003; Boix and Stokes 2003).¹⁵

Figure 2.5 shows, in turn, that a higher per capita income reduces the likelihood of democratic breakdowns during the whole period under analysis. When we split the universe of cases into different periods, a higher income is associated with more breakdowns in the interwar period, reflecting the collapse of representative regimes in central Europe, but the estimate is extremely imprecise.

According to recent systematic empirical research on the impact of the international system (cf. Boix 2011; Jamal 2012; Gunitsky 2014, 2017), a shift in per capita income from \$1,000 to \$12,000 implied an increase in the index of democratization by 0.5 points under a democratic global order but to an increase of 0.15 points otherwise. These results may explain why, under the unfavourable international climate that prevailed from the mid-1930s until the late 1980s, it took many middle-income countries so long to become democratic even though they enjoyed an income level similar to that of European countries before 1920. Indeed, whereas three-fourths of countries with a per capita income over \$3,000 were democratic in the interwar period,

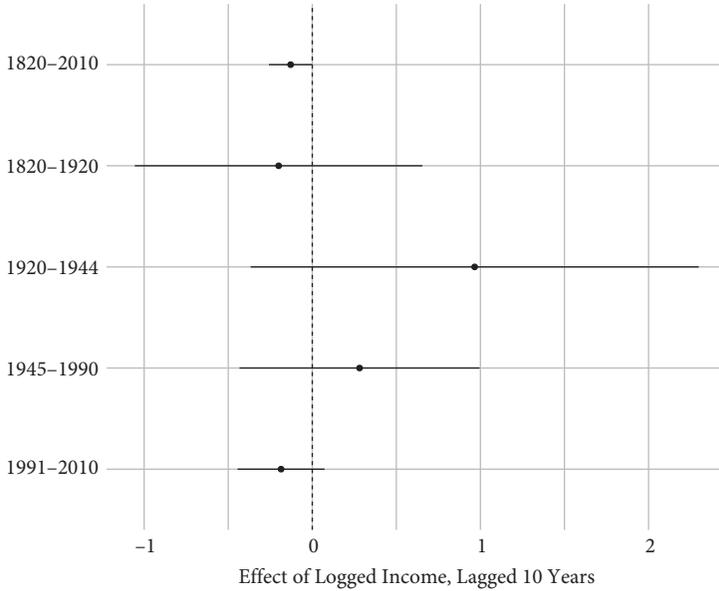


FIGURE 2.5 Predicted Effects of Income on Breakdowns

less than half above \$3,000 were democratic during the Cold War period. However, right after the fall of the Soviet Union, the percentage of democracies increased rapidly to about 60 per cent.

To sum up, income (as a proxy of development) seems to matter for democracy. The finding is in line with most of the empirical literature: Lipset (1959), Dahl (1971), Przeworski et al. (2000), Huntington (1990), Barro (1999), Boix and Stokes (2003), Benhabib et al. (2011), Miller (2012), and Treisman (2015).¹⁶ Still, economic development does not translate into ‘more’ democracy linearly. The results from looking at separate historical periods and the diminishing effect of income point to the fact that once almost all wealthy countries became fully democratic after 1945, their continuous growth simply contributed to the consolidation of democratic rule. By the end of the twentieth century, most wealthy authoritarian countries were oil-rich economies with little incentives to move to democracy for the reasons we discussed earlier in this chapter.

Measuring the underlying mechanisms triggered by development is harder than using per capita income. However, the measures we have seem to support the explanation presented so far. Figure 2.6 shows the distribution of democratic (marked with a black dot) and non-democratic country-years (marked with a gray dot) as a function of a measure of percentage of family farms (proxying for equality) and average percentage levels of industrialization and urbanization (proxying for asset mobility and/or a growing demand for skilled labour). Authoritarian countries are clustered in unequal and technologically backward regions of the world in line with the model sketched before (cf. Boix 2003).

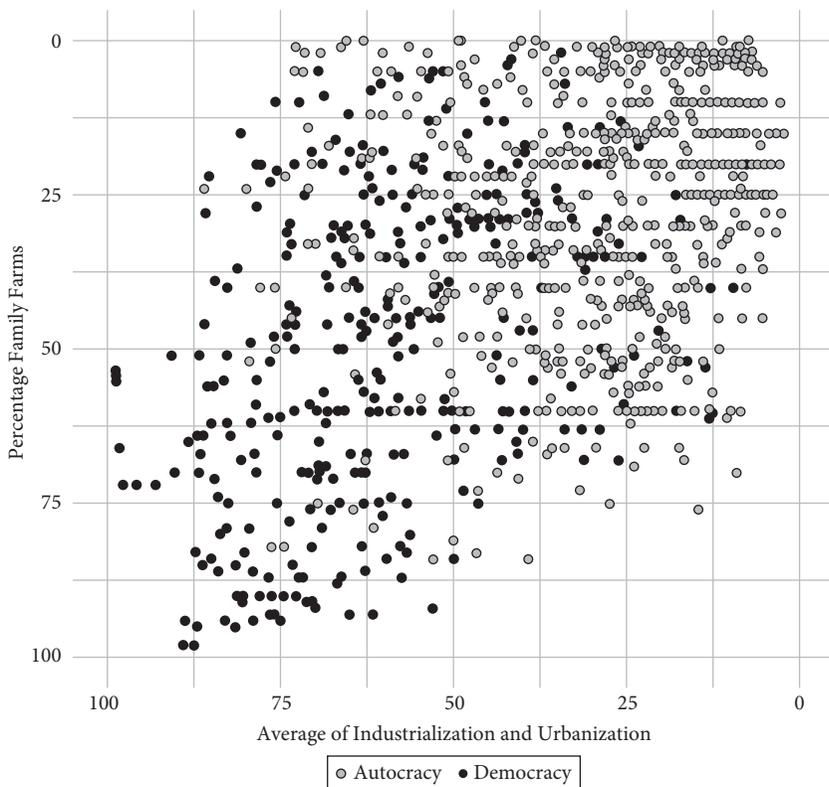


FIGURE 2.6 Development, Inequality and Democracy

FUTURE RESEARCH: LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES AND THE POPULIST CHALLENGE

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Looking ahead, the literature needs to go further in refining and testing the specific mechanisms through which development and democracy are related. Determining them has important empirical and theoretical implications. Take the following example. As a result of the rise of populism in the West, there has been a growing debate on the likelihood that democratic institutions may erode or even collapse in advanced economies (see, for example, Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018). On the one hand, according to the existing empirical models of democratic breakdown based on income, such predictions are unfounded: for example, the probability of the United States turning authoritarian today is less than one in 1,000 (Treisman 2018). On the other hand, suppose that the relationship between rising incomes and lower inequality was the result of specific production technologies that defined twentieth-century capitalism and that led to both high productivity gains and more wage and income compression.

Suppose, also, that the current wave of new information and communication technologies results in both higher incomes and more inequality (Brynjolfsson and McAfee 2014; Boix 2019). If democracy requires some relative equality, then further growth may result in less stable democracies and lower levels of political accountability.

Most of the existing research on democratization theory has relied on formal models based on very stylized assumptions about the goals and beliefs of its agents, then matched (or tested) with cross-country comparisons (or historical case studies). A way forward may consist of examining the actual preferences of political elites and citizens towards democratic institutions directly. A few (historical) studies have tried to identify the attitudes and strategies of elites towards regime transitions, mainly in the context of Britain's democratization (cf. Powell 1973; Aidt and Jensen 2014; Bronner 2014; but see Rohrschneider 1999 for Germany). However, they have been unable to relate the specific period or historical juncture they explore to the overall democratic progression of Britain and its relationship to social and economic variables precisely because they only look to an isolated episode of reform. In addition, they risk misinterpreting the motives of politicians because they do not compare their strategies during processes of reform with moments when there was no political change (see Treisman 2017).

Addressing those concerns, Svulik (2017) has designed a battery of survey experiments to evaluate the true attachment of non-elites to democratization.¹⁷ Employing historical data, Fresh (2018) has matched a panel of British parliamentarians with economic variables over a period of two centuries to understand the impact of industrialization on elite turnover and the presence of political dynasties. In a similar vein, Basu et al. (2019) use roll call votes on franchise reform in the House of Commons between 1826 and 1918 and apply Bateman et al.'s (2017) procedure to estimate the preferences of MPs regarding the size of the franchise—allowing them to describe the divergent evolution of democratization preferences across parties, the correlation of those preferences with the characteristics of the constituency of each MP, and the role of party leaders as agenda setters in electoral reforms.

Overall, we have made, over the last decades, some theoretical and empirical progress on the causes of democratization. A higher level of development fosters the transition to mass democracy (especially in the industrial core) and stabilizes democratic regimes (across the world), mainly by reshaping the payoffs (in turn defined by economic and social conditions) that political agents derive from authoritarian and non-authoritarian regimes. That effect has been often conditional on pre-existing local institutions and on the international balance of power. Those findings have then two main implications for the future of liberal democracy. First, the current transformation of the economy (due to the rise of new information and communication technologies and to the intensification of globalization, which are redefining the demand for particular types of labour as well as the distribution of productivity gains among economic factors) may affect the quality of democracies. Second, impending signs of a realignment of the international balance of power (a weaker Europe, a growingly isolationist United States, and the rise of China) may lead (even though it has not yet resulted in) a reversal of the long wave of democratization that started more than fifty years ago.

NOTES

1. *The Spirit of Laws*, book VIII, chapters 16 and 17.
2. The democracy variable is a dummy, following the dataset in Boix et al. (2011), updated through 2016.
3. The first two conditions follow Przeworski's definition and coding of democracy (2000).
4. Research on the extension of suffrage to women is an important area of study (for a recent example, see Teele 2018), which deserves further consideration.
5. The data on GDP per capita is based on Bourguignon and Morrisson (2002) and Feenstra et al. (2015).
6. The data comes from Boix, Miller, and Rosato (2013), recently updated to cover all sovereign countries from 1800 to 2015. The data can be accessed at Dataverse: <https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=doi:10.7910/DVN/FJLMKT>.
7. The percentage of democracies in the bottom quintile is only marginally higher than the share in the fourth quintile.
8. Quoted in Selinger and Conti (2015: 291).
9. For a full formalization of this argument, see Boix (2003, chapter 1).
10. Consider, for example, the agitation in nineteenth-century Britain in favor of national minorities in the Balkans or the current Western support for conditional foreign aid programmes.
11. See, for example, Fowler (1999) for an analysis of the arguably key role played by the United States in the democratization of Korea. Fowler explicitly compares the crisis of 1979–1980 (where the United States, worried about getting another Iran, preferred the authoritarian status quo), with the democratic transition of 1987, strongly supported by Washington.
12. Estimations using 'liberal democracy', as coded in the V-DEM dataset (Coppedge et al. 2018), as the dependent variable return similar results. Liberal democracy is constructed from 'electoral democracy' and 'liberalism'. 'Electoral democracy' is the average of thick freedom of association, clean elections, freedom of expression, elected officials, and suffrage (and their interaction). 'Liberalism' is based on equality under the law and individual liberties, judicial constraints on the executive, and legislative constraints on the executive.
13. Whereas income had a positive effect on democratization in the medium run (with a lag of ten years), its impact weakens or altogether disappears in the short run (Miller 2012; Treisman 2015). These results imply that economic development does not mechanically lead to the collapse of an authoritarian regime. Rather, a transition to democracy generally takes place when there is a sufficiently strong perturbation of the pre-existing authoritarian political equilibrium. Such 'perturbation' may be the result of a long-run endogenous process—in the sense of the kind of long-run economic and social change experienced by several European countries in the nineteenth century that eventually incentivized politicians to expand the franchise. But it may also be the consequence of a shock (to the authoritarian system) produced by the violent removal of an incumbent dictator or, more generally, by any instance that makes the latter leave office.
14. Boix (2011) uses a set of exogenous measures of the variation in levels of development to instrument for the effect of income on democracy to show that development affects the likelihood of having democratic institutions.

15. Indeed, a spline function, where income is split in different segments, reinforces this explanation. Income has had varying effects on democracy at different stages of development. Income growth did not lead to more democracy at low levels of development. For middle levels of development, per capita income accelerates that process. However, the effects of per capita income wear off as development progresses beyond a certain threshold. Above \$6,000, having a higher income has no statistically significant effect on the level of democracy. Over \$10,000, the coefficient becomes slightly negative, implying that the impact of development on democracy flattens out. For women's suffrage, the effect of income is significant above both \$3,000 and \$6,000, reflecting the different historical process leading to women's suffrage, but does flatten out above \$10,000.
16. The claim made by Acemoglu et al. (2008) that income and democracy are unrelated appears to be the result of the empirical strategy they implement: a sample of about twenty-five countries (even though the number of sovereign countries was over fifty in 1900 and almost 200 by 2000); and data for 1875 to 2000 grouped in twenty-five-year periods; all together yielding six observations per country and extremely limited within-country temporal variance.
17. See Treisman (2018) on why straightforward surveys may be of little value to evaluate those attachments.

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CHAPTER 3

THE CULTURAL PRE-REQUISITES OF DEMOCRACY

CHRISTIAN WELZEL

INTRODUCTION: CONGRUENCE THEORY ASSUMED

THE idea that a society's political order reflects its people's prevailing beliefs and values—that is, its political culture—has a long tradition. Already Aristotle (1962 [350 BC]) argued in Book IV of *Politics* that democracy emerges in middle-class societies in which the citizens share an egalitarian-participatory spirit. Prominent subsequent thinkers also claimed that whether a particular type of order emerges and survives in a country depends on the orientations prevailing among its people. Thus, Montesquieu (1999 [1748]: 106) argued in *De L'Esprit des Lois* that the laws by which a society is governed reflect its people's dominant mentality: whether a nation is constituted as a tyranny, monarchy or republic depends, respectively, on whether a spirit of submission, loyalty or civicism prevails. Likewise, Tocqueville (2019 [1835]: 29) postulated in *De la Démocratie en Amérique* that the flourishing of democracy in the United States reflects the liberal, egalitarian, and participatory orientations of the American people.

In modern times, the most dramatic illustration of the fact that a political order requires supportive orientations among its people was the failure of democracy in Weimar Germany. Although the democratic constitution adopted by Germany after the First World War has been widely considered a masterpiece, the political order that it established never took root among a people who continued to idolize the monarchic order and military prowess of the fallen German Empire. When the young democracy failed to provide order and prosperity, Hitler came to power through democratic elections. The failure of democracy in Germany had such catastrophic consequences

as the Second World War and the Holocaust and troubled scholars for many decades. The research inspired by this disaster suggests that democracy is fragile when it is a 'democracy without democrats' (Bracher 1971 [1955]).

In this vein, Lasswell (1951: 473, 484, 502) claimed that whether democratic regimes emerge and survive depends on the beliefs that dominate a country's national mentality. According to Lasswell's view, democracy emerges and endures only in countries in which the 'democratic character' is the dominant type of personality. Key ingredients of the democratic character include a philanthropic belief in common sense, rational discourse and respect of pluralism of opinions, coupled with a healthy dose of self-esteem. Mirroring Adorno et al.'s (1950) depiction of the 'authoritarian personality', Lasswell considered a socialization under 'freedom from anxiety' as the most important source from which democratic characters grow. Hence, the modal condition of adolescent socialization in a country shapes its 'national character' and, thus, the political culture. Earlier, psychologist Fromm (1941) offered a similar interpretation: nurturing existential anxieties breeds authoritarian personalities who idolize strong leaders, strict order and collective conformism as a welcome 'escape from freedom' and its burdening demand for civic maturity. A culture characterized by widespread 'fear of freedom' nurtures our protective instincts, which are inherently inimical to democracy, as Popper (1945) outlined lucidly in *The Open Society and Its Enemies*. Confirming this idea, Inglehart and Welzel (2005) found that existential threats emanating from scarcity, discrimination, violence, and inter-group hostility indeed feed our tribal instincts, which manifest themselves in intolerance of non-conformity, hostility towards out-groups, deference to authority, a punitive orientation and other elements of 'survival values'. Where survival values prevail, democratic institutions are either deficient or altogether absent (cf. Murray et al. 2013). Ample evidence for this conclusion highlights where the danger of recently swelling populism lies: in its appeal to those parochial forms of identity (familism, nativism, nationalism) that are inherent to survival values.

Apart from the Democratic Peace Thesis, Lipset's (1959: 85–9) famous postulate that socio-economic modernization favours democracy is the most researched thesis in political science (cf. Knutsen et al. 2018; Lindberg and Dahlum 2018). It has been barely noticed, however, that when Lipset speculated about the reasons why modernization favours democracy, he argued that modernization reshapes people's psychological orientations. These mentality shifts, which happen on a national scale, prime people to find appeal in key democratic principles, such as pluralism of opinions, peaceful opposition, separation of powers, participation in collective decisions and popular control of government. Dahl (1971: chs 7–8) reached similar conclusions when describing the features of national cultures that he thought favour democracy. Two decades later, Huntington (1991: 69) argued that globally advancing modernization gave rise to mass desires for freedom, which motivated democracy movements in scores of countries during the Third Wave of Democratization.

Almond and Verba (1963: 498), followed by Eckstein (1966: 1), introduced the term 'congruence', claiming that political regimes are internally stable to the extent to which their authority patterns meet the respective population's firmly encultured authority

beliefs—‘regardless of regime type’, as Eckstein (1998: 3) noted. In other words, not only democracies but any type of regime—including autocracy—needs a widespread belief in its legitimacy to endure. According to the Congruence Thesis, authoritarian regimes are likely to emerge and to persist when people idolize strong leaders who govern with an iron fist, just as democratic regimes are likely to emerge and to survive when people believe that political authority ought to be subject to horizontal checks and vertical controls.

THE REGIME-RELEVANCE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL ORIENTATIONS

From the beginning, scholars of political culture have claimed that the rise, functioning, and survival of democratic institutions in a country depend on the national prevalence of certain psychological orientations (Almond and Verba 1963; Eckstein 1966). Thus, the notion that regimes have a psychological foundation, which tie political institutions to mass tendencies in individual-level orientations, is quintessential to the entire literature on political culture.

Driven by the belief that people’s psychological orientations are regime-relevant, Almond and Verba (1963) launched the first comparative survey of the mass orientations that they assumed to affect the stability and functioning of democracies. They concluded that a healthy mixture of ‘subject orientations’ and ‘participant orientations’ generates the *Civic Culture* within which democracy flourishes. Subsequent studies continued to emphasize the importance of mass-scale, individual-level orientations in providing and sustaining democratic institutions at the system level (among others see Putnam 1993; Inglehart 1997; Norris 1999; Dalton 2004).

Most studies trying to establish a link between mass beliefs, on the one hand, and regime characteristics, on the other, focus on support for democracy, which seems intuitive at first glance. But none of these works was able to demonstrate a particularly strong relationship between mass support for democracy and actual levels of democracy (Hadenius and Teorell 2005; Fails and Pierce 2008; Norris 2011; Maseland and van Hoorn 2012; Shin and Qi 2013). Poor evidence for the existence of a powerful mass-regime link disfavoured the political culture paradigm in the eyes of many authors, especially those who believe in the primacy of elites and institutions as causal factors in the evolution of regimes (Schmitter and O’Donnell 1986; Linz and Stepan 1996; Acemoglu and Robinson 2006). Already in the opening issue of the journal *Comparative Politics*, Rustow (1970) argued that Almond and Verba’s *Civic Culture* got the causal arrow wrong: an intrinsically anchored commitment to the values that democracy stands for needs to be encultured through ‘habituation’: that is, learning democratic values from the first-hand experience of their practice in daily life. According to Rustow, public adherence to democratic values is not a precondition for functioning democracy but a consequence of it.

A pairwise comparison might be illuminating. From 1919 till 1932, Weimar Germany endured for a bit over a decade under democratic institutions but democratic values apparently did not take root among wide shares of the German public (Almond and Verba 1963). Otherwise, the two most openly anti-democratic parties (i.e., the fascist NSDAP and the communist KPD) would not have gained a cumulative vote share of around 60 per cent in the critical elections of the late 1920s and early 1930s. On the other hand, the population of the Federal Republic of Germany, which was founded in 1949, slowly internalized democratic values, thus creating a solid support basis for democracy after the Federal Republic's democratic institutions lasted for about two decades (Baker et al. [1987] 1990). This juxtaposition seems to indicate that the mere presence of democratic institutions encultures corresponding democratic values, if these institutions just last long enough. These observations seem to support the institutional learning interpretation of how a democratic culture emerges. But there is also evidence suggesting that the mere endurance of democratic institutions is neither necessary nor sufficient to enculture democratic values and that, instead, this enculturation effect is contingent on enabling existential conditions. Arguably, the Hyperinflation in 1923 and the Great Depression in 1929 hindered the enculturation of democratic values in Weimar Germany, whereas Western Germany's Economic Miracle in the 1950s and 1960s certainly contributed to the opposite effect.

Apart from this case-selective evidence, Welzel (2013: chapter 4) examined this issue more systematically, introducing the concept of 'emancipative values' as a measure of people's commitment to key democratic norms. Using this measure, Welzel demonstrates (1) that emancipative values emerge alongside enabling living conditions (i.e., growing material, cognitive, and connective resources in the hands of ordinary people) as well as (2) that rising emancipative values foster democracies (where they are already in place) and increase the likelihood of their emergence (where they are not yet in place).

Based on data from the World Values Surveys (WVS), emancipative values measure support for the ideal that all people have an equal right to be free from external domination in what to believe and what to do and to have a voice and a vote in public affairs. The WVS-measure of this emancipatory orientation summarizes twelve items, which group into four sub-indices, each consisting of three items, namely: (a) child autonomy (manifest in support for 'independence', 'imagination', but not 'obedience' as desired child qualities); (b) gender equality (manifest in support for women's equal access to education, jobs, and power positions); (c) popular voice (manifest in prioritizing (i) freedom of speech and the voice of the people over (ii) order and (iii) prosperity); (d) sexual emancipation (manifest in the acceptance of homosexuality, divorce, and abortion).

Welzel standardizes the four sub-indices into a uniform scale range from minimum 0 for the least emancipatory position to maximum 1 for the most emancipatory one, with a multitude of decimal fractions reflecting a wide range of intermediate positions. He then averages the four sub-indices into the overall index of emancipative values and calculates mean scores for each national population and survey wave. Population mean scores on emancipative values are available for some 300 country-wave surveys.

Population means vary massively between nations, with a minimum of about 0.20 in Iraq and Yemen and a maximum of a bit less than 0.75 in Sweden and Norway, showing a clear-cut culture zone pattern that separates Middle Eastern countries at the low end from Scandinavian countries at the high end in emancipative values.

There is no question that emancipative values also vary between individuals within nations and do so in predictable ways along cleavage lines such as gender, cohort, social class, ethnicity, and religion. The general rule is that the group whose members experience more enabling living conditions emphasize emancipative values more strongly: hence, more connected, educated and affluent people in metropolitan areas emphasize emancipative values more than people with the opposite characteristics. Groups defined by gender, cohort, ethnicity, and religion emphasize emancipative values above or below the norm in their respective society, depending on whether these groups' living conditions are more or less enabling than what is typical in their country.

But these within-country distributions cluster strongly around the respective country means, which provide the central reference point for the individuals' own orientations. For this reason, mean differences in emancipative values between nations dwarf the value differentiation over inner-societal cleavages by a large margin. Given the larger dispersion in the between-country variance partition, relationships of theoretical interest, such as that between enabling living conditions and emancipative values, are more clearly visible across than within nations and more obvious at higher than at lower levels of aggregation.¹

WHICH MASS ORIENTATIONS ARE MOST DEMOCRACY-RELATED?

The rise, fall, and survival of democracies depend on the power balance between anti- and pro-democratic actors. Part of these actors' power derives from the amount of mass support they are able to mobilize, which in turn is a function of the population's prevalent regime preference: if most people strongly idolize autocratic leaders, anti-democratic actors receive more mass support than pro-democratic ones; if most people strongly appreciate democratic freedoms, it is the opposite (cf. Easton 1965). Consequently, widespread preferences for democracy should operate as a selective force in regime evolution, making non-democracies vulnerable to democratization and democracies immune against autocratization. In line with this reasoning, survey researchers focus their attention on how widespread support for democracy is in given countries (cf. Klingemann 1999; Mishler and Rose 2002; Anderson and Tverdova 2003; Bratton et al. 2005; Mattes and Bratton 2007; Maseland and van Hoorn 2012; Claassen 2019).

However, more recent work in the 'support for democracy' framework questions the premise that people across different cultures share the same understanding of democracy when expressing a desire for democracy (Norris 2011). Especially in countries

outside the Western world, people confuse autocratic with democratic regime characteristics and even misunderstand democracy in authoritarian terms, in which case the meaning of support for democracy turns into its own contradiction: support for autocracy, that is (Kirsch and Welzel 2018; Kruse et al. 2018). Cross-cultural inequivalence in notions of democracy is actually the reason why scholars have failed to establish a strong link between mass support for democracy and democracy itself (Brunkert et al. 2019). An exception is a recent study by Claassen (2019) who uses a conditional indicator of democratic regime preferences, measuring support for democracy only insofar as it involves the simultaneous rejection of authoritarian alternatives to democracy. Using this conditional measure, Claassen finds that more widespread democratic support makes democracies more likely to endure and to emerge.

Another set of mass orientations and behaviours relates to the concept of social capital, which denotes people's shared ability and motivation to join forces for a common purpose (Putnam 1993). This cooperative tendency roots in interpersonal trust, confidence in the state and its institutions, adherence to collaborative norms, communal loyalty, religious attachment, engagement in voluntary associations, and social movement activity. Quite naturally, a population with a greater collective action tendency can more effectively enforce its prevalent regime preference. This principle should operate in favour of democracy, but only when people's social capital combines indeed with a true regime preference for democracy, instead of autocracy—which is by no means self-evident, especially where outspoken support for democracy cannot be taken for what it seems (Kruse et al. 2018). In other words, social capital is in and of itself a regime-neutral phenomenon because its collaborative tendency can work in favour of any type of regime in which social capital exists. Social capital can therefore stabilize either democracy or autocracy, depending on the regime preference with which it combines. For these reasons, Welzel (2007) found only weak and largely inconclusive linkages between social capital indicators, on one hand, and levels of democracy, on the other.

Scholars like Adorno et al. (1950), Lasswell (1951) or Inkeles and Smith (1974) argued that democracy depends on the prevalence of key personality traits that are socialized early in childhood. These personality traits could be loosely summarized under the term 'humanistic optimism', which is manifest in life satisfaction, a sense of agency, informational connectedness, an open instead of closed identity, and a universalist instead of particularistic notion of solidarity (Inglehart 1997). The prevalence of this humanistic optimism should work in favour of democratic regimes because democracy is a system that grants large numbers of unrelated people an equal voice and vote in politics. This system is inspired by a set of fundamental ideas about human nature, including the notion that most people are reasonable, that every person is equally valuable as a master of her/his own preferences, and that preference aggregation works in achieving the common good for a maximum number of people (Dahl 1971). This set of ideas embodies a philanthropic belief in people, common sense, and public rationality (Popper 1945). Given its implicit philanthropy, democracy should benefit from deeply rooted moral support in populations in which the features

of humanistic optimism are widespread. By the same token, populations whose members score high on humanistic optimism should be opposed to the misanthropic nature of autocracy.

Economic models of democracy assume that the reason why people support democracy is an interest in redistribution: since the median voter is poorer than the elite, s/he sees democracy as a tool to take advantage of her/his majority position in elections in order to enforce the redistribution of income from the elite to the median voter. If so, the level of democracy in a country should be positively linked to leftist preferences for redistribution (cf. Anselm and Samuels 2014).

Coming back to emancipative values, Welzel (2013) argues that these particular values indicate how solidly people support core democratic principles. Emancipative values are more reliable in this respect than responses to questions asking people directly whether and to what extent they desire democracy. The latter type of question lacks reliability because it does not control for differences in the understanding of democracy or the different ideals that respondents attach to the concept. Emancipative values, by contrast, address the chief principles of democracy without using the term 'democracy' itself. Implicit preference measures of this kind avoid the social desirability bias regarding the term democracy, which often troubles explicit preference measures.

These rationales suggest that the types of orientations most closely linked with levels of democracy are emancipative values and that other orientations are linked to democracy mostly insofar as they are linked to emancipative values. Hence, an orientation's connection to systemic democracy is a function of its connection to emancipative values. As Figure 3.1 shows, this is indeed true. Almost needless to say, emancipative values themselves correlate with democracy at a strength² that clearly trumps any other psychological association with democracy.

LEGITIMACY RECONSIDERED

Whether or not people express support for democracy out of a genuine commitment to democracy's defining freedoms is evident—first and foremost—in people's endorsement of emancipative values because these values touch upon the core principles inherent in democratic freedoms: individual autonomy and equal opportunities. And since emancipative values vary massively across this world's cultures, the desire for democratic freedoms is not universally human but culturally conditioned by the spread of emancipative values (Alvarez-Moreno and Welzel 2014). Indeed, where emancipative values are underdeveloped, most people misunderstand democracy in authoritarian ways, namely as the rule of 'wise' leaders to which people owe obedience because the rulers' wisdom guides them to govern in the best of all people's interests. As long as emancipative values remain weak, ordinary people lack the moral strength to resist this authoritarian indoctrination and believe in it (Kirsch and Welzel 2018).

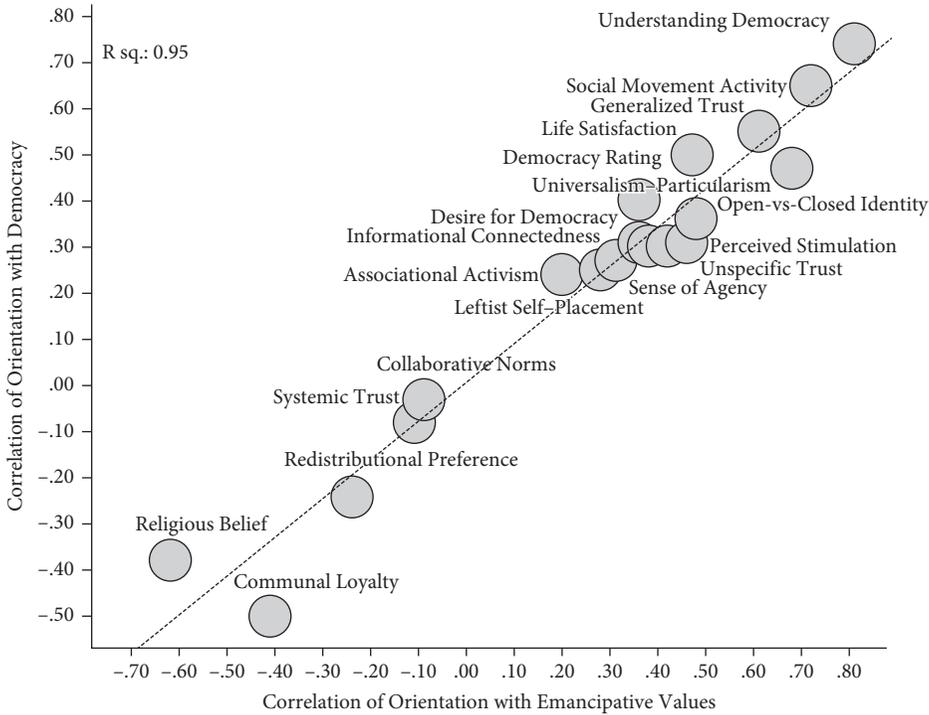


FIGURE 3.1 An Orientation’s Link to Democracy as a Function of its Link to Emancipative Values

Associational Activity: People’s cumulated membership in voluntary associations with a common-good purpose, including humanitarian, charity, and environmental associations, with a premium on active membership. *Collaborative Norms:* Extent to which people condemn bribery, tax evasion, and embezzlement. *Communal Loyalty:* Extent to which people are proud of their nation, honor, their parents, and emphasize greater respect for authority. *Desire for Democracy:* Extent to which people wish to live in a democracy. *Democracy Rating:* Extent to which people rate their country as being democratic. *Generalized Trust:* Extent to which people express trust in out-groups, including strangers and people of a different religion and nationality. *Informational Connectedness:* Diversity of sources that people use in high frequency to be informed. *Leftist Self-placement:* How far to the left people place themselves on the Left-Right scale. *Life Satisfaction:* Extent to which people say they are satisfied with their lives. *Sense of Agency:* Extent to which people see themselves in control of their own lives. *Social Movement Activity:* Extent to which people participate in peaceful protest activities, including petitions, boycotts and demonstrations. *Understanding Democracy:* Extent to which people support liberal notions of democracy and reject illiberal ones. *Open-vs- Closed Identity:* Extent to which people place an individualistic and cosmopolitan identity above a particular spatial identity (locality, nation, region). *Perceived Stimulation:* Extent to which people see their daily work as creative, autonomous, and intellectual. *Redistributive Preference:* Extent to which people support income equality, responsible government, and a public economy. *Religious Belief:* How important people find religion in their lives. *Systemic Trust:* Extent to which people trust the police, the civil service, and the courts. *Universalism-Particularism:* Extent to which people are open to immigrants and other ethnicities as neighbours and welcome immigration. *Unspecific Trust:* Extent to which people express trust in not further specified others.

Source: Latest wave of the World Values Survey for all countries (N=75 to 100, depending on the indicator).

In line with authoritarian notions of democracy, people mis-perceive their regimes as democratic when in fact they are autocratic (Kruse et al. 2018). This pattern as well maps strongly on emancipative values, which need to be strong to turn people against authoritarian misunderstandings of democracy. The evidence in Figure 3.2 provides a strong

confirmation of these propositions, showing that more widespread emancipative values associate closely with less widespread authoritarian misunderstandings of democracy (left-hand diagram) as well as less widespread overratings of a country's actual democraticness. As we will see, underdeveloped emancipative values provide the cultural condition that makes democracy more likely to slide back into autocracy. By the same token, firmly encultured emancipative values protect democracy most powerfully from backslides.

All this evidence supports a fundamental revision of our interpretation of support for democracy: coupled with authoritarian notions of democracy, support for democracy reverts its meaning into its own negation: support for autocracy, that is. Confirming this interpretation, the evidence presented by Brunkert et al. (2019) illustrates that support for democracy operates in favour of democracy only to the extent to which this support is tied to emancipative values.³

THE 'TECTONIC TENSION-RELEASE MODEL' OF REGIME CHANGE-VS.-STABILITY

Dahlum and Knutsen (2015) question Welzel's (2013) proposition of a causal link between emancipative values and democracy levels. They base their scepticism on panel regressions showing that emancipative values in a given year do not contribute to higher levels of democracy in the following year, controlling for temporal autocorrelation in the countries' democracy levels. Welzel et al. (2016) object to this criticism, arguing that the elevating effect of emancipative values on democracy is not released in annually repeated, homeopathic doses of equally small volumes. Instead, emancipative values change incrementally, thus slowly building up a tension with inert regime structures, until a sudden disruptive regime change releases the tension in a manner that brings the regime structures back into equilibrium with the population's values. The temporal pointedness of this effect is not easily captured by the standard type of serial panel regressions (but see the appendix in Brunkert et al. 2019).

Instead, one needs to estimate in which direction and to what extent a country's regime 'misfits' the respective population's values at a fixed point in time and then use this structure-culture misfit as a predictor of regime changes over the following time period, measuring these changes in both direction and degree. The time window within which one measures regime change should be rather wide to include most of the variable time points at which such changes occur in different countries.

Following this logic, Welzel et al. (2016) formulate a cultural theory of regime stability and change that they label the 'tectonic tension-release model'. The model conceptualizes the relationship between emancipative values and democracy levels as a supply-demand link with respect to freedoms. In this relationship, democracy levels constitute the elite-side supply of freedoms, while emancipative values constitute the mass-side demand for them. Now, among scholars of cultural and institutional change, there is a consensus

that, while values change continuously but slowly through generational replacement, regime change is a rare and disruptive event. If so, a co-evolutionary dynamic between these differently paced processes can only follow a tectonic tension-release logic: incrementally changing emancipative values (i.e., demands for freedoms) build up an accruing tension with inert democracy levels (i.e., supplies of freedoms), until this tension releases through a sudden disruptive shift that brings the supplies (i.e., democracy levels) back into equilibrium with the demands (i.e., emancipative values). Accordingly, the direction and scope of regime change operates as a correction of the supply's once accrued misfit to the demand. To confirm these propositions empirically, three distinct regularities must show up in observational data:

- (1) Where the elite-side supply of freedoms falls short of the mass-side demand, an occurring regime change shifts the supply *upward*—to the extent to which the supply previously fell short of the demand. In this case, we observe transitions *towards* democracy or, in short, democratization.
- (2) Where the elite-side supply of freedoms exceeds the mass-side demand, an occurring regime change shifts the supply *downward*—to the extent to which the supply previously exceeded the demand. In this scenario, we witness backslides *away* from democracy or, in short, autocratization.
- (3) Where the elite-side supply of freedoms fits the mass-side demand for them, no regime change occurs and the supply stays where it was. This is the case of regime stability, which can be either democratic or autocratic stability.

The evidence in Figure 3.3 confirms each of these three propositions. On the horizontal axis, one sees to what extent a country's institutional supply of freedoms⁴ in the first observation year of the WVS underbid or overbid the masses' demand for freedoms⁵ in the same year.⁶ Thus, we can divide countries into three groups: (1) countries to the right on the horizontal axis (i.e., increasingly *positive* misfit scores) are those in which the supply of freedoms *overbids* the demand, and the more so the further to the right the countries are located; (2) countries to the left (i.e., increasingly *negative* misfit scores) are those in which the supply *underbids* the demand, and the more so the further to the left the countries are located; (3) countries closer to the centre of the horizontal axis (i.e., closer-to-zero misfit scores) are those in which supply and demand are more *congruent*, and the more so the closer to the zero-point they are located.

On the vertical axis, we see to what extent and into which direction countries experienced a change in the supply of freedoms from the year of the first WVS observation in a given country (T_1) to the year of the last observation (T_2). The T_1 - T_2 time distances cover on average sixteen years but vary between three and thirty-six years from country to country, which Figure 3.3 controls for. Thus, the scores on the two axes display variation under temporal distances held constant. Again, we can divide countries into three groups: (1) among countries higher up on the vertical axis (i.e., increasingly *positive* change scores), the supply of freedoms *increased* more

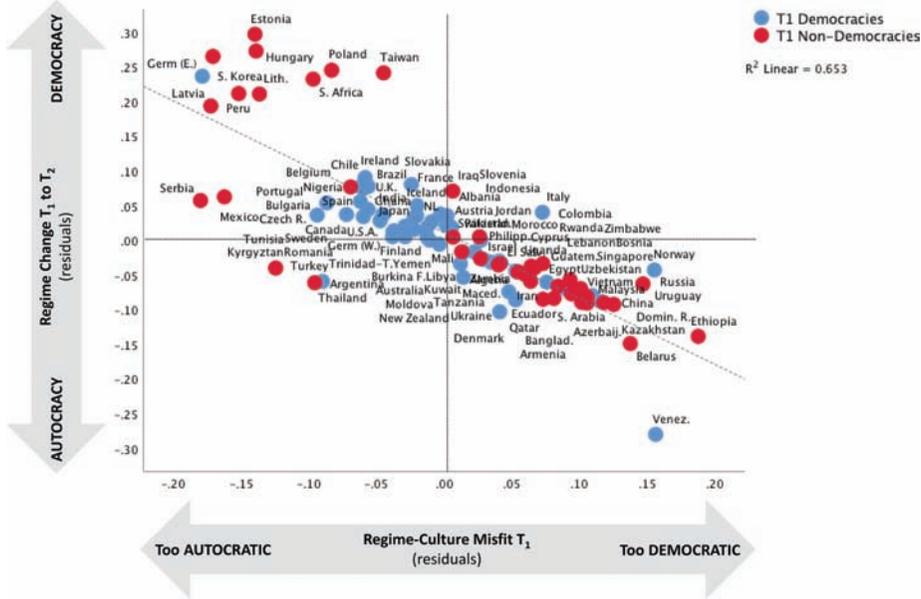


FIGURE 3.3 Regime Change-vs.-Stability as a Function of Accrued Regime–Culture Misfits

Note: Observations include all countries (N = 98) that have been surveyed at least twice by the EVS/WVS, focusing on the times of the earliest (T₁) and latest (T₂) survey. The average time distance between T₁ (on average 1996) and T₂ (on average 2012) is 16 years and varies between 3 and 36 years. Measures on both axes are controlled for the variable time distance between T₁ and T₂. For further details on measurement see footnote 4 to 6.

than in other countries within the same temporal distance, and the more so the further up they are located; (2) among countries further down (i.e., increasingly *negative* change scores), the supply of freedoms *decreased* more than in other countries within the same temporal distance, and the more so the further down they are located; (3) among countries in the middle of the vertical axis (i.e., close-to-zero change scores), the supply of freedoms remained more stable than in other countries within the same temporal distance, and the more so the closer to the zero-point they are located.

Looking at the overall distribution, it is clear that the countries’ locations on the horizontal and vertical axes largely coincide, showing a general tendency consisting of three observations: (1) countries autocratized from year T₁ to year T₂ to the extent to which freedom supplies in year T₁ overbid demands in that year; (2) countries democratized from year T₁ to year T₂ to the extent to which freedom supplies in year T₁ underbid demands in that year; (3) countries remained stable from year T₁ to year T₂ to the extent to which freedom supplies in year T₁ matched demands in that year. These three tendencies confirm exactly the three propositions of the ‘tectonic tension-release model’ of regime change-vs.- stability and account for 65 per cent of the variation in both the direction and extent of the countries’ regime change-vs.-stability

over, roughly speaking, the last fifteen years. The evidence covers all 98 nations that have been surveyed at least twice by the WVS, which represent more than 90 per cent of the world population.

The tectonic tension-release model does *not* advocate an agency-free theory of regime change that would overlook the role of elites and collective action. On the contrary, because it is a truism that regime changes are always the result of collective action and because such changes always involve the acts of elites, the model inevitably embodies a key premise: regime-culture misfits offer an opportunity for regime-challenging activists to mobilize mass support in favour of a change that turns the regime into the opposite direction of its misfit to the underlying culture. Thus, regime-culture misfits do not guarantee that certain actions are taken but they offer opportunities that define which actions are more likely to be successful.

The most important take-away of these insights for the cultural foundation of mature democracies can be phrased like this: democracies are culturally stable and safe from backsliding down to lower levels of democracy to the extent to which emancipative values are firmly encultured in the respective population. In a nutshell, backsliding is more likely where emancipative values remain weak or recede.

Political science provides separate explanations of (a) the emergence of democracies, (b) the breakdown of democracies and their backsliding into autocracies, (c) the survival of democracies, and (d) the stability of autocracies. Yet, these separate explanations co-exist rather isolated from each other. This is a drawback from the viewpoint of a general theory of regime evolution because such a theory needs to capture the selective forces that drive the world's long-term democratic trend and its intermittent reversals. Such a theory requires a simultaneous understanding of the factors that give rise to democracy or prevent their rise, as well as the factors that stabilize democracies or make them slide back into autocracy.

Against this backdrop, it is a significant feature of the 'tectonic tension-release model' that it unifies explanations of the two opposite versions of regime change (i.e., democratization and autocratization) as well as the two opposite forms of regime stability (i.e., democratic and autocratic stability) in a single theory. This single theory provides a unified framework to understand regime stability and regime change, based on a unitary principle: the direction and degree of incongruence between regime institutions and cultural values. Hence, the tectonic model provides a confirmation of the classic idea of congruence underlying the political culture paradigm.

Therefore, sweepingly dismissive statements by Munck (2018) as well as Waldner and Lust (2018), claiming that cultural theories have nothing on offer to understand the underpinnings of stable democracy, appear misplaced. In light of the evidence in Figure 3.3 a theory that explains 65 per cent of the cross-national variance in regime change-vs.-stability is certainly not everything; but it is something rather than nothing.

THE MYTH OF DECONSOLIDATION

Our discussion raises a crucial question: Does the rise of populism indicate an oversupply of democratic freedoms by today's liberal-representative institutions? In two widely cited articles, Foa and Mounk (2016, 2017) reach the alarming conclusion that this might be just so because support for democracy is in a rapid generational decline. The remarkable point about this diagnosis is its emphasis on the Millennial generation's fading support for democracy and the claim that democratic support is steeply eroding in even the most mature democracies. The latter contention marks a significant turning point in the debate. Public discourse has taken a pessimistic tone for quite some time, bemoaning the apparently ubiquitous resurgence of authoritarianism outside the Western world. But the mature democracies of the West seemed to be safe from the authoritarian offense. The novelty in Foa and Mounk's analysis is that it questions this very premise, resonating with growing concerns in the face of swelling illiberal populism. Indeed, Foa and Mounk imply that the generational erosion of democratic support is responsible for the populist turn throughout the electorates of mature democracies, especially among younger cohorts. In conclusion, Foa and Mounk suggest that democracy itself is in danger, including places where it seemed most stable over many generations.

Norris (2017), Voeten (2017), as well as Alexander and Welzel (2017) have debunked these alarmist claims on a number of accounts. To begin with, Foa and Mounk heavily overstate the age differences in democratic support by using arbitrary cut-off points in the related measures and displaying differences on truncated scale sections that magnify cohort gaps, which are actually quite small. Second, the age pattern in indicators of political disaffection has little to do with generations; it is instead a lifecycle effect: younger people showed stronger signs of disaffection already in earlier decades, but this age pattern is not linked to a uniform temporal trend towards increasing disaffection in the electorates of mature democracies.

Third, and more importantly, the deconsolidation thesis ignores that support ratings for democracy are largely incomparable across birth cohorts. The reason is that the generational rise of emancipative values has turned the ideals on which people base their democratic support dramatically more liberal. As a consequence, support for democracy has changed its *meaning*: while older generations continue to endorse illiberal notions of democracy, younger generations support an unequivocally liberal notion. The evidence presented by Alexander and Welzel (2017) illustrates this development in striking clarity.

Fourth, key quality aspects of democracy at the system level depend critically on the *type* of support that prevails, as Brunkert et al. (2019) demonstrate: support for democracy that is detached from emancipative values (i.e., illiberal support) is in no way predictive of the quality of democracy, whereas support for democracy that combines with emancipative values (i.e., liberal support) is highly predictive of the quality of democracy. And this is precisely the type of support that has been increasing over the generations.

Fifth, defining the right-wing populist electorate as those voter segments that combine a pronounced disaffection from representative institutions with illiberal

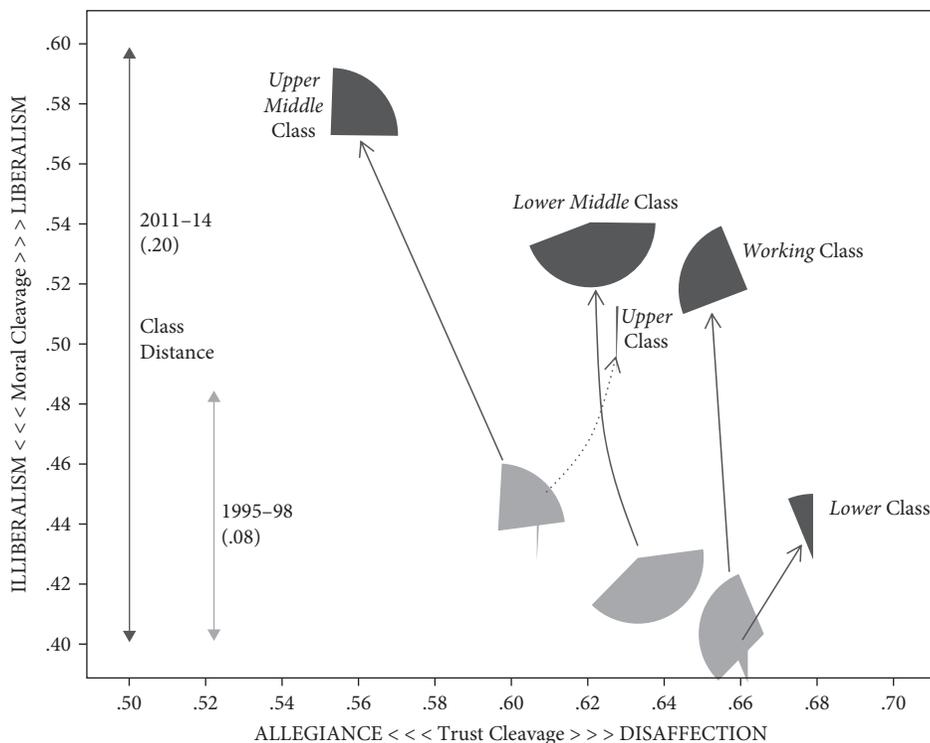


FIGURE 3.4 Growing Class Polarization in a Two-Dimensional Cleavage Space

Source: Alexander and Welzel (2017: figure 6) by permission of the authors. Pooled evidence (EVS/WVS), rounds 3 and 6, from seven mature Western democracies (weighted to equal sample size). Arrows show shift from 1995–98 (lighter shades) to 2011–14 (darker shades). Size of pie pieces represent proportional share in the population.

values, the evidence is clear that this electorate has been visibly shrinking over recent decades (Alexander and Welzel 2017). At the same time, its members have become ideologically more distant from an increasingly emancipatory mainstream in their societies. Indeed, Figure 3.4 illustrates that all social classes in mature democracies have turned more emancipatory in their orientations, yet to different degrees. Hence, we face the ambivalent situation that emancipative values have generally been on the rise, while class polarization over these values has also increased.

In conclusion, the recent success of illiberal populist parties neither indicates an increased voter base for these parties, nor does it signal a fading democratic spirit among the younger generations of mature democracies. To the contrary, the illiberal populist electorate is increasingly concentrated among older generations and within marginalized social classes. This electorate is now easier to address and to mobilize precisely because it has become smaller, more distinct, and more distant. The greater visibility of illiberal populism does not revert or disprove the massively progressing emancipatory agenda of recent decades but illustrates a growing class divide over this agenda—as a consequence of the progressive cultural shift.

CONCLUSION: CONGRUENCE THEORY CONFIRMED

In line with the burgeoning literature on resurgent authoritarianism and democratic backsliding, there is evidence that the centennial democratic trend has stalled since the turn of the millennium and shows recent signs of a partial reversal, almost all over the globe (Mechkova et al. 2017). At the same time, and despite all trending patterns, democracy always has been and continues to be a strongly culture-bound phenomenon: at the horizon of democracy, we always and only find nations that are at the frontier of emancipative values at their time (Brunkert et al. 2019). In line with this finding, public support for democracy exerts no positive influence on democracy in disjunction from emancipative values; it only does so in close connection with these values. The reason is that—in disconnect from emancipative values—support for democracy frequently reverts its meaning, indicating the exact opposite of what intuition suggests: namely, support for authoritarian rule. Consequently, the prospects for democracy are bleak where emancipative values remain weak.

Whether the recent reversal of the centennial democratic trend will turn into a lasting erosion of democracy remains to be seen. At the moment, one can only speculate about this. And since the past does not predict what is coming, the future is uncertain by definition. Still, knowing past patterns of dynamism provides a rough sense of expectable trajectories. From this point of view, one should note that reverse waves have occurred repeatedly over the last hundred years but they always halted democracy's long-term ascension only temporarily. Of course, no one can guarantee that this will be the same with the current reverse wave but reason for optimism can be seen in the fact that democracy's cultural seed—emancipative values—is rising over the generations and is doing so in most parts of the world, including such seeming strongholds of authoritarianism as China and Singapore. Moreover, as much as illiberal populism might be seen as a cultural backlash against democracy's emancipatory spirit, it is also a movement that is driven by now highly mobilized but shrinking segments of the electorates. Hence, the anti-emancipatory backlash is unlikely to turn into the wave of the future.

NOTES

1. Alemán and Woods (2015) and Sokolov (2018) question the cross-cultural equivalence of emancipative values based on evidence showing that the individual-level inter-item associations are not the same in each country. Welzel and Inglehart (2016) as well as Welzel et al. (2019) rebut this point, demonstrating that—despite the existing variation in inter-item associations within countries—the overall index performs splendidly across countries. Indeed, emancipative values show powerful cross-country correlations to other variables of interest, especially those to which the index should be correlated for theoretical reasons, most notably measures of cultural traditions, socio-economic modernization and

levels of democracy. From the viewpoint of nomological validity, this is the most essential asset of a useful construct.

2. The correlation coefficient R for this association is 0.83 ($N = 100$; $P < 0.001$).
3. An alternative interpretation suggests that fear of sanctions prompts respondents to express authoritarian notions of democracy and to deliberately overrate their regime's democratic quality in order to hide their preference for 'real' democracy. However, if authoritarian notions of democracy and overratings of democracy do not reflect what people really believe, variation in the respective responses should show no systematic relationship with such an inherently belief-embodying variable as emancipative values. But, as we have seen in Figure 3.2, the exact opposite is the case, and quite strongly so. Besides, the systematic negative influence of emancipative values on authoritarian notions, as well as on overratings of democracy at the individual-level within countries, is as strong in non-democratic regimes as it is in democratic ones (Kirsch and Welzel 2018). In conclusion, there are reasons to believe that when people support authoritarian notions of democracy and overrate their country's level of democracy, these misunderstandings and misperceptions are real.
4. To measure supply, I use Brunkert et al.'s (2019) index of 'comprehensive democracy', which combines the indicators of the 'electoral', 'liberal', and 'participatory' democracy components provided by V-Dem (Coppedge et al. 2017). Scale range is from minimum 0 for the lowest to 1 for the highest democracy level.
5. I measure demands using Welzel's (2013) index of emancipative values.
6. To obtain these misfit scores, one saves the residuals provided by regressing democracy levels in the earliest year of observation on emancipative values in the same year of observation. Note that I 'condition' these regime-culture misfit scores, multiplying them by 1 if a subsequent regime change occurred and 0 if no such change occurred. This procedure is informed by the idea that regime-culture misfits provide an opportunity for regime change but do not fully determine such a regime change because it always needs concrete actors who decide to utilize the opportunity. If no change occurred, obviously no actor utilized the opportunity. Hence, Figure 3.3 shows in what direction and to what extent regimes changed depending on the direction and extent of the regime-culture misfit, provided actors decided to utilize the opportunity embodied in the given misfit.

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CHAPTER 4

THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK OF REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY

*Comparing the Populist-Majoritarian and
the Liberal/Consensual Model*

RUDY B. ANDEWEG AND TOM LOUWERSE

INTRODUCTION

REPRESENTATIVE democracy implies an indirect relationship between citizens and the political decision-making process. This relationship is often conceptualized in terms of a principal-agent framework: citizens (the principals) delegate the authority to make public policy to representatives (the agents), who in most political systems in turn act as principals who further delegate this authority to their agents—the government. The model can be extended to include policy implementation—from the government to individual ministers, and from ministers to civil servants. This chain of delegation is mirrored by a chain of accountability from the policymakers directly or indirectly to the citizens. The model is a simplification of reality, assuming for example that citizens have exogenous preferences that can be entrusted to their representatives, thereby ignoring that such preferences may also be endogenous to the representative relationship (e.g. Esaiasson and Holmberg 1996). But in all its simplicity, the principal-agent framework serves to illustrate that the chains of delegation and accountability can be designed in very different ways: citizens may delegate to a single agent who sub-delegates, or to multiple agents as in presidential systems of government, and agents can be accountable to one or to several principals, as when governments have to answer

to unicameral or bicameral parliaments. Related to such variables, representative democracies may emphasize different combinations of mechanisms that govern the relationship between principals and agents: various *ex ante* controls such as drawing up a contract and selection of agents and/or *ex post* controls such as reporting requirements and monitoring (e.g. Strøm 2000, 2003; Bühlmann and Kriesi 2013). In summary: the daily functioning of representative democracy is facilitated, but also constrained, by the design of the institutional framework in which the representative relationship is embedded.

This chapter first seeks to tease out two basic principles that underlie the great variety in the institutional architecture of representative democracy, and their philosophical roots. Second, the chapter discusses the search for an answer to the question of which model of representative democracy is the best, and how this search is marred by both the dearth of unbiased criteria and the ambition to find a universal answer.

FROM BEWILDERING VARIETY TO BASIC DICHOTOMY

A widespread recognition of the existence of several models of representative democracy is combined with a lack of agreement about what these models are. There have been numerous attempts to categorize the empirical variety of representative democracies. In constitutional law a distinction is made between parliamentary, presidential, and semi-presidential systems of government but each of these three types comes in different varieties (Shugart and Carey 1992; Elgie 2011).

In comparative political science, several projects have developed different typologies. The aptly named ‘Varieties of Democracy’ project, for example, uses expert judgements on over 350 indicators to score countries on five ‘Democracy Ideals’ (Lühmann et al. 2018). The Democracy Barometer likewise aims to position countries on five (different) dimensions of democracy (Bühlman et al. 2012). And these two projects are not the only ones proposing a typology of forms of representative democracy (e.g. Lane and Ersson 2003; Kriesi et al. 2016).

The situation is not much different in political theory. Weale (1999: 19–39), for example, outlines three varieties of representative democracy in addition to two forms of direct democracy. In his history of the idea of democracy, Held (2006: 17, fig. 1) distinguishes nine models of democracy, five or six of which can be regarded as a variety of representative democracy. There is some overlap in the aspects and theorists discussed, but the resulting typologies are quite different (also see Chapter 1 in this *Handbook*).

These are just illustrative examples of empirical and normative typologies of representative democracy. It is not difficult to find yet other specimens of at least partially different categorizations. Given the huge variety, it is impossible to capture all the

available nuances in one simple dimension, but it has been claimed that the most important distinctions can be subsumed under a single basic dichotomy (e.g. Thomassen 1995). Sabine (1952), for example, argues that two great European revolutions led to two fundamentally different conceptualizations of what representative democracy is about. The 1689 Glorious Revolution in England, and the 1789 French Revolution, he suggests, were both middle-class revolts against feudalism, but the concrete issues at stake differed, and as a consequence each moulded a different view of representative democracy. The English Revolution was to a considerable extent a fight over religious tolerance, for nonconformist Protestants first, but later also for Catholics. Thus, 'What the English Revolution contributed to the democratic tradition was the principle of freedom for minorities, together with a constitutional system both to protect and to regulate that freedom' (Sabine 1952, 457). The French Revolution on the other hand, was a fight over social, economic, and political privileges linked to social positions. Thus, its contribution was the notion of 'a uniform citizenship giving equal political rights and imposing equal political obligations on everyone' (Sabine 1952, 462). Since then we have had an Anglo-Saxon perspective prioritizing freedom from tyranny for all, and a French or continental perspective emphasizing popular sovereignty and political equality for all, and 'As is the habit of revolutions, each had its philosopher: in the one case John Locke, in the other Rousseau. These men were the intellectual ancestors of the two democratic traditions' (Sabine 1952, 453).

The Populist-Majoritarian Tradition

If we start with Rousseau and the combination of popular sovereignty and equality, it is well known that Rousseau would prefer direct democracy if only it were viable. For reasons of scale it is not and representative democracy is seen, in Dahl's famous words, as 'a sorry substitute for the real thing' (Dahl 1982: 13). In this tradition representative democracy should be designed so as to approximate the ideal and that implies that there should be an identity between represented and representatives, and that the decision rule should treat all individuals equally. Of course, the very concept of representation presupposes a lack of identity between represented and representatives: it means 'the making present *in some sense* of something that is nevertheless *not* present literally or in fact' (Pitkin 1967: 8-9). The unavoidable distance between the represented and the representatives can be reduced if the representatives act as faithful delegates of those they represent, even if they themselves would have divergent preferences. Such a role conception can be reinforced by institutional mechanisms such as binding the representatives to a strictly worded mandate (e.g. the instructions ministers in some EU member states receive from their parliament before leaving for Brussels to represent their country) or giving the represented the right of 'recall' if their representatives stray from their mandate (as exists in some US states). Since political parties have all but replaced individual politicians as representative actors, the identity

between citizens and representatives is thought to be achieved by parties presenting their plans to the voters, voters choosing the party with the plans they prefer, and parties being held accountable by the voters at the next elections. Thus, ‘the doctrine of responsible party government’ (e.g. Ranney 1954) fits this conceptualization of democracy.

The decision rule in this democratic tradition is majoritarian—although in practice it is often pluralitarian. Decision by majority flows from the equality of all individuals. The alternative decision rule would be unanimity, and unanimity effectively gives a veto to the minority over the majority. On a more practical level, a unanimity requirement would be conservative as it would privilege the status quo. In the long run, maintaining the status quo against the wishes of the majority is not democratic in the eyes of the populist-majoritarian tradition. When, in his first inaugural address as US President, Lincoln warned that the Southern states had no right to block the abolition of slavery, he set out the majoritarian position: ‘A majority held in restraint by constitutional checks and limitations, and always changing easily with deliberate changes of popular opinions and sentiments, is the only true sovereign of a free people. (...) Unanimity is impossible; the rule of a minority, as a permanent arrangement, is wholly inadmissible; so that, rejecting the majority principle, anarchy or despotism in some form is all that is left’ (Lincoln 1861). Note that Lincoln refers to constitutional constraints on the majority, but this is an element that fits better the ‘other’ democratic tradition, as we shall discuss momentarily. In fact, in order to implement the will of the popular majority as undiluted as possible, the parliamentary majority should ideally not be subjected to any checks and balances, least of all by non-majoritarian countervailing powers such as a judiciary.

The emphasis on identity with the represented population and on decision by majority explains why this democratic tradition is referred to by labels such as ‘populistic’ (Dahl 1956), ‘populist’ (Riker 1982), ‘collectivist’ (Rejai 1967), or as ‘adversary’ (Mansbridge 1980), ‘majoritarian’ (Powell 2000), or ‘Westminster’ (Lijphart 2012).

The Liberal/Consensual Tradition

The development of the other democratic tradition has been more complicated. That Sabine regards Locke as the philosopher of the liberal tradition is easy to understand. Not only was Locke personally involved in the English Revolution, his idea that individuals possess some basic rights that even the rulers of the day have to respect exemplifies the definition of democracy as freedom from tyranny. For Locke the threat to an ordinary citizen’s rights came from an unelected ruler, but it received a radical amendment by the American founding fathers. They regarded the introduction of popular elections as inevitable, but feared that their own landowner interests would not be safe under mass suffrage. To put it unkindly: whereas Locke sought to protect the

ordinary citizens from the rulers, the US founding fathers wanted to protect the ruling classes from the ordinary citizens. Hence the obsession of Madison *cum suis* with the risk of a majoritarian tyranny. As Hamilton argued in the Federal Convention: ‘In every community where industry is encouraged, there will be a division of it into the few and the many. Hence separate interests will arise (...) Give all power to the many, they will oppress the few. Give all power to the few they will oppress the many. Both therefore ought to have power, that each may defend itself against the other’ (Hamilton 1787).

Interestingly, neither Locke nor the American founding fathers sought to protect the interests of the minority against the majority by substituting the majority decision rule with the unanimity decision rule. Locke defended decision by majority albeit on practical rather than theoretical grounds (Manin 1997: 189). Madison likewise stuck with majority rule, and sought protection for the interests of the minority through a separation of powers, speculating that in a large and thus heterogeneous polity, it is unlikely that all elected institutions (in the US: the executive and both Houses of Congress), at all levels of the federal government, would have an identically composed majority. In addition to such checks and balances between majoritarian institutions, there is the additional constraint of an independent judiciary that is empowered to adjudicate disputes between the various branches of government. In this way, this democratic tradition became intertwined with the principle of rule of law, or *Rechtstaat*.

In the United States it was Calhoun who took the next logical step by proposing to abandon the majoritarian decision rule. He feared that the checks and balances put in place by Madison *cum suis* would be an insufficient safeguard of minority interests against the majority. In his *Disquisition on Government* (1851), he developed his theory of the ‘concurrent majority’. He argued that a majority decision does not represent the will of the people: ‘(...) the numerical majority, instead of being the people, is only a portion of them (...)’. The solution is to ‘Give to each division or interest, through its appropriate organ, either a concurrent voice in making and executing the laws, or a veto on their execution’. If there is to be majority decision-making, it is within ‘each division’, and all divisions should then unanimously support any new policy. Calhoun’s political motivation for the ‘concurrent majority’ thesis was to protect the slave-owning states from being outvoted by the Northern abolitionists—his embrace of the unanimity rule stands in direct opposition to the view of Lincoln in the same dispute quoted above—and the association with slavery may have limited the appeal of the concurrent majority. Theoretically, however, it is a logical step from the protection of the interests of the minority to the inclusion of the minority in decision-making. In a sense, this is what Dahl does when he presents two dimensions of what he called ‘Polyarchy’: competition and inclusion (Dahl 1971; cf. Coppedge et al. 2008). Although Calhoun thought of the US states when he talked about ‘divisions’, the idea is applicable to other types of minorities: mechanisms such as the cross-community vote in Northern Ireland, or special majority laws in Belgium, requiring consent from not just an overall majority, but a majority of representatives from both religious groups

(Northern Ireland) or both language groups (Belgium), are manifestations of the concurrent majority.

In this line of reasoning, Calhoun's concurrent majority was an amendment on Madison's checks on the majority, which itself was an amendment on Locke's constraints on the ruler. Historically, however, the idea of decision by unanimity may be much older, certainly in non-Western countries (e.g. Lewis 1965). Mansbridge traces it back to classical (direct) democracy which, although formally deciding by majority, actually preferred unanimity (*homonoia*). It was only since Hobbes that 'Over the generations, the idea gradually gained acceptance that a democracy should weigh and come to terms with conflicting selfish interests rather than trying to reconcile them or to make them subordinate to a larger common good' (Mansbridge 1980: 16). More important than the precise historical sequence, Mansbridge points to an interesting connection between the unanimity rule and deliberation among representatives in order to define the 'common good'. They clearly belong to the same family, and it is not accidental that Schumpeter (1950), a proponent of the other (populist-majoritarian) tradition, based his definition of democracy on a rejection of the 'common good'. And if we argued above that the role conception of the delegate fits with the populist/majoritarian tradition, the role conception of a Burkean trustee is more appropriate in the liberal/consensual tradition, particularly because in Burke's view a trustee's freedom from his constituents' instructions is to be used to deliberate with other trustees about the common good. In a famous quote: 'Parliament is not a *congress* of ambassadors from different and hostile interests, which interests each must maintain, as an agent and advocate, against other agents and advocates; but Parliament is a *deliberative* assembly of *one* nation, with *one* interest, that of the whole—where not local purposes, not local prejudices ought to guide, but the general good, resulting from the general reason of the whole. You choose a member indeed; but when you have chosen him, he is not a member of Bristol, but he is a member of *parliament*' (Burke 1774: 81).

In aid of the inclusion of minorities, and the deliberation about the common good, it would be helpful if parliament would reflect the composition of the whole population, rather than only the majority of the population. This representativeness of parliament can be in terms of demography or identity, as in pleas for 'descriptive representation' if need be by enforcing a quota for particular minorities (e.g. Phillips 1995), but it is more commonly interpreted in terms of ideological preferences to be achieved by an electoral system of proportional representation rather than a system based on majority or plurality support in a constituency. One of proportional representation's early advocates, John Stuart Mill (1861), seems to echo Calhoun in his choice of words in a chapter entitled 'Of True and False Democracy; representation of all, and representation of the majority only': proportional representation acts as a check on 'the ascendancy of the numerical majority' because 'it secures a representation, in proportion to numbers, of every division of the electoral body: not two great parties alone (...) but every minority in the nation' (cited in Friedrich 1946: 274).

The inclusion of minorities in political decision-making is still not complete, however. Advocates of descriptive or proportional representation largely confine themselves to representation in parliament, ignoring the next step in the chain of delegation: the government. Mill, for example, considered parliamentary debate to be of crucial importance, and proportional representation serves to guarantee that parliament is 'A place where every interest and shade of opinion can have its cause even passionately pleaded, in the face of the government and of all other interests and opinions' (cited in Judge 1999: 30). In Mill's view parliament is a debating, not a decision-making, body, although it has to give consent to decisions taken by the government (Manin 1997: 191): 'in reality the only thing [it] decides is which two, or at most three, parties (...) shall furnish the executive government' (cited in Judge 1999, 29). This implies a parliamentary system of government, and indeed most countries that have adopted proportional representation have also chosen a parliamentary system. However, a parliamentary system, being defined as a system in which the government's survival depends on the confidence of a parliamentary majority, follows a majoritarian logic. Thus, the institutional design is inconsistent: representativeness for the relation between citizens and parliament, and majority for the relation between parliament and government. The German liberal politician Friedrich Naumann makes this very point when he is quoted as saying: 'The result of proportional elections is the impossibility of parliamentary government; parliamentary government and proportionalism exclude each other' (in Friedrich 1946: 290–1). Although combinations of proportionalism and parliamentary government do occur, Friedrich 'explains away' such cases by arguing that only small states can afford to be inconsistent, or by pointing to the monarchy as an alternative source of legitimacy for the government in states that combine the two. Whatever the merits of cases of proportional representation with parliamentary government and their explanations, from a theoretical perspective it would be logical to extend the inclusion of all minorities into the composition of the government. This is sometimes referred to as 'assembly government', *gouvernement conventionnel* or 'directory government' (although the first two terms strictly speaking refer to systems in which parliament is also the government; see Loewenstein 1965: 79–85, 116–20) in which the government is a microcosm of parliament, just as the latter is a microcosm of the people. An example is the Swiss federal government in which the government is not dependent on a majority in parliament, and in which a 'magic formula' has guaranteed the continued representation of all four main parties in government for a long time. The idea can also be recognized in the constitutional rule that requires an equal number of francophone and Dutch speaking ministers in Belgium, or in the informal understanding that (nearly) all provinces should be represented in the Canadian government, or in the formation of 'grand' or at least 'oversized' governing coalitions in general.

In conclusion, whereas the populist/majoritarian tradition of thinking about representative democracy was relatively straightforward to describe, the tradition based on freedom from tyranny actually contains two different strands of thought. One variety shares the majoritarian decision rule with the populist-majoritarian tradition, but puts

in place checks and balances to constrain the ‘numerical majority’. The other variety includes all ‘divisions’ in the decision-making process through mechanisms such as proportional representation. In its most radical form, this variety replaces majority as a decision rule with unanimity. The two varieties are easily recognized in Lijphart’s two dimensions of power sharing: first, ‘the executives-parties dimension’ consisting of proportional representation, executive power sharing, and corporatism, and second ‘the federal-unitary dimension’ consisting of federalism, bicameralism, rigid constitutions, and judicial review (Lijphart 2012). As Lijphart himself suggests ‘the first dimension could also be labeled the joint-responsibility or joint-power dimension and the second the divided-responsibility or divided-power dimension’ and these labels would be ‘theoretically more meaningful’ (Lijphart 2012: 5). Both dimensions may be subsumed under the general heading of power-sharing, but they refer to different meanings of the word ‘sharing’: sharing a taxi together involves sitting in the car together and coordinating where the driver should go first; sharing a cake together merely involves dividing it in portions and each ‘partner’ eating it separately. Thus, this tradition is referred to by two clusters of terms: ‘Madisonian’ (Dahl 1956), ‘individual’ (Rejai 1967), or ‘liberal’ (Riker 1982) democracy on the one hand, and ‘unitary’ (Mansbridge 1980), ‘proportional’ (Powell 2000), ‘inclusive’ (Lane and Ersson 2003), or ‘consensus’ (Lijphart 2012) democracy on the other hand.

Ideal Types of Representative Democracy

This leaves us with two main traditions of conceptualizing representative democracy, with one of these two traditions being subdivided into two variants. Table 4.1 provides an overview of these traditions, including their consequences for the institutional design of representative democracy. We emphasize that we should not expect actual institutional frameworks to conform to these designs in full: they are ideal types, with real political systems being mixtures or combinations of design elements from different traditions. Even otherwise strongly majoritarian systems are rarely without any constitutional constraints on the majority will, and even systems that are quite inclusive rarely do without decision by majority altogether. However, we maintain that some representative democracies are inspired more by one tradition or the other, and that this shows in an emphasis on institutional elements that are peculiar to that tradition.

THE QUEST FOR THE BEST MODEL

Faced with two different traditions of representative democracy, a core question is: which of these traditions provides us with the best model for political representation? That question is well nigh impossible to answer for at least two reasons. First, there is a

Table 4.1 Two Traditions of Representative Democracy: An Overview

	Populist-Majoritarian	Liberal/Consensual	
Historical origin	French Revolution 1789	English Revolution 1688	
Core values	Popular sovereignty; political equality	Freedom from tyranny; Protection of minority interests	
Decision rule	Majority (plurality) without constraints	Majority (plurality) with constraints: federalism; bicameralism; rigid constitution; judicial review	Unanimity/consensus
Electoral system	Majority (plurality)	Majority (plurality)	Proportional representation
Governmental system	Parliamentary (minimal winning)	Presidential	Directory/Assembly ('Grand', oversized)
Representation	Delegate: aggregating votes; binding mandate; recall	Trustee: Deliberation on common good; ban on binding instructions	Descriptive representation; Trustee: Deliberation on common good; ban on binding instructions
Authors	Rousseau; Schumpeter; Ranney	Locke; Madison	Calhoun; J.S. Mill; Lijphart
Typical labels	Populist(ic); Majoritarian; Collectivist; Adversary; Westminster	Madisonian; Liberal; Individual	Unitary; Inclusive; Consensus; Proportional

dearth of unbiased criteria by which we can assess which model is best. And second, there may not be an answer that has universal applicability.

Biased Criteria

A host of criteria has been employed to assess the relative merits of the two models, including criteria such as economic performance, domestic conflict, gender and income equality (e.g. Lijphart 2012). However, the relevance of some of these criteria is not value-free, and they are all criteria for the quality of the political system as a whole, not for the quality of the system of political representation specifically. The strength of the democratic linkage between citizens, politicians, and policy is a more

obvious criterion (Dahl 1971; Dalton et al. 2011: 7), and it is most usually operationalized as the extent to which politicians are representative of the citizens, that is, the ideological or issue congruence between voters and politicians at a given point in time (see Chapter 18 in this *Handbook*), or the responsiveness (or dynamic representation) of politicians to changes in voter preferences over time (see Chapter 25 in this *Handbook*).

A substantial part of the literature on congruence and responsiveness focuses on the effect of the electoral system: proportional versus plurality. This is, admittedly, a very rough (and partial) operationalization of our two models of democracy, but on the other hand, elections are crucial ‘instruments of democracy’ (Powell 2000). As Chapter 18 in this *Handbook* discusses at length, the original finding that proportional representation produces better congruence between the median voter and the government than plurality systems (Powell 2000) has not been replicated in some more recent studies (e.g. Blais and Bodet 2006; Golder and Stramski 2010), sparking a debate about the data, the time frame, and measurements used (e.g. Powell 2009; Golder and Lloyd 2014).

What this debate makes clear is how dependent the outcome is on the exact operationalization used. Most studies measure the distance between the median voter and the government. Under the assumption of a one-dimensional policy space, the median voter has the majority vote, and we can compare her policy preference to that of the (weighted mean of the policy positions of the parties forming the) government. However, the logic behind this operationalization is majoritarian: congruence between the voter representing the majority and the government usually having majority support; and the resulting bias is in favour of majoritarian systems. However, Golder and Stramski (2010) have outlined several alternative operationalizations (see Chapter 18 in this *Handbook*) including ‘many-to-many’ congruence in which the full distribution of the preferences of the voters is compared with the complete distribution of the preferences of the representatives. The logic behind this operationalization is consensual: all groups in society should be included in policymaking, and the result is biased in favour of proportional systems.

The same risk of bias arises in the choice of representative agent (Golder and Ferland 2018). Studies may compare the very start of the representative chain (citizens) with the very end (policy outcomes). This would fit best with the populist-majoritarian view in which the ultimate test for representative democracy would be that the policy outcome is identical to the outcome under direct democracy. Proponents of the liberal/consensual model, however, do not expect or even desire the policy outcome to approximate the aggregate of the people’s preferences under direct democracy: the intervention of representatives and their deliberation about the common good are expected to result in a different (better) outcome. There should still be linkage between the preferences of the citizens and the initial preferences of the representatives, but not necessarily with the eventual policy outcome. Thus, in this view we should focus on only part of this chain: the link between citizens and representatives’ preferences at election time.

The same problem of potential bias arises when we examine the way in which representative linkage is achieved, for example through parties fulfilling electoral mandates. From a majoritarian ‘responsible party model’ perspective it arguably matters most that government parties translate their mandate into government policy, while from a consensual perspective parliamentary representation of both opposition and government parties’ views in parliament is a crucial quality of democratic systems (Louwerse 2011). Thus it is not surprising that, all in all, the advantage of proportional electoral systems in terms of democratic linkage seems to depend on what you are looking at. When it comes to many-to-many congruence and to the difference between voters and legislators, PR systems fare better than plurality systems, but this advantage does not exist when comparing the median voter to the position of the government.

Political Legitimacy

Instead of trying to assess the two models of democracy in terms of the quality of representative linkage, we can also look at the political legitimacy or political support of democracies. This approach tries to circumvent the use of potentially biased criteria by focusing on whether citizens are more satisfied with, and eager to participate in, the democratic system (Beetham 2013). Quite a large number of studies analyse the relationship between political institutions, mostly operationalized in terms of the proportionality of the electoral system, and indicators of political legitimacy. Therefore, our discussion also considers the extent to which citizens are satisfied with the way democracy works in their country (Aarts and Thomassen 2008; Anderson and Guillory 1997; Blais et al. 2017; Bowler 2017), their trust in major political institutions (Van der Meer and Hakhverdian 2017; Zmerli and Hooghe 2011; Zmerli and Van der Meer 2017), and the level of turnout in elections (Blais and Aarts 2006; Cox 2015).

The positive relationship between proportional electoral systems and turnout is convincingly documented in empirical research on established democracies (Cox 2015; Geys 2006). Under plurality electoral systems (in single member districts) voters may refrain from voting in uncompetitive districts and parties have stronger incentives to campaign everywhere and mobilize more voters under a proportional system (but see Karp et al. 2008). Nonetheless, Blais and Aarts (2006) argue that this pattern does not seem to replicate outside of established democracies. The degree to which a high turnout matters depends on one’s normative position. For some, voting might be seen as something purely instrumental and if voters do not participate in uncompetitive districts this is not a huge problem—except for, perhaps, the detrimental effect on accountability and responsiveness of the local representative. For others, turnout is intrinsically linked to their (consensual) understanding of democracy. Therefore, proponents of a liberal/consensual model of representative democracy might see the findings on the relationship between proportional representation and turnout as

support for their model, while proponents of a populist/majoritarian system might not really care. Turnout is often used, but it may be a poor indicator of legitimacy, and it may also be a biased indicator when it comes to measuring the effects of the models of representative democracy.

Theoretically opposing arguments of the impact of electoral institutions on legitimacy beliefs have been made. Some argue that proportional representation fosters trust in institutions and satisfaction with the functioning of democracy because parliament more closely mirrors society (Karp and Banducci 2008). More people feel represented in parliament; even generally dissatisfied voters can see their concerns represented by small or new parties (Van der Meer 2017). The gap between ‘winning’ and ‘losing’ elections is generally smaller in proportional systems, which may make citizens more satisfied and trusting overall (Anderson and Guillory 1997). Others, however, argue that the lower levels of accountability under proportional representation may result in voters not feeling they have a real choice with real consequences (Powell 2000; Magalhães 2006: 192).

The empirical findings are, however, decidedly mixed. Some studies show that systems with proportional representation have higher levels of satisfaction and trust (Van der Meer and Dekker 2011; Rose and Mishler 2011: 130; Banducci et al. 1999; Magalhães 2006; Van der Meer 2010; Anderson and Guillory 1997; Lijphart 2012). Other studies find no relationship between proportionality and democratic satisfaction or trust (Blais and Loewen 2007: 51; Norris 2011) or only a weak relationship between institutions and trust (Bowler 2017). Van der Meer and Hakhverdian (2017) find higher levels of satisfaction with democracy in systems with proportional representation, but no difference when it comes to confidence in institutions. A third group of studies points to higher levels of satisfaction in democracies with disproportional electoral rules (Aarts and Thomassen 2008; Karp and Bowler 2001; Norris 1999).

It should be noted that many of these studies use (some indicator of) proportionality as one explanatory (or control) variable in a larger model. This makes causal interpretation of these findings problematic, as there is potential omitted variable as well as post-treatment bias. Together with differences in measurement, and (country and time) coverage, this may explain the wide range of findings in the literature.

Horses for Courses?

So far, we have treated the preference for one conceptualization of democracy over the other as an exogenous choice. Obviously this assumption is not correct. Just as we noted how Lincoln’s defence of majority rule, or Madison’s preference for checks and balances, were inexorably linked to their position in the political context in which they found themselves, so we may assume more generally that the choice for institutional devices that fit one of our basic models is endogenous to the social and political

situation at the time of that choice. It may well be that we also have to judge the performance of the institutional framework in that context. In situations with ‘a majority (...) always changing easily with deliberate changes of popular opinion and sentiments’, as we cited Lincoln, the populist-majoritarian model may perform better than in situations with fixed majorities and minorities of an ascriptive nature, in particular when there has been a history of discrimination and repression of one or several of the minorities. There are reasons why Northern Ireland has adopted many institutional devices from the liberal/consensual model, while the United Kingdom as a whole stuck to its largely populist-majoritarian framework, and any assessment of the relative merits of the models needs to take them into account.

The discussion about the consequences of Lijphart’s majoritarian and consociational or consensus types of democracy is a case in point. Originally, Lijphart advocated consociational democracy only for deeply divided countries, and warned that consociational politics in a homogeneous society eventually would prompt citizens to vote for anti-system parties: deprived of a meaningful choice within the system, they would vote against the system (Lijphart 1968). But in his more recent work on consensus democracy, Lijphart takes up a radically different position: ‘The consensus option is the more attractive option for countries designing their first democratic constitutions or contemplating democratic reform. This recommendation is particularly pertinent, and even urgent, for societies that have deep cultural and ethnic cleavages, *but it is also relevant for more homogeneous countries*’ (Lijphart 2012: 296, emphasis added). Faced with this contrast between the younger Lijphart’s warning against universal implementation of consociational devices and the older Lijphart’s recommendation of consensus democracy as a horse for all courses, Andeweg argues that consociational democracies in which the erstwhile social cleavages have eroded seem particularly vulnerable to challenges by right-wing populist parties, and that this vindicates the position taken by Lijphart in his earlier work (Andeweg 2001; also see Hakhverdian and Koop 2007).

The vulnerability to anti-system challenges is only one of the consequences of the design of representative democracy of which the universal or conditional applicability has been debated. Lijphart (2012) argues, for instance, that consensus democracies are just as effective as majoritarian democracies, and that consensus democracies score higher on democratic quality. In the ensuing debate both Lijphart and his critics aim for a universal answer to the question of which model is best. Bernauer et al. (2016: 474) acknowledge that ‘Obviously institutions also have to fit the societies they govern’, but this condition plays no role in their analysis. Doorenspleet and Pellikaan (2013) are exceptional in including the interaction with the homogeneity/segmentation of society in their analysis of the effect of shared power (proportional representation) and divided power (decentralization). Proportional representation turned out to be beneficial regardless of societal structure, but decentralization had positive effects only in divided societies whereas centralization was the best choice for homogeneous societies (also see Doorenspleet and Maleki 2018).

CONCLUSION

In this chapter we have used a basic dichotomy of thinking about democracy to capture most of the bewildering variety of typologies that faces the student of institutional frameworks of representative democracy. Of these two traditions, the populist-majoritarian view emphasizes popular sovereignty and political equality, and seeks to design the institutional framework in such a way that an identity between citizens and representatives is approximated, and that decisions are taken by majority rule. The other, liberal/consensual view conceptualizes representative democracy in terms of freedom from tyranny and protection of minority interests against the majority. This second tradition contains two varieties. In the liberal or Madisonian variety, minority interests are protected by an institutional framework that constrains the majority through checks and balances; in the consensual variety those interests are protected by including minorities in the decision-making process.

The question of which of these models of democracy is best is as obvious as it is difficult to answer for several reasons. First, real existing representative democracies do not treat these models as set menus, but may pick institutional elements from several models à la carte, although with an emphasis based on a preference for one model. Second, so many other variables may impinge upon the relationship between institutional framework and performance that it is not easy to isolate the institutional effects. Third, as the models depart from different definitions of what democracy is, it is hard to find criteria that are not inherently biased to favour one or the other model. And fourth, as the choice of a particular model of representative democracy is likely to be related to the societal structure and culture of a country, it is also likely that particular models have a better performance in particular types of societies.

It is therefore hardly surprising that our review of the literature suggests that more inclusive systems provide a better congruence between the distributions of political opinion in society and in the legislature, and that majoritarian systems produce better congruence between the median voter and the government. Given the fact that the differences between the models are usually differences of degree only, it is also not surprising that, in terms of legitimacy beliefs, the evidence is largely inconclusive. The fact that it seems beyond doubt that consensual systems have a higher turnout may be an indicator of inclusiveness rather than of legitimacy.

However, we should also note that the above conclusions are based on rather imperfect evidence. First, these studies, and studies of issue congruence in particular, look primarily at only one aspect of the institutional framework: the electoral system. Other elements, such as the dominant style of representation, the governmental system, or available checks and balances receive less attention. Second, and related to this, the comparison is largely restricted to the populist-majoritarian model on the one hand, and the consensual variant of the liberal/consensual model on the other. The consequences of the liberal or Madisonian variant are less frequently addressed. Lijphart (2012: 272–3, 293) does mention the effects of his ‘federal-unitary’ dimension

almost in passing. Others have criticized Lijphart for using only his ‘shared power’ dimension and not his ‘divided power’ dimension in this analysis (Armingeon 2002; Schmidt 2002; McGann and Latner 2012; Bernauer et al. 2016). Rohrschneider’s finding that the quality of the judiciary affects perceptions of representation also points to the importance of including that dimension (Rohrschneider 2005). Both these weaknesses, the lack of attention to other institutional factors than the electoral system and the relative neglect of the liberal variant of the liberal/consensual model, clearly need to be addressed in any agenda for further research into the consequences of the models of representative democracy.

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CHAPTER 5

ELECTORAL INTEGRITY

CAROLIEN VAN HAM

INTRODUCTION

WHILE democracy comes in many varieties (Coppedge et al. 2011; Collier and Levitsky 1997), most scholars agree that two core dimensions of liberal democracy are popular decision-making and the rule of law (O'Donnell 2004; Møller 2007; Chapter 4 in this *Handbook*). Popular decision-making refers to the literal meaning of democracy—rule by the people—and is based on the principle of political equality, that is, equal access of all citizens to public decision-making. Of course, in present-day representative democracies, citizens select representatives who then engage in public decision-making on their behalf, but the core idea that all citizens should have equal political influence is still upheld. Rule of law, on the other hand, refers to the liberal aspect of liberal democracy, which is based on the principle that all citizens—including rulers—are subject to, and equal before, the law, thus guaranteeing the ‘fair application of the law’ (O'Donnell 2004: 33), as well as ‘the impartiality of institutions that exercise government authority’ (Rothstein and Teorell 2008: 165). Political representation is most often linked to the popular decision-making dimension of democracy. However, the rule of law is also important to guarantee the quality of political representation (O'Donnell 2004, 2001; Karl 2000). Nowhere is this illustrated more clearly than with respect to election integrity.

Electoral processes that have integrity guarantee equal and free participation of citizens to express their preferences, vote in elections, and have their votes be counted equally; as well as a level playing field of fair competition between political parties and candidates (Elklit and Svensson 1997; Elklit and Reynolds 2005). When electoral rules are tweaked and electoral boundaries drawn to benefit the incumbent, when voter registers exclude significant parts of the voting population, when campaign finance and campaign media regulations are either not enforced or can be circumvented giving certain political parties and candidates a competitive advantage, when polling staff

behave in a partisan way, when votes are not counted equally, and when adjudication of electoral disputes is carried out by a politicized judiciary, the integrity of elections suffers, undermining the quality of political representation in the process.

Initially an understudied topic (Pastor 1999; Lehoucq 2003), the third wave of democratization generated attention for election integrity: at first slowly from 1974, and accelerating after the end of the Cold War, more and more regimes started holding elections. By now, holding multi-party elections for national offices appears to have become a global norm, with over 90 per cent of the world's nation-states holding national elections for executive and legislative offices (Hyde 2011; Norris 2015). However, as elections were increasingly held in new democracies, transitional regimes, and—often under mounting international and donor pressure—in autocracies, it quickly became clear elections could be rigged with a dazzling variety of tactics (Calingaert 2006). Thus, as increasingly savvy incumbents sought to manipulate elections and tilt the electoral playing field in their favour in order to stay in power, election integrity came into focus as a burgeoning area of research (Schedler 2002; Lehoucq 2003; Birch 2011; Kelley 2013; Simpser 2013; Donno 2013; Norris 2014, 2015; Cheeseman and Klaas 2018). As the field has matured it has become clear that elections in established democracies are in no way immune to problems with electoral integrity (Alvarez et al. 2008; Norris et al. 2018a). Problems with gerrymandering, voter registration, voter fraud, electoral management, campaign finance, media bias and fake news, unsafe voting technology, and even vote buying have been noted in established democracies such as the United States, Great Britain, Ireland, the Netherlands, and Switzerland (Alvarez et al. 2008; Alvarez et al. 2012; Bowler et al. 2015; James 2013; Clark 2017; Farrell 2015; Buckley and Reidy 2015; Norris et al. 2018a; Hill et al. 2017).

Why is election integrity relevant for political representation? As outlined in the introduction to this volume, the chain of representation is only as strong as its weakest link. If elections are rigged, manipulated, or experiencing widespread administrative irregularities, the translation of voter's preferences to votes, and votes to election outcomes, is undermined. In doing so, problems with election integrity undermine the functioning of elections as 'instruments of democracy', directly undermining elections' capacity to generate government accountability and responsiveness (Powell 2000). If elections are rigged, voters cannot remove incumbents from office if they are dissatisfied with the government's performance, undermining both voters' capacity to hold incumbents to account and incumbents' incentives to be responsive to voters' interests.

This chapter is set up as follows: the next section discusses what election integrity is and how it can be measured, followed by a section that provides a review of the literature outlining what we know and do not know yet about election integrity. The penultimate section turns to election integrity in established democracies, mapping the specific challenges to election integrity experienced by democracies in Europe, North America, and Oceania. The chapter concludes by discussing the implications of challenges to election integrity for the quality of political representation.

WHAT IS ELECTION INTEGRITY? CONCEPT AND MEASUREMENT

Elections are complex processes, and irregularities can occur at all the different stages of the electoral process: starting from the pre-election legal framework, registration and campaigning, to the actual voting on election day, to post-election vote counting and adjudication of results (Elklit and Reynolds 2005; Schedler 2002). Moreover, violations of election integrity can take a ‘panoply’ of forms (Lehoucq 2003), ranging from more visible irregularities such as ballot box stuffing to more subtle irregularities such as media bias (Calingaert 2006; Cheeseman and Klaas 2018). As a result, a number of different conceptualizations of election integrity exist.¹

Conceptualizations of electoral integrity vary from ‘positive’ definitions (emphasizing the presence of desirable properties of elections) such as the free and fairness of elections, election quality, or election integrity (Elklit and Svensson 1997; Lindberg 2006; Elklit and Reynolds 2005; Kelley 2013; Norris 2014, 2015) to ‘negative’ definitions (emphasizing the absence of desirable properties) such as electoral manipulation, electoral malpractice or misconduct, and election fraud (Schedler 2002, 2013; Birch 2011; Donno 2013; Lehoucq 2003; Simpser 2013). Conceptualizations also differ in scope: while some have a narrow focus on intentional forms of manipulation that political actors use to subvert the electoral process, others include intentional manipulation as well as—unintentional—administrative errors or irregularities (Pastor 1999, Darnolf 2011).²

Conceptualizations also differ in the normative criteria used to evaluate the integrity of elections, ranging from national laws, to democratic theory, to international legal norms (Davis-Roberts and Carroll 2010; Norris 2014; Lehoucq 2003; Munck 2009; Schedler 2002; Elklit and Reynolds 2005). Legal definitions emphasize violations of domestic electoral laws as indicating problems with election integrity (Lehoucq 2003). However, most conceptualizations of electoral integrity seek to specify ‘universal’ criteria for election integrity that are based either on democratic theory or international norms and standards for elections, to arrive at a concept of election integrity that is cross-nationally comparable. When based on democratic theory, definitions of elections with integrity often build on Dahl’s (1971) criteria of participation and contestation, and further specify these to identify the criteria of ‘free and fair’ elections (Elklit and Svensson 1997), ‘democratic’ elections (O’Donnell 2001; Munck 2009; Lindberg 2006), or when elections provide ‘democratic choice’ (Schedler 2002). Conversely, election integrity can also be defined on the basis of international norms and legal standards regarding elections (Global Commission on Elections, Democracy and Security 2012; Norris 2014; Davis-Roberts and Carroll 2010). In this approach, election integrity is defined as the degree to which elections ‘meet international commitments and global norms, endorsed in a series of authoritative instruments (conventions,

treaties, protocols, and guidelines) through the UN general assembly, regional inter-governmental organizations, and related multilateral bodies, exemplified by the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights' (Norris et al. 2018a: 10).

In practice, however, most conceptualizations of election integrity combine these norms with a 'policy cycle' approach to identify irregularities at all the different stages of the electoral process (Elklit and Svensson 1997; Elklit and Reynolds 2005; Schedler 2002; Mozaffar and Schedler 2002; Davis-Roberts and Carroll 2010; Birch 2011; Donno 2013; Kelley 2013; Simpser 2013; Norris 2014, 2015). Elections are complex logistical operations and can fail at any step in the process (Norris 2014, 2015). Hence ordering the electoral process by the sequential steps taken before, during, and after election day helps to ensure that all relevant aspects are taken into account, mapping the full 'menu of manipulation' (Schedler 2002; Mozaffar and Schedler 2002). Figure 5.1 shows the different steps in the electoral cycle, building on Elklit and Reynolds (2005) and Norris (2014, 2015).

As Figure 5.1 shows, in the months before the election, aspects such as the legal framework, the organization(s) involved in electoral management, constituency and polling demarcation, party and voter registration, and campaign regulation are important for election integrity. Common irregularities in this phase are: incumbents tweaking the legal framework for elections in their favour, stacking electoral management

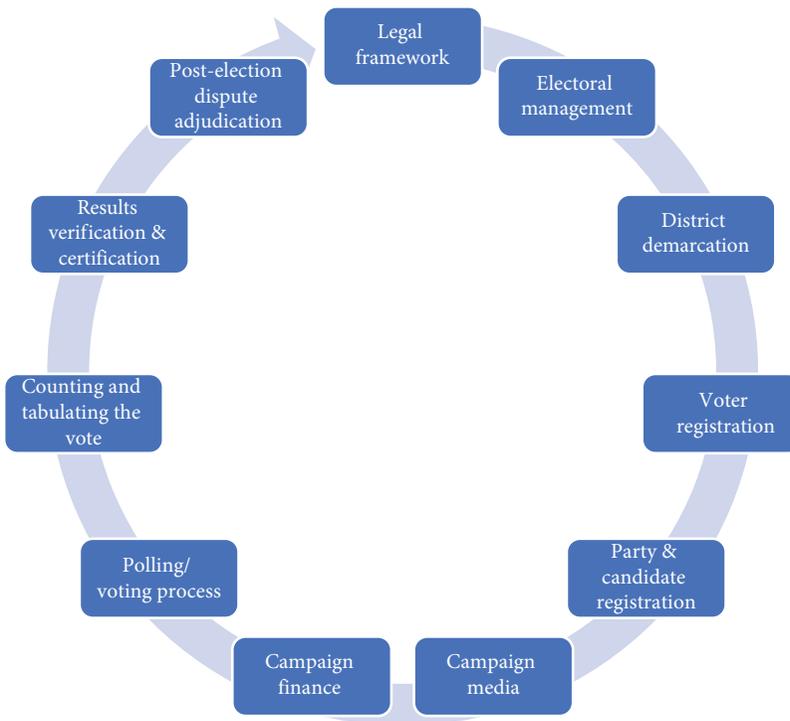


FIGURE 5.1 The Electoral Cycle

Source: Elklit and Reynolds (2005) and Norris (2014, 2015).

bodies (EMBs) with partisan staff, gerrymandering, inaccurate voter registration lists, exclusion of opposition parties or candidates, unequal access to media and campaign resources, opposition intimidation, etc. During election day, aspects such as access to polling stations, vote secrecy, and access of election monitors are important. Examples of irregularities are a lack of polling stations in rural areas, vote buying and intimidation of voters, ballot-box stuffing, etc. Finally, after election-day important aspects are counting and tabulating the vote, resolving election related complaints, and publishing the election results. Here, problems that can occur are: biased counting of votes, not publishing disaggregate results, biased dispute adjudication, etc. (Elklit and Reynolds 2005; Calingaert 2006; Birch 2011; Martinez i Coma and van Ham 2015). Clearly, the ‘menu of manipulation’ available to actors seeking to undermine election integrity is vast, underscoring that election integrity is a multifaceted concept.

Finally, in delineating what election integrity is and is not, the boundaries of this concept are also still a matter of debate (Stokes et al. 2013; Lehoucq 2003). Several grey areas exist where what separates electoral irregularities from ‘normal electoral politics’ is not so clear. For example, where does constituency service end and vote-buying begin? When does clientelism shade into political pressure or even voter intimidation? Where should we draw the line between ‘normal’ redistricting and gerrymandering? Clearly, questions remain about what election integrity is (and is not). At the same time, there appears to be broad consensus among academics and election observers about the specific types of irregularities that constitute violations of election integrity before, during, and after elections, implying that at least the constituent components of the concept, as outlined in Figure 5.1 are clear.

In terms of measurement, in recent years several cross-national datasets have been developed that measure election integrity, mostly based on election observation mission reports, news media, and historical sources.³ Most of these datasets provide measures for multiple indicators of irregularities, mapping the steps in the electoral cycle outlined in Figure 5.1 in considerable detail (Kelley and Kolev 2010; Birch 2011; Donno 2013; Simpson 2013; Schedler 2013; Hyde and Marinov 2012; Bishop and Hoefler 2016), while others provide overall indicators of electoral integrity (Lindberg 2006; Hartlyn et al. 2008; Munck 2009). Public opinion surveys that measure citizens’ perceptions of election integrity are also increasingly common (Norris 2014),⁴ as are assessments of election integrity based on crowdsourcing reports of election irregularities by citizens (Bader 2013). Assessments of electoral fraud based on ‘election forensics’, statistical analyses of vote and turnout results at local and regional levels within a country to detect deviations that might point to fraud, are also increasingly employed (Hicken and Mebane 2015; Myagkov et al. 2009; Levin and Alvarez 2012; Klimek et al. 2012; Beber and Scacco 2012; Rozenas 2017).

The two most recent datasets measuring election integrity are based on expert surveys that measure country expert perceptions of election integrity: the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) dataset (Coppedge et al. 2019) and the Perceptions of Election Integrity Index (Norris et al. 2018b).⁵ The Varieties of Democracy dataset is a broad dataset that measures numerous aspects of democracy, including the free and fairness

of elections as well as a (limited) number of specific election irregularities.⁶ The advantage of V-Dem is that the data cover all countries worldwide and go back in time until the 1900s (and for a subset of countries covered by the historical V-Dem data collection, even longer). The disadvantage is that not all elements of the electoral cycle are covered. Conversely, the Perceptions of Election Integrity (PEI) dataset was set up specifically to measure electoral integrity in great detail and covers all the eleven dimensions of the electoral cycle listed in Figure 5.1. The dataset started in 2012 and is ongoing, collecting election integrity data for national elections held around the world. The advantage of the PEI data is that challenges to election integrity are mapped in detail, allowing users to identify specific challenges in specific countries or regions. The disadvantage is, of course, that the data do not go further back than 2012, but as data collection is ongoing, PEI should provide a valuable source of data on election integrity going forward. Section 4 uses both V-Dem and PEI data to map trends in election integrity around the world and more specific challenges to election integrity in established democracies.

WHAT DO WE KNOW AND DON'T KNOW YET ABOUT ELECTION INTEGRITY?

Research on election integrity has identified long-term, intermediate, and proximate causal factors that shape the 'motives and means' of political actors to undermine election integrity (Lehoucq and Kolev 2015).⁷ Long-term or structural explanations refer to the economic and social structure of societies that shape power relations between citizens and elites, identifying factors such as economic inequality and social heterogeneity as undermining election integrity. Intermediate or institutional explanations refer to political institutions that set the rules of the game and structure electoral competition, such as the electoral system and the rules of electoral governance, as well as institutions that oversee the implementation of, and compliance with, those rules such as judiciaries and electoral management bodies. Proximate or actor-based explanations refer to strategic choices of political actors, based on the characteristics of the particular electoral game, such as electoral competition and interactions between incumbent and opposition, as well as the role of civil society actors that engage in electoral oversight, such as independent media and election observers that monitor the electoral process.

With regard to *structural explanations*, electoral manipulation is more common in countries with low levels of economic development, high levels of poverty, high economic inequality and deep social divides (Ziblatt 2009; Birch 2011; Lehoucq and Kolev 2015; Norris 2015). There are several reasons why economic development, poverty, and economic inequality are associated with election integrity. First of all, poor countries may lack financial resources and administrative capacity to run elections

of high integrity. Elections are highly complex and expensive logistical operations that can put quite a strain on government budgets (IFES/UNDP 2005). Second, high levels of poverty and economic inequality increase the means available to political elites to undermine election integrity, providing opportunities for buying votes as well as coercing voters (for example when employers ‘campaign’ for their preferred candidate), and more generally to develop and sustain patron–client relationships (Schaffer 2007; Ziblatt 2009; Bratton 2008; Birch 2011).⁸ Third, in contexts of high economic inequality, wealth can provide access to political power that can be used for state capture or for other forms of manipulation such as biased campaign media or ‘buying’ political influence through campaign finance contributions (Ziblatt 2009; Stokes et al. 2013).

Finally, unequal distribution of economic resources may also affect the motives of political actors to undermine election integrity, especially if access to government power provides access to economic power. For example, if being in government means having access to lucrative government contracts, management of state natural resources, or legislation that protects already accumulated wealth, this will increase the stakes of the electoral race, and thereby increase motives to engage in electoral manipulation (Welzel 2009; Lipset 1959).

This argument also extends to social heterogeneity. Ethnic, religious, or linguistic divisions in society, if mobilized in electoral competition, can lead to centrifugal competition, increasing the stakes of the electoral race and thereby increasing the likelihood that political actors have motives to undermine election integrity.⁹ Cross-national comparative research indeed finds that social heterogeneity increases the likelihood of electoral fraud (Lehoucq and Kolev 2015).

With regard to *institutional explanations*, electoral manipulation is more common in countries with majoritarian electoral systems, and where effective institutional checks on electoral conduct are lacking. Majoritarian electoral systems are likely associated with higher levels of electoral manipulation because they increase the stakes of the electoral race, but also because—especially in small districts and close races—relatively small amounts of manipulation can affect election outcomes (Birch 2008). Indeed, levels of electoral integrity are lower in majoritarian electoral systems (Birch 2008, 2011) and higher in proportional electoral systems (Lehoucq and Kolev 2015). Apart from the electoral system, the institutions that provide oversight of electoral conduct during elections are also important for election integrity. Through increasing the likelihood of detection and sanctioning of electoral irregularities, an impartial and effective electoral management body and independent judiciary provide crucial checks on electoral conduct and thereby improve election integrity. Indeed, the presence of independent judiciaries has been found to improve election integrity (Birch and van Ham 2017), and independent electoral management bodies (EMBs) also improve election integrity, though what appears to be more important is that the EMB operates independently in practice, rather than being formally independent (Hartlyn et al. 2008; Birch and van Ham 2017). Finally, more generally, political systems that have stronger checks and balances resulting from power-sharing appear to hold elections of higher integrity (Norris 2015).

With regard to *actor-based explanations*, these focus on the competitiveness of the electoral race on the one hand, and the effect of oversight by civil society actors such as media and observers on the other. The effect of competitiveness is not straightforward because with increasing electoral competition, the motives to undermine election integrity, as well as the likelihood to be detected, increase (Schedler 2013). Hence, competitiveness might increase parties' incentives to engage in fraud (as Nyblade and Reed 2008; Lehoucq and Molina 2002; Ziblatt 2009; and Bermeo 2010 find). But competition between parties might also lead to increased monitoring of the electoral process and denouncement of irregularities, by parties themselves as well as by civil society organizations (Birch 2011; Lehoucq and Molina 2002).¹⁰ In terms of oversight, independent media has been found to have a significant positive effect on electoral integrity (Birch 2011; Birch and van Ham 2017). Findings on the impact of international and domestic election observers on election integrity are more mixed, as some scholars find election integrity improves when international and domestic observers are present (Hyde 2007; Callen and Long 2015; Grömping 2017), while others note temporal and geographical displacement of irregularities in response to observer presence (Simpser and Donno 2012; Ichino and Schundeln 2012).

In addition to the research literature identifying why overall levels of electoral integrity are higher in some countries than in others, an extensive literature exists on specific types of electoral manipulation as well, most notably vote buying and election violence.¹¹ Research on vote buying includes vote buying as well as abstention and turnout buying (Mares and Young 2016; Nichter 2008, 2014; Gans-Morse et al. 2014), and also increasingly investigates the grey area of targeted public spending and/or targeted provision of public services prior to elections, with evidence suggesting these practices occur across a wide variety of democracies, including older democracies (Rosas et al. 2014; Baskaran et al. 2015). Research on election violence is mostly located in new democracies and hybrid regimes and therefore not discussed more in-depth here.

Besides these well-established sub-fields of research on vote buying and election violence, newly emerging areas of research on election integrity investigate: (a) trade-offs between different types of electoral manipulation (studying how political actors choose between manipulative tactics such as vote buying, intimidation, and ballot fraud) (Collier and Vicente 2012; Frye et al. 2018; Weidmann and Callen 2013; van Ham and Lindberg 2015); (b) shifts in manipulation in time and place and increasingly 'smart' forms of manipulation (Bermeo 2016; Kalinin 2018; Sjoberg 2016); and (c) electoral administration (investigating the principal-agent problems that occur between central and local levels of administration in 'delivering' electoral fraud (Gehlbach and Simpser 2015; Rundlett and Svulik 2016), as well as what types of electoral management organizations and staff are best able to deliver clean elections (Alvarez et al. 2008, 2012; James et al. 2019)).

Finally, following increased attention for problems experienced in the 2000 and 2016 US elections, as well as irregularities in recent UK elections and elections in other European democracies, election integrity in established democracies is now also

gaining more attention (Norris et al. 2018a). We will discuss this in more depth in the next section.

ELECTION INTEGRITY IN ESTABLISHED DEMOCRACIES

Research on election integrity in established democracies was until quite recently limited to historical analyses of election fraud in the US, Latin America, and Europe at the end of the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries (Lehoucq 2003). Accounts range from voter intimidation, vote buying and stuffing the voter registry with ineligible voters, to pressure from landlords, employers, and the church to vote for specific parties and/or candidates, in countries ranging from the United Kingdom (Eggers and Spirling 2014), to Germany (Ziblatt 2009), Portugal (Bermeo 2010), Sweden (Teorell 2017), and the US (Kuo and Teorell 2017). This body of research demonstrates that fraud was by no means uncommon in the early years of what are now established democracies. However, by now, having had such long experiences of democratic rule, electoral processes have come to be seen as relatively straightforward administrative procedures, clean overall and without serious problems of election integrity, resulting in very little attention for election integrity in established democracies (Mozaffar and Schedler 2002; Lehoucq 2003; Pastor 1999).

A comparison of election integrity across different regions in the world (Figure 5.2) demonstrates that in comparative perspective, this view indeed seems to be warranted. Figure 5.2 shows the average election integrity for national elections in regions across the world from 1990 until 2017, using data on the free and fairness of elections from the Varieties of Democracy dataset.¹²

Considering a little over twenty-five years, from the start of the post-Cold War wave of democratization in 1990 until the present, it becomes clear that election integrity started off quite low on average in the Middle East and North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Asia in the 1990s, but in all three regions improved gradually over time. Election integrity in the Former Soviet Republics (CIS) saw some improvement in the early years after the end of the Cold War, but has declined and stabilized at low levels of election integrity since. On the contrary, elections in Central and Eastern Europe started off at a relatively high level of election integrity in the early 1990s, and have remained at relatively high integrity. Average election integrity in Latin America is also high compared to the other regions, which is most likely due to the much earlier onset of democratization processes in this region.

Average election integrity in Western Europe and North America is very high and has been relatively stable over time compared to the other regions. However, a slight dip in election integrity is visible in recent years, and average scores are still well below the maximum score of 4. In addition, the average high score of established democracies

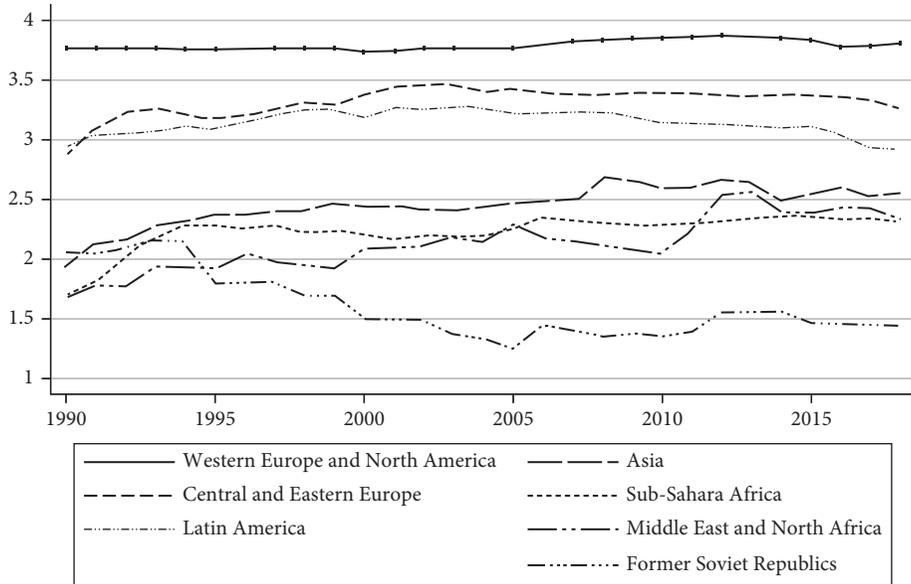


FIGURE 5.2 Election Integrity by Region Over Time 1990–2018

Source: V-Dem, v9. Continuous variable scoring whether national elections were free and fair, ranging from 0–4.

masks significant differences between countries. Figure 5.3 illustrates the variation in election integrity between established democracies using data from the Perceptions of Electoral Integrity dataset (Norris et al. 2018b). The PEI data measure how well elections score on 11 dimensions of electoral integrity and subsequently aggregate these dimensions in an index that varies from 0 to 100. Clearly, established democracies vary substantially in terms of the integrity of their elections. The Scandinavian and North European democracies score quite well. However, the US, the UK, and a number of Southern European democracies have substantially lower election integrity scores. The US scores worst, with an electoral integrity score just over 60, which is in line with the challenges experienced in US elections in recent years (Alvarez et al. 2008; Alvarez et al. 2012; Norris et al. 2018a).

Hence, while understandably, election integrity in established democracies did not at first seem an issue in need of scholarly attention, this situation has changed in recent years. Problems surrounding the 2000 US presidential elections revealed quite serious issues with election integrity, which triggered a rapidly expanding research literature on electoral management and election integrity in the US (Alvarez et al. 2008; Alvarez et al. 2012; Bowler et al. 2015), a debate only reinvigorated by renewed issues with election integrity in the 2016 US presidential elections (Norris et al. 2018a). However, challenges to election integrity have also become apparent in other established democracies, such as the UK and Ireland (James 2013; Clark 2017; Farrell 2015; Buckley and Reidy 2015).

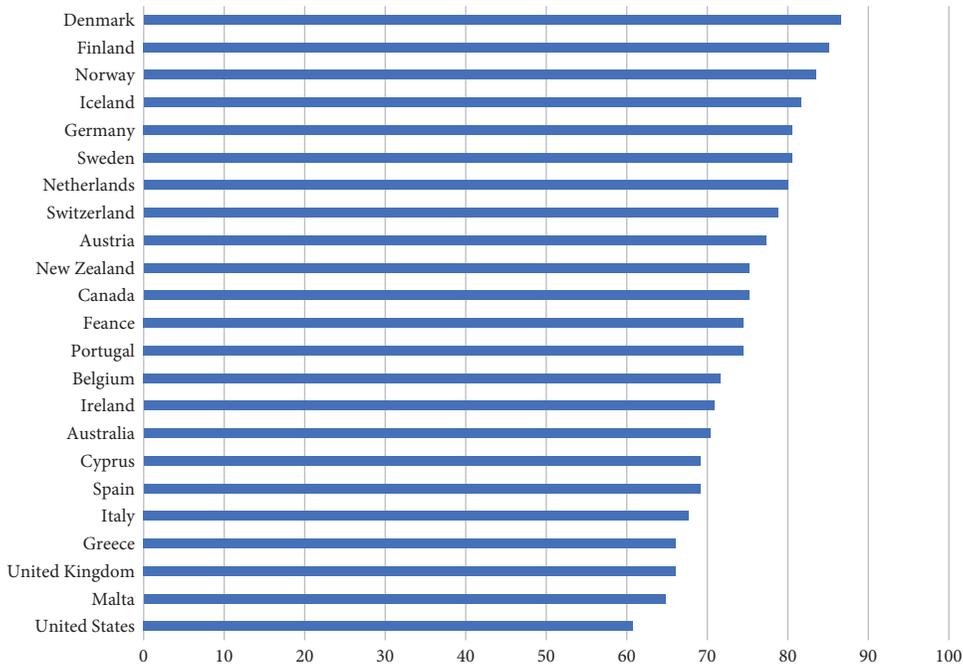


FIGURE 5.3 Election Integrity in Established Democracies (2012–2018)

Source: PEI, version 6.5 (Norris et al. 2018b).

Some challenges to election integrity in established democracies have been long-standing issues with specialized research sub-fields, that have gained renewed attention in recent years, such as campaign finance regulation and gerrymandering. Other challenges to election integrity are more recent, such as risks for election integrity generated by the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and early voting procedures in elections, and challenges posed by social media, ‘fake news’ and foreign interference in elections. The increased use of ICT in elections poses risks for election integrity in terms of the viability of internet voting and voting-machine security, risks that led the Netherlands for example to return to the use of paper ballots (Alvarez and Hall 2008). The use of ICT in elections also raises questions about the involvement of private actors in electoral administration—such as voting machine providers—and how to ensure impartial conduct by such actors (Daniels 2010). In addition, early voting procedures such as postal ballots, while meant to facilitate voter participation, have been shown to facilitate vote buying and intimidation (Hill et al. 2017) and increase the risk of large-scale electoral fraud, as postal ballots undermine the secrecy of the ballot (Birch and Watt 2004; Wilks-Heeg 2008).¹³

Challenges posed by the increased influence (and lack of regulation) of social media in elections are mainly due to the fact that social media facilitate the spread of fake

news during electoral campaigns, which may influence the election outcome. The accessibility of social media platforms also enables foreign agents to spread such news. Evidence of such interference in elections by Russian actors spreading fake news through social media has been found in elections in Germany, Britain, Spain, and the US (Rankin 2017).¹⁴ Whether these actors acted alone or their actions were state-sanctioned is not clear; nor is the extent to which such messages actually affect voting preferences and behaviour; however, there are potentially significant negative consequences for election integrity and hence this topic does warrant further research (Chapter 27 in this *Handbook*).

Finally, some challenges to election integrity are country-specific, such as the debate on voter fraud versus voter exclusion in the US (Hasen 2012; Bateman 2016; Norris et al. 2018a). In what is sometimes referred to as the ‘voting wars’, ever since the 2000 presidential elections an increasingly polarized debate has developed between Republicans and Democrats on voter registration. While Republicans are concerned that lax voter registration and identification requirements may allow non-US citizens (such as illegal immigrants) to vote, Democrats argue that strict voter ID laws disenfranchise large numbers of legitimate American voters. As a result, a number of (mostly Republican governed) states have adopted stricter voter ID laws in recent years in order to prevent fraud and increase administrative efficiency (Hale and McNeal 2010). Hasen (2012) documents significant litigation against these changes, which were successful in a number of US states. Nevertheless, the debate is ongoing and only appears to have been fuelled further by US president Trump’s continued allegations of systemic and widespread voter fraud, despite empirical evidence to the contrary (Minnite 2010; Cottrell et al. 2018). Public opinion appears to be equally polarized along partisan lines on this topic (Wilson and Brewer 2013).

In addition to the debate on voter fraud versus voter exclusion, election integrity in the US is also challenged by its highly decentralized (and in some states partisan) electoral administration, leading to marked variation in voting procedures in different states, and significant variation in electoral management performance between states (Alvarez et al. 2008; Alvarez et al. 2012), with important consequences for citizens’ confidence in electoral processes (Bowler et al. 2015).

Finally, while the latter issues have affected the integrity of US elections for longer, the most recent US elections also experienced quite serious attempts at foreign interference. Apart from attempts at spreading fake news, discussed above, ‘the Senate Intelligence Committee (2018) reported that Russians attempted to break into the official election records in twenty-one states, scanning them for vulnerabilities. Russians had penetrated *the official voter registration rolls* of several US states, including Illinois, and they stayed inside the system for several weeks prior to the 2016 presidential election. They had opportunities to *alter voter registration data and vote tallies*, although the Senate Intelligence Committee concluded that they did not actually do so’ (Norris et al., 2018a: 6, italics mine). The extent to which state officials were involved in this remains unclear, but the fact that it was at all *possible* for outside actors to interfere with voter registration data and vote tallies poses severe threats to election integrity.

Add to this the ongoing challenges posed by campaign finance regulation, gerrymandering, and campaign media, and it becomes clear that when multiple ongoing and new challenges to election integrity align, as they did in recent elections in the US, even elections in established democracies can experience severe election integrity challenges.¹⁵

Figure 5.4 shows which dimensions of electoral integrity experts identify as being most problematic in established democracies. It shows the average election integrity score for all established democracies together on each of the specific dimensions of electoral integrity. In line with the research discussed above, the three most common problems experts identify are campaign media, campaign finance, and electoral boundaries (tapping gerrymandering in systems where this is relevant). Election laws and voter registration appear next in line, which is most likely driven by the fact that these are issues experienced in a number of established democracies (voter registration being an issue in the US but also in the UK and Ireland for example).¹⁶

Summarizing, key challenges to election integrity in established democracies are: campaign finance, gerrymandering, social media and fake news, private actors involved in electoral administration, legislation with de facto partisan effects (such as voter ID laws), and foreign interference. Some of these challenges intertwine and reinforce each other, and when they do, election integrity can be undermined, even in the most stable democracies.

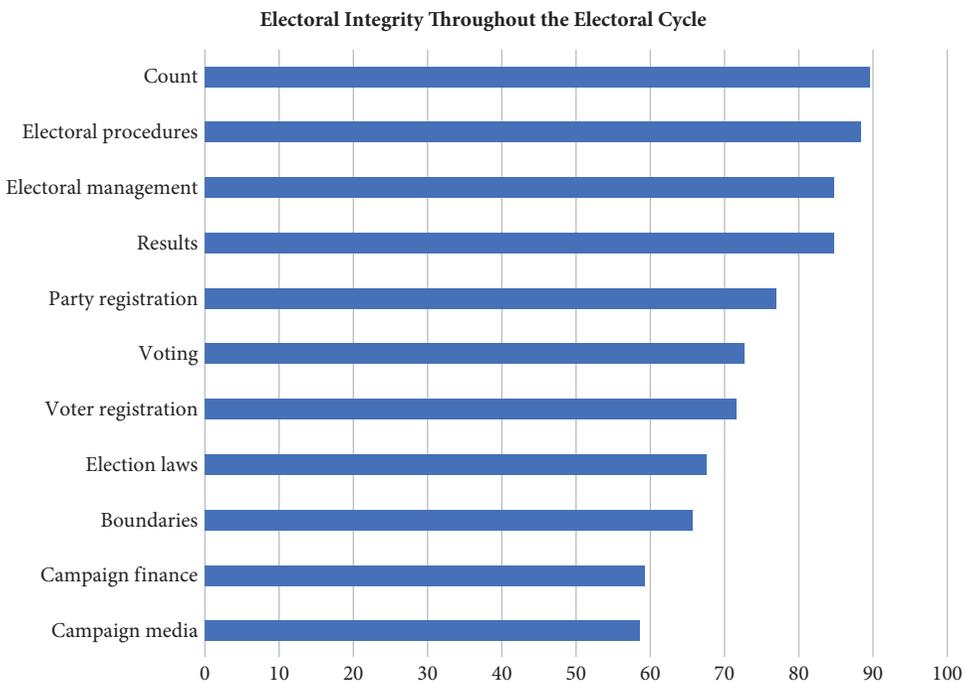


FIGURE 5.4 Challenges to Electoral Integrity in Established Democracies (2012–2018)

Source: PEI, version 6.5 (Norris et al. 2018b).

CONCLUSION: ELECTION INTEGRITY AND POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

Concluding, in comparative perspective, elections in established democracies in Europe, North America, and Oceania are clearly still of very high integrity. However, where facilitating conditions exist and multiple challenges emerge simultaneously, election integrity can be seriously compromised. The consequences for political representation are manifold.

In the stage of electoral campaigns, preference formation of voters can be influenced substantially by exposure to fake or biased news, be it via social or traditional media. The relatively easy access to means of communication that social media provide, offer a powerful platform for any kind of actor so inclined to engage in political campaigning (be it foreign actors, private campaign companies, or civil society groups). The extent to which voter's preferences are actually affected by such messaging is still unclear and a matter of ongoing research, but the potential for these channels to exacerbate political polarization and misinformation among voters is worrying.

At the stage of voting, vulnerabilities in electoral management and ICT means votes *could* be stolen, even if in practice this seems to be quite rare in established democracies. However, what is more worrying at this stage in terms of the core democratic principle of political equality is when electoral rules either systematically exclude certain parts of the population, or make it harder for certain citizens to vote, and when in practice gerrymandering of electoral district boundaries and/or de facto disproportionality in vote-seat allocations means some votes count much more heavily in the overall election outcome than others.

Finally, at the stage where election outcomes need to be translated into policy, if extensive challenges to election integrity were present, it is well possible that elections generate a government that does not accurately reflect voters' preferences. If that government has also received extensive campaign donations of specific private and civil society actors, chances are it will feel more responsive to its sponsors than to its citizens. These are, of course, just some examples, but examples that illustrate how irregularities at any stage in the electoral cycle can affect and undermine the quality of representation.

Clearly, election integrity is a crucial—if often overlooked—factor affecting the quality of political representation (Mozaffar and Schedler 2002; Pastor 1999; Elklit and Reynolds 2005). The chain of representation is only as strong as its weakest link, and hence if election integrity is compromised, the quality of representation is severely undermined. If elections are flawed, rigged or fraudulent, there is no level playing field for parties and candidates contesting the electoral race and voters' preferences are unlikely to be translated truthfully into election outcomes. Election fraud directly affects the formation of preferences, as well as the translation of preferences into votes in the chain of representation, thereby undermining the capacity of elections to generate accountability and responsiveness (Powell 2000).

Thankfully, recent challenges to election integrity in established democracies have brought these issues into full focus. But much more detailed research is needed to uncover their causes and consequences for political representation, to be able to guarantee elections that truly provide rule-by-the-people.

NOTES

1. Van Ham (2015) provides an overview and in-depth discussion of the different conceptualizations and measurements of election integrity, on which this section builds.
2. However, in practice distinguishing between intentional actions and organizational incapacity is often quite difficult, and the latter can have significant consequences for election integrity. As Pastor notes: 'the boundary line separating political manipulation and technical incapacity is rarely surveyed, and elections can fail for one or both reasons' (Pastor 1999: 2).
3. Earlier research studying electoral fraud in country case studies also used data on court cases and officially reported instances of fraud as sources of data on election irregularities. See Lehoucq and Molina's (2002) study of Costa Rica and Eisenstadt's (2004) work on Mexico. For an in-depth discussion of challenges to measurement validity and reliability and the advantages and disadvantages of different data sources, see van Ham (2015).
4. Surveys that ask citizens about perceptions of election integrity include the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems, the International Social Survey Project, the Afrobarometer, the Latinobarometer and the most recent two waves of the World Values Survey (Birch 2011; Norris 2014, 2015).
5. Extensive validity and reliability checks have been carried out on V-Dem and PEI data, suggesting the data are high quality (Pemstein et al. 2019; Martinez i Coma and van Ham 2015). For more details on data collection, question wording and data scores, see Coppedge et al. (2019) and Norris et al. (2018b).
6. To be precise, V-Dem includes questions asking about problems with voter registration, campaign media, election violence, government intimidation, vote buying, and EMB capacity and autonomy.
7. See Lehoucq (2003), Birch (2011), Kelley (2013), Simpser (2013), Donno (2013), Norris (2015) for overviews of the literature.
8. Note that these practices are not necessarily limited to transitional democracies or developing countries. Examples of historical vote buying and voter intimidation in established democracies are common (cf. Lehoucq's discussion on historical vote buying in Britain, Spain, and the US, and Ziblatt's case study of Germany), and recent research on vote buying and intimidation among poor migrant communities in the United Kingdom suggests such practices can occur in established democracies too, when voters are in precarious economic conditions (Hill et al. 2017).
9. As Lipset and later Welzel argue: 'When resources are more equally distributed across socioeconomic, religious, ethnic, and other groups, this can diminish existential hostilities, making groups more inclined to accept each other as legitimate contenders for political power. If there is less at stake in the power game, all groups can be more relaxed about others winning the game for just one electoral round' (Welzel 2009: 79). However, '*if loss of office is seen as meaning serious loss for major power groups, then they will be readier to resort to more drastic measures in seeking to retain or secure office*' (Lipset 1959: 84, italics mine).

10. Moreover, note that the effects of competition on electoral manipulation are quite different in electoral authoritarian regimes, which for reasons of parsimony are not covered here (but see Simpser 2013; Schedler 2013).
11. Each of these sub-fields of enquiry are sufficiently vast to merit an individual chapter, and hence space does not permit to review all the findings this research has generated. For a brief overview of key themes and references for research on specific election integrity challenges (most notably vote buying and election violence), as well as new themes in election integrity research, please refer to the online appendix to this chapter at www.ru.nl/english/people/ham-c-van/.
12. Experts were asked: ‘Taking all aspects of the pre-election period, election day, and the post-election process into account, would you consider this national election to be free and fair?’ Answers could range from 0 to 4, ranging from ‘no, not at all’, to ‘not really’, ‘ambiguous’, ‘yes, somewhat’ and ‘yes’. Answer categories were clearly defined, please refer to the codebook for the full wording of answer categories (Coppedge et al. 2019). Ordinal variables were converted to continuous measures using a Bayesian item response theory measurement model (Pemstein et al. 2019).
13. Indeed, in the UK ‘the majority of electoral fraud allegations and convictions since the early 2000s have been related to postal voting’ (Hill et al. 2017: 780).
14. For example, Norris et al. (2018a) report that leading up to the 2016 US presidential elections, the Russian Internet Research Agency ‘bought 3,517 Facebook ads to spread disinformation and sow discord in the electorate. The ads emphasized polarizing negative messages, stoking fear about race and the police, Muslims, and immigration, which were subsequently spread in America by online networks and amplified by mainstream reporters’ (Norris et al. 2018a: 6).
15. For a more detailed analysis of challenges to election integrity in the US, please refer to Norris et al. (2018a).
16. Considering how experts scored national elections between 2012 and 2018 on each of the eleven dimensions per country demonstrates that in addition to the challenges to election integrity that established democracies share (such as campaign finance, media, and boundaries), specific challenges to election integrity occur in specific countries as well. As such, voter registration appears to be a particular concern in Ireland, and election laws appear to be of particular concern in the UK, the US, and Spain. Supplemental Figure 5.5. demonstrating the scores on the eleven dimensions per country is available on the author’s website.

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P A R T I I

ELITE
ORIENTATIONS
AND BEHAVIOUR

CHAPTER 6

ROLL-CALL VOTING BEHAVIOUR IN LEGISLATURES

SIMON HUG¹

INTRODUCTION

VOTING- behaviour by members of parliament (MPs) offers a unique individual perspective on these central actors in the legislative process.² Not surprisingly, legislative scholars and researchers interested in related topics have drawn heavily on this data stemming from roll-call votes to address a wide variety of research questions, amongst them also questions related to representation.³ In recent years, studies relying on such data have increased considerably in number, mostly for two reasons. First, such data is more and more easily accessible for a larger and larger set of parliaments. While many early studies focused on the US Congress, US state legislatures, and the British House of Commons, currently one finds studies focusing on a wide variety of national and subnational parliaments, as well as studies dealing with supranational (parliamentary) assemblies. Second, the tools available for researchers to analyze this voting information have increased in number and improved dramatically. While early studies focused on whether or not members of particular parties voted frequently together, more refined indices were developed as well as more sophisticated tools to estimate underlying preferences based on roll-call data. This allowed for the use of more sophisticated ways to assess whether MPs represent well their principals, namely their party and their voters.

In this ever-growing literature on roll-call votes, two main research questions are at the forefront. First, do political parties display party discipline⁴ and if so, why does it vary? Second, what influences MPs' voting behaviour more generally? These two questions resonate well with the two perspectives Collie (1984) detects in an earlier literature review and two corresponding chapters in the 'Handbook of Legislative

Studies' (edited by Martin, Saalfeld and Strøm 2014) by André et al. (2014) and Kam (2014). The authors of these reviews focus on the one hand on collective entities like the parliamentary body or political parties, and on the other on individual MPs (see, relatedly Uslaner and Zittel 2006).

In what follows I will review these two strands of the literature and discuss what we can learn from them with respect to political representation. Before, however, it is useful to briefly sketch the history of studies on roll-call vote behaviour and discuss the main theoretical underpinnings, as well as the characteristics of the data used.

HISTORY AND THEORY

Given the centrality of parliaments in representative democracies (Cox 2006) it is hardly surprising that scholars have developed a keen interest in the visible behaviour of the main actors in this arena. Probably one of the earliest analyses (if not the earliest) appears in Lowell's (1901) book-length treatment of 'The Influence of Party upon Legislation in England and America'. Part of his text presents analyses of a series of votes in the US Congress, in some state legislatures and the British House of Commons, mostly during the nineteenth century. As the title implies, the focus of the study is on assessing whether the main political parties were unified (i.e., at least nine-tenths of all voting members voted the same way, Lowell 1901: 323) or divided in votes. The main conclusion of the author was that parties in the US context act much less cohesively than those in the British parliament.

An equally early discussion of roll-call vote behaviour appears in von Gerlach's (1907: 34–40) book on parliaments. The analysis presented in that book relies on a simple tabulation on how often, for a small number of recorded votes, the parties in the German parliament in 1906 voted cohesively or were divided. Very observantly von Gerlach (1907: 34–40) alerts the reader that roll-call votes constitute only a small share of votes and, as a consequence, the latter are unlikely to reflect voting behaviour by members of parliament (MPs) more generally (for a similar cautionary remark regarding roll-call votes in the US Congress, see Turner 1951, 15ff).⁵ He summarizes his analysis by noting that '[i]n Germany we are still quite far from the English "ideal" of cohesiveness in votes' (von Gerlach 1907: 34, my translation).

These early studies, despite their sometimes highly relevant character, are rather infrequently referred to in the literature, while the studies by Stuart Rice (1925, 1928) turned out to be much more influential. Focusing on roll-call vote behaviour in the United States Congress, he proposed to measure how cohesively members of the two parties in Congress, more specifically the Senate, voted.⁶ The resulting Rice (1925, 1928) index, still frequently used, showed that there is quite a high degree of cohesion among the two parties present in the US Congress.

Implicit in these earlier studies are already the main theoretical arguments orienting the literature on roll-call vote behaviour. On the one hand these early studies referred

to the importance of party discipline in parliamentary democracies, as the survival of the government depends on a secure majority support in parliament (for a formal theoretic argument, see Diermeier and Feddersen 1998). On the other, already in Rice's (1925: 61) early work the issue was raised whether, by being selected by his or her voters, MPs should not be 'representative' of their interests. Eulau et al. (1959) introduced in this context the notion of MPs as 'trustees' or 'delegates' (see also Eulau and Karps 1977). Thus, several studies attempted to assess whether characteristics of MPs' constituencies affected their voting behaviour (see, e.g., Turner 1951; Miller and Stokes 1963). This line of reasoning was sharpened by Mayhew (1974) who emphasized the importance of the 'electoral connection' in understanding MPs' behaviour (and obviously at the basis of the argument on the development of the British parliament, by Cox 1987). As Carey (2009) underlined in a recent book-length treatment, roll-call votes play a crucial role in the accountability mechanisms that link MPs and their parties to their voters. Thus, MPs are considered in a principal-agent framework as the agent of (at least) two principals, namely of their party and their voters (Carey 2007). The former, through selection and re-selection decides who will run in an election under the party label, while the voters, ultimately, decide who will represent them in parliament. As Carey (2009) discusses, these principal-agent relationships allow voters to hold their representatives to account. Depending on the context, accountability might be demanded from parties or from MPs. This relates nicely, as mentioned above, to the two main research questions on which the literature has focused predominantly, namely what characterizes and influences the behaviour of political parties (and groups) in parliaments, and second, what influences the behaviour of individual MPs.

DATA, TOOLS, AND METHODS

To answer these questions, as already noted by Rice (1925) roll-call votes provide a unique behavioural perspective. Somewhat forgotten in the literature were cautionary remarks by von Gerlach (1907) and others, who highlighted that many parliaments conduct business not only in roll-call votes. This important caveat was for a long time ignored as it was assumed that in the most studied parliament with respect to roll-call votes, namely the US Congress, all business was dealt with in such votes (see Poole and Rosenthal 1997: 56).⁷ While some early critics of this assumption focused as well on Congress (see VanDoren 1990), comparative scholars quickly noticed that the rules leading to roll-call votes differed considerably across parliaments (Saalfeld 1995; Crisp and Driscoll 2012; Hug et al. 2015; Wüest 2016). These differences in rules obviously not only affect the extent to which roll-call votes are available, but also what the behaviour in these votes can reveal about MPs more generally (for theoretical treatments of this point, see Carrubba et al. 2008; Ainsley and Maxwell 2012; Wüest 2016).

Studies by Carrubba et al. (2006), Roberts (2007), Clinton and Lapinski (2008), Lynch and Madonna (2013), Hug (2010), and Benesch et al. (2018) all offer evidence

that these differences in legislative procedures for voting have empirical relevance in the US Congress, the European Parliament and the Swiss lower and upper houses. Thus, Hug (2010), comparing the behaviour of Swiss MPs in roll-call votes with the one in secret (though electronically recorded) votes shows that party discipline is different in these two sets of circumstances. More specifically, for almost all political parties, party discipline is lower in votes that are not roll-called.

Several studies attempt to identify the effect of these differences between roll-call votes and other votes, by looking at rule changes. Hence, Roberts (2007) assesses how the introduction of roll-call votes in the 'Committee of the Whole' in the United States House of Representatives affected the Representatives' partisanship. As he convincingly shows, this change in rules of voting increased the partisanship in votes. A related study by Benesch et al. (2018) assesses how the introduction of an electronic voting system in the Swiss upper house and thus the publication as roll calls of all final passage votes (amongst others) affected the Senators' voting behaviour. They find that party discipline in final passage votes has increased due to the new transparency. A similar change of rules occurred in the European Parliament (EP) with the 7th Parliament (EP7). More specifically, the EP introduced a rule change that required all final passage votes on legislative matters to be subject to a roll-call vote. Three studies have looked at the effect of this rule change, coming to different conclusions. Mühlböck and Yordanova (2015) offer comparisons of party discipline based on roll-call votes on legislative proposals both on final passage and previous stages both in EP6 and EP7. They conclude that party discipline might be underestimated based on roll-call votes. Hug (2016) on the other hand models explicitly in an item response theory (IRT) model the effects of party pressure, showing that this has changed from EP6 and EP7.⁸ These changes in party pressure across two legislative periods make comparisons of party discipline infer the effect of roll-call votes as adventurous. Such a comparison is, however, also at the basis of Hix et al.'s (2018) study, whose authors come to the conclusion that focusing on roll-call votes in the EP does not lead to selection biases.

Thus, scholars employing roll-call vote data need to be aware of the rules and the political processes leading to such votes (see, for example, studies by Loewenberg 1971; Fennell 1974; Carrubba et al. 2008; Chiou and Yang 2008; Hug 2010; Stecker 2010; Ainsley and Maxwell 2012; Crisp and Driscoll 2012; Hug et al. 2015; Thierse 2016; Wüest 2016; Chiou et al. 2017). Depending on the research question and the tools used, the biases might be more or less important. Among the tools used to analyse roll-call vote behaviour, indices for party discipline are the most common. From the early indices proposed by Rice (1925, 1928), comparing the difference of yes and no votes amongst members of a party (for a proposed correction for small parties, see Desposato 2005), on to measures that also take into account abstentions (see Lijphart 1963; Attina 1990; Hix et al. 2006) scholars attempted to summarize voting data in single numbers that helped them characterize parties (or other groupings, see, for the case of the US House of Representatives, Turner 1951). Other approaches, however, focused on individual MPs and attempted to extract information from their respective voting records. Early work considered the problem of summarizing these records basically

as a data reduction issue and employed scaling methods, like factor analysis (see Harris 1948; MacRae 1958; Anderson et al. 1966; Weisberg 1972) or Guttman scaling (e.g., Belknap 1958; Farris 1958; Miller and Stokes 1963; Jackson 1974). Only with the seminal contributions by Poole and Rosenthal (1985) introducing a theoretically informed scaling method (i.e. NOMINATE) were such analyses put on a more solid footing. More specifically, these authors' approach relied on a spatial representation of MPs' decision-making. Assuming that MPs have Euclidean preferences in a one-dimensional space and vote for the alternative that is spatially closest to them, allows estimating the positions of MPs and the location of the alternatives in a one-dimensional space.⁹ Such methods (for overviews, see Poole 1999, 2005) have allowed estimating so-called 'ideal-points' of MPs based on a spatial model of voting. As these models assume that only the underlying latent preferences of MPs and the location of the proposal and the status quo affect the voting behaviour of individual MPs, scholars of parliamentary systems alerted the field to the issue of party discipline and the logic of opposition (e.g., Rosenthal and Voeten 2004; Spirling and McLean 2006, 2007). Relying on IRT models, which allow for extending the set of factors influencing an MP's vote, several scholars have offered avenues for exploring how such methods might also be applied in contexts where party pressure matters, like in parliamentary systems (see Clinton et al. 2004; Bräuninger et al. 2016).¹⁰

PARTY DISCIPLINE

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Party discipline can be considered a prerequisite for accountability that focuses on parties. Voters can hold parties accountable only if they act in unison. And as MPs are also to some extent the agents of political parties, the latter also have an interest in maintaining discipline. Thus, it is not surprising that the question of whether parties (or other groups) behave in a disciplined fashion in roll-call votes has been an important preoccupation of legislative scholars since the early twentieth century (and continues to be so, as a recent special section of a journal on the topic of 'Disunity in parliament' testifies (see Close and Gherghina 2019)). These studies, almost systematically either compare parties in a particular legislature, or might include a time or even a cross-national (or even cross-parliamentary) comparison.

Early studies focused largely on one chamber in a specific country. Thus, early work on France, for instance by Burton (1936), highlighted how cohesively French parties voted in the Chamber of Deputies. Focusing on latter periods, a series of scholars (Dupeux 1963; Dupeux 1967; MacRae 1967; Warwick 1977) offered similar assessments, but also highlighted divisions, especially linked to the leftist French Popular Front government (see Warwick 1977). Similarly, early studies focused on the German Bundestag. Loewenberg (1961), analysing roll-call votes from the first few parliamentary periods after the Second World War, finds that German parties vote quite cohesively (see also Loewenberg 1971). A recent comprehensive data collection

underlines this characteristic of parties in the Bundestag until more recent times (Bergmann et al. 2016).

Needless to say, several studies also focused on particular aspects of the British parliament, like Cox's (1987) study on the nineteenth century demonstrating how the increasing powers of government led to changes in voting behaviour in parliament, establishing, through reinforced party discipline, the pre-eminence of government. A similar historical perspective is also adopted in Godbout and Høyland's (2017) study of the Canadian parliament (see also Godbout 2010). Also in this case the government's agenda control played a considerable role in leading to higher party discipline, as did the sorting of MPs into ideologically more cohesive parties.

Similarly, a series of studies has assessed party discipline in the US Congress (e.g., Rohde 1991).¹¹ While most document a decline in bi-partisanship and thus an increase in party discipline, several scholars have highlighted quite convincingly the importance of agenda effects, also in the apparent polarization in these parliamentary chambers (see, for instance, Crespin et al. 2013).

More recent work centres on the European Parliament as a major supranational parliament. Party discipline in the party groups is relatively high as well, despite the fact that no 'government' depends on majority support in the European Parliament. As party groups can at best offer perks in the European Parliament, while the national parties, forming together these groups, are responsible for the candidate selection process, an important issue in this area of research was the extent of the influence of these two sets of actors. Thus, Hix (2002) notes that the national parties (though not the nationality) of MPs have considerable influence on the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) (see also Hix et al. 2006; Hix and Høyland 2014). Recent work by Lindstädt et al. (2011, 2012) demonstrates, however, that the electoral cycle influences the MEPs considerably. The party groups have most influence in the middle of an MEP's term, while the national parties (responsible for candidate selection) have more influence before (and shortly after) elections. Consequently, around election time voters, through their national parties, might be better represented in the EP.

Next to these country- and parliament-specific studies on party discipline,¹² several attempts were also made to adopt a comparative perspective. Thus, Özbudun (1970) in his seminal study on 'Party cohesion' assembles findings from earlier studies to assess how disciplined MPs are in several Western democracies (for an early collection of case studies, see Aydelotte 1977). These comparisons highlight (and underline previous findings) that party discipline varies across parliaments, parties, and time. Thus, Özbudun (1970) finds that party discipline in Great Britain is much higher than in France during the third and fourth Republic. He also expects (and finds to some extent) that mass parties (mostly of the left) act much more in unison in parliament than other parties and that cohesion has increased over time.

While in these earlier studies the comparative aspect served mostly illustrative purposes, in more recent work scholars attempted to leverage on this comparative angle to assess broader research questions. Thus, Owens (2003) and Carey (2007), mostly focusing on East European (see also Tavits 2012), respectively Latin American

countries assess how party discipline varies. Support for the effect of electoral institutions is again, in these studies, quite weak. Similarly, Depauw and Martin (2009) compare party discipline across parties and several parliamentary chambers in order to assess whether the electoral rules and the candidate selection process allow for explaining differences in party cohesion. The evidence offers little support for the role of the electoral system, while the process of candidate selection, and especially the importance of central party institutions in this process, increases party discipline (see also Sieberer 2006). In a similar vein, a more recent study by Coman (2015) covers more countries and assesses similar hypotheses (see also Willumsen 2017 and Willumsen and Öhberg 2017). These comparative studies face the challenge, however, that von Gerlach (1907: 34–40) had already raised, namely that not all votes are roll-called. As the rules for roll-call votes differ, these results have to be taken with a large pinch of salt.

Thus, under the assumption that party discipline is indicative of an influence of parties (though recall the critique by Krehbiel 1993), many studies have documented an important effect of the partisan principal on MPs. Both theoretically and empirically, it is quite clear that this party discipline is normally higher in parliamentary systems (compared to presidential ones), which is almost a prerequisite for allowing voters to hold to account their main agent, namely the parties.

WHAT EXPLAINS VOTES BY MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

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While the study of party discipline emphasizes the important role one principal, namely the party, of MPs plays in the latter's behaviour, a focus on MPs' votes allows for nuanced assessments of various influences. Thus, studies on the explanation of MPs' votes consider, most often and most prominently next to party influence, the influence of voters and more specifically the voters in an MP's constituency. Drawing on the theoretical work briefly discussed above, which considers MPs as agents of several principals (voters, parties, etc.), many authors attempted to assess the respective influence on this behaviour coming from the MP's own preferences, the preferences of his or her constituency, and his or her party. Probably one of the earliest studies focusing on this question is that of Turner (1951), for the US House of Representatives. By assessing first, for four legislative sessions, how important party affiliation is in explaining voting decisions, he then considers how characteristics of the Representatives' constituency might influence roll-call vote behaviour. While finding some evidence for such constituency pressure (in terms of simple correlations) it pales, according to the author, next to the influence of parties. In the same vein, though relying on Guttman scales based on sets of roll-call votes (for early applications, see Belknap 1958; Farris 1958), Miller and Stokes (1963) attempt to infer, with the help of correlations, whether Congressmen are influenced, next to the influence of their own

preferences, by their constituency. Their findings, which were considerably criticized due to their reliance on correlations by Achen (1977, 1978), suggest that Congressmen are influenced by their constituencies, but mostly through their own perceptions of what the latter want (for a similar study focusing on France, see Converse and Pierce 1986).

Given these early attempts to assess the various influences on an MP's vote, and thus also to answer the question whom s/he represents, the literature is replete with different attempts to sort out these influences, relying on information on the preferences of the various actors (e.g., Kalt and Zupan 1990), the behaviour of party-switchers (Nokken 2000), etc. (for critiques addressed towards these various approaches, see Fiorina 1975; Peltzman 1984; Jackson and Kingdon 1992). Relying on an explicit model of decision-making, Levitt (1996) proposes an innovative way to account for the respective influence of a US Senator's party, constituency, and personal preferences. As his results show, the relative influence varies across the term in office with the effect of the preferences of the constituency increasing as an election approaches.

These general studies, which have also been replicated in other contexts, have been improved upon in more specific studies focusing on particular issues. Thus, Bartels (1991) considers votes on military expenditure and links Congressmen's decision to characteristics of their constituency. Hiscox (2002a) assesses whether changes in factor mobility induce changes in voting coalitions in the US Congress, as is expected by trade theory (see also Hiscox 2002b). More explicit tests of various influences on an MP's voting decision rely on specific votes and direct information on MPs' preferences. Kam (2001: 94) convincingly argues in favour of such an approach:

Indeed, unless parliamentarians' preferences are measured directly, one cannot know whether cohesion results because of a congenial configuration of preferences, or because parties have managed to enforce discipline despite their members' preferences.

Using this approach Kam (2001) finds evidence not only of party influence, but also for an MP's personal preferences (see also Kam 2008). Bailer et al. (2007) push this one step further by eliciting preferences on specific bills from MPs and then assessing whether MPs voted uniquely along these preferences, or whether party and constituency preferences matter as well. They find that the effect of an MP's own preferences is mitigated by the electoral system, as is the influence of the constituency's preferences, with MPs elected in majoritarian systems being influenced more strongly by their constituencies. Similar findings result from recent studies taking advantage of the heavy use of direct-democratic institutions, which imply that voters decide on the exact same issues as MPs. Thus, both Hug and Martin (2012) and Martin and Hug (2020 (forthcoming)) show that in the lower and upper chambers, respectively, members elected in majoritarian elections have ideal-points closer to the median position of their canton (see relatedly, Portmann and Stadelmann 2017; Stadelmann et al. 2019). In a similar vein, Stratmann (2006), taking advantage of the mixed electoral system of

Germany, assesses whether members elected in single-member districts behave differently to those elected on party lists. His results suggest that the former deviate more often from the party line (for a related study, see Sieberer 2010).¹³

A series of recent studies estimates the ideal-points of members of parliament in various countries and chambers to assess the respective conflict dimensions (e.g., Power and Zucco 2009; Zucco 2009; Bräuninger et al. 2010; Curini and Zucchini 2010; Jun and Hix 2010; Zucco and Lauderdale 2011). Several scholars have also used roll-call vote data from the European Parliament to assess the position of MEPs and the changes thereof over time (see, for instance Hix et al. 2006; Han 2007; Voeten 2009).¹⁴ More recently, scholars also propose comparing ideal-point estimates over a considerable number of parliamentary chambers, for instance to assess whether, as a function of the regime characteristics, government-opposition voting prevails over voting according to ideological divisions (Hix and Noury 2016). This latter study shows that in presidential systems the ideological divisions are the main dimension in roll-call voting, while the government-opposition divide drives the main dimension in parliamentary systems. This is another expression of the considerable party discipline in parliamentary systems. Such comparative studies, however, face the conundrum discussed above, that the available data for such analyses differs considerably, and systematically, from one parliamentary chamber to the next (see also Coman 2017).

In summary, the study of what influences MPs' decisions has made tremendous progress over time. While ideally scholars would like to have access to identical behavioural data of both principals and agents (as is the case for some policies in Switzerland and in some US states, see Masket and Noel 2012) to assess the influence of voters and parties, survey data can sometimes be of help as well. Overall, these studies show that the influence of constituencies varies as a function of the electoral cycle and that MPs elected in majoritarian elections follow more closely the preferences of the median voter in their constituency.

CONCLUSION

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Roll-call votes provide a unique view on the behaviour of important political actors in legislative processes, namely MPs. Thus, it is hardly surprising that legislative scholars have devoted a considerable amount of attention to analysing such votes to address a wide array of diverse research questions, which can be categorized, as in this chapter, into two broad sets, namely whether parties act in a disciplined fashion and what explains individual MPs' voting behavior. Thus, from the early studies that basically aimed at, on the one hand, assessing whether political parties were unified or divided in their legislative actions, and the other, providing sophisticated analyses based on models allowing (under certain assumptions) to recover information about the preferences of MPs and thus to study what affects the latter's decisions, roll-call votes have provided a unique treasure trove of ample data.

From the very start of these analyses, however, cautionary remarks appeared in the literature emphasizing that, in most parliaments, roll-call votes cover fewer than all votes (legislative or others). Thus, depending on the research question asked, relying on roll-call votes without considering how this wealth of information was produced, is likely to lead to conclusions that are on feeble ground. Already, work focusing on a single chamber over time is likely to be affected by changing rules (Hug et al. 2015) or changes in the agenda (Londregan 2000b; Crespin et al. 2013). These caveats apply even more strongly to comparative work focusing on several parliamentary chambers using different rules of procedures that lead to roll-call votes.

Thus, while the wealth of information provided in the various studies dealing with roll-call votes seems to indicate that, especially in parliamentary democracies, political parties have become more unified in their voting behaviour (especially over a long period of time like the ones covered by Cox 1987; Godbout and Høyland 2017; Godbout 2020), solid conclusions are hardly possible as the field has not yet grappled successfully with the challenges discussed above.

These same caveats also apply to studies focusing more specifically on the various influences on an MP's voting decision. The most careful studies focusing on individual votes rely on detailed measures of the preferences of the various actors that might influence MPs. Such studies, while they gain in depth, obviously raise the issue of their generalizability. More broadly framed studies comprising either (or both) a time and a geographic dimension, are likely to lead to problematic inferences, as the rules leading to roll-call votes differ and change.

Consequently, for the study of representation, analyses of roll-call votes offer a unique glimpse on the actual behaviour of legislators. At the same time, in the absence of similar behavioural data on voters and parties, such analyses are hampered by the fact that, almost by definition, identical scales can not be derived to allow a precise assessment of representation (see Achen 1977, 1978). In addition, as this behaviour is in most legislatures only a subset of all behaviours, and also is likely to be influenced by a myriad of factors, care is warranted when analysing such data. Literature tackling these important questions has progressed dramatically over the last few decades, but an approach that overcomes the various hurdles has not yet emerged.

NOTES

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2. For previous publications of the author on the same subject, see a contribution to the volume 'Party Governance and Party Democracy', edited by Wolfgang C. Müller and Hanne Marthe Narud (Hug 2013) and a similar chapter ('Le vote en assemblée parlementaire,' Hug 2017) published in the 'Traité des études électorales', edited by Nonna Mayer and Yves Deloye. Helpful comments by the editors Robert Rohrschneider and Jacques Thomassen, as well as partial financial support by the Swiss National Science Foundation (Grant n° 100012-111909) are greatly appreciated.
3. In this chapter I will not discuss work on 'dynamic representation' as it is covered in a later chapter, and strictly speaking this chapter focuses solely on MP's responsiveness.
4. The terminology used when describing a party whose members vote in similar ways varies considerably in the literature (for a discussion, see Sieberer 2006). As much of the literature reviewed uses 'party discipline', 'party cohesion', and 'party unity' largely as synonyms, I will do so as well. These notions simply describe the fact that members of a particular party vote frequently together. Whether this behaviour comes about because of disciplining measures, shared preferences, or re-election constraints is, for the purpose of this review, irrelevant.
5. As the discussion of the literature that follows shows, these early warnings were largely ignored by scholars over the next dozen or so decades.
6. It has to be noted that the larger part of Rice's (1925) analyses focuses on the New York Assembly. Similarly, to be true to Rice's (1925) work, the author also contributed a second index allowing the assessment of how much alike two groups behaved in a legislature (see also Rice 1928).
7. See, also, the very informative discussion on this point provided by Turner (1951, 15ff) Snyder and Ting (2005) on the US Congress, and a similar discussion on the case of Brazil by Londregan (2000b).
8. He draws on Høyland's (2010) work, which demonstrated that roll-call vote behaviour differs in (the overwhelming number of) votes on non-legislative matters compared to the behaviour in votes on legislative proposals.
9. Extensions to multidimensional policy spaces have also been proposed.
10. Several other innovations have advanced this literature as well (Londregan 2000a; Lewis 2001; Martin and Quinn 2002; Dewan and Spirling 2011; Imai et al. 2016).
11. It bears noting that the literature on Congress was heavily influenced by the methodology proposed by Poole and Rosenthal (1985) (and probably the provocative interrogation by Krehbiel 1993), such that the analysis of ideal-points is much more prevalent (also in work focusing on party discipline) than in other contexts (see, for instance, Theriault 2008; Jessee and Theriault 2014).
12. Many other studies adopt similar perspectives like Skjæveland's (1999, 2001) work on Denmark; Lyons and Lacina's (2009) study on the Czech Republic; and Ferrara's (2004), Curini and Zucchini's (2012), and Papavero and Zucchini's (2018) study on Italy, just to cite a few.
13. Becher and Sieberer (2008) assess more broadly what affects the likelihood that an MP in the German Bundestag defects from the party line, while the studies by Andeweg and Thomassen (2011), Louwerse and Otjes (2016), and Louwerse et al. (2017) consider voting in the Dutch parliament, where elections in a single district reduce differences in re-election concerns considerably. Thus, the authors find that other factors play a considerable role in explaining voting behaviour.
14. A recent study employing a more flexible modelling strategy questions some of the conclusions reached in these studies (Lo 2018).

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CHAPTER 7

CONSTITUENCY CANDIDATES AND POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

THOMAS ZITTEL

INTRODUCTION

CANDIDATES in constituency campaigns are important agents in the representative process. They contribute to inform voters about past achievements in politics and thus facilitate accountable government. They also function as mechanisms for responsive government since they provide avenues for participation and interaction between citizens and the state.

This chapter surveys the state of the literature about the extent to which, and how, constituency candidates facilitate accountable and responsive government. Furthermore, it asks about the sources of individual level variance in this regard. To achieve this task, the chapter is structured in three main sections. Following this introduction, a first section discusses the issue of constituency level *campaign effort*. The significance of district campaigns compared to the national campaign level must be seen as a prerequisite for the extent to which constituency candidates matter for political representation. A second section addresses two aspects of constituency level *campaign style*. First, we examine the involvement and behaviour of constituency candidates in their campaigns and thus the level of campaign personalization. Second, we analyse the traits of candidates and thus whom parties recruit to personalize their campaign appeals and target distinct voter segments. Candidate characteristics provide important cues to voters on what the campaign is all about and what parties stand for.

A third and final section of the chapter focuses on *candidate effects*. It explores the wider implications of constituency level campaign effort and style for the process of political representation. We will discuss the effects of candidates on voter mobilization, vote choices, and briefly on legislative behaviour. The chapter closes with a short summary on the main conclusions regarding its initial argument, namely that constituency candidates matter for accountability and responsiveness in liberal democracies.

CONSTITUENCY LEVEL CAMPAIGN EFFORT

Election campaigns consist of different levels that involve a national tier and visible ‘Spitzenkandidaten’ (or lead candidates) on the one hand and a constituency tier and less well-known constituency candidates on the other (Norris 2000). The extent to which parties make an effort at the constituency level is a necessary prerequisite for the significance of constituency candidates as agents of political representation. Vital constituency campaigns increase the likelihood of contacts between voters and candidates, thus helping to clarify the candidate and policy choices that parties offer to voters (Johnston et al. 2012).

A large part of the literature on constituency level campaign effort focuses on plurality systems, specifically on the UK. This is mainly motivated by its highly strategic nature resulting in a striking level of variance across districts. Under plurality rule, constituency candidates compete in single member districts to win nominal mandates that eventually pool into national partisan seat shares. This incentivizes parties to strategically target local constituents to effectively mobilize national majorities (Karp et al. 2008). Specifically, it incentivizes parties to make an extra effort in those districts in which elections are close, compared to safe districts or districts in which winning is unlikely. The literature on campaign efforts involves two distinct approaches to empirically tap into this phenomenon. One approach stresses the size of campaign budgets, and thus how much parties spend in their campaigns to win votes (Pattie et al. 1995). A second approach adopts a more comprehensive perspective that aims to summarize the many campaign activities that jointly constitute effort by surveying election agents (Denver and Hands 1997; Denver et al. 2003). Both approaches however reach quite similar conclusions with regard to the strategic nature of constituency level campaign effort in the UK.

From a cross-temporal perspective, the decisive role of district competitiveness for the campaign efforts of British parties is said to be exacerbated by centralization processes in which national headquarters took an increasingly large role in planning and managing constituency level campaign activities (Fisher et al. 2006; Fisher and Denver 2008). These trends in campaign centralization have led to more campaign efforts in marginal districts, if not necessarily in the aggregate (Norris 2000). Increases in campaign effort over time also were found to result from supplementing traditional

campaign techniques such as canvassing with modern electronically mediated campaign approaches (Fisher and Denver 2008; Fisher and Denver 2009).

The strand in the literature that focuses on constituency level campaign effort in the UK is supplemented by research on other plurality (most notably on Canada by Carty and Eagles 1999) and also proportional systems. This comparative turn allows for the exploration of the levels and prerequisites of campaign efforts under different electoral and party organizational contexts. Some of it draws from data that are collected in the context of the *Comparative Candidate Studies Network* (CCS). The CCS data result from surveys among constituency candidates in old and new democracies that supplement traditional approaches to tap into the issue of constituency level campaign effort (Zittel 2015a). Some comparative research also draws from voter level data that contain information about the campaign contacts of voters (e.g. Karp et al. 2008; Hix and Hagemann 2009).

One key finding of the comparative literature shows that constituency level campaign effort in proportional systems is higher than the previous ‘conventional wisdom’ suggested (Bowler and Farrell 2011). Compared to plurality systems, local campaign effort is found to still fall behind in proportional systems (Karp et al. 2008). However, even in proportional systems, parties are eager to invest resources in local campaigns and to mobilize members to launch grass-roots activities at significant levels (Karlsen and Skogerbo 2015; Selb and Lutz 2015; Eder et al. 2015; De Winter and Baudewyns 2015; Chiru 2015). Candidate-centred ballots appear to be a key mechanism for furthering these efforts. In this vein, Hix and Hagemann (2009) found that in preferential electoral systems, more citizens received leaflets during the 2004 European election campaign, compared to closed list systems. While under proportional rule the overall aim of parties remains to win (national) government, candidate-centred ballots provide incentives to launch grass-roots efforts and to woo local voters via local candidates (Karlsen and Skogerbo 2015; Papp and Zorigt 2016). According to Hix and Hagemann (2009) the local campaign effort is also affected by district size. In their study on the 2004 European elections, they found more effort in small compared to large districts (for a similar finding see Bowler and Farrell 2011).

A second key finding of this comparative strand in the literature unveils surprising spatial variance, even under proportional rule (Bowler and Farrell 2011). This has been said to partly result from individual ambition. Candidate-centred ballots provide individual level incentives to run vital campaigns to either win a bid for election or to further career prospects (Zittel and Gschwend 2008; Cross and Young 2011; Selb and Lutz 2015). There is some evidence that, in candidate-centred systems, parties use individual vote returns as proxies to gauge candidate quality and to inform future personnel choices (Bowler et al. 1996: 471; André et al. 2017). Spatial variance in constituency effort, however, also might result from party organizational factors. The strength of local party organizations affects the campaign capabilities of vote-seeking parties on the ground. Grass-roots efforts are labour intensive and demand resources in terms of money and manpower. Related variance across local parties can result in constituency level differences in campaign effort. This is an important but largely

uncharted issue. One notable exception is Pattie and Johnston (2016), who found for the UK that even in key marginal constituencies, many local parties increasingly struggle to mobilize sufficient resources to launch credible grass-roots efforts.

The lack of cumulative comparative research renders it impossible to generally assess cross-temporal trends in constituency effort beyond the British case. However, we can infer from our discussion that current political dynamics offer a mixed picture. On the one hand, the weakening of local party organizations in many democracies raises questions about future local level campaign capabilities. The proliferation of candidate-centred ballots (Renwick and Pilet 2015) on the other hand increases electoral incentives to target local constituents. The combination of these two trends raises follow-up questions about agency in campaign politics. To what extent are future district level campaign efforts a result of party or rather candidate strategies? To what extent do these two levels reinforce or contradict each other? These questions hardly have been addressed in the literature and cannot be resolved in the context of this chapter. However, we will return to them in the next section, which addresses the issue of candidates' campaign behaviour and characteristics.

THE CAMPAIGN BEHAVIOUR AND CHARACTERISTICS OF CONSTITUENCY CANDIDATES

The role of candidates in constituency campaigns has become a prominent theme in the electoral studies literature. This is due to a growing interest in the personalization of electoral politics (McAllister 2007; Rahat and Sheaffer 2007; Zittel and Gschwend 2008; Karvonen 2010). However, this also results from a new set of data that emerged from the CCS and that allow analysts to explore closely the behaviours and socio-structural backgrounds of constituency candidates (Zittel 2015a; Vandeleeene et al. 2019).

The literature on constituency level personalization involves a number of adjectives that aim to distinguish it from national level personalization. Most prominent examples are decentralized (Balmas et al. 2014) and individualized (Zittel and Gschwend 2007; Zittel and Gschwend 2008) personalization. While both concepts show significant overlap, they differ in ways that are relevant for the main theme of this chapter, which is to view candidates as agents for accountable and responsive government. In the first part of this section, we discuss their main difference and how they relate to candidate behaviour. In a second part, we then move to candidate characteristics. In addition to candidates' campaign behaviour, candidate traits also matter for accountable and responsive government. Distinct candidates with distinct traits bear implications for the way campaigns are run and what they convey to voters.

Personalized and Individualized Campaign Behaviour

Decentralized personalization has been defined as concerning the visibility of local candidates compared to national level operations (Balmas et al. 2014: 40). The Irish case is widely portrayed as an ideal example in this regard. For the 2007 election campaign, 60 per cent of the population reported that personal contact was made with them in their homes by either candidates or volunteers representing local candidates (Sudulich and Wall 2009: 459). Students of Irish politics explain this high level of personalization by pointing to pronounced electoral incentives that result from Ireland's Single Transferable Vote (STV), in which individual candidates of different parties, but also of one and the same party, compete in multi member districts for nominal votes (Marsh 2007: 506f.; Marsh 2004).

Studies that reach beyond the Irish case provide indications that candidate-centred ballots generally further decentralized campaign personalization. Analyses based on CCS data for Austria show that candidates with promising electoral prospects were more likely to personally campaign full time in the last campaign stage (Eder et al. 2015). Similarly, in Belgium, Canada, and Germany, serious contenders for nominal mandates were found to be more likely to produce independent campaign material emphasizing their own candidacy, despite available material produced by the parties they represent (Zittel and Gschwend 2008; Cross and Young 2015; De Winter and Baudewyns 2015).

Online media are portrayed as effective means for decentralized personalization and are used in expected strategic ways. Auter and Fine (2018), for example, report for the 2010 US Senate elections that all seventy-eight candidates maintained official Facebook pages that showed higher numbers of posts in competitive districts and with greater proximity to Election Day. Obholzer and Daniel (2016) find for the 7th session of the European Parliament that 40 per cent of all MEPs had active Twitter accounts during the 2014 Elections and that nominal ballots and low district magnitude explained part of the variance (see also Rodriguez and Madariaga 2016; Giebler and Wüst 2011. For a national level analysis on the effects of mixed-member rules see Zittel 2015b).

The reported research indicates whether candidates actively involve themselves in local level campaign activities. It does not say much about campaign content and the extent to which candidate characteristics and valence are emphasized, which is said to be another component of decentralized personalization (Bowler and Farrell 1992; Balmas et al. 2014). One of the exceptions in this regard is a recent analysis of the 2003 and 2009 Japanese House of Representative elections in which Adams et al. (2016) coded newspaper campaign ads that allowed candidates to present themselves to Japanese voters. They counter-intuitively find that candidates representing parties with an electoral advantage emphasized character-based appeals compared to parties that ran behind and that the personalization of campaign messages was more pronounced in rural compared to urban districts.

In contrast to decentralized personalization, the notion of individualized personalization raises the issue of agency that is essential in the context of representative government. It aims to address this issue by asking about the organizational and motivational dimension of constituency campaigns and about who runs the constituency campaigns rather than how they are run. In this vein, individualized campaign strategies are defined by candidate-centred campaign organizations which weaken the control that party organizational units are able to exercise, and also by distinct subjective aspirations, by which candidates aim to focus their activities on themselves in entrepreneurial ways rather than on their party (Zittel 2015a; Zittel and Gschwend 2008).

Research on the motivational dimension of constituency campaigns shows a fair amount of individualization across established democracies. It draws from an ordinal variable resulting from CCS data that distinguishes between candidates' subjective goal to either emphasize their own candidacy or the policies and programmes of their parties in their campaigns. Frequency distributions that are based on candidates' self-placement on a 10- or 11-point scale measuring their subjective campaign goal show a clear bias towards the goal of running as a partisan candidate, selecting the rank positions of 10 or 11. But they nevertheless show striking variance and indicate the existence of a sizable share of candidates that leans towards the candidate polar end and that subjectively aim to run as an individual agent. Explanations for this variance consistently point to the expected positive role of candidate-centred ballots but also indicate that ideological mavericks and candidates with strong local ties are more inclined to individualize their campaign. Most notably, the role of standard electoral factors such as electoral competitiveness and district magnitude remains inconclusive in this research (De Winter et al. 2019; Papp and Zorigt 2018; Chiru 2015; Zittel 2015b; Selb and Lutz 2015; Zittel and Gschwend 2008; for a similar approach with similar findings based upon a survey with legislators see Chan 2018).

The organizational dimension involves both the horizontal relationship between candidate and local party and also the vertical relationships between national and local campaigns. Analyses based upon CCS data stress individual level variance in the size of personal non-party related campaign teams (Chiru 2015), the share of party independent campaign funding (Zittel and Gschwend 2008), and also the extent to which candidates discarded coordination efforts with national, regional, and local level party organizations. However, the evidence on these issues remains scarce and inconclusive and requires further systematic efforts in future research.

Candidate Characteristics

System level accountability and responsiveness not only are affected by constituency effort and candidate visibility but also by who the candidates are. The literature stresses two specific and related themes that we discuss in this section. It first stresses biases among vote and policy-seeking parties to recruit politically experienced candidates at

the risk of running socially homogeneous and thus detached candidate pools. Second, it highlights the role of proportional electoral contexts as opportunity structures that allow to diversify candidate pools and to recruit candidates from the ranks of formerly disadvantaged groups.

Past recruitment biases are mirrored in the extensive US-American literature on candidate quality (Bond et al. 1997; Cox and Katz 1996; Bond et al. 1985; Bianco 1984) and also in the European literature on professionalization (Cotta and Best 2007; Borchert 2003). Both literatures essentially agree on the key role of political experience and educational and occupational achievements in recruitment processes. They nevertheless differ with regard to one fundamental conceptual issue. While the former literature considers candidate quality a valence factor, the latter perceives it as indicating a set of criteria that are purposely developed by parties to foster their collective goals.

The quest of political parties for recruiting candidates with high levels of political experiences and significant educational and occupational achievements has been corroborated by a wealth of empirical research. In a recent case-specific analysis, Lampriakou et al. (2017) find for the candidate pools in the British elections in 2015 that they display a narrow range of occupational backgrounds, with fewer manual occupations, and also a relatively high percentage of candidates with university education. The British case must be considered a most likely test case, since its plurality system presumably provides few opportunities for parties to diversify their candidate pools. However, research on non-plurality systems corroborates biases in candidate pools (Norris 1997; Ohmura et al. 2018; Dodeigne and Teuber 2019). The research conducted by Maurizio Cotta and Heinrich Best is of special importance. These authors demonstrate from a cross-national and cross-temporal perspective the increasing and pervasive prominence of political experience in the recruitment choices of political parties and thus the rise of a professionalized (party) political class in twentieth-century European democracies (Best 2007; Cotta and Best 2007). Heinrich Best (2007: 88) concludes by emphasizing the ‘paradox that representative democracy emerges as an order of inequality from processes of selection (. . .) which are, in principle, egalitarian, inclusive and free’.

Increasing attention to issues of descriptive representation and identity politics has stimulated new interest in the social diversity of candidate pools even though empirical research on this has been said to remain a blind spot in the literature (Bloemraad and Schonwalder 2013). The few available findings stress trends towards more inclusive candidate pools involving formerly disadvantaged groups such as women (Valdini 2012; Dolan et al. 2007; Carroll 1994) and ethnic minorities (Sobolewska 2013; see also Chapter 10 in this *Handbook*). They show that these trends, however, start from a low level and also frequently constrain outsider candidates to electorally non-viable positions (Dodeigne and Teuber 2019). Electoral rules shape these trends in expected ways. They are facilitated by proportional rules in multi-member districts that afford parties greater leeway to balance their tickets and to nominate female or minority candidates when compared to plurality systems (Kenny and Verge 2016; Valdini 2012; Hennl and

Kaiser 2008; Kunovich and Paxton 2005; Rule 1987). Some authors, however, stress the limits of electoral rules in explaining cross-national variance and suggest paying more attention to party organizational factors and also to group mobilization efforts (Cheng and Tavits 2011; Bawn et al. 2012; Bloemraad 2013). Visible progressive developments in plurality systems corroborate this line of argument. In this vein, Lampriakou et al. (2017), found the candidate pools of parties in the 2015 British election to reflect greater efforts to particularly provide better representation of women and ethnic minorities, though this was found to vary by party (for similar assessments on the UK see Sobolewska 2013; Ashe et al. 2010).

The increasing social diversity of candidate pools does not contradict one important continuity that needs to be stressed by way of concluding this section. It does not indicate a decreasing prominence of political experience and educational and occupational achievements as key criteria in legislative recruitment. These remain important proxies for vote and policy-seeking parties to estimate the loyalty and effectiveness of candidates in campaigns but also in their role as prospective legislators. The growing social diversity that we witness in candidate pools suggests that formerly disadvantaged groups such as women now show increasing levels of professional and political credentials and thus experience increasing success in the recruitment choices of parties (Schwindt-Bayer 2011).

THE EFFECTS OF CANDIDATES' CAMPAIGN BEHAVIOUR AND CHARACTERISTICS

The effects of campaigns are a contested matter in the literature (Farrell and Schmitt-Beck 2002). While some argue that 'the prevailing scholarly consensus on campaigns is that they have minimal effects' (Brady et al. 2006: 4) others believe that 'campaigns fundamentally shape voters' decisions' (Druckman 2004: 577). This section asks whether campaign effort, candidates' campaign behaviour, and their characteristics empirically matter for the behaviours of voters. It furthermore takes stock of the literature on an understudied question, namely the legislative effects of candidates' campaign behaviour.

Does constituency level campaign effort win votes? Parts of the debate on this question hark back to the issue of who candidates are. This stems from the work of Gary Jacobson, in which he showed that campaign effects are conditioned by candidate status. Incumbents are found to enjoy far smaller electoral gains from their campaign efforts than do challengers (Jacobson 2006; Jacobson 1978). According to Jacobson, this results from relative differences in candidates' prior records. Compared to challengers, incumbents are better known among district voters as a result of their legislative records, the work they carry out for their districts, and the local media coverage. Consequently, their campaigns produce fewer marginal returns in terms of mobilizing and persuading voters.

From a comparative perspective, only Benoit and Marsh (2003) echo the proclaimed challenger effect for the case of Ireland (for a similar finding for elections to the European Parliament see Sudulich et al. 2013). In contrast, the literature on constituency campaigns in the UK finds consistent positive effects of campaign effort on electoral performance, independent of candidate status. In European contexts, strong parties offer functional party labels that contradict information asymmetries resulting from candidate status and level the playing field between incumbents and challengers. Consequently, this literature finds, that any carefully managed campaign stands a good chance of delivering tangible electoral payoffs (Pattie et al. 1995; Whiteley and Seyd 2003; Fisher et al. 2011; Fisher et al. 2014; Pattie et al. 2017). Similar positive effects of constituency level campaign effort are found in research on proportional systems (Johnson 2013). In this vein, a study on the German case matching individual level voter data with individual level candidate data shows that higher campaign spending increases the likelihood of a candidate vote being cast, independent of candidate status, but also independent of partisanship at the voter level. Increased levels of campaign spending mobilize partisans but also stand a good chance of persuading non-partisans (Gschwend and Zittel 2015).

Campaign effort not only affect vote choices but also other important components of the representative process such as voter turnout and voter information levels. Research on turnout shows that increased campaign effort in terms of spending but also in terms of contact activities results in increased levels of turnout (Trumm and Sudulich 2018; Vaccari 2017; Fisher et al. 2016; Cutts and Johnston 2015; Green et al. 2003). Studies on voter information levels provide some indication that increased campaign effort also results in higher information levels among voters. This particularly concerns the issue of name recognition and thus the ability of voters to understand who the competing candidates are (Gschwend and Zittel 2015; Giebler and Wessels 2017; Pattie and Johnston 2004).

The electoral effects of campaign personalization and individualization are an under-researched issue in the electoral studies literature, though exceptions exist. Van Erkel et al. (2017) find for Belgium that individualized constituency campaigns, defined by the shares of private funds in campaign budgets and the candidates' subjective campaign goal, did result in greater shares of preference votes. However, some of these effects were found to be contingent upon contextual factors such as candidate's resources, their party affiliation, and their list position. For the US, Miller (2016) finds positive effects of the individual time investments of Congressional candidates for their vote shares. However, he concedes that these effects are restricted to challengers, which reiterates the role of candidate status in Congressional politics already discussed above.

The electoral effects of candidate characteristics are subject to a large body of research that stresses the mediating role of contextual factors such as partisanship, group affiliation, and district structure. As a result of space constraints, we briefly touch upon ethnic candidates leaving out the literature on female candidates (see, for example, Schwindt-Bayer et al. 2010; Atkeson 2003; see also Chapters 8, 9, and 10 in

this *Handbook*). The key question with regard to this issue is to what extent ethnic candidates are able to mobilize support among co-ethnic voters *without* losing votes among non-group voters and key constituencies. This is what Rohrschneider and Whitefield (2012) called the strain of representation in modern electorates that are increasingly diverse and fragmented.

Positive effects of ethnic candidates on co-ethnic voters are shown by Zingher and Farrer (2016), who analyse multiple election cycles in Australia and the UK, finding that their nomination consistently is associated with a 10-percentage point gain in support from ethnic minority independents and Labour supporters. For the UK, Fisher et al. (2015) found that voters of Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage were more likely to support co-ethnic candidates, while those of West Indian and African heritage were not (see also Martin 2016 with similar results for the UK; also Barreto 2007 for the Hispanic vote in the US). These findings, however, stress the context dependency of candidate effects at the constituency level and also are contradicted by more sceptical accounts and negative findings (see, for example, Henderson et al. 2016 on the Hispanic vote in California). Furthermore, the electoral risks that ethnic candidates face among majority voters are stressed by a recent study of Fisher et al. (2015) on the 2010 UK elections. Their findings show that ethnic minority candidates suffered an average electoral penalty of about 4 per cent of the three-party vote from whites, mostly because those with anti-immigrant feelings were less willing to vote for Muslims (see also Stegmaier et al. 2013).

The relevance of constituency candidates for the representative process not only results from voter-level effects. Their characteristics and behaviours also matter for the legislative process and thus for how voters are represented in substantive ways. This traditionally is an under-researched issue in the literature. However, recent efforts to better understand the link between descriptive and substantive forms of representation contribute to address this gap. Also, some studies have started to explore the relationship between successful candidates' campaign strategies and their legislative behaviours. In the following, we briefly review existing research on the issue.

The literature on the descriptive representation of women provides an important vantage point in the search for answers about the substantive effects of candidate characteristics. At century's turn, Joni Lovenduski and Pippa Norris (2003) argued that the scarce representation of women in the parliaments of most democracies renders it premature to examine empirically whether they make a difference or not in the legislative process. Since then, shifting research perspectives and increasing numbers of female legislators have stimulated a debate on this question. Other chapters cover this topic in greater detail (Chapters 8 and 9 in this *Handbook*), which allows us to only briefly and selectively touch upon the main findings of this new wave of research (for an overview, see Wängnerud 2009). These findings show that candidate characteristics make a difference and that female legislators are more inclined to subjectively focus on women's issues and gender equality (Campbell et al. 2010; Wängnerud 2000), to keep close contact with women's organizations (Celis et al. 2016; Wängnerud 2000), and to support issues that concern the interests of women while participating in the legislative

process through parliamentary speeches, parliamentary questions, and roll call votes (Debus and Hansen 2014; for an interesting negative finding see Simon and Palmer 2010). Studies also show that female legislators were able to directly affect policy outcomes in decisive ways (Budde and Heichel 2017; Kittilson 2008; Sainsbury 2004).

To what extent do differences in candidates' campaign behaviour matter for their legislative behaviour? Particularly, to what extent do personalized and individualized campaign behaviours matter for the legislative process? This question, so far, has been raised and explored only by very few studies in the literature. Cantor and Herrnson (1997), for example, shows for the US-American context, that Democrats who received less campaign assistance from their party, and who were therefore more 'on their own', were more likely to deviate in roll calls from the party line. Since party unity used to be low in the US Congress during the time of this study and since parties might deliberately provide extra assistance to loyal candidates, this finding raises issues of causal inference and also adaptability to European contexts.

For European contexts, two recent studies, both on Hungary, have explored the effects of candidates' campaign behaviour on their legislative behaviour. Chiru (2018) finds that close contact with local activists during the campaign serves as a good predictor for the likelihood of asking parliamentary questions that signal to geographic constituents. Papp (2018) finds a limited effect of campaign personalization on legislators' attitudes and how they perceive their role, but no effect on their actual behaviour and how they participate in the legislative process. Since personalized and individualized constituency level campaign politics is of increasing importance in modern democracies, its effects on the legislative process should be of concern for future research on the implications of constituency candidates for political representation.

CONCLUSION

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This chapter explored the role of constituency candidates in representative systems. It shows that constituency campaigns differ with regard to campaign effort, but also with regard to candidate behaviour and characteristics. It further shows that this affects what voters know about politics, whether and how they vote, and how they are represented in parliament. This is not to say that national campaigns and the main candidates of political parties are irrelevant in this regard. This, rather, stresses the important complementary role of local candidates in the representative processes and in securing its responsiveness and accountability. This electoral role, however, might be of increased importance under the conditions of ongoing partisan dealignment and the resulting political changes.

This chapter makes two additional points that we highlight here. First, the effects of constituency candidates' behaviour and characteristics are not confined to the voter level. The personalization and individualization of campaigns and also the descriptive heterogeneity of candidate pools spills over into the legislative realm, affecting the way

successful candidates participate in the legislative process. Second, variance in candidates' campaign efforts and styles, and also variance in candidate characteristics, are not present by chance but rather result from distinct contextual factors. The literature traditionally stresses electoral rules in this regard. Specifically, candidate-centred ballots are said to facilitate candidates' campaign efforts and their personalized or individualized campaign behaviour, but, at the same time, to bias the nomination choices of parties, directing their choices to favour median candidates. A closer scrutiny of the recent literature, however, showed that the effects of electoral rules are conditioned by a more complex set of party level and individual level factors. One of the challenges of future research is to disentangle the interplay between these different factors and their relative weight. This is important, since this root system of representation conditions those who we are able to choose from in elections, what candidates communicate, and who voters listen to in election campaigns.

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P A R T I I I

DESCRIPTIVE
REPRESENTATION

CHAPTER 8

DESCRIPTIVE REPRESENTATION REVISITED

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It is now part of the shared understanding of liberal democracy that representation involves at least some component of what has come to be known as ‘descriptive’ representation. Politicians, political commentators, and citizens alike now routinely comment on the gender and ethnic composition of elected assemblies, and take it as self-evident progress when elections generate a higher proportion of women or a more ethnically diverse legislature. Initiatives to achieve the latter remain relatively rare, but the Inter-Parliamentary Union has been collecting data on the proportion of women in parliaments around the world since the mid-1980s, and the idea that this is at least salient information is now widely accepted.¹ Some form of gender quota is now in place in half the countries of the world, and in many cases, this is not just as voluntary adoption by individual political parties but as a legislative requirement on all parties participating in elections.² France, Spain, Portugal, and Ireland are among the countries in Europe that have passed electoral laws requiring parties to achieve a specified level of gender balance when selecting candidates for election. In Latin America, these electoral laws are increasingly the norm. The global figure is not stunning—at the time of writing just 24 per cent of the world’s politicians are female—but figures in the high 30s or 40s are no longer so unusual. Progress *has* been stunning if one compares the predominantly male and ethnically homogeneous legislatures of the 1970s and 1980s with the (somewhat) more diverse legislatures of today (for the role of feminist political scientists in this shift, see Sawyer 2019).

This does not mean that the normative arguments are now settled, or that a continued upward trajectory is in any way guaranteed. Though many—perhaps even most—now accept that there is a democratic deficit when the decisions shaping our lives are made by assemblies composed overwhelmingly of men, overwhelmingly of those with no experience of discrimination or insecurity, or overwhelmingly of those from the society’s ethnic majority, there is no great head of steam building up to propel

democracies towards full parity of representation. Public opinion appears largely satisfied with current slow rates of change. The arguments employed to promote fairer representation are, moreover, varied, and on some scores in tension. In what follows, I begin with reasons why descriptive representation matters, including some reasons why 'descriptive representation' may not be the best term. I then address three perennial concerns. These are worries about essentialism; disagreements about the extent to which a politics of presence implies a form of group representation; and questions about whose exclusion matters. I turn finally to some pressing questions about how the still growing body of initiatives to address political under-representation by gender and ethnicity relates to the populist politics that characterizes many liberal (and other) democracies today.

WHY DESCRIPTIVE REPRESENTATION MATTERS

One point to note from the outset is that 'descriptive representation' is not the chosen language of many of those who have contributed to these debates. Essays on the topic commonly reference theorists who work with 'inclusion' or 'the politics of difference' (Young 1990, 2000); who write of 'group-based representation' (Williams 1998); the 'tyranny of the majority' (Guinier 1994); or 'the politics of presence' (Phillips 1995). In all these cases, there is a shared critique of the homogeneity that has characterized those in positions of power, and a set of arguments about the damage this does to our claims to equal citizenship as well as the narrowing effect it has on the policies our supposedly representative institutions adopt. In all cases, there are proposals for opening up the democratic system by changing not just structures but personnel, with an insistence that *who* does the representation can be as important as the ideas or visions they represent. In the process, a 'politics of presence' increasingly supplements a previous 'politics of ideas' (Phillips 1995).

The presumption, in some cases, is that it is impossible for those who have not shared an experience of disadvantage, discrimination, and exclusion to speak adequately for those who have. Melissa Williams captures some of the force of this view in a speech she cites from the Rev. Henry McNeal Turner, elected to the Georgia state legislature in 1868 but prevented from taking his seat because he was black. 'We are told,' he said, 'that if black men want to speak, they must speak through white trumpets; if black men want their sentiments expressed, they must be adulterated and sent through white messengers, who will quibble and equivocate and evade as rapidly as the pendulum of a clock' (cited in Williams 1998: 279). The idea that white politicians simply cannot be trusted to represent black interests is an especially strong version of the argument—and entirely plausible in that context. More typically, however, it is recognized that advocacy is not restricted to those who directly share

the experience. There are male politicians who have fought tirelessly for women's rights; female politicians who disdain any suggestion that they might speak for women; and white people who have given their lives to struggles for racial equality. The core argument is not that political perspectives are *determined* by one's location in gender or racial hierarchies, hence that failing the participation of members of disadvantaged groups, no one speaks in their name. The argument, more modestly, is that the capacity to recognize and challenge these hierarchies depends on exposure to them, whether this be direct or mediated through others.

We can all learn from the experiences of others, including by reading about them, but those who have experienced marginalization have concerns, interests, and perspectives that those lacking this experience may not even understand, let alone be able to re-present. There is, in other words, an underlying epistemic argument about the ways in which experience enables and constrains the understanding of political issues; this epistemic argument often precedes any claim about people constituting distinct or competing interest groups. Indeed, many contributors to the literature prefer the 'more fluid and open' language of perspective over that of interest, because, as Iris Marion Young puts it, 'a perspective is a general orientation on the political issues without determining what one sees, and without dictating particular conclusions' (Young 2000: 148). But whether the focus is on interest or perspective, the central argument is that there can be no substitute for the presence of those with the more direct experience in decision-making assemblies. Failing their participation, we cannot be confident that the issues arising from their location in gender or racial hierarchies will be adequately identified or vigorously pursued.

It is relatively easy to see why the many theorists who have argued versions of this do not all adopt a language of descriptive representation. That term has been employed, from its beginnings, in a contrast with more substantive understandings of representation, in ways that then suggest something rather cosmetic. This was indeed implied in Hanna Pitkin's use of the term in her influential work on *The Concept of Representation*. One of her key distinctions was between representation as 'acting for' and representation as 'standing for'. In the first of these, the quality of the representation can be judged by how well the representative acts for those he or she represents: this might be a matter of how well she articulates their needs and concerns, how responsive she is to their preoccupations, how accountable, how effective. There is, in this, no particular imperative towards ensuring that representatives also reflect their constituents as regards gender or class or race. In the second, by contrast, the representative 'stands for'—one might almost say 'stands in for'—those who are being represented, and in this understanding, it looks as if the quality of the representation is to be judged simply by how closely the representative mirrors the represented, by the nature of the resemblance, the degree of likeness. As Pitkin then notes, this suggests a somewhat passive understanding of representation. "The representative does not act for others; he "stands for" them, by virtue of a correspondence or connection between them, a resemblance or reflection. In political terms, what seems important is less what the legislature does than how it is composed' (Pitkin, 1967: 61).

This distinction between ‘being there’ and ‘doing something’ is, however, significantly misleading as a characterization of the concerns that drive recent initiatives regarding the composition of decision-making institutions. In most of the arguments, it is precisely because representatives *do* act, *do* make choices, *do* exercise judgement, that being able to ‘represent’ the gender or ethnic composition of the electorate so much matters. If politicians were mere ciphers, their role no more than to pass on a message from constituents, it might indeed not matter who they were, for their gender, ethnicity or class would make minimal difference to their arguments or voting records. It is precisely because representatives must act that the knowledges they draw on from their social experiences become relevant to their political decisions.

In an earlier—somewhat idealized—version of party politics, the party label alone was supposed to provide voters with the necessary information about what their politicians would do, and having representatives who shared one’s party allegiances was considered enough of a predictor of their future actions, without any additional assistance from shared social experience. Even in the ideal version, the case is flawed, for politicians always have to establish priorities and exercise judgement in the face of unanticipated issues; if we regard knowledge as to any significant degree ‘situated’, we then have good reason to seek the additional representativeness given by some shared characteristics. But the case for this has been markedly strengthened by the decline of a left-right spectrum that more readily bundled judgements and preferences around the organizing axis of class. In her analysis of the growing demands for women’s political representation, Nadia Urbinati argues that women previously felt more confidence in the ability of their political parties to pursue policies that would address their concerns, and did not therefore worry so much about their own virtual absence from parliamentary debates. With the declining role of, and trust in, political parties, and the greater fragmentation of issues, this changed. ‘When women demanded a greater presence on party lists or in elected institutions, it was because they no longer trusted their party... They no longer believed that their absence from decision-making institutions was irrelevant to the fulfillment of their demands’ (Urbinati 2012: 473). Jane Mansbridge (1999) makes a related point about trust in her argument about why having female or black representatives matters. When we cannot predict views on abortion or multiculturalism or civil rights or immigration from positions on the nationalization of the banks, we begin to seek additional sources of ‘representativeness’.

All this links fairer representation to fairer outcomes, and has given rise to numerous studies exploring whether and in what ways descriptive representation really does promote substantive representation (e.g. Lovenduski 2005; Celis et al. 2008). Evidence here is still mixed, in part because there are few ‘natural experiments’ to draw on: even the paragons of gender representation—the Nordic countries—have not been able to sustain full parity between women and men in their legislatures. The country with the highest female participation is Rwanda, still grappling with the fallout from a brutal civil war, so not an easy test case. Moreover, increases in the number of female parliamentarians do not always (indeed rarely) combine with advances into positions of leadership; and as the literature on new institutionalism demonstrates, numbers do

not guarantee transformations in institutional culture (Annesley 2010; Chappell and Waylen 2013). Other chapters in this section provide fuller accounts of what is now known as regards gender and minority representation (see Chapters 9 and 10 in this *Handbook*). The point to stress here is that there is always an important additional component to the argument that does not depend on evidence about outcomes.

This is sometimes described in term of justice (Okin 1995), sometimes political liberty (Urbinati 2012), sometimes parity of participation (Fraser 2003). It is generally captured by the observation that those currently marginalized in political decision-making should not have to ‘prove’ that their entry transforms political life in order to justify their inclusion. The case stands even if this were to make no difference at all to practices, debates, or policies, for it is not simply a matter of policy outcomes; it is a matter of equal citizenship. As Urbinati (2012: 469) puts it, ‘The achievement of reparative justice may or may not be the outcome of the citizens’ political presence. Yet *whatever the outcome*, it should certainly not be what justifies justice in representation.’ ‘Representation is a means of defending or promoting interests, but it also has a value that is not reducible to the interests it may help to protect or voice, or fulfill. It is... a question of political liberty: being in the game and playing the game as citizens who are equal in power’ (2012: 475).

ESSENTIALISM

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The normative arguments are strong, but leave areas of continuing uncertainty about the precise implications. One frequent criticism is that focusing on the social characteristics of political representatives commits one to an implausible essentialism, as if all women, merely by virtue of being women, are likely to support the same kinds of policies and initiatives, or all those sharing an ethnicity are by virtue of this essentially alike. Proponents of descriptive representation have been addressing and, to my mind, answering this criticism from the early 1980s onwards. So when Virginia Sapiro (1981) argued that women should be recognized as a distinct interest group, she was immediately taken to task—by those who broadly supported her argument—for failing to specify in what ways ‘women’ could be said to constitute a group, or sufficiently to address the intersection of hierarchies of gender, race, and class (Diamond and Hartsock 1981). When Lani Guinier (1994) argued that all groups should have a meaningful voice in government (earning herself the epithet of ‘quota queen’ for her pains), it was a central point in her argument that merely increasing the number of African American representatives was no guarantee of better minority representation. Though strongly supportive of higher numbers, she was concerned that the mechanisms most readily available to achieve these tended to provide safe seats for minority representatives, thereby insulating them from challenge and making them less effective as representatives (see also Swain 1993; Canon 1999). In these and other contributions, the idea of a unified ‘women’s’ interest, or unified ‘black’ interest, has been firmly

repudiated, along with the easily disproved notion that any woman, merely by virtue of being a woman, can speak to the interests and concerns of all women, that any person of colour can speak to the interests and concerns of all people of colour, or any Muslim, Christian, or Jew to the interests and concerns of all Muslims, Christians, Jews. As Melissa Williams puts it (1998: 6), 'no defensible claim for group representation can rest on assertions of the essential identity of women or minorities; such assertions do violence to the empirical facts of diversity as well to the agency of individuals to define the meaning of their social and biological traits'.

The critique of essentialism has been a particular preoccupation for feminists, and not only because generalizations about women are a central part of what feminism seeks to contest. Claiming an essential 'female' identity also has the effect of obscuring major differences of experience according to location in racial and class hierarchies, and can actively project the hegemony of one sub-group (Spelman 1990; Narayan 1998; Mohanty 1984, 1992). As the notion of intersectionality (Crenshaw 1989) has gained prominence in feminist debate, it is increasingly recognized that everyone is positioned at intersections of gender, race, and class (to mention only three major axes of power relations) that structure our experiences differently. No one then argues for an essential female or essential minority identity. Nor, indeed, do advocates of increased representation for women particularly warm to the notion of paradigmatic 'women's issues', which seems to imply that men have no interest in—or can be absolved from any interest in—matters relating to child care or work/life balance or sexual harassment. That women are more likely to raise such issues is empirically the case, but this does not make them 'women's issues'.

The risks of essentialism have been long rehearsed, along with the misleading presumption that all minority ethnic citizens can rally under the banner of 'black' (Modood 1994); or the dangers of assuming that 'just any woman, black or Latino will do' (Dovi 2002). This is not to say, however, that the conundrum in claiming that certain social groups are politically excluded, whilst simultaneously refusing to specify core defining features of the group, has been resolved. As regards ethnicity, Modood (2007) offers a Wittgensteinian idea of 'family resemblance' as a way to avoid the essentialism of groups. As regards gender, Young (1994) offers a Sartrean distinction between series and group, arguing that we can think of women as those 'positioned as feminine' by a complex of varying social practices (including the local expectations of femininity, the institutionalized divisions of labour, the social rules of menstruation) without committing ourselves to the view that all women share certain attributes, or a particular identity, or experience their lives in the same way. Others have argued that it is the inescapable paradox of feminism that it must simultaneously assert *and* refuse the identity of women. As Joan Scott (1997: 3–4) puts it, 'Feminism was a protest against women's political exclusion: its goal was to eliminate "sexual difference" in politics, but it had to make its claims on behalf of "women" (who were discursively produced through "sexual difference"). To the extent that it acted for "women", feminism produced the "sexual difference" it sought to eliminate.' Nancy Fraser (1997) makes a similar point when she argues that the politics around race and gender

simultaneously asserts their significance and seeks to ‘put them out of business’ as organizing principles. These issues will continue to generate debate.

GROUP REPRESENTATION

The question of group representation links to the issue of essentialism, but is also distinct. One can talk of groups without thereby reifying them into entities defined by core characteristics (Brubaker 2004; Phillips 2007); indeed, the point of Young’s distinction between series and group is precisely to highlight the sense in which groups are political entities, brought into existence through action. But once we accept that groups are internally heterogeneous, we are left with an ambiguity in what it means to represent a group. This begs the question of which sections of the group one has in mind: the old, the young, the rich, the poor, the men, the women? There is a further complication when it comes to political representatives, for most are elected via geographical constituencies, and usually present themselves for election as members of a political party. Except in the rare cases where there is a separate electoral roll for women and men, a constituency is never made up exclusively of voters sharing the representative’s gender, and only in the most segregated of circumstances is it exclusively made up of voters sharing his or her ethnicity. When, moreover, representatives are elected as candidates from a political party, it is unclear in what sense they can be deemed to represent some other constituency. They can take it upon themselves, certainly, to speak for their gender or racial or ethnic group as well as for their constituency and party—and many now do. But they cannot in all legitimacy describe themselves as ‘group representatives’.

In any strict sense of the phrase, group representation is a misnomer. It carries most conviction when allied to structures through which representatives consult with members of ‘their’ group over the policies they should pursue. Iris Marion Young’s early work on group representation (1989, 1990) comes closest to this, but only because it is not about political representation in the more conventional sense. Young argued for public funding to enable currently marginalized groups to self-organize—in effect, to constitute themselves as groups—and to formulate, through their discussions, policies that decision-makers would then be obliged to take into account. It would be entirely legitimate for those who took on the role of conveying the results of these deliberations to describe themselves as group representatives. But it is hard to see how a woman of colour, contesting a geographical constituency under a party label, could describe herself as a group representative in the same way, even if she has made it clear in all her speeches and campaign literature that she intends to devote considerable energy to representing the concerns of women of colour. She has not been elected exclusively by that constituency, and failing a Young-type structure of consultation, is not really in a position to say what ‘her group’ wants. Like any group, ‘women of colour’ is internally heterogeneous, and her own vision of its needs and concerns will not be shared by all.

Suzanne Dovi (2002, 2009, 2012) has addressed one part of these concerns in work on what makes a ‘good’ descriptive representative. In earlier work, she argued that descriptive representatives should have ‘strong *mutual* relationships with *dispossessed sub-groups*’ (Dovi 2002: 735). This meant they should both see themselves and be seen by others as representative (so just saying you feel you speak for group X is not enough); and that they should be speaking for a group that has been, and remains, politically marginalized (so needing representation is not a matter of self-definition).³ In later work, she moves ‘beyond’ descriptive representation to focus on the norms that should inform the act of representation. Her basic position is that ‘it matters who represents democratic citizens’ (Dovi 2012: 27). This could be adopted as a succinct summary of arguments for descriptive representation, but her ‘who’ now refers less to social characteristics and more to whether politicians are sufficiently committed to civic equality, self-governance, and inclusion. Inclusion remains a central pre-occupation, but in the later reformulation, this is achieved as much through the norms politicians adopt as through institutional design. ‘Democratic citizens should select representatives whose advocacy is consonant with the norms and values distinctive of democratic institutions’ (Dovi 2012: 32).

Desirable as such a state of affairs would be, this moves us too far from the kind of institutional prescription that has always been part of the argument for descriptive representation. My own preference is to avoid the language of group representation altogether, both because it continues to suggest overly homogeneous groups, and because it implies clearer lines of representation and accountability than are available. The point is not that we need or should pursue ‘group representation’, but that we live in societies that are ‘group-structured’ (Williams 1998) along intersecting axes of class, race, gender, sexuality, religion, such that in the absence of countervailing mechanisms and institutions, we end up with decision-making bodies predominantly composed of members of hegemonic groups. When liberal democracies represent themselves as engaged only in the competition of ideas, disdaining any concern as to whether those doing the representation are women or men, from the society’s dominant ethnic group or one of its racialized minorities, they turn a blind eye to the power structures that reinforce the status quo. Challenging these structures, whether via gender and racial quotas, or—as in the shift of perspective suggested by Rainbow Murray (2014)—by setting ceilings to the participation of dominant groups, does not, in any literal sense, produce ‘group representation’. It does, however, acknowledge the group-structured nature of social and political hierarchies, and thereby opens up space for political and policy change.

There is one position in the literature that even more adamantly repudiates the notion of ‘group representation’. This is associated with the French movement for *parité*, which had its first success in a 2000 electoral law requiring political parties to achieve a 50/50 balance of male and female candidates in all elections involving a list system or proportional ballot.⁴ In the dominant discourse of French republicanism, even recognizing the group-structured nature of society has been problematic, for citizens are supposed to be citizens, not designated by difference, and the *paritaires*

dealt deftly with this by treating gender as *sui generis* and the exclusion of women as a unique failure of democracy. It became part of the arguments mobilized on behalf of *parité* that this was not in any way a call for group representation. As one of the leading campaign documents put it, women ‘can’t be compared to any pressure group . . . that demands to be better represented . . . Women are neither a group nor a lobby. They constitute half of the sovereign people, half of the human species’ (cited in Scott 2005: 62) In a critique of this, Eleonore Lépinard (2007: 392) notes that ‘parity campaigners achieved a tour de force in translating parity into republican terms. However, this strategic republicanism had a cost: it made it impossible for other minorities to take advantage of the breach women had made in the bulwark of the Republic.’ The repudiation, in this case not just of group representation, but of the idea that society is group-structured, broke what Lépinard (2007: 395) calls the ‘chain of equivalences’ that otherwise links the under-representation of women to the under-representation of other groups.

WHICH UNDER-REPRESENTATIONS MATTER?

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This leads to a further continuing area of debate: which of the many possible axes of under-representation matters? Is gender to be regarded as the only significant candidate (as suggested by the *parité* movement), or do arguments about the under-representation of women necessarily extend to other marginalized groups? If the latter (as is now widely argued in the literature, and is very much my own view), then which others? Critics of descriptive representation frequently point out that we can identify any number of statistical mismatches between voters and their representatives; and that not all such mismatches matter. As Phillips Griffiths (1960: 190) put it many years ago—in a somewhat unpleasant formulation—‘while we might well wish to complain that there are not enough representative members of the working class among Parliamentary representatives, we would not wish to complain that the large class of stupid or maleficent people have too few representatives: quite the contrary’. An under-representation of people with red hair is not, of itself, evidence of a democratic deficit, though if red hair turned out to be correlated with social disadvantage, it might well be. A mismatch between the religious affiliations of our representatives and those of the electorate is also not, of itself, evidence of a democratic deficit, though where religion is associated with a culture of systemic denigration, it probably is. Melissa Williams offers, as two criteria for identifying which mismatches matter, ‘contemporary inequality as compared to other social groups and a history of discrimination and oppression’ (1998: 176). But even if we take that as a working definition, there are practical obstacles to addressing all who might then qualify.

As already noted, initiatives to address under-representation by gender are more fully developed and more widely implemented than initiatives to address other forms of under-representation (see also Chapter 10 in this *Handbook*). At least part of the explanation for this is the relative ease with which we can identify who is a woman and who is a man. Self-identification somewhat complicates the picture (at the time of writing, there are ongoing discussions within the British Labour Party about procedures for the participation of transgender women on all-women short lists), but is considerably more of an issue as regards racial and ethnic minorities. Our ethnicity is by no means transparent. We cannot, moreover, assume that candidates from one minority group have much in common with those from another, or that people can be boxed together in broad categories like 'black' or 'white'. The alternative, however, seems unworkable: one thinks of the ever-lengthening list of ethnic categories produced by the equal opportunities industry and used in many censuses, and the multiplication of gender categories along similar lines: could any democracy plausibly embrace this multiplicity of categories and build it into its procedures? What, moreover, of intersectionality? In recent years, there has been discussion (and some implementation) of 'nested quotas' as a way of addressing intersections of race, culture, class, gender, and sexuality: some guaranteed representation of women, for example, in a quota for an indigenous or ethnic minority; or some guaranteed representation of indigenous or ethnic minority candidates in a quota for women (Bird 2016). And at an informal level, there is some evidence that this already happens. In a recent study (Krook and Nugent 2016) of constituencies that adopted all-women shortlists for the 2015 general election in the UK, the requirement to address under-representation by gender encouraged party activists to think more broadly about the wider range of axes of under-representation, and generated candidates (and MPs) who were also diverse in their ethnicity and social class. In Australia, the Queensland Labor Party has set a 5 per cent target for LGBTQ representation in its parliamentary party, along with a 5 per cent target for indigenous representation and 50 per cent quota for women. But to make this kind of nesting a formal requirement, and to do so over the full range of possible axes of under-representation, makes for an impossibly complicated system. It also brings with it yet more difficulties as regards who the representatives are supposed to represent.

The further stumbling block is class. In an earlier contribution (Phillips 1995: chapter 7), I suggested that there might be less urgent need for a politics of presence as regards class than as regards gender or race, if only because questions of class already framed the left/right divide that then organized so much political life. The epistemic case for electing more working-class representatives might, on this account, be less compelling, because the relevant issues and policies were already more fully rehearsed. (The advocacy case, I argued, remained.) This was always unsatisfactory, and it becomes more so in the current climate, when the working-class presence in legislatures has markedly declined, and populist repudiation of 'establishment elites' has reintroduced class issues in a new guise.

THE CHALLENGE OF POPULISM

Across many of today's liberal democracies, populist movements have mobilized anger against what they see as exclusionary and exclusive elites, elites variously derided as metropolitan, cosmopolitan, overly intellectual, establishment, and detached from 'ordinary' or 'real' people. The emphasis on exclusion resonates with many of the arguments explored in this essay, but in the organizing narrative of populism there is also a strong sense of existing elites as exclusive, snobbish, looking down on the people, thinking themselves superior. This is a language that 'pits the people against the elites' (Arato and Cohen 2017: 286). As Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris (2016: 18) put it, populism reflects 'a loose political ideology emphasizing faith in the "decent", "ordinary" or "little" people over the corrupt political and corporate establishment'.

On one level, populism expresses a feeling of marginality and under-representation that is close to what has fuelled claims for descriptive representation. The focus is typically on class rather than gender or racial exclusion, or is framed as 'rust belt versus Washington' or 'deindustrialized North versus booming metropolis', but there are obvious parallels. Within most populist narratives, however, any such parallels are explicitly denied. The tendency, to the contrary, is to represent the politics around gender or racial equality as yet another elite preoccupation, not as speaking to a similar experience of political exclusion, but as bound up with those exclusive and exclusionary elites. In what strikes me as an oddly inaccurate depiction of what establishments actually focus on, populist movements often represent the political establishment as preoccupied with anti-racism, LGBTQ rights, multiculturalism, gender equality, or the rights of refugees, at the expense of those 'working' or 'ordinary' or 'real' people (Sawer 2008). Populism evokes an earlier time when things were better: a time before large-scale immigration, or before competition from China, or before the collapse of East Germany. This often includes nostalgia for an imagined period of racial homogeneity, and an imagined era of gender relations, when men earned enough to support their families, women were more exclusively engaged in looking after the household, and the children found themselves partners of the opposite sex. The turn towards populism then seems simultaneously to confirm the importance of descriptive representation (it expresses, in part, a feeling that representatives do not speak for those they supposedly represent), and to reject those previously associated with such claims.

It is also notable that populist anger against political exclusion has not generated the same kind of demand for 'one of our own' to speak in our name. From Peronism onwards, it has thrown up leaders who represent themselves as embodying the people's will, but there is rarely any requirement for them to resemble the people in any descriptive way. We see, then, two very different discourses of political exclusion: one focused primarily on gender and race, and looking to inclusion via those who bear the characteristics as an important component of effecting change; the other focusing more on social class, but not attaching any particular importance to whether

those offering to effect the change are part of the excluded group. In both instances, there is a strong sense of our representatives as not currently speaking for us, not giving voice to our often very different concerns. Beyond this, the two discourses do not cohere.

One reading of this conjunction is to say that proponents of a politics of presence have focused too narrowly on gender, or at best on gender and race, and in the process contributed to intensified class exclusion. This is a classic move: in the early arguments in the British Labour Party over the introduction of all-women short lists, one often heard complaints that working-class trade unionists (trade unionists were always assumed to be male) were being swept aside by middle-class women, who—according to this narrative—would be no different in type from the middle-class men they were joining. It is certainly the case that the representation of working-class men has declined in many parts of the world, along with the decline of the trade unions that were often their political training ground. But being a woman is hardly incompatible with being working class, and some of the supposed tension between prioritizing gender or prioritizing class seems to assume (to appropriate an influential contribution by black feminists) that all the women are middle class and all the workers are male. Overall, there is little evidence to suggest that a preoccupation with the under-representation of women has actively contributed to an increased under-representation of working-class men, except in the obvious sense that as women get more access to a political voice, men get less.

Yet the worries remain. Nancy Fraser (2009, 2013) has been articulating for some years an argument about feminism contributing to the legitimation of neo-liberal global capitalism, producing a disturbing alliance. Global capital, in this argument, is not burdened by nostalgic ideas about the appropriate place for women, and will happily commit itself to the search for both talent and cheap labour, regardless of gender. In doing so, it coincides with what Fraser calls the 'feminist romance' that attracts 'at one end, the female cadres of the professional middle classes, determined to crack the glass ceiling; at the other end, the female temps, part-timers, low-wage service employees, domestics, sex workers, migrants, EPZ [export processing zone] workers and microcredit borrowers, seeking not only income and material security, but also dignity, self-betterment and liberation from traditional authority. At both ends, the dream of women's emancipation is harnessed to the engine of capitalist accumulation' (Fraser 2013: 221). In a subsequent contribution, she argues that the Brexit vote, support for Bernie Sanders in the US, and for the *Front National* in France, are best seen as movements to reject globalization, neo-liberalism, and the political establishments that have promoted these—but that feminism, unfortunately, has become part of that establishment. In this account, support for Trump in the 2016 election can be interpreted as a rejection of the 'progressive' neo-liberal establishment, embodied in the figure of Hillary Clinton, that yoked the ideals of various social movements, including feminism, to the high-end business sectors of the global economy. The feminists and progressives who rallied to the Clinton campaign 'need to acknowledge their own share of blame for sacrificing the cause of social protection, material well-being, and

working-class dignity to faux understandings of emancipation in terms of meritocracy, diversity, and empowerment' (Fraser 2016: 283).

Inglehart and Norris (2016; see also Chapter 28 in this *Handbook*) also note a close connection between feminism and populism but they offer a very different reading. In their argument, the latter is best understood, not as a response to economic insecurity but as a cultural backlash against the 'silent revolution' in values that shifted younger generations towards cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism, environmentalism, anti-racism, human rights, and sexual and gender equality. This inter-generational shift has triggered 'a counterrevolutionary retro backlash' among those sensing the decline of familiar norms, including norms regarding sex roles, who actively reject the rising tide of progressive values. So where Fraser calls for a realignment of feminism that will enable it to forge common ground with those whose lives have been shattered by the onward march of global capitalism, the analysis by Inglehart and Norris leaves no space for any such realignment: this is a battle between opposing sides, and one either sustains the feminism and anti-racism or gives way to the populist backlash.

My own view is that neither account is entirely convincing. Fraser's claims about the alliance between feminism and the 'high end sectors of the global economy' looks somewhat dubious in the light of compelling evidence about the sexism that characterizes the Silicon Valley industries, while her suggestion that progressives rallied around the cause of meritocracy at the expense of social protection does not ring especially true for Europe. Even in the UK, which comes closest to the vagaries of the deregulated US economy, feminist discourse has focused more on the socially enabling and protecting aspects of improved pre-school provision, improved maternity and paternity leave, a better work/life balance for all workers, than the meritocratic promotion of high-level professional women. Yet she is surely right to identify as a problem the disconnect between the sense of exclusion that fuels contemporary populism and a politics around gender that is currently achieving some small success. The increased acceptability of arguments regarding the under-representation of women, and the slowly but steadily improving numbers in legislatures around the world, are *not* matched by similar transformations as regards race and ethnicity, and they hold out little promise as regards social class. If, however, the central epistemic argument of this chapter holds true—that experience both enables and constrains understanding, and that those experiencing marginalization have concerns, interests and perspectives that those lacking this experience cannot adequately represent—it should be seen as much true for those marginalized by class as those marginalized by gender or race.

The alternative account offered by Inglehart and Norris understates the part played by economic insecurity in the rise of populism, and overstates the progressivist tide. Indeed their argument tends towards the kind of progressivist developmentalism that has long characterized particularly Inglehart's work.⁵ They are right, nonetheless, to suggest that much of the gap between populism and feminism, populism and multiculturalism, or populism and anti-racism, is unbridgeable. Short of abandoning one's

feminism or anti-racism, there is no way to compromise with a politics that reasserts traditional gender roles or refuses to recognize those of immigrant origin as equal citizens. The gap is unbridgeable in another sense, for the polarizations of populism tend to invoke an undifferentiated 'people' against the establishment or elite, and typically refuse the kind of differentiated representation that starts from the acknowledgement of different groups with distinct and sometimes competing experiences, interests, and perspectives. Populism is in many ways antagonistic to representation as encoded by liberal democracies, and certainly antagonistic to the understandings of representation characteristic of a politics of presence. Urbinati (2014: 129) goes so far as to present it as 'an alternative to representative democracy', arguing that 'populism has the people, more than the democratic citizen, at its core' (2014: 133).

The future of all this for the politics of representation in contemporary liberal democracies remains unclear, but it is an important lacuna in the politics around descriptive representation that it has so far failed to address marginalization by social class. There are no easy answers to this, and it may be that the most promising way forward involves a decentering of the state, and a refocus on arenas of democratic engagement beyond the central representative institutions (Dryzek 2016). But while this could be an important corrective to the exclusive emphasis on the composition of elected assemblies, it could also undermine the real achievements of the last decades in promoting alternative understandings of what it is to be representative. That it is now so widely agreed that political representation involves at least some component of so-called 'descriptive' representation is a major advance on the ways in which democratic representation was understood fifty years ago. The challenge is both to continue this advance, and ensure that the implications are widened beyond gender.

NOTES

1. www.ipu.org.
2. www.idea.int/data-tools/data/gender-quotas.
3. The notion of mutuality provides no cast-iron guarantee that the representative is indeed representative but shares this with virtually all claims to be representative. As Michael Saward (2010) has argued, representation is as much a matter of making the representative claim, calling into existence the community that is to be represented, as it is to actual achievement.
4. In effect, this meant municipalities with more than 3,500 inhabitants, regional elections, and elections to the European Parliament. Later modifications added Senate elections, and introduced financial sanctions for elections to the National Assembly if a party's candidates deviated more than 2 per cent from a 50/50 rule. See Scott (2005) for a full account.
5. One of his recent publications defends a revised version of modernization theory, revised mainly in challenging the excess determinism of the earlier model, but otherwise continuing with much the same story of our progress towards individualism, secularism, and toleration (Inglehart and Welzel 2005).

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CHAPTER 9

GENDER EQUALITY

KAREN CELIS AND SILVIA ERZEEL

INTRODUCTION

THERE is intuitive logic, as well as intellectual synergy, for a chapter about gender equality to be part of the section on ‘Descriptive Representation’ in this *Handbook*. Women’s descriptive representation—taken here to mean women’s presence in legislatures—is a prominent concern both to feminist activists striving for gender equality in politics, and gender and politics scholars aiming for a better understanding thereof. The focus on women’s descriptive representation has surely been one of the most successful feminist strategies to establish increased gender equality in politics. The obverse, namely women’s descriptive under-representation, is a very tangible sign of gender inequality in politics: it is both visible and quantifiable. The numbers of women in parliaments, figures that, for instance, visualize the evolution of women’s descriptive representation and the numerical comparisons between countries and parties, convincingly underpin feminist demands for measures and policies to increase the political representation of women. Accordingly, they are taken here, as a powerful tool for holding domestic and international governments and institutions to account, be it for their lack of willingness and actions to establish equality between women and men, or to monitor the effect of soft promises and hard measures like gender quotas.

The gender and politics scholarship, too, has devoted much of its attention to women’s descriptive representation. Since the mid-1980s, a rich body of empirical research on women’s descriptive representation developed, that illustrated to what extent, with what effects, and under which conditions, women are numerically (under) represented in politics. The academic interest in women’s descriptive representation has not only increased, but has become increasingly sophisticated both in the analysis of the conditions that shape women’s presence in politics, and the investigation of descriptive representation as a predictor, examining whether women’s presence has any substantive or symbolic effects. It is safe to say that no other subfield of political science has devoted so much attention to theorizing, measuring, and explaining descriptive representation than the gender and politics scholarship.

Notwithstanding the fact that the numbers of women in legislatures figure prominently in activist strategies and scholarly work on gender equality in politics, they are not all that matters. Gender equality in descriptive representation is not just about the numbers. The focus on women's numerical presence in political institutions is but one way to approach broader issues of gender inequality in politics. Women's descriptive representation is the case that is foregrounded and studied to show and understand the gendered politics of exclusion and marginalization, and to change it. The common aim of feminist activists and scholars is to understand and break mechanisms of exclusion and dominance that operate within the political system broadly understood (Dahlerup and Leyenaar 2013). Studying why there are so few women in our legislatures provides insights into how women's exclusion works: how political actors and institutions, processes and contexts generate, sustain, and reproduce gender inequality in politics. Women's descriptive representation is also studied as an inroad to investigate other dimensions of gender equality in representation, that is, the representation of gendered issues and interests (substantive representation), and how politics is perceived and emotionally responded to by women and men (symbolic representation).

Without question, women's descriptive representation has gained a prominent place in both feminist strategies and the study of gender equality in politics. Moreover, women's under-representation is increasingly understood as signalling political inequality *tout court*, as a red alert for the democratic deficit of the political system. Paradoxically, and parallel to what could be considered as an increase in its importance, the focus on women's descriptive representation has been strongly critiqued in recent decades; predominantly so by gender and politics scholars themselves. More specifically, the question of how women's descriptive representation is conceptualized and operationalized in order to assess and understand gender equality in politics has been problematized (see also Chapter 8 in this *Handbook*). The criticisms boil down to the claim that descriptive representation as it is commonly measured, that is, by counting the number of female legislators, makes it unfit, and even wrong, as a measure to underpin any claims about, or assessments of, gender/political equality. The strategic importance of descriptive representation and the richness of the scholarship on women's descriptive representation and gender inequality, are, we believe, strong reasons to not give up on descriptive representation as a means to assess and study political equality. We contend that it is worthwhile revising our understanding of descriptive representation and to invest in getting the counting right.

The importance of this lies in the fact that measuring descriptive representation is one of the very few 'readymade' tools we have for assessing political equality. As mentioned above, measuring gender equality has important strategic and monitoring advantages. By contrast, assessing political equality in substantive and symbolic representation is more difficult, more time-consuming, and a markedly more expensive undertaking. The key problem with determining political equality in substantive representation is the impossibility to define 'what and how much of it' is needed for political equality to be established. For sure, we can make claims about the degree to

which a political system is democratic based on whether the interests of minority or marginalized groups are included in the decision-making, or, on the contrary, systematically excluded. Yet, it is not the case that *all* interests and issues of societal groups should be met in order for decision-making to be democratic and the group to be politically equal. Similar problems arise with determining political equality in the symbolic dimension of political representation. How well should citizens feel represented to be politically equal, and compared to whom? In contrast, the descriptive dimension of representation lends itself to the measurement of political equality more easily, because one can agree on what to count and what to compare with: political equality requires a presence of various groups in legislatures that is *grosso modo* in proportion to the societal make-up.

In light of the above, this chapter discusses the relationship between descriptive representation and political equality, particularly gender equality. It starts with documenting some of the general patterns found in women's numerical presence in legislatures. Second, the key insights of the scholarship about women's descriptive representation on the causes of gender inequality will be outlined. Third, the descriptive representation of women will be considered as a source of gender equality in other fields of representation, by reviewing the literature that studies the importance of descriptive representation for substantive and symbolic representation. Fourth, the scholarly work that problematizes measuring descriptive representation, that is, counting female legislators, is reflected on as a means to assess gender equality. In order to save and improve the measurement of descriptive representation as a way to assess political equality, the final section revisits Pitkin's foundational discussion of the descriptive dimension of representation. It will be argued that Pitkin's characterization of descriptive representation as information-giving, has important advantages over the traditional way of conceiving and measuring descriptive representation.

PATTERNS OF WOMEN'S PRESENCE IN LEGISLATURES

Women's bodily presence in legislatures has traditionally been used as a yardstick for women's descriptive representation. Counting numbers of female and male legislators, and comparing them across countries and over time, indeed allows us to make a first assessment of the level of gender equality in politics. Recent numbers from the Inter-Parliamentary Union indicate that women's legislative presence has come a long way. Women currently make up on average 30 per cent of the elected representatives in lower or single houses in liberal democracies. This is an increase by an amount equivalent to 12 percentage points compared to 1999. Table 9.1 also reveals considerable variation across countries. Among the highest-ranking countries we find, perhaps unsurprisingly, five Nordic countries. These countries have held top positions in most

Table 9.1 Percentage of Women in Lower or Single Houses in Liberal Democracies

Country	Percentage of women 2019	Percentage of women 1999
Sweden	47.3	42.7
Costa Rica	45.6	19.3
Finland	41.5	33.5
Spain	41.1	24.7
Norway	40.8	36.4
New Zealand	40	29.2
France	39.7	10.9
Iceland	38.1	25.4
Belgium	38	12.7
Denmark	37.4	37.4
Austria	37.2	26.2
Tunisia	35.9	7.4
Italy	35.7	11.1
Portugal	35.7	13
Switzerland	32.5	21
United Kingdom	32	18.2
Netherlands	31.3	36
Latvia	31	17
Trinidad and Tobago	31	11.1
Germany	30.9	30.9
Australia	30	22.3
Albania	29.3	—
Estonia	28.7	10.9
Canada	26.9	20.6
Luxembourg	25	20
Slovenia	24.4	7.8
Cape Verde	23.6	11.1
USA	23.5	13.3
Chile	22.6	10.8
Czech Republic	22.5	15
Ireland	22.2	12
Uruguay	22.2	7.1
Barbados	20	10.7
Greece	18.7	6.3
Cyprus	17.9	5.4
South Korea	17.1	3.7
Ghana	13.1	9
Japan	10.2	4.8
<i>Average</i>	<i>30**</i>	<i>17.7</i>

Notes: Countries are ranked in descending order of the percentage of women in 2019.

* The classification of 'liberal democracies' is based on Lührmann et al. (2018: 94).

** Average excludes Albania because data for 1999 is missing.

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union (<http://archive.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>, consulted on 2 April 2019).

rankings of women's legislative presence since the 1970s. They are increasingly accompanied at the top by countries that have witnessed a strong increase in women's presence following the adoption of strict quota laws, including Costa Rica, Spain, France, and Belgium. At the lower end of the ranking, we find thirteen countries where women's presence has not yet reached 25 per cent in 2019. These countries include both 'old' democracies (e.g. USA, Ireland) and 'new' democracies (e.g. Czech Republic, South Korea, Ghana).

It should be clear that not only the actual numbers of women in legislatures, but also the rate at which they entered legislative politics and their specific trajectories to power differ significantly from country to country. In one of the most comprehensive studies on the topic, Paxton and Hughes (2017: 73–82) identify five historical paths to women's descriptive representation: (1) Flat, (2) Increasing, (3) Big Jump, (4) Low Increasing, and (5) Plateau. The 'Flat' path includes countries, for instance Japan in Table 9.1, where women's representation did *not* change over time. The 'Increasing' path collects countries where women's presence made steady progress over the years, for instance in the Nordic countries or New Zealand. Big Jumps, the third trajectory, includes countries where women's presence made large and sudden gains in a short period of time. Examples are Belgium, Costa Rica, or Tunisia. In 'Low Increasing' countries, women's numerical presence is increasing, but at a (very) slow rate, such as in the United States, Ireland, and Uruguay. 'Plateau' countries, finally, witnessed a (major) decline in women's representation. This is a pattern found in some of the former Communist countries, where women's presence in legislatures fell back during (and after) democratic transition.

THE CAUSES OF WOMEN'S DESCRIPTIVE UNDER-REPRESENTATION

Women's numerical presence in legislatures shows considerable variation across countries, parliaments, and over time. A large body of scholarship has sought to explain patterns of women's descriptive (under)representation. These studies contributed greatly to our understanding of the actors and processes that determined the level of gender equality in politics. More than anything else, they showed the complexity of establishing political equality in politics. The existing literature illustrates how a multitude of factors influence women's numerical presence in politics, including: macro-level socio-economic and cultural factors (Paxton and Hughes 2017); the openness of political institutions towards women (Dahlerup and Leyenaar 2013; Krook and Mackay 2011); the impact of women's movements (Lovenduski et al. 2005); the influence of gatekeepers such as political parties, voters, and media (Dolan 2014; Kenny 2013; Kittilson 2006; Lovenduski and Norris 1993; Thomas and Wilcox 2014); the personal ambitions and resources of women (Lawless and Fox 2005); and the

gendered socialization of both men and women in politics (Verba et al. 1995). A detailed description of each of these would take us too far from the specific task of this chapter, however three key insights about the determinants for gender equality that the studies of descriptive representation deliver will be foregrounded.

First, gender equality in descriptive representation is determined by, and hence can also be changed by, formal systemic rules. In particular, three of them stand out: (i) the electoral system; (ii) gender quota legislation; and (iii) the rules and practices of political parties. The electoral system had early on been identified as one of the key determinants for women's descriptive representation (Leyenaar 2004; Norris 2004). Three elements, in particular, play a role: (i) the degree of proportionality; (ii) district or party magnitude; and (iii) ballot structure (whether voters vote for a party or for one or more candidates) (Leyenaar 2004; Matland and Studlar 1996; Norris 2004). Gender quotas, if well designed, can rapidly increase the number of women in politics, and are most effective when they are of a binding nature, applying rank order rules and strict sanctions, and when they are compatible with party strategies and the broader institutional context (Dahlerup 2006; Krook 2009; Htun and Jones 2002; Meier 2004; Murray 2010). Finally, women's presence also depends on party-level factors (Kittilson 2006; Lovenduski and Norris 1993), including party ideology, gender-related candidate rules, the presence of active women and (to a limited extent) party organization. Here, too, gender quotas play a role, although the range of regulations that parties adopt to promote gender equality can be much wider (Rashkova and Van Biezen 2013).

A second key finding is that, within the set of systemic factors, *institutions* are found to be crucial for understanding why in some cases women's numerical presence makes great progress while in other cases it does not. In this respect, scholars point to the importance of both formal and informal gendered institutions (Kenny 2013; Krook and Mackay 2011; Waylen 2014). Whereas formal institutions are officially enshrined in written documents, informal institutions are (often) unwritten practices and norms that are socially shared and enforced (Helmke and Levitsky 2004: 727). However, both formal and informal rules shape opportunities for women in politics, either separately or jointly (Bjarnegård 2013; Kenny 2013; Waylen 2014). Informal gendered practices at work in the wider public sphere, including the existence of clientelist systems and homosocial networks, hinder women's access to power (Bjarnegård 2013). Biased notions of what makes a competent candidate also limit the selection of women when these ideas privilege stereotypically masculine traits (Murray 2010, 2015; Niven 1998). Even when women-friendly formal rules are in place, descriptive outcomes are not guaranteed when their effect is hampered by women-unfriendly informal norms and gendered practices (Franceschet and Piscopo 2008; Sacchet 2008).

A third key finding relates to the fact that norms about the acceptable level of women's descriptive presence have gradually increased. In many advanced democracies, the equal political representation of men and women has become an indisputable ideal. This manifests itself, among other things, in a constant increase of the 'acceptable minimum' for women's presence in politics (Dahlerup and Leyenaar 2013). Whereas in

the 1980s political parties and voters still considered elected assemblies with a small minority of women to be ‘acceptable’, such gender imbalances are increasingly criticized today. In order to understand this, Dahlerup and Leyenaar (2013) introduce the concept of ‘conditional irreversibility’: although gender parity among elected representatives is not yet achieved in many countries, norms about the acceptable level of women’s descriptive presence have gradually increased and attempts to go below a certain acceptable minimum are not well received.

Explaining the level of women’s descriptive representation has made an important contribution to revealing how gender inequality in politics is produced and reproduced. It also shows how the project of establishing political equality for marginalized groups is a complex and slow process, one that demands changes to many dimensions of the political system as well as sustained feminist action and strategies. In addition, the studies have also made a crucial contribution to our understanding of gender equality and political equality more generally, approaching it as a potential source for achieving equality in other spheres of political representation, that is, substantive and symbolic representation, which the next section considers.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF WOMEN’S DESCRIPTIVE REPRESENTATION

Scholarly interest in descriptive representation as a predictor for women’s inclusion and equality in other fields of representation developed consequent upon the numbers of women in elected assemblies increasing (Childs and Lovenduski 2013). As women became numerically better represented, scholars became more interested in the political impact of these women. Impact is usually measured in two ways. On the one hand, studies focus on the ‘substantive’ impact of descriptive representation. They ask if women’s descriptive representation has led to a better representation of women’s interests and the development of women-friendly policy outcomes—that is to say, more gender equality in substantive representation. On the other hand, studies examined the ‘symbolic’ effects of descriptive representation, and sought to clarify whether descriptive representation boosts women’s overall political engagement and increases their feelings of being represented, that is, increases gender equality in symbolic representation.

Research on the substantive and symbolic effects of descriptive representation are rooted in the path-breaking theoretical work on ‘group representation’ by scholars like Anne Phillips (1995), Jane Mansbridge (1999), Iris Marion Young (2002), Melissa Williams (1998) and Suzanne Dovi (2002). These authors criticized the absence of marginalized and oppressed social groups in representative institutions and provided reasons for the inclusion of these groups in decision-making processes. They also referred to the substantive and symbolic importance for increasing the presence of

women: female representatives, because they share certain life experiences and social perspectives with women in society, are more likely to articulate women's concerns and engage women in the representative process (see Chapter 8 by Anne Phillips in this *Handbook* for a more thorough theoretical discussion of social group representation).

Empirical studies on the *substantive* effects of descriptive representation asked two questions: (1) Are women more likely than men to represent women's interests? (In other words, do we need women for the representation of women's interests? Or, can the representation of women's interests take place without women's presence?); and (2) Does an increase in the number of women lead to better policy outcomes? (In other words, do we need an increase in the number of women, or a high level of women, to guarantee women-friendly policy results?). The first question investigates the 'politics of presence' argument on an individual level, by examining whether female representatives have different attitudes, policy priorities, and act differently in their parliamentary work compared to their male colleagues. The second question is close to the 'critical mass' argument, which assumes that female representatives are more likely to represent women's interests if the total number of elected women reaches a 'critical mass' of more or less 30 per cent, because only then can women change politics as usual and overcome the negative consequences of their 'token' presence, including isolation, performance pressure, and role entrapment (Kanter 1977).

Both research questions have led to an impressive body of academic work, with mixed results. A significant number of studies offer (strong) empirical proof for the idea that women find it attitudinally more important to represent women's interests and support proposed women-friendly policy changes (Lovenduski and Norris 2003). At the behavioural level, results are more difficult to assess because representatives' behaviour is shaped by many other institutional and party-political factors (Childs 2004; Lovenduski and Norris 2003). Nevertheless, here too, evidence points out that women represent women's interests when they *can*, that is, when they have the legislative autonomy to do so, when institutional constraints that might limit the articulation of group interests are minimal, or when they operate in safe spaces where they can speak 'freely' for women as women (Childs 2004; Grey 2006; Curtin 2008). Women moreover make a substantive difference in that they are more inclined than men to support feminist legislation that has the specific aim of developing a gender equal or more equitable society.

At the same time, however, not every woman in a given parliament represents women's interests, and sometimes men take up the case for women (Celis et al. 2008; Erzeel 2015). In several examples, women's interests have been represented without a critical mass of women, either because their token status might give them some opportunities (Crowley 2004; Bratton 2005), or because activist women behave as 'critical actors' or join forces with men to represent women's interests in the absence of a critical mass (Childs and Krook 2009). In other cases, a critical mass of women has evinced no substantive impact, or has even had a negative effect because, for instance, it generated a backlash effect (Yoder 1991; Kathlene 1994). These results show that the substantive impact of descriptive representation is not guaranteed (Dodson 2006; Phillips 1995).

Compared to the large bulk of studies on substantive representation, empirical research on symbolic representation remains somewhat more limited, and empirical studies focusing on the symbolic effects of descriptive representation tend to move in different directions. Most studies examined the so-called 'role model effect' and analysed whether the election of more women affects women's overall political engagement and empowerment. A significant number of studies showed that descriptive representation does positively affect women's political attitudes, sometimes boosting levels of political efficacy and political interest among female citizens (e.g. Atkeson 2003; Wolbrecht and Campbell 2007, 2017; Hinojosa et al. 2017). Descriptive representation has also been found to stimulate the political activism and participation of women, and especially of young/adolescent women who are most susceptible to role model effects (Atkeson 2003; Campbell and Wolbrecht 2006; Wolbrecht and Campbell, 2007, 2017). Although a majority of studies suggest *some* symbolic effects, it is clear that the perceived effects are not always that strong (Lawless 2004). In some cases, unexpected negative consequences also emerge, as in cases when gender quotas cause a rapid increase in the political presence of women yet hinder their progress in other domains (Zetterberg 2009; Burnet 2011; Kerevel and Atkeson 2017).

A second set of studies investigated the symbolic effects of descriptive representation by looking at how the political presence of women, either as tokens or as a critical mass, changed societal norms, ideas, and discourses about women's place in the public sphere (Lombardo and Meier 2014; Verge and Pastor 2018; Franceschet et al. 2017). Noteworthy here is the novel, discursive approach to symbolic representation presented by Lombardo and Meier (2014). In their understanding, symbolic and descriptive representation are connected, but symbolic representation is much more than a derivative of descriptive representation as it sheds light on gendered symbols and gendered constructions in political representation that surpass the mere presence of women.

Previous studies painted a highly complex picture of descriptive representation as a predictor of substantive and symbolic representation. On the one hand, these studies bring convincing theoretical and empirical arguments for the claim that descriptive representation is intimately and intrinsically imbricated with substantive and symbolic representation. On the other hand, descriptive gender equality does not automatically bring about substantive or symbolic gender equality in many cases. In order to get to grips with these inconclusive findings, recent studies call for an opening up of theoretical and analytical frameworks in the study of both substantive and symbolic representation (Celis et al. 2008; Lombardo and Meier 2014). Without giving up on the notion that different forms of representation might indeed be interconnected, these studies urge us to reflect upon symbolic and substantive representation not as a by-product, or effect of, descriptive representation, but as representative processes in and of themselves (Celis et al. 2008; Childs and Krook 2009; Lombardo and Meier 2014; Weldon 2002). In many cases, descriptive representation is still taken on board as one of the conditions for gender equality in substantive or symbolic representation, but in every case, descriptive representation is not the sole, sufficient, or even decisive factor.

GENDER EQUALITY: THE PROBLEM OF DESCRIPTIVE REPRESENTATION

The previous sections have shown that the study of descriptive representation, as both a consequence and a source of gender equality in politics, improves our understanding of gender equality, and of political equality in general. Indeed, counting numbers of women and men in politics is important. The numerical absence of women in representative institutions provides the first very visual sign of gender inequality and an indicator of social injustice towards women. For this reason alone, it makes little sense *not* to count. The question, however, is whether numbers alone are a *sufficiently strong* indicator for gender equality in politics? While the absence of a ‘substantial’ number of women in politics clearly points to a democratic deficit (and is increasingly perceived as such by policymakers and parties across the ideological spectrum), it remains to be seen whether the numerical presence of women (alone) begets gender equality and political equality in a broader sense.

Women’s numerical presence as an indicator for gender equality is indeed increasingly under scrutiny for several reasons. The first reason is that gender equality in descriptive representation does not necessarily reveal a lot about the distribution of political *power* between women and men. Gendered norms of power are known to challenge women in political leadership, both in parliament and beyond. Because parliamentary institutions have historically been dominated by men, institutional rules and norms reflect the power of the dominant—and thus ‘masculine’—norm (Bjarnegård 2013; Murray 2015). This is visible in numerous ways. Women for instance generally experience more difficulties than men in achieving leadership posts in important legislative committees (Heath et al. 2005). They also continue to hold fewer cabinet positions than men in many Western societies and are more often directed to low-prestige and stereotypically ‘feminine’ policy domains (Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson 2005; Jalalzai 2013; Krook and O’Brien 2012; Murray 2010). In addition, numerous studies reveal, that once women are elected in higher numbers in politics, various strategies are deployed to keep women out of centres of decision-making power. This opposition to women in political power can take many forms (Celis and Lovenduski 2018), and ranges from subtle tactics such as the silencing and ridiculing of women (Kathlene 1994; Hawkesworth 2003), to more overt and ‘hard’ forms of resistance including the use of violence against women (Krook 2017). Indeed, gender equality of presence clearly does not imply equality in political power.

Moreover, studies focusing on the effects of descriptive representation have demonstrated that gender equality in descriptive representation does not automatically translate into gender equality in other forms of political representation, but is highly conditional on the attitudes, resources, and identities of the representatives involved (Phillips 1995; Childs 2004). Hence, what often matters more than numbers is the *agency* of these women, and ‘who these women are’ in terms of the (feminist) attitudes

and the resources they can use (Tremblay and Pelletier 2000; Erzeel 2015). Both the substantive and symbolic representation of women strongly benefits from the activities of a small group of highly resourceful and highly motivated individuals—called ‘equality champions’ (Chaney 2006) or ‘critical actors’ who ‘act individually or collectively to bring about women-friendly policy change’ (Childs and Krook 2009: 126–7). The previous findings tap into Suzanne Dovi’s (2002) convincing argument that if we expect women’s descriptive representation to have any substantive (and symbolic) effects, then some criteria should guide the selection of descriptive representatives. She argues that,

... a commitment to a politics of presence would be more likely to support robust democratic relations if descriptive representatives were selected on the basis of their mutual relationships with dispossessed subgroups. (Dovi 2002: 728)

These mutual relationships imply that preferable descriptive representatives ‘share aims’ and feel they ‘have their fates linked’ with women (Dovi 2002: 736).

Finally, gender equality in descriptive representation is increasingly problematized by intersectionality theory. Intersectionality assumes that experiences of (dis)advantage are always intertwined in a complex manner (Crenshaw 1991; Hancock 2007). Hence it is highly critical of the universal categories that tend to be used in the study of gender equality (Celis and Mügge 2018). The intersectional critique boils down to the claim that counting and comparing numbers of women and men in politics is not enough to assess gender equality in descriptive representation, because of the risk of ignoring intersectional identities and consequently overlooking secondary forms of marginalization. Hence, assessments of gender equality that rely on such measures are not only inaccurate, they may well make the political equality of some groups of women (and men for that matter) invisible, and enable their persistence. Many of the institutional rules aimed at redressing gender inequalities in descriptive representation, like gender quotas, tend to focus on one specific identity (women) and as a result are likely to prioritize the presence and interests of privileged group members (Hughes 2011; Celis et al. 2014). In sum, gender equality in descriptive representation is complicated and in order for the descriptive presence of women in politics to be a solid indicator of political equality, within-group diversity, existing privilege and marginalization need to be taken into account.

RE-VISITING PITKIN ON DESCRIPTIVE REPRESENTATION

Issues of power, agency and intersectionality, then, seem to undermine the project of assessing political equality by measuring descriptive representation. Counting women

increasingly appears to be a shallow and even problematic way of measuring gender equality. Yet, as discussed earlier on, descriptive representation is one of the few political dimensions that is suited for measuring political equality. That given, *not* counting and comparing group representatives becomes an important limitation in the assessment and monitoring of the democratic quality of a polity; one that many democrats, feminists, and other disadvantaged groups' activists would not readily accept.

In an endeavour to 'save' the project of measuring political equality in descriptive representation, this section queries whether scholars have been too quick to assume that, in contrast to substantive and symbolic representation, we knew *what* and *how* to count in order to assess political equality in descriptive representation. For this task, revisiting Pitkin's foundational discussion of descriptive representation (1967), is an appropriate place to begin. Notwithstanding the fact that re-evaluating Pitkin's work in light of today's representation puzzles is not entirely original (see, for instance, Disch 2011), our turn to Pitkin might come as a surprise because she is generally known to be highly critical of descriptive representation. Indeed, she explicitly rejects descriptive representativeness as a source of legitimate or accurate political action (Pitkin 1967). However, we suggest here that a different understanding of descriptive representation can be derived from her work on representation that goes some way to resolving contemporary issues related to power, agency, and intersectionality in women's descriptive representation.

Many empirical scholars discussed in the previous sections, including ourselves, have conceptualized and operationalized descriptive representation as socio-demographic bodily correspondence between who the representative is, or is like, and the represented. The similarity of characteristics is thus seen as a necessary and sufficient condition for descriptive representation. Resemblance of characteristics between a representative body and the people is, according to Pitkin, however not the only concern in descriptive representation. The defining feature and function of descriptive representation is *giving information* about the constituents:

The making present consists of the presence of something from which we can draw accurate conclusions about the represented, gather information about the represented, because it is in relevant ways like the represented. (. . .) The function of representative institutions is to supply information, in this case about the people or the nation. (Pitkin 1967: 81)

The information-giving function of descriptive representatives is of key importance in the process of talking, deliberating, discussing policy proposals, and watching and exerting control over the government. Pitkin cites Downs in suggesting that,

[With regard to] Representatives . . . their job is to tell the party what the people want (and occasionally to tell the people about their party). They are 'specialists in discovering, transmitting and analyzing popular opinion'.

(Pitkin 1967: 83 citing Downs 1957: 83)

In order for descriptive representation, understood as ‘information-giving’, to occur, descriptive representatives should not only be present, they also need to ‘appear’ and must be heard (Pitkin 1967). Descriptive representation, then, requires the intention of giving information, and the capacity for reading the information.

In contrast with today’s widely shared understanding of descriptive representation as passive; as ‘something that is’, Pitkin’s understanding of descriptive representation involves a certain level of activity. Descriptive representation is ‘something that is done’: ‘making representations about’; ‘giving information’ (Pitkin 1967: 83). Yet, descriptive representation, Pitkin stresses, should not be understood as an ‘acting for’ type of representation, which she reserves for actions that imply agency of the represented, actions committing others in an authorized way, or accountable actions. If giving information about the constituents is the key political function of descriptive representation, it logically follows that the accuracy of information is the key quality criterion of descriptive representation. It also must imply that ‘good’ descriptive representatives give ‘*accurate information*’ (Pitkin 1967: 83, emphasis added). Representativeness is then defined by the extent to which representatives (i) supply information that is (ii) relevant and accurate, in the sense that we can draw conclusions about what the group is like and wants, and (iii) intended to be heard and received. Descriptive representativeness in that sense is desirable because ‘the more accurate the copy, the more accurate the information’ (Pitkin 1967: 85). Yet, as mentioned before, Pitkin warned that the accuracy of correspondence should only be used as a source of information, never as a source of legitimacy for letting representatives act for us.

The information-giving aspect gives rise to a different operationalization of women’s descriptive representation. Women’s descriptive representatives do not only share socio-demographic characteristics, but also supply politically relevant and accurate information in a public manner; their information-giving is intentional, visible and (can be) heard. The kind of information-giving women representatives actively, intentionally, and publicly engage in might include expressing sympathy or closeness to individual women or women’s groups; highlighting relevant women’s experiences, for instance, through their own life stories, or narratives about other women’s lives; and attaching importance to specific events that concern women or are especially important to women’s groups and organizations. Such information tells something about the perspectives, opinions, and interests of women in society and one can draw conclusions from it about what women are like, what they care about, and what they want. Hence, this information is relevant for future decision-making about women’s issues, yet remains pointedly distinct from substantive representation. Giving such information is different from representing women’s interests based on that information. Nevertheless, similar to substantive representation, information-giving allows for judgements about accuracy. Women in society can assess the accuracy of this information and decide whether and which women representatives are ‘good’ descriptive representatives. When information-giving about women is absent or inaccurate, women in society can conclude that a female representative, notwithstanding socio-demographic resemblance, does not ‘stand for’ them, and is thus not a/their descriptive

representative. Although, there is a conceptual difference between sharing a disadvantaged group's socio-demographic characteristics on the one hand, and the ability and intention of giving information about the group perspective on the other, the former theoretically remains a condition for the latter. As convincingly theorized by the theorists on group representation, people sharing life experiences and a similar structural position in society are 'epistemologically privileged' in providing accurate information about how a group is positioned vis-à-vis a political issue and perspective (Phillips 1995; Mansbridge 1999; Young 2002; Williams 1998; Dovi 2002).

In light of the problems identified with counting bodies to establish political equality, linking descriptive representation with the act of information-giving arguably has three key advantages. First, it allows for the exclusion of those descriptive representatives that deliberately reject the role of group representatives (Severs and de Jong 2018), or those representatives who are inhibited from acting as such by, for instance, political parties or institutional rules and practices. Hence, only those representatives that have some kind of agency are taken into account. Second, and strongly related to the above, is that only those representatives who are able to publicly give information and make that information known are included in the count, which to some degree also guarantees that only those representatives with a certain level of power are considered. Indeed, the ability to publicly give information presupposes some level of power, albeit not necessarily the 'active power' required for substantively representing the groups' interests and influencing the actual decision-making (Celis and Lovenduski 2018).

Third, the information-giving approach provides a means to accommodate the intersectional dimension of group representation. The information that representatives give explicitly or implicitly refers to an intersectionally defined group, and it is through this information that the representative relates to a specific group. For example, taking that information to determine which group a representative descriptively represents, would allow for counting a female representative from an ethnic minority group as a descriptive representative for women, and/or for the ethnic minority group, and/or for ethnic minority women (or indeed as none of these). Such a sophisticated count of descriptive representation allows for a more nuanced and less reductionist assessment of political equality of intersectionally defined groups.

While the new focus on information-giving might offer new opportunities for the study of descriptive representation, it obviously also poses some additional challenges. Rather than only counting women's and men's bodies in parliaments, researching the level of descriptive representation defined as information-giving requires the collection of additional data on information that representatives give about themselves, and about who and what they care about, in online or offline media, political speeches, visual images, or public performances (Saward 2010). Also, women's perception of the accuracy of the information given might be included. The collection of such data might pose some research difficulties similar to those we previously attributed to measuring substantive and symbolic representation: it is indeed more difficult, more time-consuming, and more expensive to gather such data. The main advantage of the additional measurement we suggest, is that it offers an important qualification of the

levels of descriptive representation measured by simply counting bodies. To improve our understanding of gender and political equality it is, we contend, key to assess whether an increase in numbers of women in legislatures is paralleled by an increase in numbers of female representatives who intentionally, publicly, and accurately engage in information-giving about women and various sub-groups of women.

CONCLUSION: GENDER EQUALITY IN DESCRIPTIVE REPRESENTATION

This chapter has cast a focused eye through the lens of descriptive representation as a means to better understand political equality and, in particular, gender equality. Studies have revealed that the underlying causes for women's low descriptive representation are *inter alia*: electoral rules, including gender quotas, the interplay between formal and informal rules and institutions, and the role of societal acceptability of equality. All are considered as key determinants in understanding the political equality, or lack of it, of women. Investigations into women's descriptive representation as a source for substantive and symbolic gender equality deliver an evenly complex picture. In short, descriptive representation has the capacity to increase political equality in other dimensions of representation, but the breadth and nature of the effects remain highly conditional.

The literature review confirmed that descriptive representation is one of the only sites where political equality can be measured (easily), thus being attentive to descriptive representation is key in projects that aim to understand and further gender equality. It is therefore worth investing in improving our understanding and operationalization of descriptive representation, and gender and politics scholarship has identified important criteria to consider for such an improvement: power, agency, and intersectionality. This chapter engaged with these challenges by going back to the conceptual roots of descriptive representation. Based on a re-reading of Pitkin's foundational study on representation, we have suggested that scholars can counter many of the complexities that have been identified by taking information-giving on board as an additional criterion. This is only one possible way to identify descriptive representatives in a more sophisticated manner, and future researchers might further engage in re-conceptualizing descriptive representation for a better measurement of political equality, given that monitoring gender equality has traditionally been, and remains, a powerful strategy to establish political equality for women and other disempowered and marginalized groups alike. Studying descriptive representation operationalized in a less reductionist way would obviously also allow for an improved understanding of the causes of political inequality, and of descriptive representatives as a source of political equality in other political spheres.

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CHAPTER 10

REGIONAL AND ETHNIC MINORITIES

DIDIER RUEDIN

THE elections of Barack Obama as President of the United States in 2008 and Leo Varadkar as Taoiseach¹ in 2017 demonstrate that members of regional and ethnic minorities can reach the highest echelons of power. Yet, in many contexts regional and ethnic minorities remain politically marginalized and under-represented in formal politics (Bird et al. 2010; Ruedin 2013). This under-representation poses a fundamental threat to the legitimacy of liberal democracies, which partly draws on having representative bodies that reflect the population (Dahl 1985). In legislatures around the world, anything between the absence of minority representatives to—in rare cases—a numerical over-representation can be observed.

This chapter focuses on ethnic and regional minorities, a dimension the literature on political representation has long neglected despite ethnic cleavages being salient in many places (Lijphart 1999). Traditionally, researchers have sometimes assumed that all so-called minorities of power are equivalent when it comes to political representation, but research has shown that this is not the case (Ruedin 2010). While there are similarities in some respects, clear differences exist in others. Similarities include the importance of trust in representatives from the same group, and (contested) claims to substantive group-specific interests. Particular to regional and ethnic minorities is that they are not numerically relevant in all countries: Some populations are ethnically homogeneous with no politically relevant minority groups. If such minority groups exist, the relevant cleavage is not always apparent: race, ethnicity, language, urbanity, geographical region, or a combination of these. With this comes the challenge of identifying minority groups without making the assumption that all members of the group are the same—an issue more commonly discussed in the context of the representation of women (McCall 2005).

There are many reasons why we care about the inclusion of regional and ethnic minorities in legislatures and government. To start with, members of regional and ethnic minorities tend to trust members of their own group more (Schildkraut 2016).

The inclusion of minority groups in legislatures also serves as a strong symbol of equality (Saideman et al. 2002). Researchers commonly assume that regional and ethnic minority groups have specific interests that are best represented by members of their group. The nature and existence of such group-specific interests is sometimes contested, but from a normative point of view, the *perception* of such interests matters, not their objective existence. Moreover, ethnic minorities may be geographically clustered, ethnicity often reinforces differences of social class, and it may be reflected in, rather than cutting across, party lines (Htun 2004). For these reasons, including regional and ethnic minorities in positions of power can alleviate open conflict (Van Cott 2005).

THE CHAIN OF REPRESENTATION FOR REGIONAL AND ETHNIC MINORITIES

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At its basic, the chain of representation for regional and ethnic minorities does not differ from other forms of representation: Citizens elect party candidates into legislatures to articulate their interests and influence policy (see the Introduction to this *Handbook*). Throughout the chapter, I argue that there are various challenges to studying representation when it comes to regional and ethnic minorities. To outline these challenges, the chapter follows the key actors along this chain of representation.

To start with, the representation of regional and ethnic minorities assumes that there is such a thing as ethnic groups in society. Ethnicity refers to social entities that share a—real or assumed—common origin, a cultural-linguistic legacy that collectively ties members of the group and is transmitted across generations (Ben-Rafael and Sternberg 2015; Jenkins 1997). The meaning of boundaries between regions and ethnic groups are socially constructed, and power plays a role in determining which of these are politically salient (Posner 2017). Boundaries can be drawn on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, culture, urbanity, geography, immigration status,² or a combination of these. Particularly comparative studies need to justify the boundaries they examine and beware that a label like ‘Asian’ can mean different things in different contexts. In the United States, ‘Asian’ refers to minorities with an origin in countries such as China, Japan, or Korea. In the United Kingdom, by contrast, ‘Asian’ refers to minorities with an origin in India and Pakistan. Depending on the motivation of the research, it can be useful to focus on politically relevant groups, but doing so can contradict the observation that regional and ethnic identity may be particularly important for those largely excluded from formal politics. The nature and relevance of these boundaries can be controversial and should probably constitute a future line of inquiry in itself.

Just counting the size of regional and ethnic minorities is challenging. Because regional and ethnic identities can be multidimensional, ethnic groups can be fluid and context-dependent. Put differently, membership in a particular minority group is not necessarily fixed, with relevant ethnic boundaries and their importance open to

change over time (Stribis 2019).³ Context dependence means that in some situations membership is highlighted and salient—for example, to secure resources—while in other situations it may be subdued or even denied. To make matters more challenging for researchers, ethnic groups are often nested or hierarchical in the sense of groups and subgroups that may be distinguished depending on the context (Marquardt and Herrera 2015). With this in mind, it should be clear that it is often inappropriate to assume that the number of minority representatives is equivalent to the number of representatives from an ethnic minority party where such parties exist. Ruedin (2013) argued that with a focus on political representation, ethnic differences can be regarded as sufficiently fixed in time to count the number of representatives belonging to ethnic and regional minorities—but we cannot assume that they stay the same over time. He also demonstrated that different sources tend to agree on the salient divisions and how many representatives fall into a particular group. Because scope and boundary issues cannot always be resolved, future work should try to capture the uncertainty in measurement, and include this uncertainty in empirical models whenever possible. This encompasses efforts to verify that potential markers like skin colour are salient, or whether ethnic boundaries draw on other forms of difference in a particular case.

If we take the literature on intersectionality seriously on better capturing the complexity of social life (McCall 2005), there are serious consequences for work on the representation of regional and ethnic minorities. This literature highlights the diversity and heterogeneity within regional and ethnic minorities, suggesting that not all members of these groups are represented or excluded to the same extent (Celis and Mügge 2017). This differential effect is referred to as *intersectionality-plus* by Weldon (2008), suggesting that there are effects for being a woman and for belonging to a minority group, but also separate effects for belonging to both. Indeed, political inclusion and marginalization can occur for different subgroups of regional and ethnic minorities at the same time (Mügge 2016; Mügge and Erzeel 2016). For the study of political representation, intersectionality means capturing membership in different socially and politically relevant dimensions. This is a challenge only few studies, to date, have taken up directly (Hughes 2011, 2013, 2016; Krook and O'Brien 2010; Murray 2016) or indirectly (Ruedin 2010), especially for dimensions like sexuality that are not readily visible. One solution is to bring the study of representation to the individual level (Ruedin 2012), although this approach should be regarded a complement rather than a replacement of existing approaches.

Whether political representation should focus on the public, citizens, or voters (as opposed to non-voters) is a topic that requires further theoretical work. Lack of representation and political marginalization can be a reason for regional and ethnic minorities to abstain from formal politics, directly affecting the first link of the chain of representation. The robust descriptions of this phenomenon suggest that the viability of candidates, identity, cross-pressures, tactical voting, trust, and differences in interest and participation may all play a role (Fisher et al. 2015; Kolpinskaya 2017; Martin 2016; Ruedin 2018; Sobolewska 2013; Thrasher et al. 2013). More research and theory-building is necessary to understand *why* this is so in some cases and not in others.

NATIONAL LEGISLATURES

National legislatures have been the focus of much work on the political representation of regional and ethnic minorities. Directly elected by the voters, they constitute the second link in the chain of representation.⁴ A central assumption is that group membership of representatives can be perceived by voters, matters to voters, and that boundaries of group membership correspond to those at the population level. Within countries these assumptions are probably not unreasonable (Ruedin 2009), but they remain assumptions. On this basis, there is by now a significant body of literature exploring the descriptive representation of regional and ethnic minorities—much of it focusing on individual cases (Barker and Coffé 2018; Bergh and Bjørklund 2003; Garbaye 2005; Geisser 1997; Morden 2017; Saggat and Geddes 2000; Schönwälder 2013) with comparative research emerging (Bird 2003; Bird et al. 2010; Hänni 2018; Hughes 2013; Ruedin 2009, 2013). These studies outline numerical under-representation of regional and ethnic minorities, although the degree to which minority groups are under-represented seems to vary, and there are a few instances where minority groups are over-represented like Whites in South Africa or Chinese in Trinidad and Tobago (Ruedin 2013).

While some studies engaged in head counting of representatives from regional and ethnic minorities highlight that descriptive representation is valuable in itself (Saideman et al. 2002), many assert that numerical under-representation reflects structures that exclude minorities (Leyenaar 2004; Phillips 1995). A stronger argument asserts that descriptive representation is the best way to ensure substantive representation (Mansbridge 1999): We insist on the presence of regional and ethnic minorities to have their interests reflected when new policies and laws are written. The existence and nature of these substantive interests, however, is a subject of considerable controversy. On the one hand, there is the position that group membership and interests are different things, focusing on the individual and basic needs like jobs, security, or cultural expression. To some extent, this view is informed by the ideal that the issue preferences behind substantive representation should dominate politics, and that different groups in society should not be disadvantaged. On the other hand, there is the assertion that groups have inherent interests, perhaps most obvious when it comes to control over land with regional minorities. Mansbridge (1999) also highlights that when trust is low, such as in situations of ethnic conflict, descriptive representation is normatively desirable. In either situation, *perceptions* of group interests are relevant, not whether these objectively exist. Others focus on the experience of having grown up as a member of a regional or ethnic minority group—an experience difficult to relate to for those not directly affected (Walby 2009).

There is much evidence that, on average, representatives of regional and ethnic minorities work in the name of their respective groups (Bird 2010; Broockman 2013; Casellas and Leal 2010; Juenke and Preuhs 2012; Minta 2011; Saalfeld and Bischof

2013; Saalfeld and Kyriakopoulou 2010; Wüst 2010, 2014). This can be shown by an increased number of parliamentary actions related to these groups, like putting forward motions, being part of commissions, asking parliamentary questions, votes in the chamber, or oversight work (Minta 2011; Saalfeld and Kyriakopoulou 2010; Wüst 2014). In this sense, representatives from regional and ethnic minorities articulate public interests. Bailer and Ohmura (2018) show that in Germany parliamentarians from under-represented groups use parliamentary questions to represent 'their' group, particularly at the beginning of their political career.

Where studies are willing to identify minority interests, they often find an association between descriptive and substantive representation. Bird (2010) examined how parliamentarians from visible minorities are more likely to intervene on issues that she argued represent the interests of these regional and ethnic minorities. Casellas and Leal (2010) make similar observations for the US Congress. In the same direction, Juenke and Preuhs (2012) demonstrate that the voting behaviour of Black and Latino legislators in the US differs systematically from other legislators, but they stop short of specifying the actual minority interests they assume this to reflect. Saalfeld and Kyriakopoulou (2010) observed minority parliamentarians in the UK asking more questions related to minority interests. Kolpinskaya (2017) highlights, however, that parliamentary questions are a 'low-cost' activity for parliamentarians: Interventions on behalf of minority groups may be more symbolic than substantive. For this reason, work by Minta (2011), who focused on parliamentary oversight as more 'costly' activities, is important. Minta shows that Black and Latino legislators are more likely to testify in favour of minority interests, or write letters to officials to urge them to take action in the interest of members of minority groups.

A challenge for these studies is to separate out electoral calculus from intrinsic motivation to represent a specific group, because often the two cannot be separated. The importance of electoral incentives is probably best illustrated with work in the United States, where majority legislators have become less responsive to the interests of their Black constituents because they assume that other (Black) legislators would represent these interests (Lublin 1997; Overby and Cosgrove 1996). Another challenge of these studies is that they assume that representatives have an opportunity to voice these interests in the legislature (compare Goodin 2004). Future work should examine these opportunities to represent, which may include questions of framing, such as *how* politicians present and justify issues in political debates, in addition to which issues they address (Morden 2017).

Research on immigrant minorities in Europe shows that group membership can be an important—even dominant—political issue for the affected parliamentarians. For example, Saalfeld (2011) finds that in Europe ethnic minorities are more likely to ask immigration-related questions in parliament (see also Saalfeld and Bischof 2013; Saalfeld and Kyriakopoulou 2010; Wüst 2010). The visibility of immigration origin may be more important than the immigrant origin in itself. Furthermore, minority representatives are more likely to act for immigrants if they represent a constituency with a relatively large share of minorities (Wüst and Saalfeld 2011). These findings are in line with the results

by Kroeber (2018) who showed that substantive representation is more likely when group membership of the politicians and the composition of their constituency align, and Hänni (2018) who examined ethnic and regional minorities more broadly.

In a comparative study, Hänni (2018) showed that presence in legislative chambers—descriptive representation—does not necessarily lead to substantive representation of ethnic and regional minorities. She highlights that the relationship between descriptive and substantive representation is moderated by the context in which legislators operate, like having a sizable minority group in the population or a supportive government. At the same time, without descriptive representation we do not seem to observe substantive representation. Rather than focusing on the overall relationship between descriptive and substantive representation in government, it might be more fruitful to focus on specific instances where substantive representation can be said to take place (or not). From this point we can work towards understanding *when* and *how* descriptive and substantive representation relate, rather than trying to establish a link at the aggregate level where other influences may mask the underlying processes leading to representation. Future research should also seek innovative designs to better capture the substantive interests of minority groups, especially ways to move beyond assumptions and towards possibilities to treat differences in interests within groups.

Experiments where voters send fictitious requests to representatives have been used to show that members of regional and ethnic minorities are often to some extent intrinsically motivated to represent group interests (Broockman 2013; Costa 2017; McClendon 2016). Yet, electoral calculus can ensure that non-minority representatives also work in the interests of regional and ethnic minority groups in the legislature (Sobolewska 2013). This is particularly relevant in cases where electoral districts, or the geographical distribution of ethnic minorities, mean that minorities are not the majority in a particular district. While we have empirical evidence for intrinsic motivation and electoral incentives, as Mansbridge (1999) predicted, future research should complement these findings with a better understanding of *when* and *how* representatives work in the name of regional and ethnic minorities. Indeed, Giger et al. (2019) suggest that intrinsic and extrinsic motivations may interact to some extent. Furthermore, there is some evidence that many minority representatives are reluctant to represent their own group, but feel pressed to do so (Wüst 2014; Wüst and Saalfeld 2011). Similar pressure has been noted for women to represent the interests of women (Reingold and Swers 2011; Schwindt-Bayer and Palmer 2007). Experimental approaches like Broockman (2013) are unable to differentiate intrinsic motivations from feeling obliged into representing groups, and other approaches are necessary to understand the role of such pressures.

Focusing on representatives in the legislature, more work is needed to examine the expectations of different actors that members of regional and ethnic minorities should represent the interests of 'their' group. While there is evidence of expectations from the party leadership (Murray 2016), there are also expectations from the population and voters. A careful examination of substantive representation would link these expectations in the population with the work of representatives—rather than assume what the interests of the groups are. This means that future research should focus on *how*

substantive representation takes place, rather than be preoccupied with the question whether (on average) it does take place and whether it is linked to descriptive representation. This way, future research can move beyond the assumption of a simple direct link that reduces ethnic and regional minorities to a single homogeneous group, and also consider the possibility that legislators represent a privileged subgroup only (Mügge and Erzeel 2016). Novel approaches like process tracing are needed to complement the commonly studied policy outcomes in order to have stronger claims that we truly observe substantive representation.

The heterogeneity of regional and ethnic minority groups is a challenge for the study of representation more generally. To date, only few studies have examined differences within groups (see Celis and Mügge 2017 for a discussion). When it comes to asserting or measuring the representation of substantive interests, these differences within groups are an important aspect that future research should examine. On the one hand, these considerations highlight that just counting parliamentary interventions that mention the interests of a regional or minority group will fail to capture whether the group is represented in its diversity. On the other hand, a focus on these differences within groups can highlight that, what are purportedly group interests, are in some instances interests that transcend groups and may have been associated with groups due to historical reasons. For example, economic interests of Black South Africans probably do not constitute an interest of the group other than that they are vastly more affected by poverty than other population groups, but even a rich Black South African needs recognition and protection from racial discrimination.

A different approach has been championed by Saward (2006, 2010) to focus on claims to representation. Here counting individual representatives and considerations of heterogeneity take a back seat, with political actors claiming to represent a particular regional or ethnic group in focus (see also Montanaro 2012). This approach is compatible with intersectionality—a legislator can claim to represent Black women in particular—and fluid ethnic boundaries in the sense that depending on the context the same politician can claim to represent different groups. As Rehfeld (2006) highlighted, however, claims to representation are limited because there is also an audience that needs to accept a claim to representation as legitimate. In free elections, this is apparent for political parties, but less so for group membership because voters did not explicitly legitimize a candidate because of their ethnicity. This brings us back to questions of trust: whether regional and ethnic minorities trust legislators to represent the interests of their group. In this sense, there is room for studies capturing claims to representation alongside feelings of representation and possibly descriptive representation.

GOVERNMENTS

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Questions of substantive representation come to the fore when we look at representation in governments. Here arguments of numbers are typically less obvious, though

normatively it is desirable to include regional and ethnic minorities in government. Especially when it comes to symbolic representation, the inclusion in government seems of great importance (Sharp 2014). Because governments implement policies, they play a particularly important role for ethnic and regional minorities.

A central question is whether the inclusion of ethnic and regional minorities in government (and in legislatures) shapes policies with substantive impact on these ethnic and regional minorities. Establishing such a link empirically is fraught with difficulties to do with the many factors that influence policies: party politics, commissions, lobbying behind the scenes, oversight, but also economic constraints and limited budgets (Minta 2011; Ruedin 2013). These challenges notwithstanding, the relationship between budget allocations and policies on the one hand, and substantive interests of regional and ethnic minorities on the other, is not always straightforward. While many studies in the United States suggest that descriptive representation and substantive representation are linked, other studies are more careful in claiming an association: Much depends on the willingness to identify minority interests, with the risk of treating ethnic and regional minority groups as homogeneous groups with unified interests.

At the level of government, a tension becomes apparent between demands for representing regional and ethnic minorities on the one hand, and clientelistic behaviour on the other. While this tension may indeed exist at the level of the legislature, it is readily apparent when it comes to governments. In liberal democracies, both the inclusion of different groups in society, as well as the absence of clientelistic politics, are considered desirable. For politicians, finding the right balance can be difficult, and future work should examine how these different demands affect the work of government.

INSTITUTIONS

Irrespective of the particular workings of representation in legislatures and governments, the literature on regional and ethnic minorities examines how different institutions affect the chain of representation. With this, institutional differences are often cited as reasons for the numerical under-representation of ethnic and regional minorities in formal politics. Electoral institutions are an obvious target for investigation because they affect which candidates and parties are elected into the legislature and government. Many contributions have underscored the role of the electoral system, arguing that proportional representation should benefit the inclusion of regional and ethnic minorities (Barker and Coffé 2018; Lijphart 1999). What is at work here is a combination of the district magnitude and the behaviour of parties in selecting candidates (on electoral thresholds, see also Kook 2017). A larger district means that a larger number of candidates is selected, which is relevant for regional and ethnic minorities when we bring in the second part: the tendency for parties to place majority candidates at the top of lists. With more candidates selected, the likelihood increases

that a (minority) candidate further down the list is elected (Ruedin 2013). When minorities are geographically concentrated, the purported advantages of proportional representation systems are no longer obvious (Ruedin 2009; Wagner 2014). Moser (2008) argues that in the case of ethnic and regional minorities, proportional representation systems need to be combined with ethnic parties to positively affect representation. What is more, as stable institutions, electoral systems are not well suited to explain changes over time.

Quotas and reserved seats constitute other electoral institutions that commend themselves for increasing the number of ethnic and regional minorities in formal politics. Contrary to gender, when it comes to regional and ethnic minorities, reserved seats are more common than party quotas (Htun 2004; Zuber 2015). On the one hand, the mechanism is relatively straightforward, and we can expect a direct impact on the number of minority representatives as a consequence. On the other hand, the way such quotas and reserved seats are implemented often means that they are ineffective to increase the number of minority representatives to a level we would expect from their share in the population (Ruedin 2009, 2013). More research on the origins and implementation of quotas is needed, requiring better longitudinal data. We know little about when reservations for regional and ethnic minorities are initiated, what groups are considered, and in what circumstances colour-blindness can lead to better inclusion of minorities. This research could also relate to the consequences of quotas in the style of Clayton and Zetterberg (2018) who have looked at gender quotas. Clayton and Zetterberg examined the effects of quotas on public spending, but importantly worked from the purported causes to the effects in the analysis rather than trying to identify causes of observed effects (see also Jensenius 2015). On a normative level, there is a tension between including regional and ethnic minorities on the one hand, and individual freedom highlighted in liberal democracies. There is a danger that quotas and reserved seats relegate regional and ethnic minorities to the positions put aside for them—be this reserved seats or ethnic parties—and, overall, marginalizes their position in formal politics, especially in commissions and ministries with consequential powers. Murray's (2014) suggestion to use quotas that limit the majority group is difficult to implement when there are more than two regional and ethnic groups in a country, but may work well for gender.

Research on other structural factors is less common. Spicer et al. (2017) highlighted that the political opportunity structures commonly examined in the protest literature can be fruitfully applied to questions of political representation. Both institutional and cultural aspects of the political opportunity structure are highlighted, but the link to specific social mechanisms and how these relate to the chain of representation are not yet well developed. Cultural aspects describe attitudes in the population and among the party leadership that are conducive to including a diverse group of representatives, like the view that women are equally competent as political leaders. Ruedin (2009, 2013) has highlighted how cultural differences between countries can affect all parts of the chain of representation—from voters to candidates, from parties to members of government. An important question is how such cultural attitudes can

be changed to encourage the inclusion of minorities. Future research should examine how cultural aspects and formal political institutions interact to shape political representation.

CANDIDATES, POLITICAL PARTIES, AND PARTY LEADERS

Candidates from regional and ethnic minorities constitute an important link in the chain of representation. When too few candidates from regional and ethnic minorities come forward, voters are constrained in the ability to elect them, which reduces the level of representation in the legislature and government. While the number of representative seats is always small enough that there are certainly enough qualified members of regional and ethnic minorities who could run in national elections, there might be too few who are motivated to run. Just like many voters choose not to vote, regional and ethnic minorities may choose not to stand (compare Ohmura et al. 2018). There is a need for studies on this decision not to stand, but it is likely that marginalized groups are also politically demobilized—which could lead to a vicious circle where nobody works in the interests of the marginalized group.

Mansbridge (1999) highlighted that regional and ethnic minorities often only trust members of their ‘own’ group to represent their interests. It is clear that representatives who are not members of these groups can represent the interests of these groups by voting in favour of certain policies, for instance, but such representation will be incomplete without accompanying trust. In this constellation, politicians from regional and ethnic minorities may be under intensified pressure to stand for their ‘own’ group, even if they would prefer to focus on other policy areas. Such pressures have not been studied in detail, but they may be particularly strong when there are few other minority representatives who can share the ‘burden’ of representing minority interests. These pressures may increase because of expectations from other politicians (Lublin 1997; Murray 2016), conformity with a specific social role, concerns over political reputation, and indeed electoral incentives (Saalfeld and Bischof 2013; Sobolewska 2013). Future research should pay attention to political networks and interest groups that may be particularly influential because candidates and elected representatives are likely to value their political reputation. Pressure on regional and ethnic minorities to represent particular groups and interests may be particularly strong when these interests are organized and can lobby politicians.

Political parties and the party leadership play an important role in shaping the political representation of regional and ethnic minorities (Geddes 1998; Kittilson and Tate 2004; Messina 1989). They are gatekeepers, and their actions can encourage or discourage minority candidates to put their name forward for an election (Chaney 2015; Murray 2016; Wüst 2010; Wüst and Saalfeld 2011). Parties may choose regional

and ethnic minority candidates with a clear expectation that they represent these groups—at least outwardly in terms of symbolic representation. Some parties react to growing diversity in the population with recruitment drives of minority candidates (Fisher et al. 2015). The literature, however, continues to rely on studies on women candidates to draw inferences about regional and ethnic minorities, something that should be complemented with dedicated studies, especially in view of findings by Ruedin (2010, 2013) that the mechanisms may not be the same for women and other minority groups.

Where they are allowed, ethnic parties can positively affect the inclusion of regional and ethnic minorities. Ethnic parties can be defined by the priority they give to issues related to ethnic groups (Zollinger and Bochsler 2012). The presence of ethnic parties, however, cannot be equated with inclusion or indeed substantive representation and legitimacy (Hänni 2018). We also need to look at the geographic distribution of minority populations; the electoral system in place, which may restrict the success of ethnic parties; or the inclusion of members from ethnic minorities in mainstream politics. While ethnic parties can provide a concentrated effort to represent substantive interests of regional and ethnic minorities, there is also a danger that they represent the interests of a particular subgroup and reduce mobilization along other interests that cut across ethnic lines, like poverty. By politicizing ethnic differences, ethnic community leaders and ethnic parties may project social cleavages through an ethnic lens, which may encourage ethnic conflict (Zuber 2015). In this context, claims to representation by ethnic parties (compare Saward 2006), but also the acceptance of these claims by mainstream parties, deserve careful study.

In many places ethnic parties are outlawed for the fear of ethnic conflict. Sometimes we can find quasi-ethnic parties in the sense that certain parties receive an overwhelming part of their support from particular regional or ethnic minorities. Parties will be more likely to put forward candidates if minority voters show a willingness to switch their support (Anwar 1990; Ruedin 2009), or if they are a pivotal electorate. Different motivations of candidates may be revealing here (Sobolewska 2013), and indeed how parties react to these different motivations among the candidates. Rather different is the role of left-wing parties who have traditionally championed the rights and interests of disadvantaged groups who also tend to be politically marginalized. This universalist focus tends to include regional and ethnic minorities, including immigrants (Carvalho and Ruedin 2018). Indeed, left-wing parties may choose (certain) minority candidates to highlight the fact that they champion diversity (Htun and Ossa 2013; Weldon 2006; Wüst 2010). On the one hand, this means that left-wing parties may reduce the pressure on minority politicians to necessarily represent the interests of regional and ethnic minorities, because there are other representatives watching out for these substantive interests. Whether they represent all facets of minority interests, or focus on representing the ‘fact of diversity’ (Goodin 2004) is a question that has been left unaddressed. On the other hand, questions of trust may limit the extent to which left-wing parties can legitimately speak in the name of regional and ethnic minorities.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown that the political representation of regional and ethnic minorities follows a chain of representation that links citizens to parties to legislatures and governments. The nature of ethnicity, however, makes it difficult to precisely capture representation at each link of the chain of representation. Indeed, throughout the chapter I have argued that much research is needed to understand the nature of representation when it comes to regional and ethnic minorities. It is inappropriate to simply assume the mechanisms reflect those of the representation of women because both are minorities of power (Ruedin 2010), and only dedicated research on regional and ethnic minorities can establish to what extent there are similarities with gender. At the same time, if one wants to avoid the traps of essentialism and unrealistic assumptions, research on regional and ethnic minorities is plainly difficult (Celis and Mügge 2017).

Rather than focusing on descriptive representation, as much of the literature on regional and ethnic minorities has done, the chapter argued that substantive representation should be the guiding principle—acknowledging how difficult it can be to ascertain that (perceived) substantive representation takes place. In this sense, however, future research should explore the dynamic nature of political representation. Regarding substantive representation, this means moving from the question *whether* substantive representation takes place (and whether it is linked to descriptive representation), to questions of *how* and *when* it takes place. In this sense, the pressures on politicians to represent their ‘own’ group versus anti-clientilistic norms in liberal democracies deserve more attention.

The literature presents both institutional and cultural change as possible ways to improve the inclusion of ethnic and regional minorities in formal politics, and future work should also consider how these two forces interact. Longitudinal data, combined with a careful examination of the purported mechanisms at play, may help identify causal order between relevant attitudes and levels of representation, and ascertain what happens when quotas are implemented and indeed what happens when quotas and reserved seats are removed. Even if quotas and reserved seats are accepted as a ‘necessary evil’ to address the historic under-representation of regional and ethnic minorities, the principles of liberal democracy suggest that we should work towards their eventual removal.

Another significant question is the consequences of representation (or lack thereof) on trust, conflict, identification, but also social and political participation. Once again, longitudinal data combined with different methods—qualitative, quantitative, and experimental—are likely to be necessary to better understand how regional and ethnic minorities are represented at the different links of the chain of representation. With the challenges of counting who should be considered part of regional and ethnic minorities to start with, we are likely to see many small steps towards a better understanding of political representation in liberal democracies.

NOTES

1. The Taoiseach is the head of government (prime minister) of Ireland.
2. To what extent immigrants and their descendants can constitute ethnic groups is contested. Where boundaries are truly irrelevant to political representation, we can (on average) expect high levels of political representation by chance alone (Ruedin 2013).
3. This may be particularly relevant for immigration-related minorities where some descendants of immigrants may become included in the mainstream while for others ethnic differences are upheld—rendering labels like ‘second generation’ and ‘immigration background’ meaningless.
4. Upper chambers are less often studied because they are not always directly elected. Representation in regional and local legislatures has received less attention in the literature, but there is no reason to insist on representation at the national level or in formal politics only.

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CHAPTER 11

SORTITION AND MINI-PUBLICS

A Different Kind of Representation

DAVID M. FARRELL AND PETER STONE¹

INTRODUCTION

OVER the past few decades, liberal democracies have begun to experiment with *sortition*—the selection of citizens by lottery for engagement in political or policy discussions. A notable development has been the emergence of randomly selected *deliberative mini-publics* that can take a number of different forms. This chapter reviews this experimentation, and what political scientists can learn from it. It focuses its attention upon *citizens' assemblies*, a particular type of mini-public that has started to play an important role in constitutional reform worldwide.

While deliberative democracy is now long established as a dominant field of interest in political theory, its empirical application is more recent. Of particular interest is the emergence of deliberative mini-publics that are set the task of dealing with major policy, institutional, or constitutional reform questions. All share in common the method of selecting the citizen members—by random selection; they also face the common criticism that the entity that is established is competing with the country's 'true citizens' assembly'—the national parliament. The most notable examples are the citizens' assemblies of British Columbia (2004), Ontario (2007), and the Netherlands (2006); the Irish Constitutional Convention of 2012–2014; and the Irish Citizens' Assembly of 2016–2018.

This chapter sets these important experiments in sortition into context, showing how they developed from wider debates in political theory over the potential of deliberative democracy, and also from a desire to bring citizens into the heart of debates over constitutional and institutional reform. We move on to develop a normative case for sortition, focused on how it can contribute both in a negative sense—in

helping to shield the process of selecting officials from forces that could compromise it (a problem to which an election is prone)—and also in a positive sense in how it can deliver more effectively on the ideal of descriptive representation. We then consider some empirical evidence of how the most significant examples of sortition today (citizens' assemblies) have performed against those normative ideals.

THE REVIVAL OF SORTITION

Sortition is an old idea that has found a new following. Dating back to Ancient Athens, whose citizens were selected by lot to its main organs of government, it has found new form in contemporary experiments in deliberative democracy. This is a prominent branch of democratic theory that itself has moved through a series of stages, the most recent of which has entailed the study of real-world deliberative mini-publics—small groups of randomly selected citizens, operating according to deliberative principles (including facilitated small-group discussions) and tasked with considering one or a number of important policy, institutional, or constitutional reform issues (Elstub 2010, 2014; Goodin and Dryzek 2006). These mini-publics can take a range of different forms, including citizens' juries, consensus conferences, planning cells, deliberative polls, and citizens' assemblies.² As Table 11.1 shows, what all share in common is that random selection is the mode of recruiting the members (regular citizens), and the mode of operation is deliberation. But in other respects they differ. For instance, citizens' juries and consensus conferences tend to involve small groups of citizens, whereas the other forms of mini-publics tend to be larger (thus making them more representative of the wider population). Another important difference is over the number of meetings, which range from being very short (often single-shot) events, as in the case of citizens' juries and deliberative polls, to being longer, more intensive sessions, most notably in the case of the citizens' assemblies. A third difference of note is the outcome of the mini-public, which ranges from a survey report sent to the media or a private sponsor through to detailed recommendations that are voted on by the wider citizenry in a public referendum.

Our principal focus is on the citizens' assemblies, which have the combined merits of a large membership, time for intensive and detailed focus on issues, and a significant role in influencing policy outcomes (Contiades and Fotiadou 2017; Reuchamps and Suiter 2016).³ For Elstub, the citizens' assembly is the 'democratically superior mini-public' (Elstub 2014: 172); as Smith notes '[n]o other randomly selected body has been given the level of influence in the political process' (Smith 2009: 75). Table 11.2 sets out five cases to date: the citizens' assemblies on electoral reform in the Canadian provinces of British Columbia (2004) and Ontario (2007); the Dutch citizens' forum (*Burger-Forum*) of 2006; the Irish constitutional convention of 2012–2014; and the Irish citizens' assembly of 2016–2018 (Farrell et al. 2017, 2018; Fournier et al. 2011; Warren and Pearse 2008).⁴ Four of the cases share in common that ordinary citizens

Table 11.1 Types of Mini-Public

	Citizens' juries	Planning cells	Consensus conferences	Deliberative polls	Citizens' assemblies
Developed by (first instance)	Ned Crosby (USA, 1971)	Peter Dienel (Germany, 1970s)	Danish Board of Technology (1987)	James Fishkin (USA, 1994)	Gordon Gibson (Canada, 2002)
No. of members	12–26	100–150	10–25	100–500	99–160
No. of meetings	2–5 days	4–5 days	7–8 days	2–3 days	20–26 days
Selection method	Random selection				
Mode of operation	Deliberation				
Result	Collective position report	Survey opinions & collective position report	Collective position report	Survey opinions	Detailed recommendations
Destination of proposal	Sponsor and mass media	Sponsor and mass media	Parliament and mass media	Sponsor (which could be government) and/or mass media	Parliament, government and referendum

Source: Based on Escobar and Elstub (2017).

were the only members, all selected in a random process; in one case (the Irish constitutional convention) one-third of its members were professional politicians. Meetings occurred at weekends over a number of months, with all five cases having roughly the same amount of meeting days (which clearly do not include reading and other additional activities with which the members will have been involved).

The two Canadian cases resulted in referendum questions that went directly to the wider citizenry for consideration, which in both instances were defeated (though in British Columbia, which held two successive votes on this, on the first occasion the proposition actually received majority support but failed to pass a super-majority threshold). In the case of the Dutch citizens' forum, the recommendation was for only minor changes to the existing electoral system. This was to have been discussed by the government, but the process disintegrated with the collapse of the coalition government. By contrast, both Irish cases have resulted in successful outcomes, most notably the passing of the 2015 marriage equality referendum and the 2018 blasphemy referendum (both following the constitutional convention), as well as the passing of the 2018 abortion referendum (following the citizens' assembly) (Elkink et al. 2019).⁵

Table 11.2 The Citizens' Assemblies

	British Columbia Citizens' Assembly 2004	Netherlands <i>BurgerForum</i> 2006	Ontario Citizens' Assembly 2007	Ireland Constitutional Convention 2012–2014	Ireland Citizens' Assembly 2016–2018
Number of members	160 citizens	140 citizens	103 citizens	66 citizens + 33 politicians	99 citizens
Selection method	Pool drawn randomly (stratified) from electoral register; interested people signify their interest; members picked randomly (ensuring gender parity)			Door-to-door recruitment by a market research company of citizens on the electoral register (stratified random)	
Number of topics	1	1	1	8 (+2)	5
Number of meeting days	26	20	24	20	22
Number of recommendations	1	1	1	38	44
Destination of recommendations	Binding referendum	Reports to government	Binding referendum	Reports to parliament	Reports to parliament
Outcomes (to date)	Referendum defeated (twice)	Proposal rejected	Referendum defeated	The bulk of the recommendations in train or implemented (including successful referendums on marriage equality and blasphemy)	Successful referendum (abortion); climate change recommendations being discussed by a special parliamentary committee

Sources: Fournier et al. 2011; information on Ireland provided by the authors.

The Irish cases are distinguished from the rest also in the sense that the agenda was more wide-ranging and the time scale for each topic more constrained. Unlike the other three cases, which each had a long period of time to consider just one item (the electoral system), the Irish constitutional convention was asked to consider eight items (the electoral system included), subsequently adding two further items to its agenda, whereas the Irish citizens' assembly was asked to consider five items. This was closer to the 'constitutional gardening-frame' recommended by Olsen (2003: 820) for constitutional review processes, but it was not without logistical challenges (Suiter et al. 2016).

Processes like these speak to a wider agenda of political reform (cf. Farrell 2014), which is occurring at a time when we see citizen engagement expanding into new 'forms of action' (Dalton et al. 2003: 1). It is a time in which more of us engage in new, less conventional (sometimes even unconventional) forms of political action, in which more of us become 'good' (Dalton 2016) or even 'critical' citizens (Norris 1999), seeking a more active (less passive) role in the political system, prepared to challenge (and thereby engage with) existing systems and norms. In large part responding to rising democratic challenges, the political elites are introducing widespread democratic reforms (e.g. Bedock et al. 2012). Dalton and his colleagues (2003) refer to this as a 'second wave of democratic reform', personified by the creation of new institutions and the redesign of existing ones with the principal aim of facilitating greater citizen participation, or as Smith puts it, 'to increase and deepen citizen participation in the political decision-making process' (Smith 2009: 1). Political institutions are changing with the times (of course, in some cases more quickly than others). The emerging 'new model of democracy' that Dalton and his colleagues (2003a) refers to is one that is more 'talk-centred' rather than 'election-centred', with citizens being ever more drawn into the policy process in between elections (Steiner 2012: 37).

WHAT CAN SORTITION DO?

The contemporary revival of interest in sortition raises many questions for political scientists, some empirical, some normative. On the empirical side, as we have seen, there is the question of explaining the revival. Why are more and more people attracted to the idea of selecting citizens by lot for public purposes? Why are politicians becoming more willing to entrust randomly selected citizens with public responsibilities, at least on a limited scale? On the normative scale, there is the question of *justifying* this revival, as opposed to simply explaining it. Just what can sortition do for politics today? Are there good reasons to endorse this practice? And should contemporary polities be making even more use of it?

These empirical and normative questions are, of course, deeply intertwined. People have reasons for their attraction to sortition, but are they good reasons? Normative analysis can critically analyse the current fascination with sortition, and see if it is well motivated or simply confused. On the other hand, the normative desirability of

sortition depends critically upon the consequences it generates for the political processes into which it gets embedded. And the assessment of those consequences is an empirical matter.

Our primary focus in this and the next sections of this chapter is normative, moving beyond the question of the origins of the modern revival of interest in sortition. That said, we will later consider the empirical data relevant to the normative case for sortition—data bearing on, for example, the performance of randomly selected decision-making bodies. But before doing this, we will engage in normative analysis of the sort that would justify proper consideration of such evidence. We will begin this task in this section by suggesting there are two different types of arguments for sortition—a *negative* and a *positive* argument. Each argument appeals to random selection in a different way. As we will see, it is easier to establish the validity of the negative argument than the positive one.

Random selection, or selection via fair lottery,⁶ requires selecting each individual from a given population with equal probability. At the level of a single decision, a lottery makes the selection as unpredictable as possible. There is no more reason for expecting one selection to be made than any other. But things are different when a lottery is employed more than once. In this case, patterns emerge at the level of the sample. Suppose that some of the individuals in the population share some property in common—their race, their religion, or their gender, for example. Then the proportion of the sample possessing that property will be very nearly the same as the proportion of the population possessing that same property, provided the sample is large. The larger the sample, the less likely becomes any meaningful deviation from proportionality. This is all in accordance with the Central Limit Theorem in statistics.

Random selection, in other words, combines *maximum possible unpredictability* at the level of the individual selection with *maximum possible predictability* at the level of the (large) sample.⁷ This fact suggests two possible contributions that sortition could make to democratic politics. The first of these is negative, and takes advantage of the unpredictability of individual random selections. The second of these is positive, and relies upon the predictable proportionality produced by large random samples. We will consider each of these in turn.

THE NEGATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF LOTTERIES

When an agent selects at random an individual from a population, her selection cannot be based upon any reasons of any kind, good or bad. She may *have* reasons for favouring some individuals over others in making the selection, but the lottery prevents her from *acting* upon those reasons. This is the contribution that the unpredictability of lotteries makes to decision-making; it provides the *sanitizing effect* of a process

unaffected by reasons (Stone 2011; cf. Dowlen 2008). This can prove useful if there exist bad reasons, but no good reasons, for selecting some individuals rather than others.⁸ It can also prove useful if both good and bad reasons exist, but the danger posed by bad reasons is more serious than the benefit offered by good reasons. The lottery screens out both types of reasons; whatever contribution it makes at the individual level relies upon this property.

This is the negative contribution that lotteries can make to politics, and it can come in several forms. Some of these forms generate an intrinsic contribution by sortition to the democratic process. Suppose, for example, every citizen has an equal claim to serve on a decision-making body of some sort (just as we assume that every citizen has an equal claim on the right to vote). Then if there is no way for every citizen to serve on that body, a lottery constitutes a fair way of selecting whose claims will be honoured. A lottery is, in fact, the only way to make this selection that fully respects the equality of citizen claims (Stone 2011: part II). It ensures that no other reason is employed in distinguishing between the claimants; any other reason would in effect work against the equality of claims. This equality of claims is not typical of decision-making bodies in modern democracies; we normally assume that citizens enjoy at most *equality of opportunity* with respect to holding office—something that is very different from having equal claims to holding office (Stone forthcoming). Elections are one method of respecting this equality of opportunity.⁹

THE POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION OF LOTTERIES

Contemporary proponents of deliberative mini-publics usually defend sortition in terms of the properties, not of each individual random selection, but of the sample as a whole. Sometimes, this is spun in negative terms. Random selection, it is suggested, empowers ‘ordinary’ citizens as opposed to ‘elites’ (be they politicians, bureaucrats, lobbyists, lawyers, or corporate directors). But ordinary citizens are not interchangeable. Few would be impressed by a mini-public composed entirely of middle-class white Catholic men. Much of the appeal of assemblies selected by lot stems, not from their negative ability to select people other than elites, but from their positive ability to represent the people as a whole, in all its diversity. Their appeal stems, in other words, from their ability to generate *descriptive representation*.

A sample offers descriptive representation of a population if and only if every significant segment of the latter appears in the same proportion in the former. That is, if x% of the population shares some characteristic (race, gender, age, etc.), then x% of the sample shares this as well. Descriptive representation is often called ‘mirror’ representation for its ability to reflect every feature of the population (Pitkin 1967).

Random selection ensures descriptive representation with respect to every characteristic, both important and trivial. This is the positive, sample-based contribution of random selection noted before. Under ideal conditions, random selection accomplishes this effortlessly, without any decision regarding which characteristics are ‘worthy’ of representation. Should society employ random selection to ensure descriptive representation with respect to race, gender, and socio-economic class, and then later decide that descriptive representation with respect to sexual orientation is also important, it will discover that it has been achieving this form of descriptive representation all along. This is not unlike Molière’s Monsieur Jourdain, who was delighted to learn that all of his life he had been speaking prose (Stone 2011: 136).

In practice, of course, conditions are often far from ideal. In the real world, people routinely decline opportunities to participate in politics, and they do so at rates that correlate strongly with characteristics such as education level and socio-economic class. For this reason, deliberative mini-publics tend to employ *stratified* random sampling. This means that they ensure that certain segments of the population are represented proportionately, and then randomize within the limits of that proportionality. The Irish citizens’ assembly of 2016–2018, for example, was stratified by gender, age, socio-economic status, and place of residency.¹⁰ Random selection thus determined who, within each of these categories, got selected. But the proportionate presence in the Assembly of each of these groups was not left to chance.

Note that when stratification is employed, it is the stratification, and not the randomization, that is ensuring proportionality along the stratified dimensions. The positive, sample-related contribution of lotteries is not doing the difficult work here.¹¹ Moreover, it is hard to see, under current circumstances, how descriptive representation could be ensured any other way. Participation in randomly selected citizen bodies is voluntary. Even if measures are taken to encourage citizens from all segments of society to participate (such as by paying honoraria), members of some segments (especially marginalized segments) are likely¹² to decline participation at higher rates than others. If differential acceptance rates are the problem (at least with respect to certain groups), then stratified sampling is the most obvious solution (although stratification can only be performed along a very limited number of dimensions; see Stone 2011: 135).¹³

Random selection, especially when combined with stratification, is extremely good at ensuring descriptive representation. But while political scientists have written a great deal about the importance of descriptive representation, its exact contribution to democracy is not always clear. Many political theorists, for example, point out that marginalized group members have distinct experiences and viewpoints that any meaningful deliberative process must incorporate (e.g. Phillips 1995; Mansbridge 1999). This has led some theorists to argue that successful democratic deliberation on a small scale requires taking steps to minimize ‘participation bias’ in favour of high-status groups (Fung 2003: 347).

The contribution that the marginalized can make to deliberation is undeniable, but why should this contribution necessitate proportionality? Women’s voices need to be

heard, but does this require that they provide just over 50% of the voices? Indeed, for very small minorities, proportionality is almost certain to ensure that their voices play little role in deliberation; over-representation seems appropriate in such cases if their voice is indeed deemed important (see n. 13). It is for this reason that John Dryzek has defended the representation of ‘discourses’ for certain types of democratic decisions. This may involve granting more representation to the advocates of a certain discourse than the presence of those advocates in the population might warrant (Dryzek and Niemeyer 2008).

In short, it is one thing to say that many different voices should be heard in a democratic deliberative process. It is quite another to say that those many different voices should be *proportionately* heard (Stone 2012). The first can usually be assured without the second; sometimes the second can be assured without the first. But there is no necessary reason to assume the two must track each other. The case for descriptive or ‘mirror’ representation must rest on some basis other than its potential contributions to high-quality deliberation.

There is an intuitive argument for descriptive representation, one with a natural connection to democratic theory. This argument has been articulated most forcefully in contemporary democratic theory by James Fishkin, creator of the ‘deliberative poll’ (Fishkin 1991, 1995, 2009, 2018). In a democracy, according to Fishkin, the people should make political decisions. But most people lack the time, energy, resources, and inclination for the sustained study of politics; they are ‘rationally ignorant’ about the subject (Downs 1957). As a result, decision-making by the people as a whole—through popular referendum, for example—will be poorly informed (cf. Achen and Bartels 2016). The people may rule in such cases, but they will not rule very well. But with descriptive representation, of the sort that can be provided through a (stratified) random sample, this problem can be remedied. Suppose that a sample of a few hundred people is asked to make a decision (or at least advise on one). The people in that sample have every incentive to become informed and thoughtful on the subject; each voice counts in such a small sample, after all. But because the sample is descriptively representative, it accurately mirrors the population as a whole. This suggests that the sample’s decision will be the same as the decision the entire people would have reached if it became informed and thoughtful. The people may not rule when a descriptively representative sample decides, but the decision that results is the same as the one it would have made if it really did rule, and rule well.

This, we suggest, is the heart of the positive case for random selection today. It is only as strong as the story about democracy behind it. This story raises a number of difficult questions for democracy. For example, it depends critically upon the extrapolation from the (descriptively representative and well-informed) sample to the population at large. There is no easy way to test the validity of the extrapolation—by asking the entire population to become well informed and testing whether it reaches the same judgment as the sample, for example. Moreover, the sample does more than simply obtain information in all contemporary experiments with sortition; it deliberates, engages in arguments, etc. Does it therefore reach the same decision the entire

population would reach if it engaged in the same argumentative process? Could the latter engage in the same process as the former? Is this even a well-defined idea for a population of millions? It had better be, as without it there is nothing for the random sample's decision to track (Garry et al. 2015).

HOW WELL DO RANDOMLY SELECTED BODIES PERFORM?

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The previous two sections have raised interesting normative questions, some of which can be addressed, at least in part, by examining the five cases considered in Table 11.2. First, there is the question of descriptive representation. Given that stratified random sampling was used in the citizens' assemblies, it should not be surprising to find that in all instances there was good representation across the main demographics. The principal study of the Canadian and Dutch cases reveals some under-representation of older (and in the British Columbia case also younger) citizens and a slight over-representation of better-educated citizens, but otherwise good representativeness overall (Fournier et al. 2011). In the Irish citizens' assembly there was a slight under-representation of younger citizens and farmers, but otherwise all the base targets were met by the market research company that carried out the recruitment—and this despite the high level of membership turnover across the assembly's fourteen months of operation (Farrell et al. 2018); similarly, there was good overall descriptive representation in the Irish constitutional convention (Suiter et al. 2016: 34–5).

The analysis of demographic and attitudinal evidence by Fournier et al. finds 'no persuasive evidence that the outcomes of the citizens' assemblies would have been any different' even had there been a perfect mirroring of the wider population (Fournier et al. 2011: 64). In the Canadian and Dutch cases the members were paid honoraria; this did not happen in the Irish cases, prompting the chair of the Irish citizens' assembly to remark in the final report that this is likely to have resulted in higher levels of self-selection than in the other cases. This led her to recommend that in any future Irish processes of this type the members should receive honoraria (Citizens' Assembly 2018: 107).

A second theme of interest is whether there is evidence of members engaging with the deliberative process. This refers to a growing interest in empirical research of deliberation on the quality of the deliberative process itself (e.g. Bächtiger et al. 2014), and the development of measurement tools such as, most notably, Steenbergen et al.'s 'discourse quality index' (2003; also Steiner et al. 2004), which is now being applied widely in the study of deliberative processes and which on the whole finds evidence of good engagement by all categories of members (e.g. Himmelroos 2017). In a comprehensive study of five deliberative polls across the US, Siu finds no consistent evidence of demographic or attitudinal differences between participants having a

bearing on deliberative quality. Her conclusion is that ‘when citizen deliberations are well structured, the many social patterns that we might expect from inequalities in the world around us are, to some degree, negated’ (Siu 2017: 125). Similarly, in their research on deliberative engagement between citizens and US members of Congress, Neblo and his colleagues find that citizens are enthusiastic about the engagement and, furthermore, that ‘those most willing to deliberate are precisely those who are turned off by standard partisan and interest group politics’ (Neblo et al. 2010: 582).

Due to their long-term design, the citizens’ assemblies offer a sterner test of the issue of members’ engagement. The bulk of the studies cited in the previous paragraph were single-shot events—mini-publics that may have occurred over one or two days. By contrast, the citizens’ assemblies occurred over longer periods (Table 11.2), raising the possibility of the quality of the deliberation varying over time. The studies of the Canadian and Dutch cases surveyed members’ views, revealing high levels of satisfaction throughout: ‘over the entire span of the proceedings, great proportions of individuals felt that the project was important, that they were not wasting their time, and that the next step was exciting’ (Fournier et al. 2011: 47; see also Ratner 2008). The authors put this down to a number of reasons including: the importance of the issue (in each case, this was whether to reform the electoral system); the sense the members had of their powerful role (notably in the Canadian cases where their recommendations went straight to a referendum); the well-organized nature of the operation as a deliberative mini-public; and ‘[a]n extensive residential context [that] provided ample opportunities to socialize, trade joyous and less happy stories about life, and understand each other’s perspectives’ (Fournier et al. 2011: 49). There were similar findings for the two Irish cases. For instance, across the five sets of meetings discussing the difficult topic of abortion, survey data gathered on the members revealed consistently high levels of satisfaction and engagement (Farrell et al. 2018; on the constitutional convention, see Arnold et al. 2018).

Members may be satisfied and feel engaged, but how confident can we be that they are not being led by the nose? This raises a third theme over whether random selected bodies can reduce the risk of domination. The Irish constitutional convention offers some interesting insights. In this instance of a mixed sortition chamber (mixing politician and lay members), there was good reason for concern that the professional politicians, used as they are to public speaking and debate, could dominate the discussions. The issue of politician dominance over a deliberative process featured in a recent British experiment, which sought to test the potential for a constitutional mini-public in the British context. Informed by the Canadian and Irish experiences, the research team designed two city-based mini-public experiments, one involving only citizen members (the Canadian model) and the other a mix of citizen and politician members (the Irish hybrid model). Their evidence from surveying the members is that citizen members in the latter group were more inclined to feel that some members dominated the discussions: when probed, it was clear that for the most part it was politician members who were seen to be domineering. The report’s authors conclude: ‘At least in the short term, inclusion of politicians decreases the quality of deliberation (including the amount of perceived domination)’ (Flinders et al. 2016: 42).

The Irish case produced quite different findings, however. In a series of semi-structured interviews with citizen members that were carried out in the final days of the Convention, the question was posed whether the politicians dominated the roundtable discussions (cf. Farrell et al. 2018). For the most part, the citizen members were of the view that the politician members did not seek to dominate. This is buttressed by surveys of all the members, asking largely the same questions as in the British study (Flinders et al. 2016). The data reveal little evidence of members feeling dominated by other members; there is no evidence to indicate domination of discussions by politicians.

One final way to empirically assess the performance of these randomly selected bodies relates to agenda influence: just how influential are these bodies in influencing political decision-making? This is a key question posed by Goodin and Dryzek, who set out a catalogue of ‘pathways to influence’, two of which merit consideration here: ‘actually making policy’, and ‘taken up in the policy process’ (Goodin and Dryzek 2006: 225–6). The first of these is the rarest—where the mini-public’s output goes straight to a binding referendum. As we have seen, the two Canadian cases are the only ones in our sample (and among the few cases in mini-publics more generally), both resulting in defeat. The pathway ‘taken up in the policy process’ is more common: here there is no formal guarantee that the recommendations of the mini-public will be taken any further, which was the fate of the Dutch process. However, the two Irish cases show that the recommendations can be ‘taken up’—as most prominently shown by the successful abortion (2018), blasphemy (2018) and marriage equality (2015) referendums, but also more generally in terms of a spate of other policy outcomes that have occurred or are promised (Farrell 2018), suggesting that—in these cases at least—we may be starting to see the potential institutionalization of mini-publics into our representative system of government (cf. Bächtiger et al. 2014; Farrell et al. 2018). Another real-world example of how deliberative mini-publics show the potential for institutionalization into the existing system of democracy are the citizen initiative reviews used in a number of US states, but most prominently in Oregon, in which the mini-publics provide important contextual advice to the wider electorate in referendums. Also to be mentioned in this context are the ‘deliberative town hall’ meetings that Neblo and his colleagues (2018) arranged with a number of US Congressional legislators, which showed the potential for politicians to ‘work with’ voters.

THE FUTURE OF DELIBERATIVE MINI-PUBLICS

At this point, then, we have accumulated considerable modern experience with citizens’ assemblies and similar deliberative institutions. This experience suggests that sortition can mobilize people from many walks of life, people who would never seek out

public service by running for office. Moreover, there is no evidence that people selected via lottery fail to take the duties assigned to them seriously. Randomly selected citizens listen to the experts and to their fellow citizens, participate in the deliberative process, and offer informed responsible judgements when required.

Citizens' assemblies can thus avoid most of the pitfalls that their critics attribute to them, at least if they are properly constructed. It therefore makes sense to consider their future potential as democratic instruments. The existing literature contains two distinct visions for sortition in modern democratic societies, a strong one and a weak one. By way of a conclusion, we will briefly set out and evaluate those two visions.

The strong vision imagines a future in which sortition has replaced election, and randomly selected citizens' assemblies occupy the 'commanding heights' of the democratic process. This future seems to take inspiration from Rousseau's suggestion in the *Second Discourse* that elections are fraudulent democratic instruments, foisted off on the masses by the rich and powerful when they were not paying sufficient attention. In place of rule by politicians and other political elites, there will be direct rule by the 'people', or their randomly selected counterparts, which amounts to the same thing. Examples of this vision include the 'demarchy' of James Burnheim (2006, 2016), the 'Total Social Lottery' of Barbara Goodwin (2005), and the system of 'democracy through multi-body sortition' proposed by Terrill Bouricius (2013). This same vision has inspired several recent popular books advocating sortition, such as David van Reybrouck's *Against Elections* (2016) and Brett Hennig's *The End of Politicians* (2017). (The titles of these last two books are not coincidences.)¹⁴

The strong vision relies upon the strong use of lotteries—their ability to generate descriptive representation. To offer such a vision, then, is to place a great deal of confidence in this use. It is also to upend the entire practice of democratic politics in the modern era—most notably, by eliminating or sidelining any form of political elite (most notably, professional politicians). Given the revolutionary nature of the strong vision, it is not surprising that some of its advocates (including Bouricius, Hennig, and van Reybrouck) hedge their bets. They also offer democratic possibilities which combine sortition works with election in various ways. They do so either as potential alternatives to the strong vision or as fallback positions should that vision prove unrealistic or unattainable.

Most proponents of sortition in the modern world—including most advocates of citizens' assemblies—do not hedge their bets in this way. Rather, they straightforwardly imagine a future in which randomly selected citizen bodies work alongside elected officials and other political institutions of the status quo. Many, for example, propose the use of a randomly selected legislature alongside a traditional elected legislature. Examples of this vision—what we will call the weak vision—include Leib (2004); Barnett and Carty (2008); Callenbach and Phillips (2008); Sutherland (2008); Buchstein and Hein (2009); Zakaras (2010); and Guerrero (2014).¹⁵

The weak vision—which does not depend as critically on the strong use of lotteries as the strong vision does—views citizens' assemblies as useful correctives for the failures of contemporary democracies. It imagines, not the replacement of political elites by the

pure voice of the ‘people’, but a process by which political elites and ordinary citizens work together, with the latter providing critically important input capable of reviving democratic practice. What it proposes is less the replacement of the modern democratic way of doing politics than the next stage in its evolution, as democracy changes with both human knowledge and human organizational capacity.

The weak vision is explicitly less utopian than the strong vision. This may render it less inspiring in some ways. But it also means that it rests upon stronger theoretical foundations, foundations more consonant with the democratic experience of the past two centuries. It is also easier to imagine implementing this vision,¹⁶ given the continued importance it assigns to political elites. (Such elites are unlikely to support anything like the strong vision, for the same reason turkeys do not vote for Christmas.) It is therefore both conservative and optimistic to hope that the implementation of the weak vision might be enough to mend many of the problems ailing contemporary democracy.

NOTES

1. Peter Stone would like to acknowledge support from the Arts and Social Sciences Benefaction Fund, Trinity College Dublin. David Farrell acknowledges the support of the Irish Research Council, which funded his research of the 2016–2018 Irish Citizens’ Assembly, and of his colleagues Jane Suiter and Clodagh Harris.
2. This is not an exhaustive list. Other forms of mini-publics that could be included are: the Oregon ‘citizen initiative reviews’ that feed into that state’s referendum process (e.g. Gastil et al. 2018); or the ‘long-form deliberative processes’ that run in Australia and Canada (such as the British Columbia Services Card User Panel of 2013, or the Toronto Planning Review Panel 2016–2018; for more on these and other cases, see Chwalisz 2017).
3. We should note, however, that the citizens’ assemblies are not the only forms of mini-publics to have significant impacts on policy outcomes. The recent adoption of James Fishkin’s deliberative poll by the state of Mongolia whenever the state is considering constitutional reform (Fishkin 2018) is another case to mention. In this context we should also refer to the interesting experiments with online ‘deliberative town hall meetings’, organized in conjunction with a number of members of the US Congress by Michael Neblo and his colleagues (2018).
4. The Icelandic Constitutional Council is not included in this list as its members were elected (Bergmann 2013).
5. The Irish cases have not been entirely successful, however. A second referendum question on the same day as the marriage equality referendum in 2015 was heavily defeated; and not all of the recommendations from both processes have been accepted or implemented by the Irish government. For more, see Farrell (2018).
6. Not all lotteries are fair. *Weighted lotteries* select some options with higher probability than others. Weighted lotteries occasionally get used in allocative decisions. The US National Basketball Association, for example, employs them in selecting teams for its draft process. More seriously, the state of Georgia employed weighted lotteries to distribute land stolen from the Cherokees (Wilms 1974).

7. Stone (2011: chapters 2 and 6) focuses upon the first of these two properties—the unpredictability of the individual random selection—and treats the second as derivative from the first. Dowlen (2008) regards use of the first property of random selection as ‘strong’ and the second as ‘weak’. For a critique of Dowlen on this point, see Stone (2010).
8. If there are no possible good or bad reasons for making the selection, then it does not really matter how the selection is made. One can simply ‘pick’ one option any which way. On picking, see Ullmann-Margalit and Morgenbesser (1977) and Stone (2014).
9. Stone (2016) compares elections and sortition with respect to the different understandings of democratic equality underlying them. The paper also argues that the democratic equality underlying sortition is essentially the same as the democratic equality underlying universal suffrage.
10. For the methodology employed to select the Irish citizens’ assembly, see RED C (n.d.).
11. Dowlen (2008: 23–8) argues that stratified sampling, and not simple random sampling, is the first-best way to achieve proportionality. This is because the former can guarantee proportionality along certain dimensions, whereas the latter can only achieve this on expectation, and only under ideal conditions. For a response to Dowlen, see Stone (2010).
12. But not necessarily. In the US, affluent and well-educated citizens evade (randomly selected) jury service at a higher rate than poorer and less-educated ones.
13. Stratification, however, can also be employed to ensure *deviation* from proportionality. It can be used, in other words, to ensure that certain segments of society are over- or under-represented. In 2001, for example, Australia conducted a deliberative opinion poll on the subject of reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous communities. Obviously, any deliberation on this topic would have been pointless without the indigenous voice playing a prominent role. But proportionality would not have enabled this, given the small size of the indigenous community. This community was therefore heavily oversampled during the deliberative poll (Karpowitz and Raphael 2016: 15). Similarly, the British Columbia Citizens’ Assembly was comprised of exactly eighty men and eighty women, with one man and one woman from each of the province’s seventy-nine electoral districts plus two Aboriginal members (Fournier et al. 2011). This was not done because Aboriginal members comprised 1/80 of the population. There are obviously reasons why deviations from proportionality might prove desirable under the right circumstances, but this fact raises complications for descriptive representation that we cannot address here.
14. For a critique of Goodwin, see Stone (2012–2013). For a critique of Burnheim, see Stone (2018). For a critique of van Reybrouck, see Stone (2017).
15. Delannoi et al. (2013) do not explicitly offer this kind of vision, but their recommendations for the use of sortition in modern society are largely compatible with it.
16. Indeed, the recent announcement by the parliament of the German-speaking community of Belgium that it is to establish a permanent citizens’ assembly (<http://www.g1000.org/>) shows that this is a realizable vision.

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PART IV

PARTY
GOVERNMENT
AND
REPRESENTATION

CHAPTER 12

THE MODEL OF PARTY GOVERNMENT

RICHARD S. KATZ

PARTY government is an ideal-type model of one way in which democratic, particularly democratic parliamentary, governments might be structured. As the term implies, it gives priority to governing by parties (as opposed merely to governing by partisans), but it also casts parties as central agents of representation. Like all ideal types, it is never fully achieved in actual cases, but the phrase ‘party government’ is often used to identify a class of real cases that approximate the ideal, and as with many other ideal types (for example, ‘rational economic man’), the model is sometimes used as a simplifying device in both empirical and normative theory. Also like many ideal types, notwithstanding the normative appeal of models based on the idea of party government, overly close approximation of the ideal type in a complex and interconnected world is likely to come at the expense of other, and equally important, values.

The literature includes a number of implicit and explicit definitions of party government, including those of Schattschneider (1942), Rose (1974), Katz (1987), and Bickerton and Invernizzi Accetti (2017). While these differ from one another, they all have a common core that puts parties at the centre of political power. Beyond this core, however, they differ in (the specificity of) their senses of what a ‘political party’ is or should be, and of how parties should be organized and should behave in a system of party government. In this respect, what is not required by each of the definitions of party and party government can be as significant in distinguishing among them as what is required. In particular, and depending on the specific definition, the ideal type of party government may be compatible with a wide variety of party organizational forms, varying bases for interparty competition, and differing patterns of government formation.

Although not often stated so baldly, both party government and modern democracy are sometimes defined simply as what happens when parties compete in free and fair elections for control over the government. Schattschneider (1942: 4), for example, identifies ‘modern democracy [as] a by-product of party competition’. On reflection, however, it is clear that this apparent equation of democracy and party government is

at best an oversimplification. By this standard, the United States, where the vast majority of elective offices are filled by individuals identified by party labels, would qualify as a strong case of party government, but Schattschneider's diagnosis was that American parties 'have never been able to establish party government in the full meaning of that expression' (1942: 207–8). In the 1980s, Morris Fiorina (1987: 290) 'characterized the U.S. as a democracy extremely low in party government'.

For parliamentary systems, the identification of democracy and party government might make a certain intuitive sense: governments (which is to say in this context, cabinets) are chosen by parliaments, which are organized by parties on the basis of election results which, especially in systems of proportional representation, are contested by parties. But writing about what many scholars would regard as the archetypical case of party government—the United Kingdom—Richard Rose, who identified party government with the (variable) capacity of 'party to influence government' (Rose 1974: 381), found many ways in which British party government could be strengthened (1974: 427–80).

Both Schattschneider and Rose saw party government to be the best way of institutionalizing democracy, but also to be under challenge. In Schattschneider's case the principal challenger was pressure groups, and he argued that while '[p]ressure groups may destroy party government . . . they cannot create a substitute for it' (1942: 209). Rose cites a range of challengers, including pressure groups but also the permanent civil service and the market actions of consumers. 'When party government is diminished, other institutions may act in its stead, but they cannot fully replace parties in the government of a modern state' (Rose 1974: 380). Mair (2013: 65–73) writes about 'the waning of party government'. In a more philosophical vein, Bickerton and Invernizzi Accetti (2017) have defined party democracy (presumably as a synonym for party government) as 'a regime based on two key features: the mediation of political conflicts through the institution of political parties; and the idea that the specific conception of the common good that ought to prevail and therefore be translated into public policy is the one that is constructed through the democratic procedures of parliamentary deliberation and electoral competition'. In proposing this definition, they then contrast it with populism and technocracy as alternative models of government, and as the principal current challengers to party democracy.

In more detail, there are several prominent definitions of, or lists of conditions for, party government. Rose lists eight conditions (1974: 381–3; for a similar, but not identical, list, see Rose 1969: 416–18):

1. Partisans must formulate policy intentions for enactment once in office.
2. A party's intentions must be supported by statements of 'not workable' [sic] means to desired ends.¹
3. At least one party must exist, and after some form of contest, become the government.
4. Nominees of the party occupy the most important positions in a regime.
5. The number of partisans nominated for office should be large enough to permit partisans to become involved in many aspects of government.

6. Partisans given office must have the skills necessary to control large bureaucratic organizations.
7. Partisans in office must give high priority to carrying out party policies.
8. Party policies must be put into practice by the administration of government.

While Rose's third condition explicitly does not require that the 'contest' be electoral, for the party government to be democratic in the modern sense, clearly it must be.

Katz, explicitly limiting his concern to democratic party governments, offers a somewhat different list (1987: 7):

1. Decisions are made by elected party officials or by those under their control.
- 2a. Policy is decided within parties, which
- 2b. then act cohesively to enact it.
- 3a. Officials are recruited and
- 3b. held accountable through parties.

Thomassen, focusing particularly on models of representation, suggests three requirements (1994: 251-2):

1. Political parties must present different policy alternatives to the voters. In other words, there must be different parties with different programs.
2. The internal cohesion, or party discipline, of political parties must be sufficient to enable them to implement their policy program.
3. Voters must vote rationally, that is to say, they must vote for the party whose program is closest to their own policy preferences. This last requirement implies two other ones:
 - a. Voters must have policy preferences.
 - b. Voters must know the difference between the policy programs of the different political parties.

While these definitions have much in common, there are also significant differences. First, while the definitions from Rose and Katz both emphasize party control over all of the decision-/policy-making institutions of government, Thomassen's definition appears simply to take this as the inevitable result of the electoral victory of a disciplined party or coalition. Second, while Rose and Thomassen focus very much on parties as bearers of (or tokens for) bundles of policies among which voters choose at the ballot box, Katz does not, in particular seeing Beer's model of 'Tory democracy' (1982: 91-8), in which parties are presumed to compete on the basis of confidence in leadership rather than preference among policies to qualify as party government on the same terms as the more policy-based 'Socialist democracy' (Beer 1982: 79-86). While by the Katz definition, parties must make and take responsibility for policy, this might happen only once the

party is in office (in contrast to Rose's first condition) and the policies need not differ from those of other parties (in contrast to Thomassen's first and third conditions).

There is one element of the Socialist democracy model that is, however, conspicuous by its absence from all three definitions: that is, none of them is concerned with the internal organization of parties beyond the explicit (Katz and Thomassen) or implicit (Rose) requirement of cohesion; in particular, none says anything about internal party democracy. Also absent from all three definitions is any requirement that the government be formed by a single party, although both British and American advocates of party government often appear to take a two-party system, and hence single-party governments, to be necessary for party government.

Each of the conditions for party government may be satisfied to a greater or lesser degree in any particular polity. In particular, independent central banks, a nonpartisan judiciary, and an independent civil service all could represent alternative, non-party, loci of governmental decision-making and power. This led Katz (1987: 4) to coin the phrase 'party-ness of government' to refer to the degree to which a particular system meets the conditions of his definition, although the phrase obviously could be used, *mutatis mutandis*, with regard to any of the definitions. Recognizing that the formal government might exercise only a fraction of the political power in society (organized interest groups or large corporations being obvious alternative centres of power), he also coined the phrase 'party governmentness' to refer to the degree to which party government characterizes the entire *Herrschaftsorganisation* of a society. Finally, recognizing that in the context of his ideal-type definition of party government (and similarly in the context of the other definitions), party itself is an ideal type. Katz applied the concept of 'party-ness' to organizations commonly identified as parties, referring to the degree to which they meet three defining characteristics (1987: 8):

1. Exhibiting team-like behaviour;
2. in attempting to win control over all political power;
3. and basing claims of legitimacy on electoral success.

Obviously, other things being equal, low party-ness of party would imply low party-ness of government and low party governmentness. Again there is no requirement that parties be internally democratic—or indeed that they have rank-and-file membership at all. That is, parties are understood within the party government model to be objects among which voters choose, and not (or at least not necessarily) as channels through which citizens participate in any deeper sense.

PARTY GOVERNMENT AND DEMOCRACY

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Aside from its scientific utility in the analysis of actual political events, the model of party government has also been important in normative democratic theory, and indeed

the Bickerton and Invernizzi Accetti (2017) analysis is best understood as normative rather than empirical. In particular, the legitimation of parliamentary government in terms of principal–agent models generally is predicated on the assumption of high partyness (e.g., Strøm 2000). It is only if all of the candidates of each party exhibit team-like behaviour in advocating the same policies, or in promoting the same team of leaders, that votes cast and members elected in different constituencies can meaningfully be aggregated into a national mandate, and thus that the authority of the parliamentary majority to act as the agent of the electorate can be justified. Similarly, it is high partyness in parliament that justifies the position of the cabinet as the agent of the parliamentary majority (or alternatively justifies the position of the cabinet as the agent of the prime minister and the prime minister him/herself as the primary agent of the parliament); while it is possible to think of each MP as the independent agent of his or her own independent constituency, that would leave the cabinet with so many independent principals that it would be hard to maintain a coherent principal–agent relationship between parliament and government.² It is only if that majority exhibits the cohesion implicit in high partyness of party, and has the capacity implicit in high partyness of government, that the administration can be legitimized as the agent of the cabinet. At the same time, however, exactly this emphasis on coherent partyness, which is necessary to the democratic legitimation of parliamentary government through the principal–agent relationship, also highlights the potential conflict between the representation of the great diversity of interests and opinions that will characterize any electorate, and the simplification and coherence of alternatives required for parliamentary elections to perform the function of allowing effective popular choice of government (either directly through a single party majority or indirectly through the formation of a multiparty coalition, see the next section, below, and not only popular choice of individual representatives each with an independent ‘general power of attorney’.

Focus on principal–agent models raises the question of the nature of the parties’ agency, or, put differently, the nature of representation (see also ‘Party Government and Representation’ below). Both the Rose and the Thomassen senses of party government cast the parties in the role of delegates: the voters are presumed to choose on the basis of the policy promises of the parties, and these definitions include a prescription that the parties that ultimately form the government in fact carry out the promises they have made. The Katz definition, on the other hand, allows for party agency in the form of trusteeship: the voters as principals ‘hire’ a party to decide for them which policies to pursue.³ In both cases, the voters are the principal and the parties are the agent in a principal–agent relationship (with perhaps more danger of agency slack in the latter), but the nature of the relationship is quite different.

As this indicates, both party government in particular and the classic model of parliamentary government in general are rooted in a majoritarian, liberal pluralist, and elitist conception of democracy. They are majoritarian in assuming that political legitimacy is conferred by the support of an electoral majority. They are liberal pluralist in asserting the legitimate existence of competing interests that can, at best, be

aggregated into a temporary but generally acceptable compromise, but can never be melded into a single *volonté générale*. They are elitist in assigning decision-making power to elected representatives organized into political parties—which regardless of any ideological commitments to the contrary naturally tend toward oligarchy.

While some level of partyiness of government may be necessary to legitimize parliamentary government, this is not the only way in which democratic governments can be legitimized. One alternative, exemplified by the United States, is presidential government, with separation of powers (and functions). In this case, the contradiction between popular choice of a coherent government/executive and representation of a diversity of interests and opinions is resolved by separating direct election of the chief executive from the election of a representative body in which a lower level of party cohesion and discipline (lower partyiness) is tolerable because the executive does not depend on continuous support from the legislature. A second alternative, exemplified by Switzerland, is easy and immediate access to the instruments of direct democracy, in particular to referenda that allow direct popular challenge to legislation so that the voters can overturn individual actions of their ‘agents’ in the parliament. In this scenario, the parliamentary government idea of periodic (re)authorization of a responsible government, which requires that the voters as principal give the parties as agents a blanket mandate to govern until the next election, at which time the government parties can expect to be held accountable for the collectivity of their actions, is replaced by the idea that while the government is authorized to adopt policies, these adoptions are not final until they have survived the possibility of immediate review and rejection by the electorate.

As argued by Fiorina (1987) and by Lehner and Homann (1987), neither of these systems would score highly on a scale of partyiness of government. But neither are parties irrelevant. On the one hand, as both the American founding fathers in the eighteenth century and Charles de Gaulle in the twentieth century (both initially hostile to the idea of political parties) quickly learned, even with a strong presidency in a presidential or semi-presidential system, parties are necessary to organize popular support on the national level, to facilitate cooperation between executive and legislative branches, and to structure the legislature itself. In the Swiss system, parties also serve these functions as well as, along with interest groups, organizing petition drives to force referenda. Thus even these systems, which might not fall into a category of ‘party government’, still can be expected to exhibit some, albeit low, level of partyiness of government.

Finally, there are the two alternatives to party democracy discussed by Bickerton and Invernizzi Accetti. On the one hand, technocracy justifies rule through the objective quality of outputs, resulting from the expertise of technocrats, rather than the democratic quality of inputs. On the other hand, populism is legitimized by claims on the part of the populists to understand and to represent a singular national interest that is superior to private interests, is opposed to the interests of those who are not members of ‘the nation’, and is being subverted by the corrupt elite of the mainstream parties of liberal democratic regimes.

In extreme form, a populist regime would most likely be a self-perpetuating cabal; since that cabal presumes that it already knows the will or interests of the true people, it has no need for electoral consultation except in the form of plebiscites, and hence no need for multiple parties.⁴ Similarly, a fully technocratic regime would be governed by a self-perpetuating council of experts, again with no need for political parties because the fundamental assumption is that the experts 'know best'. In either case, there might be an advisory council of citizens analogous to early European parliaments that provided the king with information and feedback, but like in those regimes in which power remained firmly in royal hands, the advice of such councils would be accepted or rejected at the discretion of the populist or technocratic leadership.

In reality, modern populists compete in elections, and hence require a party organization—notwithstanding that they eschew use of the word 'party' itself. Technocracy is not reflected in its own party structures, but rather in the shedding of responsibility by parties in power to technocrats under such rubrics as 'the regulatory state'. In both cases, parties remain relevant, although in the populist case, those parties overtly argue against the basic model of pluralist democracy institutionalized in party government, while in the technocratic case, the party-government-parties covertly undermine its democratic credentials through what might be identified as 'departyfication'⁵ as part of a more general tendency to cartelization (Katz and Mair 2018).

TYPES OF PARTY GOVERNMENT

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There can be quite wide variation even among regimes that would be scored highly with regard to partyness of government. One 'dimension' of variation already suggested concerns the degree to which competition is based on policy promises or alternatively based on something else. In the former case, the idea of party government implies that the parties are somehow obligated to pursue the policies that they espoused in their campaigns. In this case, elections become popular decisions regarding policy, and not just decisions regarding leadership. Alternatively, however, competition could be based on perceptions of the relative capacity of the competing parties to pursue a national interest, the essential nature of which is not the main focus of competition. A closely related basis for competition might be differences in perceived trustworthiness or honesty. In these cases, elections are choices of leadership, but the leaders selected are left with broad discretion concerning policy, and should expect to be judged retrospectively in the expectation that bad performance will reduce public confidence. Competition could also be based on the mobilization of identities, with the parties merely, and perhaps only implicitly, promising to pursue the interests of their individual clientele groups without pre-committing themselves to any particular policies. Again, leaders rather than specific policies play the predominant role, but now with a pluralist expectation that those leaders will be pursuing sectoral interests rather than a singular national interest, and with less capacity on the part of the leaders who

emerge to claim that their electoral mandate is somehow personal. While these understandings of competition are appropriate to different conceptions of representation and different theories of democracy, each would be compatible with high party-ness of parties and government.

Also as already indicated, systems with the same degree of party-ness of government can exhibit differing levels of party governmentness. In particular, Katz and Mair (2018) have suggested a trend in party governments to transfer responsibility for a variety of activities onto non-partisan or non-governmental agencies—including neo-corporatist bodies, independent central banks, the WTO or (in the case of European polities) the EU. In each case, a smaller share of the overall rule of society would be under the direct control and responsibility of the parties (see the chapter by Richardson in this *Handbook*).

Types of party government can also be distinguished on the basis of the connection between popular choice among parties at the ballot box and the actual personnel in the executive, and in particular the choice of the individual who will serve as chief executive. In one type, the connection is simple and immediate: if each party goes into an election with an identified leader who is also its prime ministerial (or presidential) candidate, then by giving a majority to a single party, the voters 'not only decide about the composition of the parliament and about the *rapport des forces* of the various parties in parliament, but they also decide (indirectly) about *the party composition of the government* and about *the individual head of government*' (Reif 1987: 30, italics in original). Although it is possible for a single party to win an absolute majority regardless of the party system, this form of party government, which essentially corresponds to Lijphart's (1999) majoritarian model of democracy, is most likely with bipolar systems (especially if the parties in the two poles pre-announce their coalition programme and agreed prime ministerial candidate), and but most particularly with two-party systems.

With the second and third variants, elections generally do not give a single party or pre-announced coalition a parliamentary majority, with the result that coalitions are formed, and the head of government designated, through negotiations that take place after an election rather than before. In the second type, which might be identified as *coalitional party government* (Katz 1987: 13), no single party regularly occupies a dominant position, with the consequence that there can be real alternation in office. Because governments are formed on the basis of post-election interparty negotiations (whether among the leaders of the parliamentary or of the extra-parliamentary organizations—assuming that these are in fact different people), it is not necessarily the case that gains in voting strength will increase a party's chance either of being included in the government or of holding the premiership.⁶ Moreover, it is quite possible that one or more parties in a potential coalition will veto the presence of the leader of another potential coalition partner either in the premiership or in the cabinet altogether, and conversely a party may choose to maintain a certain distance from a coalition by itself not putting its leader forward for (prime) ministerial office.

The third type is also characterized by coalitions rather than *monocolour* governments, but in this case there is one party which is both strong enough, and central enough in terms of policy, that it has to be the senior partner in every normally conceivable coalition.⁷ In this *dominant party* form, there can only be marginal turnover in office (e.g., centre-left replacing centre-right, but with the same 'centre' dominating both). Similarly, there may be marginal shifts in policy, determined by (or reflecting) the shifting pattern of coalition into which the dominant party enters. One potential consequence of the dominance of a single party (e.g., the Italian Christian Democrats from 1948 to 1993) is to displace much of political competition from the interparty to an intraparty/interfactional arena. This is likely to greatly weaken the link between electoral outcomes and the choice of head of government, as well as to make the head of government especially vulnerable to intraparty challenge, particularly because the party's dominant position on the one hand allows its leadership cadre to give only secondary consideration to the potential electoral costs of disunity, while on the other hand it gives each of them an incentive to prevent any one of their number from becoming overly dominant within the party. The result, ironically, can be to combine the appearance of quite high partyyness of government and/or high party governmentness with relatively low partyyness of party (see Pasquino 1987).

PARTY GOVERNMENT AND REPRESENTATION

Party government is centrally about who exercises power: in Robert Dahl's (1961) terms, 'Who Governs?'. Starting from Lijphart's (1999: 1) 'most basic and literal definition of democracy—government by the people, or in representative democracy, government by the representatives of the people', however, democratic party government must also be about representation. The key questions are to what extent and in what ways parties, and especially those parties that are in power, can be seen as 'representatives of the people'.

Consideration of representation requires that at least three questions be addressed: What does the representative do? Who is the represented? Who is the representative? As the preceding discussion suggests, there is a variety, but not an unlimited variety, of answers that are consistent with party government.

Particularly in parliamentary systems, representatives are expected to perform three semi-distinct roles. First, they are expected to give voice to the interests and concerns of the represented. Second, they are expected to make decisions and to govern. (The distinction between these two is exemplified by MPs who articulate views opposing the position of their party in debate, but then vote with their party on divisions.) Third, in performing the ombudsman role, representatives are expected to intervene with the government administration on behalf of those they represent. In each case, the

representative is acting as an agent of the represented, but this agency can fall anywhere on a continuum between the instructed delegate, with the representative merely serving as a transmission belt or mouthpiece for the opinions and expressed demands of the represented, and the Burkean trustee, with the representative acting in the interests of the represented as the representative understands them, even if that is opposed to the immediately expressed opinions of the represented, and moreover acting to anticipate, stimulate, and shape not just the immediate opinions of the represented but possibly their longer-term interests as well.

In a democracy, the represented naturally are primarily the citizens, but they can be classified in many ways. With regard to the ombudsman form of representation, the represented are generally citizens taken one at a time: Mrs Smith's pension has been disrupted; Mr Jones needs planning permission; the ABC Corporation wants an export licence. With regard to expressions of interest and demands or to governing, the represented is more likely to be some aggregation of citizens, whether defined geographically by the electoral constituency of the representative, politically (i.e., those who voted for the representative), socio-economically (e.g., members of a class, gender, ethnicity), or ideologically (e.g., liberals, Christians, environmentalists), or indeed the entire nation. Significantly, however, the particular aggregate represented in the expressive sense need not be the same, or even at the same level of aggregation, as that represented in the governing sense.

Within Lijphart's 'most basic' definition of democracy, each of the combinations of representative function and represented may be provided by a variety of individuals or institutions as representatives, including the possibility that the nation as a whole may be understood to be represented by the parliament as a whole. Indeed, unless his consensus model of democracy is to be judged a lesser democracy than his majoritarian model, even ostensibly non-political institutions like independent central banks, courts, or neo-corporatist agencies must be included under the rubric of 'representatives of the people'. If attention is limited to party government, however, the representatives who perform the role of governors must be political parties acting as corporate entities and not simply as agglomerations of partisans, whether they perform that role primarily as delegates or trustees. Granting governing authority to non-party agencies by definition limits party governmentness, while failures of party to act cohesively in governing by definition lessens the partyness of government. Similarly, while accepting the principle (dating at least from the Roman Republic) that the voice of the majority is entitled to be treated as the voice of the whole, the model of party government is indifferent as to whether the represented is understood to be the entire country or merely that portion of it that voted for the governing party or parties. While party cohesion in the articulation of interests and opinions is somewhat less crucial to party government, the translation of popular votes into legitimate exercise of government authority by parties still requires that there be sufficient coherence in what candidates of the same party say, that votes for any of them can reasonably be interpreted as votes for the party as a whole, and that governing decisions taken by any of the party's elected officials can reasonably be attributed to the party as a whole. In this regard, although

the ombudsman role is normally performed by individual politicians rather than parties as collectives, party government requires that those politicians not use this part of their jobs to undermine party coherence.⁸

FACILITATING CONDITIONS FOR PARTY GOVERNMENT

Although Rose and Thomassen list a number of conditions for party government, many of them are really part of the definition. Others (for example, Thomassen's assumption that voters have opinions regarding policy) are less definitional than they are facilitative—in this case to the extent that in the absence of the condition, party government in Thomassen's sense would be impossible: if voters do not have policy preferences, then they cannot vote on the basis of those preferences, and elections cannot be seen to be producing a policy mandate. This, however, relates only to one quite specific sense of party government, and indeed one that denies parties much autonomy: parties are effectively transmission belts between the public and the state. Other conditions, however, can be identified that would make high party-ness of government more likely, even if their absence would not logically prevent high party-ness. At least five such conditions are particularly relevant for the future of party government because they appear to be under challenge in the contemporary world.

The first condition is a relatively deferential citizenry, content to be periodic choosers among competing parties rather than active participants in them. In theory, the idea of party government is compatible with the mass party model of party organization, and indeed one could argue that the party government model was developed specifically in the context of the mass party. While the mass party model is clearly identified, again in theory, with the idea of internal party democracy, as an empirical matter this commitment to internal party democracy was more honoured in the breach than in the observance. While mass parties may have developed the instruments of control from the bottom, the reality was generally more in line with Michels' (1962) 'iron law of oligarchy', and this oligarchy facilitated the coherent, team-like behaviour of the party, both in government and in opposition. Austin Ranney (1962: 156) summarized the views of Henry Jones Ford (particularly, Ford 1898), 'If what we most want is parties that are sufficiently organized and well disciplined for them to assume real responsibility *as parties* for how the government is run, we most certainly had better shun any ideas—such as "intraparty democracy"—that will tend to disintegrate the parties and thereby render them incapable of assuming any real responsibility to the electorate.' Anthony Downs, in his *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, eschews the idea of intraparty democracy because its result would be that 'the actions taken by the party as a whole are likely to form a hodgepodge of compromises—the result of an internal power struggle rather than any rational

decision-making' (1957: 25). As both Ford and Downs recognized, and as Kitschelt's (1988) work on left-libertarian parties demonstrated, if large numbers of 'ordinary' party members or supporters are empowered to determine party policy or to select party leaders and candidates, rather than debate followed by decision followed by unity, the result is likely to be debate followed by decision followed by the losers constantly attempting to overturn the decision—leading to party incoherence, if not fully fledged factionalism. Pilet and Cross (2014: 235), for example, report the average tenure of party leaders selected in full member votes to be nearly twenty months shorter than for those chosen by party delegates and nearly twenty-four months shorter than for those chosen by the parliamentary party. (On the relationship with factionalism, see also Katz 1980.) Party coherence and member activism or empowerment do not, in general, seem to be compatible.

A second condition is public confidence or trust in the parties, or at least high trust by voters in the party that they support. In the absence of such trust, citizens are likely either to withdraw from public life altogether (which may not present a challenge to party government in the short run, but is likely to undermine the legitimacy of party government itself in the longer term), or else to turn to other modes of political action: interest groups or direct action, which as both Rose and Schattschneider emphasize represent challenges to party government; or perhaps to populist alternatives that, as Bickerton and Invernizzi Accetti argue, reject the basic premises of party democracy.

A third condition is a relatively simple party system, driven by, because it is reflective of, a society structured by social cleavages that divide the population into a limited number of politically stable and homogeneous camps. High partyness requires that each party present a coherent and comprehensive front to the electorate (although on some issues, the agreed position may be one of indifference). There is no logical requirement that the number of such comprehensive packages be limited. In the post-electoral, government formation phase, however, an excessive multiplicity of parties can be expected to make the formation of a stable majority coalition more difficult, and the resulting coalition more complex, obscuring the lines of accountability. On the one hand, even if there is a tendency to assign responsibility for a particular decision to the party of the minister who is nominally in charge, both the presence of junior ministers from other parties, and the reality of intra-governmental compromise, render this assignment questionable. On the other hand, it is hard for voters to reward or punish either particular parties individually, or the government collectively, if there is no obvious connection between changes in a party's electoral support and its chance of inclusion in the next government, and little expectation that the parties in government will rise or fall together. Moreover, the very process of coalition formation may undermine public respect for parties in showing them to be office-driven 'horse-traders' seeking their private advantage, rather than principle-driven agents of the public. Possibly mitigating this, however, it is more likely that party supporters will have confidence in their leaders and defer to them with regard to necessary compromises if the parties themselves represent clearly delineated and cohesive social or political blocks (Lijphart 1968; Calhoun 1851/1943). As this suggests, while

a pattern of cross-cutting cleavages and issues conceived as points in a continuous multi-dimensional space⁹ may facilitate stable pluralist democracy, this is not a scenario that is especially conducive to party government.

Whether among parties or within a single party, democratic politics is about the building and maintenance of coalitions. In the context of party government, it is also about the partisan elements of government securing the compliance of the non-partisan elements, especially the permanent civil service. A fourth facilitating condition for party government is that the parties and their leaders have resources adequate to these tasks. Blondel and Cotta (1998, 2000) provide a useful summary of these resources, albeit in a framework that wants to separate governments from the parties that support them. The first is the capacity to make policy. While this is obviously at the core of governing, in this context it is important to distinguish between policy as an end in itself (in which regard the requirement would be that the parties have sufficient technical capacity such that they do not become captives of non-party experts), and policies used as bargaining chips to 'buy' support for other policies. This might take the form of 'log rolling' ('you support my bill and I'll support yours') or 'pork barrel politics' ('I'll support your bill if you include targeted benefits for my constituents or supporters'). When these tactics are employed by individual legislators, especially in negotiations that cross party lines, party government is clearly undermined, but when they are employed by the parties themselves, and particularly by those in ministerial offices, they can be powerful tools in support of party government. The nature of some of these policies as 'club goods' then blends into the second of Blondel and Cotta's resources: patronage, that is, the capacity to give (or withhold) favours in exchange for support or other forms of cooperation. Finally, Blondel and Cotta cite the capacity to make appointments, including not just appointments that might be characterized simply as a form of patronage (high rewards in terms of money or social status, but no significant work required in exchange) but especially appointments to important policy-making or policy-influencing positions (e.g., Kopecký and Mair 2012). The more parties can deploy these resources, the more likely there is to be strong party government.

The fifth condition relates to the essential core of party government: a focus on the parties as collective entities rather than on individual politicians as the central political actors. Even when the party is defined by its support of 'a certain body of men' rather than 'a connected policy', the emphasis is on the collective entity, and the understanding is that a politician who defies party unity 'is acting contrary to the expectation of those who have put their trust in him' (from Attlee 1957, quoted in Beer 1982: 87). Except perhaps for the party leader, the idea of a personal mandate is foreign to the ideal of party government. There remains considerable ambiguity as to whether increased personalization of politics at the top comes at the expense of partyness, or indeed might even support it. While it is possible that increased personalization below the top, for example in the election of individual MPs, might simply alter the nature of intra-party decision-making without affecting party cohesion vis-à-vis other political actors, it is more likely that a sense of possessing an individual mandate will weaken the

conviction that, in Attlee's (1957) words, 'party discipline is paramount' (Katz 2018). In this respect, the expansion of the personal autonomy implicit in the use of 'conscience votes' on issues like capital punishment or abortion to free votes on questions that merely divide a party (e.g., the 2004 UK hunting legislation) clearly undermine party government.¹⁰ Thus, lower personalization of politics in the media, in electoral institutions, or in internal party practices, could be expected to facilitate party government.

THE FUTURE OF PARTY GOVERNMENT

The problem for party government is that all of these facilitative conditions are becoming weaker. Whether or not citizens actually want to be more involved in the decision-making processes of political parties—and one could certainly interpret the near universal decline in the proportions of national electorates who choose to join parties as evidence to the contrary—many parties have reacted to their loss of members, the widespread mistrust of parties evident in social surveys, and the electoral growth of 'anti-party-system' parties by attempting to 'democratize'. The most obvious examples are the opening of leadership selection contests to all member votes, often accompanied by a fundamental dilution of the concept of 'membership' (the introduction of 'multi-speed membership' [Scarrow 2015]) or even the abandonment of the traditional idea of fee-paying membership altogether, as with the 2016 constitution of the Liberal Party of Canada). From the demand side, the developments collectively identified as 'cognitive mobilization' (Inglehart 1970; Dalton 1984) have increased the capacity, and probably the inclination as well, of significant segments of the population to act more independently, but individual independence sits uncomfortably with party cohesion. While it may be true, even for those who do not agree with all of the party's programme, that accepting party discipline will increase the likelihood of achieving their aims, they are more likely to transfer their allegiance to a series of more narrowly focused organizations, each of which more closely mirrors their preferences on a particular set of questions. But as both Schattschneider and Rose observed, as alternatives to party, these groups are also challengers to party government.

Public confidence in parties, and in politicians more generally, has all but collapsed. A Spring 2015 Eurobarometer showed parties to be the least trusted political institutions¹¹ in all twenty-eight EU member states; a 2014 *GfK Verein* study including eleven European democracies found politicians to be the least trusted of thirty-two professions in every one except Sweden, where they came second last to retail sellers.

Party systems have become more complex. Although the current trend is far from universal (in some cases because the increased complexity occurred earlier), in comparing the first general election after 2000 with the last election before 2017 in twenty-eight parliamentary democracies, Katz and Mair (2018) report an increase in the average effective number of electoral parties from 4.8 to 5.4 and in the average effective number of parliamentary parties from 3.9 to 4.2. The decline of party identification, the

mitigation of religious and class cleavages, and the accompanying weakening of ties between social position and party, have reduced the likelihood of simple deference to group leaders and increased the likelihood of cross-cutting cleavages—all moving politics away from the model of competition among discrete and comprehensive packages and toward the model of movement in a continuous policy space.

One reason for the low levels of trust is undoubtedly the revelations of real misconduct: *Tangentopoli* in Italy; the parliamentary expense scandal in the UK; the Greek minister who admitted taking over €200,000 in bribes (Apokoronasnews 2015); ‘Spain’s never-ending corruption problem’ (Torres 2017). This is aggravated, however, by an increasing tendency to interpret a range of formerly common practices used to build and maintain coalitions—pork barrel legislation; quango appointments; granting special access to large donors—as forms of corruption or abuse of state resources. While the tendency to treat practices that are normal in the private sector—using air miles accumulated on business travel for private vacations; sending an assistant on a personal errand, for example—as corrupt practices by individual politicians is unlikely to undermine party government except by reducing public trust in politicians, the analogous tendency to regard partisan appointments or public spending targeted to particular areas as evidence of corruption, denies parties the resources to build and maintain coalitions.

As already suggested, it is hard to reconcile ‘free votes’ in parliaments with the idea of party government, constitutional prohibitions against an ‘imperative mandate’ to the contrary notwithstanding. (Indeed, the fact that every vote in Congress is effectively a ‘free vote’ is one of the major contributors to the conclusion that the United States is not a case of party government.) Potentially much more problematic, however, is increased personalization of politics. This is manifested in many ways: in the increased focus on individuals rather than parties in the news media; in the widespread use of personal websites and social media by individual politicians; in the increased possibilities for individual party members (or supporters, or any citizen) to take part directly in the selection of party leaders and candidates; in the increasing ability of voters to determine not only how many seats in parliament will be won by each party, but to determine which individuals will fill those seats as well (Renwick and Pilet 2016). All of these further the idea of party as a loose and contingent alliance of individuals rather than a durable and coherent team.

High partyness of government requires not only high partyness of party, but also that the parties (or at least the governing parties) be strong. One irony, and perhaps one of the principal threats to party government, is that the reforms to ‘democratize’ parties that have been adopted to try to counter the growing weakness of parties as indicated by declining membership, identification, and trust (see Cross and Katz 2013), also have the effect of undermining the partyness of those parties by encouraging or even requiring politicians to differentiate themselves from other members of their own party. A second irony—at least if the experience of the United States (where internal democratization, for example in the form of candidate and party committee selection through primary elections and costless partisan registration instead of fee-paying

membership and primary elections, began earlier and has progressed farther) can be generalized to parliamentary systems—is that no matter how successful party democratization may be in arresting the decline of party membership in the short run, in the longer term the very decline in partyness that it engenders highlights conflicts within individual parties and as a result also furthers popular alienation from party politics.

In lowering partyness, each of these trends contributes to the divorce of expressive representation and responsible action in government—because the more power is dispersed, the lower the possibility of holding any one actor responsible for outcomes. But, as Mayhew (1974) observed for the American Congress, and similarly as Sartori (1976) observed for parties in a system of polarized pluralism, in the absence of an expectation of being held accountable for outcomes, political actors, whether individual politicians or political parties, are encouraged to compete by making irresponsible and unrealistic promises—with the subsequent failure to deliver on those promises ultimately undermining respect for, and confidence in, the democratic enterprise altogether. While it would be premature to suggest the imminent collapse of party government, all of this does indicate that the long-term security of party democracy cannot be taken for granted.

NOTES

1. The elaborating text makes it clear that Rose means ‘workable’ or ‘not unworkable’.
2. As Miller (2005: 205–6) notes, one of the core assumptions of the canonical principal-agent model is that ‘initiative lies with a *unified* principal’ (emphasis added).
3. To analogize to investments, the delegate model casts parties in the role of stock brokers, executing the orders of their investor principals; the trustee model casts the parties in the role of investment managers, hired because the investor has more confidence in the manager’s judgement than he has in his own judgement.
4. While the ‘henchmen’ of the leader might be organized in something called a party (although given the antipathy of populists for parties, use of the word itself might be unlikely), with no legitimate opposition allowed, it would not be a party in Sartori’s sense of being a part.
5. I introduce this neologism rather than using the more common depoliticization to reflect the fact that taking a question outside the realm of party contestation does not mean that it ceases to be political, only that it ceases to be party-political.
6. For example, in 1977 the Dutch PvdA gained ten seats, but moved into opposition, only to return to government in 1981 after losing nine seats; between 1985 and 1989, the Norwegian Conservative party lost over one-fourth of its electoral support, yet moved from opposition to the Prime Ministership.
7. The word ‘normally’ is used here to allow for the possibility—rarely realized and always short-lived—of a coalition of the extremes formed precisely to oust the dominant party.
8. Continuing the metaphor of Schattschneider’s (1960: 35) observation that ‘the flaw in the pluralist heaven is that the heavenly chorus sings with a strong upper-class accent’, the requirement for party government is that, notwithstanding the possibility of contrapuntal voices, the chorus should sing in harmony.

9. Party government, on the contrary, would be facilitated by an understanding of political issues as discrete ‘packages’. In the two party (or unidimensional) case, this would be illustrated by the distinction between the Downsian model of party convergence to the first preference of the median voter along an issue continuum, and Duverger’s (1951/1959: 215) proposition ‘that political choice usually takes the form of a choice between two alternatives. A duality of parties does not always exist, but almost always there is a duality of tendencies. Every policy implies a choice between two kinds of solution.’
10. Indeed, particularly in countries using closed list proportional electoral systems—but also in other systems to the extent that electoral choice is driven either by party or by the person at the ‘top of the ticket’—one could question the democratic legitimacy of any free votes, whether based on conscience or otherwise, given the absence of a recognizable ‘blank-check’ personal mandate for the individual MP.
11. Overall, 16 per cent reported that they ‘tend to trust’ political parties, in comparison to the army (71 per cent), the police (69 per cent), the justice/legal system (52 per cent), regional or local public authorities (47 per cent), the national parliament (31 per cent), and the national government (31 per cent).

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CHAPTER 13

PARTY COMPETITION AND REPRESENTATION

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ACCURATE democratic representation requires that individuals find a party to support that adequately represents their views. This means that the potential for representation is a function of the policy demands of citizens and even more so on the supply of parties at election time—the variety of choices available to the voters. This chapter describes the factors that affect the choices that parties and party systems offer to voters, such as the number of political cleavages organizing the party system, the structure of the electoral system, the simple number of parties, the ideological diversity of these choices, and other systemic factors. I use the Left–Right scale in the 2014 European Elections to illustrate the representation process across contemporary party systems. The chapter discusses the implications of these patterns for the functioning of representative democracy. The final section considers some of the issues facing future research.¹

The essence of representative democracy is the linkage between individual citizens and their elected representatives. The importance of parties as political linkages has long been recognized in the literature (Chapter 12 in this *Handbook*; Golder and Ferland 2017; Thomassen, 2014; Budge et al. 2012; Thomassen 1994). In an oft-cited statement, Giovanni Sartori summed up this view by stating ‘citizens in modern democracies are represented *through* and *by* parties, this is inevitable’ (1968: 471; italics in original). Political theorists have broadly shared his views (Schattschneider 1960; Ranney 1962). Modern empirical studies of representation have largely built upon this presumption.²

The political linkage between citizens and parties is conditioned by the characteristics of the citizens and the political parties as illustrated by the essays in this book. One side of this dyad is concerned with the citizen traits that facilitate the choice of political elites who adequately reflect citizen preferences within the governing process (Chapter 1 in this *Handbook*). This debate often focuses on the sophistication of voters and their knowledge of the issues that affect their electoral choices (Chapter 14 in this *Handbook*).

This other half of the dyad focuses on the political parties. Citizens' opinions cannot be well represented if the parties do not offer a range of choices that reflects the diversity of citizen preferences. The supply of party choices is just as important as the public's demands in making elections an effective means of democratic representation. The clarity of choices also affects the ability of voters to make informed choices. As political agents, parties should also carry through their election promises into policy action (Chapter 17 in this *Handbook*). So the intentions, coherence, and effectiveness of political parties affect the quality of democratic representation.

This chapter discusses the contextual and party-level factors that might affect the political linkage between voters and their chosen party. The contrast between majoritarian and proportional electoral systems has been central to this discussion (Lijphart 2012; Huber and Powell 1994; Powell 2000; Chapter 4 in this *Handbook*). Other scholars argued that the number of party choices and other characteristics of the party system were important in voters finding a voice for their policy concerns in the governing process (Adams 2012).

Studying contextual influences on representation is complex because it requires comparison of citizen and party positions across different institutional structures or party systems. Past research generally focused on a single nation or a small set of nations (e.g. Barnes 1977; Miller et al. 1999; Matthews and Valen 1999; Converse and Pierce 1986; Aarts and Thomassen 2008). However, this approach cannot determine if the political context affects representation since these studies have limited contextual variation and a small number of parties to compare. For example, a single nation study can calculate whether the British Labour Party holds a position closer to (or further away from) its voters than the Conservative Party. Such a study cannot say how the institutional context and the nature of party supply in Britain affects this overall representation process—which is the primary goal of this chapter.

This chapter draws upon the increasing number of recent projects that have studied voter–party agreement cross-nationally (Dalton 2018; Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012; McDonald and Budge 2012; Dalton et al. 2011; Ezrow 2010). This literature generates theories of why context matters, and then describes how the electoral system and party system affect the supply of choice in elections and thus the efficacy of party representation.

In addition to institutional effects, other factors—such as party characteristics or other national conditions—may influence the representation process and mediate the effects of context. The characteristics of individual parties, such as size or ideological orientation, may influence voter–party policy congruence. For example, older established parties may have a more stable voter–party link than new parties seeking a constituency. These effects would vary within any institutional context, and thus moderate the effects of institutional traits. Thus, the supply of party choices and the nature of these choices may be more important than the institutional context in translating citizen preferences into party representation.

The chapter presents the evidence on voter–party congruence and then considers how institutional and party-level factors might affect the patterns of congruence. We

illustrate these patterns with new data from the 2014 European Election Study and the 2012 American National Election Study. The chapter concludes by discussing the implications for further research on the representation process.

EVIDENCE OF PARTY REPRESENTATION

The adequacy of party choice—party supply—is partly determined by the political concerns of the public—citizen demands. The complication is that there is no simple answer to determining all of the political demands existing within the public. Researchers often rely on a single Left–Right dimension to summarize voter positions, building on Anthony Downs’ (1957) model of party competition. Left–Right terminology is common in elite discourse. Experts (and candidates) routinely claim that one party is too liberal on a certain political issue, or another party is becoming less conservative. Electoral scholars often interpret shifts in party vote shares in representational terms: a party may gain votes by moving closer to the centre, or lose votes by adopting extreme positions on the left or right (Adams 2012; Ferland 2018; Ezrow 2010; McDonald and Budge 2012). Admittedly, I have often succumbed to the siren-like appeals of the Left–Right scale in my research (Dalton et al. 2011).

Figure 13.1 illustrates the typical findings from cross-national studies of voter–party congruence in Left–Right terms. The figure displays results from 150 party dyads from twenty-seven member states of the European Union in 2014 and evidence from the United States.³ The horizontal axis measures the average Left–Right position of supporters for each party; the vertical axis measures the position of each party on the Left–Right scale based on the Chapel Hill Experts Study (Polk et al. 2017). A party’s score on both measures locates it in the space, and the size of each bubble is the party’s vote share in the election. This figure provides a reference framework throughout this chapter.

The figure shows a very strong relationship between voters’ positions and those of their chosen party (Pearson’s $r = 0.87$). In overall terms, leftist voters are represented by leftist parties, and vice versa. The median difference between voter blocs and their parties is barely over half a point on a ten-point Left–Right scale. This is also an impressive match if we consider that voters and party experts potentially have a different understanding and interpretation of the Left–Right scale, as well as the statistical frailties of matching data from samples of voters and party experts. Such results have led representation scholars to be relatively positive about the workings of the party government model.

The other obvious pattern in the figure is the ideological polarization of parties. At both political extremes, political parties are seen as more leftist or rightist than their own voters. For example, the French National Front is seen as nearly two points more conservative than its voters, and the German *Linke* is about one point to the left of its voters.⁴ Parties near the poles of the scale tend to ‘over-represent’ their constituents, while moderate and centrist parties are generally closer to their voters.

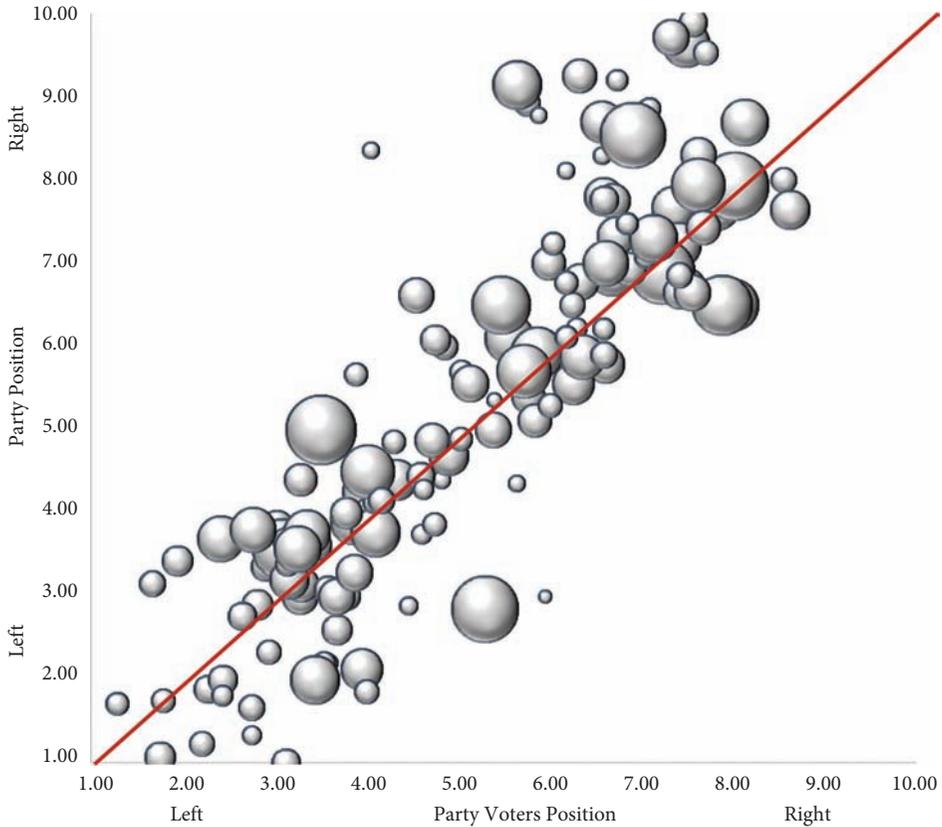


FIGURE 13.1 Party Voters and Party Positions on Left–Right Scale

Note: Figure entries are mean scores for party voters on the horizontal axis and for the political parties on the vertical axis. The 45-degree diagonal line represents an exact match between voters and their party.

Source: 2014 European Election Study for party voters' position and 2014 Chapel Hill Expert Study for party position; US from 2012 ANES and 2014 Chapel Hill Expert Study of US (N=150).

Impressive as this relationship may be, Jacques Thomassen (2012, 13) cautioned that representation research may have a blind corner because many scholars 'assume that representativeness on the left-right dimension automatically implies representativeness on a range of other issues as well'. Parties have distinct histories and political ties that connect them to different cleavages and their adherents. Traditional economic leftist parties—social democrats and communists—were formed to represent working-class interests, while conservative and liberal parties have been representatives of the middle class.

In addition, new cultural and social issues cut across traditional Left–Right party alignments in most affluent democracies (also see Dalton 2018; Valen and Narud 2007). The cultural cleavage took clear partisan form with the formation of Green and New Left parties in the 1980s, and then conservative cultural parties followed in the subsequent decades. Even a two-dimensional policy framework may be too simple,

however. Oddbjörn Knutsen (2017), for instance, argued that five value dimensions are needed to understand contemporary electoral choices in Europe. There is a growing scholarly consensus that contemporary political competition involves multiple policy dimensions that only partially overlap (Kriesi et al. 2008; Bakker et al. 2012; Dalton 2018).

In terms of broad policy cleavages—such as the economic conflict over the role of the state and social programmes, or the emerging socio-cultural cleavage in affluent democracies—the agreement between voters and their parties almost rivals the pattern described in Figure 13.1 (Dalton 2018). The fit between voters and their parties tends to weaken on more specific policy questions (Dalton 2017; Miller et al. 1999; Thomassen and Schmitt 1999).⁵ There are also cleavages that narrowly apply to a specific portion of the electorate, such as regional policies or farming programmes; in these cases, broad national and cross-national analysis might not apply. From one perspective, this implies less citizen influence in directing government policy. From another perspective, this matches the theoretical model that public opinion provides the broad parameters of public policy, and the entire public has less influence on any specific policy (Schattschneider 1960; Key 1961; Shapiro 2011).

There is no magic answer for the correct number of dimensions of competition in any party system. Instead, there is a trade-off between theoretical parsimony and empirical adequacy. The selection of what demands are being represented can affect the process of democratic representation and its effectiveness. This chapter uses the Left–Right scale as an illustration of the effect of context on the representation process in general. I follow Ronald Inglehart’s description of the Left–Right scale as a sort of super-issue that represents the ‘major conflicts that are present in the political system’ (Inglehart 1990: 273). But we should be mindful that the general pattern might not apply to specific issue dimensions.

PREDICTING PARTY REPRESENTATION

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Our attention now shifts to the factors that may affect the level of voter–party congruence across contemporary democracies. Or in terms of Figure 13.1, what factors might promote a close fit between the political positions of a party and the political positions of their voters. I first describe previous research findings on the impact of the electoral and party systems on voter–party congruence. The evidence of party agreement in Figure 13.1 is used to illustrate these patterns in the EU nations and the United States.

The Electoral and Party Systems

Scholarship often identifies a nation’s electoral system as a prime factor in shaping the party representation process (Golder and Ferland 2017; Powell 2000; Miller et al. 1999).

In majoritarian single-member district (SMD) systems, as in the United States and to some extent in Britain, candidate image and localized interests typically play a significant role in voting choice, which may partially weaken the broad policy link between voters and their chosen party. Warren Miller and Donald Stokes' (1963) landmark study of representation in the United States focuses on individual candidates as the primary agents of political representation. Majoritarian systems also typically restrict the number of viable parties running in elections, which diminishes the supply of choices to voters. Weakening the link between the number of votes cast and the number of seats won in elections further distorts the representation of public interests in SMD systems.

In contrast, proportional representation (PR) systems focus the voters' attention on party choices rather than individual candidates. In PR systems, the parties typically control the selection of individual candidates—they run on a shared election platform, party candidates generally present themselves as a collective, and the party organizes and directs the campaign. In many PR systems, citizens vote directly for a party rather than an individual candidate. The cumulative effect of these traits should be to increase voter–party congruence in PR systems relative to majoritarian systems (Belchior 2012; Dalton et al. 2011: chapter 6). As Farrell and Scully observe (2007: 50) 'the basic rule is that more proportional voting systems... [are] more closely aligned to the partisan preferences of the people'.

This contrast between SMD/PR systems is of limited value, however, because there are few SMD systems in contemporary democracies and especially within the European Union. The European Parliament now requires some form of PR in its elections, and most member states use a variant of PR in their national elections. So researchers have turned to other aspects of electoral systems that may affect the strength of the voter–party congruence.

One approach categorizes the electoral system from candidate-centred to party-centred voting rules (Farrell and Scully 2007: chapter 4). SMD systems give the greatest latitude for candidate-centred voting; single transferable vote and open list PR systems are relatively more party-oriented; and closed list PR systems focus the greatest attention on party voting. Thus, we might expect a closer voter–party fit in party-centred systems and a weaker representation link in the more candidate-centred systems.

District magnitude is another related element in electoral system design (Farrell 2011; Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012: chapter 8). District magnitude counts the number of seats elected in the average electoral district. In the EU/US data example, this ranges from 1.0 in the three SMD systems to 150 in the Netherlands. Higher district magnitude provides more opportunities for smaller parties, which increases the supply of party choices for voters and therefore partisan representation. A study of the 2009 European Parliament elections found a smaller representation gap between voter opinions and party choices as a function of larger district magnitudes (Dalton 2017).

The disproportionality of an electoral system is another potential influence (Gallagher 1991). The disproportionality index measures the difference between the

percentage of votes each party receives and the percentage of seats each party gets in the legislature. Previous research suggests that less distortion in the translation of votes into seats may encourage parties to be more responsive to voters (Wessels 1999; Powell and Vandenberg 2000; Ezrow 2010; McGann 2009; Belchior 2012; Dalton 2017).

These electoral system characteristics create an institutional structure that affects the supply of party choices for voters. The basic assumption is that, with greater party choices, there can be a greater congruence between voter demands and their electoral choices. Presumably, Dutch voters had more choices to express their varied opinions in the 2017 elections because thirteen parties won representation in the parliament, but most British voters only had two to three viable choices in the 2017 elections. A more direct measure of these effects might come from simply calculating the effective number of parties competing in national elections (Shugart and Taagepera 2017: chapter 4). For the twenty-eight nations included in Figure 13.1, the effective number of electoral parties (ENEP) in proximate national elections varied widely (from 2.1 in the United States to 10.0 in the Netherlands).⁶ Cross-national studies of congruence between voters and their preferred party found greater Left–Right agreement with a higher number of parties, but the evidence across specific policy domains is more varied (Wessels 1999; Belchior 2012; Dalton 2017, 2018).

Bernard Wessels' (1999) cross-national study suggested that the political diversity of party choices is more important than the simple number of parties. Polarization attempts to capture the number and dispersion of political parties along the Left–Right dimension.⁷ A party system with two social democratic rivals offers less diversity than a system with a social democratic party, a communist party, and a New Left/Green party. A party system populated by many centrist parties offers less choice than a system with parties dispersed along the Left–Right scale. In the 2014 election, the polarization index for EU member states ranged from 1.43 (Malta) to 7.03 (UK). A simple logic holds that polarized choices should give voters more opportunity to find a party that is closer to their preferred mix of issue positions.

Another measure of party diversity presumes that the number of social divisions in a nation determines citizen demands that guide party formation and party choice (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Knutsen 2017). Arend Lijphart (2012) similarly maintained that the number of major social cleavages should predict the number of parties to represent these cleavages. If there is a single, dominant cleavage—as social class once exerted in Britain—that might simplify and facilitate representation by a few parties aligned along this dimension. However, when nations contain multiple political divisions—such as separate economic and cultural cleavages—this requires that the party system represent these diverse interests.

Representation research is now beginning to address this topic and the methodological challenges of a multidimensional space (Kriesi et al. 2008; Thomassen 2012; Häusermann and Kriesi 2015; Knutsen 2017; Dalton 2018). Rovny and Polk (2018) proposed a method to determine the adequacy of a single dimension in describing party choices. They used CHES data to identify an economic and cultural cleavage in the established European democracies. Then they determined whether parties were

aligned along a single dimension, roughly contrasting Left/libertarian parties to Right/authoritarian parties.⁸ If citizen issue demands are multidimensional, varying on both the economic and cultural cleavage, then a single Left–Right alignment of parties would impede effective representation. If parties are dispersed in a two-dimensional space, then voters may find a party that better matches their preferences. In short, a one-dimensional party alignment in a multidimensional political space should increase the size of the representation gap.

To evaluate these hypotheses, I calculated the *representation gap* based on voter–party scores in Figure 13.1. This statistic is the absolute distance between party voters’ Left–Right position and the position of their chosen party. This provides an empirical base from which to consider the factors that might affect voter–party agreement.

Figure 13.2 illustrates the correlation between each aspect of the electoral/party system and the size of the representation gap. The electoral rules—SMD to PR—show a smaller representation gap in more proportional systems ($r = -0.18$).⁹ These are significant differences; the average representation gap is twice as large in SMD systems as it is in closed-list PR systems. The impact of district magnitude and disproportionality show very weak correlations. And even the effective number of electoral parties is an insignificant influence—the simple number of parties does not systematically affect the representation gap.

The representation gap is wider in ideologically polarized party systems ($r = 0.16$). In part, this arises because parties at the poles of Left/Right are often more extreme than

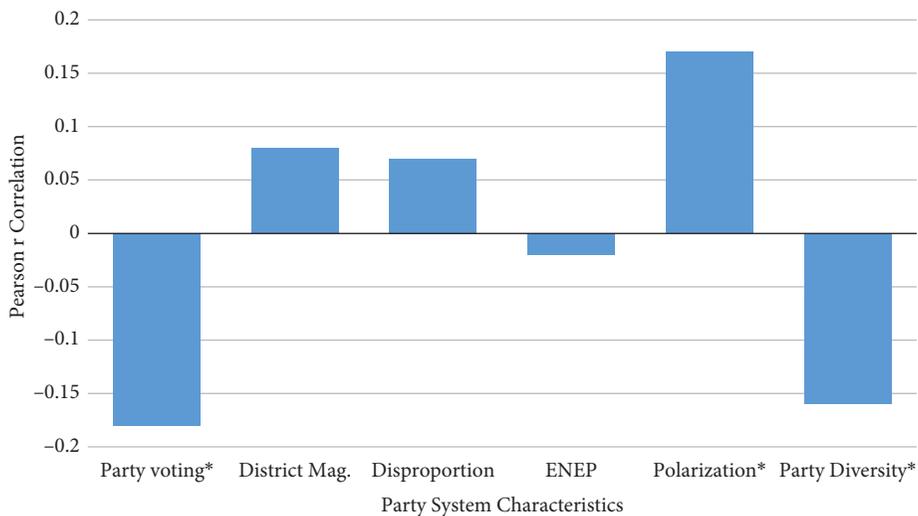


FIGURE 13.2 Aggregate Correlates of the Representation Gap on Left–Right Scale

Note: Figure entries are the Pearson correlations between party system characteristics and the absolute difference between party votes and their respective party on the Left–Right scale. Traits with an asterisk are statistically significant, $p < 0.05$.

Source: 2014 European Election Study for party voters’ position and 2014 Chapel Hill Expert Study for party position; US from 2012 ANES and 2014 Chapel Hill Expert Study of US (Maximum $N = 150$).

their own partisans and thus the representation gap increases overall. Rovny and Polk's measure of the dimensional diversity of party positions shows that the representation gap is modestly lower in nations where parties are more dispersed in a two-dimensional issue space ($r = -0.16$).

Overall, these party system characteristics generally have a modest or insignificant impact on the size of the representation gap across nations. More elaborate statistical models might find that these systemic variables influence representation in complex ways. For example, David Farrell and Roger Scully (2007) argue that ballot structure and a candidate versus party electoral formula interact to affect the representation of citizen interests. Robert Rohrschneider and Stephen Whitefield (2012: chapter 8) suggest that the level of partisanship in the electorate interacts with contextual effects. Using the European Election Studies as an example also complicates the analysis because of the potential mix of national and EU influences. Contextual effects may be stronger in national elections (Dalton et al. 2011: chapter 7; Wessels 1999).

National Conditions

While the specifics of the electoral and party systems have a modest influence on the size of the representation gap, other national traits may shape political norms and the workings of the democratic process.

Perhaps the most obvious factor is the possible contrast between the established party systems of the West and the still-developing party systems of the post-Communist states. Most post-Communist party systems experience greater volatility in electoral results and greater party turnover. Voters and political elites are still developing the procedures of democratic elections, and how to organize and sustain political parties. In contrast, Western parties are relatively more stable and institutionalized, and have a long democratic history. Therefore, research suggests a smaller representation gap in the West than in the East (Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012; Dalton et al. 2011: chapter 7).

A nation's socio-economic development is another possible influence on representation. More affluent and educated publics presumably are better able to understand the complex world of politics and make appropriate voting choices (Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012: chapter 8).¹⁰ In contrast, other research argues that the social and political complexity of affluent democracies is creating new bases of political division, fragmenting social interests, and eroding long-term party bonds—all of which may weaken the connections between voters and their preferred party (Hutter et al. 2016; Dalton 2017).

Based on the EU/US data in Figure 13.1, there is little difference in the representation gap between the established democracies and the post-communist systems in Eastern Europe. The post-communist democracies actually show slightly smaller differences ($r = -0.10$) but this is not statistically significant. This may reflect the

increasing tumult occurring in West European systems as they deal with the fallout of the 2008 recession, new struggles over immigration, and other issues that are disrupting the status quo. There is relatively little variation in socio-economic conditions compared to the range including developing democracies outside of Europe. This may explain why the United Nations' Human Development Index shows no relationship with the size of the representation gap ($r = 0.04$).

While each of the contextual hypotheses seems plausible, and there is some evidence for each in the previous literature, our examination of the EU/US data in 2014 suggests that institutional factors exert limited influence on voter-party congruence. These limited effects of context are, in a sense, a positive finding because it implies that representation is not tightly bound to the specific institutional arrangement. But it leaves open the question of what explains the variation between voters and their parties, as illustrated in Figure 13.1.

Party Traits

Contextual factors may have limited impact on voter-party congruence because these effects are constant across parties within a nation. Much of the variation in the representation gap may occur at the party level, and the mix of parties varies within each nation. The challenge of representation is for like-minded voters and parties to identify each other and establish an electoral bond, and this may vary across party types more than electoral systems.

The clarity of party positions may help voters to recognize and support the party that best represents their views (Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012: chapter 8; Walczak and van der Brug 2013; Wessels and Schmitt 2014). For example, a party's identity may derive from its ties to a social cleavage. A party can be closely linked to specific voter blocs that define its identity, such as the religious base of Christian Democratic parties, the working class base of Communist parties, or the rural base of agrarian parties.

Another measure of the clarity of a party's position is its political position—its Left-Right ideology in terms of this chapter. Parties at the ideological extremes offer distinct political programmes, and thus voters more easily know where they stand—and stand with them if they agree (Wessels 1999; Walczak and van der Brug 2013; Belchior 2012; Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012; Dalton et al. 2011; Dalton 2018). For example, communist parties generally project a more distinct political profile than a moderate centrist party.

However, part of the clarity of party images comes because extreme parties are so extreme. Figure 13.1 showed that far-left parties are even more leftist than their supporters, as are parties on the far right. This contributes to the correlation between party system polarization and the representation gap noted earlier. The same applies when party elites are compared to their rank-and-file voters. Indeed, Figure 13.3 describes the strong relationship between extremism on (either to the left or right) and the size of the representation gap ($R=0.37$).¹¹

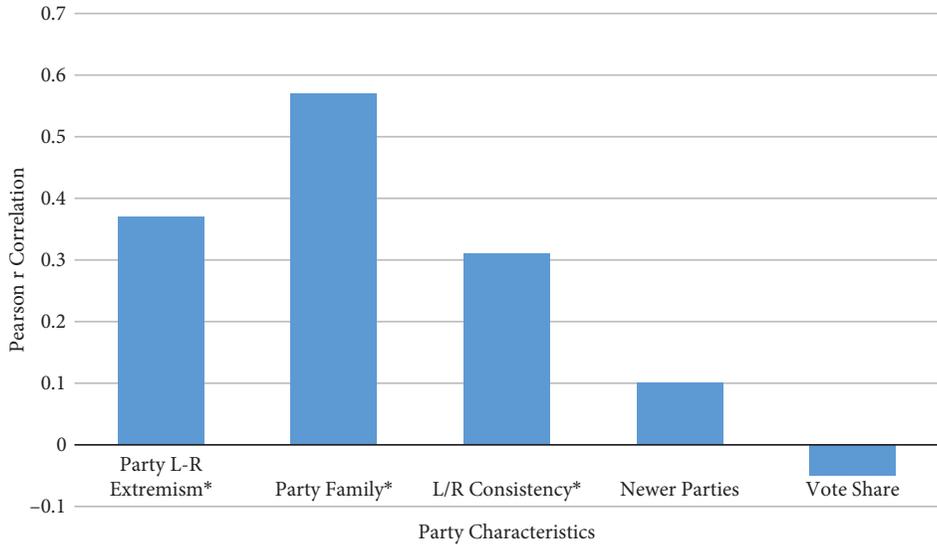


FIGURE 13.3 Party-level Correlates of the Representation Gap on Left–Right Scale

Note: Figure entries are the Pearson correlations between party system characteristics and the absolute difference between party votes and their respective party on the Left–Right scale (Eta correlation for party family). Traits with an asterisk are statistically significant, $p < 0.05$.

Source: 2014 European Election Study for party voters' position and 2014 Chapel Hill Expert Study for party position; US from 2012 ANES and 2014 Chapel Hill Expert Study of US ($N = 150$).

Party family is another way that parties communicate their political identity to the electorate. Party family indirectly measures a party's location along the Left–Right scale, but it also imports information on a party's political identity (Belchior 2012). A Christian Democratic or Labour party should advocate a distinct set of issues favoured by their core voters. Conservative and Green parties might also occupy distinct positions on the Left–Right scale, but embedded with different core principles. For example, Bonnie Meguid (2008) argued that niche parties—green, radical right, and ethnoterritorial parties—are more closely linked to their voters because of their distinct political profiles.

Party family has a very strong relationship with the size of the representation gap in the 2014 data (Eta=0.57). The largest gaps are for far-right and Communist parties that pursue an ideology more extreme than that of their own voters.¹² Christian Democrats and Liberal have the closest voter–party fit, with the other party families between these two extremes.

Analyses of the 2009 EES Election found that party families held different positions on the economic and cultural cleavages (Dalton 2018). Leftist parties—Communists and Social Democrats—are closer to their voters on the economic cleavage than they are on cultural issues. In contrast, Liberals, Christian Democrats, and Conservatives are relatively close to their conservative voters on the cultural cleavage, but less so on the economic cleavage. And despite their claim to represent the forgotten citizen, the representation gap on both the economic and cultural cleavage is substantial for far-right parties.

These results also suggest that a single Left–Right comparison is insufficient to capture the diversity of party choice in contemporary democracies. This is further evidence that greater policy diversity across multiple cleavage dimensions narrows the representation gap as noted in the Rovny/Polk diversity measure in Figure 13.2. Squeezing party representation into a one-dimensional framework appears too constraining for these nations.

Other less-ideological traits may also affect the representation gap. For example, the age of a party might facilitate the clarity of party positions and thus voter–party congruence. New parties often emerge to represent a specific policy perspective, which might heighten clarity, but then evolve their positions over successive elections as they expand their programmes beyond their initial formative issues. In comparison, established parties have a track record that may enable voters to better identify the parties’ positions as well as committing a party to match their positions. Figure 13.3 shows that younger parties experience a slightly wider representation gap from their voters ($r=0.10$), and this pattern is even stronger in the established democracies in the West.

A party’s size (vote share) also may affect its responsiveness to voters, although the direction of effects is unclear. On the one hand, large parties might provide more information on their policy positions to the voter. But with size also comes the potential for intraparty disagreements and an inertia to new issue demands. Conversely, smaller parties might feel compelled to be more responsive to their voters to maintain their existence, but they also might be more labile in their positions because of their small political base. Previous research results for party size are mixed (Dalton et al. 2011; Mattila and Raunio 2006; Costello et al. 2012; Dalton 2017). Figure 13.3 shows that party size insignificantly decreases the Left–Right representation gap for parties in these data.

Other research suggests that centralized and well-organized parties are more effective in presenting a single coherent party message compared to decentralized parties or ones that speak with many voices. This logic builds on a long tradition emphasizing the efficiency of oligarchy or centralized structure in political parties, but the empirical evidence is mixed (Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012: chapter 6; Dalton 2017).

An increasing number of representation studies will provide an empirical base for more extensive analyses that examine the interaction among various party characteristics and the representation process. Multilevel models can also examine the interactions between context and party traits. However, the importance of party characteristics in the representation process means that broad contextual structures play a more limited role in connecting like-minded voters and parties on Election Day.

LESSONS FOR RESEARCH

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The study of political representation could once be described as theoretically rich but empirically limited. This chapter has described the advancement of empirical research

on political representation over the past two decades. Earlier national studies separately examined the representation process in individual nations (Barnes 1977; Converse and Pierce 1986; Matthews and Valen 1999; Miller et al. 1999; Aarts and Thomassen 2008). The field became fallow for several years, with occasional individual national studies. Then, beginning in the 2000s, several projects systematically examined different aspects of the representation process with cross-national evidence, and increasingly with longitudinal comparisons. This expansion in empirical resources has generated a renaissance in the study of political representation. Scholars can address theories about representation that were impossible to systematically research in earlier periods. And the forefront of the field is progressing rapidly.

This chapter has summarized and illustrated recent research findings on the role of electoral and party systems on the representation process. The most significant finding is the very strong relationship between the Left–Right position of the average party voter and the position of the party as separately determined electoral experts. If the goal of representative democracy is to enable voters to find aggregate representation through a political party, then the party government model appears to function quite effectively.

This chapter focused on the factors that might affect voter–party congruence. Despite the importance attributed to electoral and party systems in the theoretical literature, the empirical reality is more modest. Party-focused electoral systems display a smaller representation gap than the candidate-focused SMD system, but the differences are modest. Other aspects of the electoral formula have a limited and variable influence on voter–party congruence. The European/US comparisons show little difference between old and new democracies, although other studies have displayed greater congruence in the established democracies. Previous research linking electoral systems to the number of parties carries less weight in predicting policy representation.

Contextual factors may have limited impact on voter–party congruence because these effects are constant across parties, and the variation in congruence primarily occurs at the party level. For example, extremist parties on the far Left and Right are less congruent with their supporters than centrist parties. Extreme parties are selling an ideology, rather than marketing what potential supporters want. This is also apparent in comparing representation patterns across party families. Party age and size also have a modest influence on the congruence between voters and parties. In other words, the characteristics of political parties, rather than the characteristics of the electoral or party systems, are more important in determining the size of the representation gap.

Much of the evidence summarized here suggests the need to go beyond a unidimensional Downsian framework of party systems. The Left–Right continuum offers a constrained view of political competition. Contemporary affluent democracies are more complex and diverse societies, and political competition often requires a multi-dimensional framework to describe citizen demands and party choices. This has become progressively more apparent in studies of voting choice and political representation (Kriesi et al. 2008; Thomassen 2012; Häusermann and Kriesi 2015; Dalton 2018). Few electoral researchers view the political world in only one dimension.

Multidimensional analyses pose theoretical and methodological challenges, however. There is no theoretical answer to determine the minimum number of dimensions to reflect the public's current issue interests. And even if we could determine this a priori, the measurement of multiple dimensions creates additional challenges. For example, if we accept that economic issues are one dimension of cleavage, how do we identify which issues to include in measuring this cleavage and consider the differential relevance of issues across nations and time?

A multidimensional political space also requires more attention to the source of data. There is a general convergence on party positions across methods—party expert data, party elite surveys, voter advice applications, and citizen perceptions of parties—in measuring the Left–Right position of parties across nations and time (Dalton and McAllister 2015). But a focus on issue cleavages is likely to create more inconsistency in measurement across different modes of data collection.

A multidimensional political space also creates new challenges for statistical analysis. Most of the previous research benefited from the simplicity of the Left–Right scale as a single metric. If voters are choosing parties in multidimensional space, ordinary predictive models are insufficient to capture this reality. Even in two dimensions, statistical models designed for a single dependent variable cannot capture the reality of voter choice. When we compare representation in multiple dimensions, similar challenges arise. At the advent of modern electoral research, Donald Stokes (1963) raised some of these potential problems; they have not been resolved in the subsequent decades.

Until recently, most representational research has been cross-sectional analysis or the comparison of separate cross-sectional findings. These snapshots of political representation suggest that a more dynamic modelling of representation is needed (Holmberg 2010; Aarts and Thomassen 2008). There are rich longitudinal series of voters and members of parliament in several nations, such as Sweden, the Netherlands, and Germany. At each election, parties make new promises for the forthcoming term. But at the next election, representation blends with the accountability of the incumbent parties. Do the promises of the last election match political reality, and what are the prospects for the future? Democracy is a dynamic process.

Over fifty years ago, Warren Miller and Donald Stokes (1963: 45) wrote ‘Substantial constituency influence over the lower house of Congress is commonly thought to be both a normative principle and a factual truth of American government. From their draft constitution, we may assume the Founding Fathers expected it, and many political scientists feel, regretfully, that the Framers’ wish has come all too true.’ This set the research agenda for scholarly research on the representation process in modern democracies. As this chapter and others in this book demonstrate, Miller and Stokes’ assertion remains highly debated in the scholarly community on both theoretical and empirical terms. But our understanding of the representation process and factors influencing representation present a path to address the questions they first raised.

NOTES

1. I want to thank Robert Rohrschneider and Jacques Thomassen for their comments on an earlier draft of this chapter.
2. The main exception to this statement is the district-focused representation in single member electoral systems (Miller and Stokes 1963; Miller et al. 1999). This point is addressed later in the chapter.
3. The citizen data come from the 2014 European Election Survey (<http://europeanelectionstudies.net/>); I included parties with at least twenty supporters in this survey. The party data come from the 2014 CHES study (<https://www.chesdata.eu/>). The US data on citizen positions come from the CSES supplement to the 2012 American National Election Study; the party data come from the CHES 2014 US Study. Both studies use a similar Left–Right scale. Ryan Bakker generously provided access to the US study.
4. The American parties display very large representation gaps in Left–Right terms: Democrats 2.44 and Republicans 1.64. While there are many possible explanations for these large gaps, the overall pattern is consistent with voter perceptions of the parties and the widening gap over time (Dalton 2018: chapter 9).
5. For example, a single broad question on support for European unification shows a .54 correlation for the same set of parties as in Figure 13.1. This is still a strong relationship, but far below the correlation for Left–Right or broad social cleavage measures.
6. These data are based on the 2014 EP election and the 2012 US election; from www.parlgov.org.
7. The Polarization Index is calculated following the methodology in Dalton et al. (2011: chapter 7) and Dalton (2008).
8. They used a regression line (β) and mean squared error around this line to estimate whether parties fell along a single line in this two-dimensional space. When party positions are linearly aligned, this produces a strong relationship (Italy $\beta = 1.127$); when parties are dispersed along both dimensions, a party's position on one dimension has little relationship to the other (Denmark $\beta = .015$). They present data for fourteen West European party systems.
9. This is based on a six-point measure: (1) SMD/FPTP, (2) parallel SMD and PR systems, (3) two tour, (4) MMP with PR outcome, (5) open-list PR, and (6) closed-list PR systems.
10. I use the United Nations' Human Development Index, which combines national income, education levels, and longevity. The HDI for 2014 showed significant differences, ranging from .794 in Bulgaria to .926 in Germany. United Nations Development Program, *Human Development Report 2015*. (http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2015_human_development_report.pdf)
11. This is the Multiple R from a non-linear quadratic relationship between a party's Left–Right position and the size of the Left–Right representation gap.
12. The Left–Right representation gap was: 1.01 Communists, .73 Green/New Left, .56 Social Democrats/Labour, .66 Christian Democrats, .46 Conservatives, Liberals .56, and 1.92 for far-right parties.

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CHAPTER 14

PARTY GOVERNMENT AND VOTERS

WOUTER VAN DER BRUG, EELCO HARTEVELD,
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THIS chapter focuses on a number of requirements that voters need to meet in order to be well represented according to standards defined by scholars of party government. As Richard Katz explains in much more detail in Chapter 12 of this *Handbook*, various versions of party government models exist, but all seem to have in common that representation is realized *by* and *through* political parties (e.g. APSA 1950; Sartori 1976; Katz 1987; Thomassen 1994). This chapter focuses exclusively on ‘substantive representation’ (e.g. Pitkin 1967), which entails that voters will be well represented if political parties have the same policy positions as those who voted for them (Dalton 2006). Elections can be an instrument that results in this form of representation if voters and parties meet a number of requirements. Other chapters in this volume test whether and when *parties* meet these requirements. In this chapter we focus on the extent to which *voters* meet the necessary requirements to be substantially represented. The three most important of these requirements are: (1) voters must have policy preferences on the most important policy dimensions; (2) voters must be aware of the important differences between the policies proposed by different parties; and (3) voters should vote for the party with the programme that is most in line with their policy preferences.

While these conditions appear quite straightforward, meeting them requires that the behaviour of parties and their voters is structured by a common ideology. As will be argued in more detail below, substantive representation is impossible without overarching ideologies structuring party competition and voting behaviour. Therefore, this chapter focuses mainly on the role of ideology and how it structures opinion formation and party choice.

In this chapter, we will first elaborate on the notion of substantive representation and on the importance of ideological structuration for representation. In a next section we will aim to provide a brief summary of existing empirical work in the field, after which we will present some new empirical evidence ourselves.

PARTY GOVERNMENT AND REPRESENTATION

As Dick Katz shows in Chapter 12 of this *Handbook*, different versions of the model of party government exist. Yet, their normative perspective on representation seems to be grounded on three premises. The first one is that of substantive representation, rather than descriptive or symbolic. In other words, citizens are well represented if public policies are implemented in accordance with the preferences of a majority of the citizens. The second premise is that representation is organized by and through political parties. The third premise is that citizens are represented by the party for which they voted.

This makes the logic of representation somewhat different than one in which the representative is an individual politician acting on behalf of the citizens of a specific electoral district. Research on substantive representation in majoritarian systems such as the US and Britain tends to focus on the fit between the position of a candidate and that of the median voter in the district s/he represents, while such studies in multi-party systems tend to focus on the link between the parties and their voters. In the former case, representation is seen to be good if the positions of the elected representative are close to those of the median voter from the district s/he represents, even if there is much variation in positions among voters within the district. In the latter case, a voter will be well represented if s/he voted for a party with the same positions on important issues, even if that party is not a member of a governing coalition and if those positions are very different from the governments' policies. Like most research in the tradition of the party government model, this chapter focuses on the latter type of representation (e.g. Dalton et al. 2011a, 2011b).

Two remarks should be made at the outset. First, representation should not be seen in binary terms (i.e. that voters are either well represented or poorly represented): representation is a matter of degree. In some countries and some historical periods, representation of citizens is better than in other countries or in different periods. Second, this type of representation does *not* require that politicians behave as 'delegates', that is, as spokespersons who just represent the interests and opinions of the citizens who elected him or her. Parties compete in elections by a combination of redefining unpopular policy positions (being responsive to the public's wishes) and by trying to persuade voters of the attractiveness of their policy proposals (showing leadership). Research shows that policy preferences are not fully exogenous to party preferences and voting decisions, but that voters' attitudes towards policies (and politics) are affected by the parties that they prefer for other reasons (e.g. Bartels 2002; Cohen 2003; Carsey and Layman 2006; Steenbergen et al. 2007; Lenz 2009; Rooduijn et al. 2016). Yet, this does not stand in the way of substantive representation. If the people who voted for Donald Trump in 2016 support the proposal to build a wall at the Mexican border, because they have been persuaded by Trump that this would be a wise decision, Trump represents them well substantively. After all, Trump is trying to implement the policies that they prefer, even though he is not acting as their delegate.

So, irrespective of ‘who has been cueing whom’ (Steenbergen et al. 2007), if there is a close match between the policy preferences of parties and those of their voters, we will conclude that voters are substantively well represented (see also Dalton et al. 2011a, 2011b).

REPRESENTING VOTERS: THREE REQUIREMENTS

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Scholars who developed the various versions of party government models were mostly researchers of parties, not of voters. While it has been acknowledged that the claim to democratic legitimacy of governing decisions rests ultimately on electoral support (e.g. Katz 1987), these scholars have not paid much attention to the role of voters. Thomassen (1994) was one of the first scholars to specify the conditions that *voters* need to meet in order to be substantively represented. For voters to be well represented, they need to meet one overarching condition: they need to vote for the party that they agree with the most on the most important policies. Even though this can be seen as a rather simple requirement, several steps have to be taken to satisfy this overarching criterion, and each of these steps requires a rather high level of political awareness on the part of voters. Three requirements have to be met for voters to vote for the party they agree with the most.

A first requirement is that voters need to have preferences on the most important policies. Yet, just to have preferences is not sufficient. If citizens would link their opinions on different issues in idiosyncratic ways, we would need too many parties for citizens to be well represented. This can be illustrated with a simple numerical example. In most democracies, parliaments are elected for a four- to five-year term and over the course of that period they pass thousands of pieces of legislation. Not all of these are politicized and voters will not really care about most of them. Yet, it seems reasonable to assume that there will be two or three issues at stake each year, which voters really do care about and on which they would like to be represented by the party they voted for. So, ten issues seems a realistic estimate of the number of issues on which voters would like to be represented over the course of that parliamentary term. For the sake of simplicity, let us assume that these issues would be dichotomous or, in other words, that parties and voters can occupy just two positions on those issues. Even though this seems a rather conservative estimate, there are theoretically $2^{10} = 1,024$ different combinations of positions on these ten issues. If the positions on those ten issues are not correlated with each other, the millions of voters will distribute their preferences approximately equally across those 1,024 combinations of issue positions, so that representation would become impossible. So, we may conclude that representation is only possible if public opinion on different issues is structured by a relatively limited number of attitude dimensions.

Yet, that is not sufficient for substantive representation either. Let's imagine that voters who are left leaning on socio-economic issues tend to be conservative on cultural issues, while left leaning parties on socio-economic issues are progressive on cultural issues. In this case, the specific combination of attitudes of voters (left-conservative) are not represented by any party. So, representation is only possible if position-taking of parties is structured *in the same way* as position-taking of voters. In practice, this means that representation requires *ideology* (e.g. Thomassen 1994). In most advanced democracies, political parties present themselves as the representatives of different ideologies, such as socialism, liberalism, conservatism, or Christian democracy. These ideologies provide them with an ideal image of how societies ought to be arranged and as such they also guide parties often in their position-taking on substantive issues. So, it is to be expected that ideologies structure the behaviour of political parties, at least to some extent. However, whether ideologies structure attitudes of citizens in the same way is much less evident, as we will discuss in more detail below.

A second requirement for voters to be able to vote on the basis of their policy preferences is that they must know where parties stand on the most important issues. This poses a huge cognitive demand on most voters, particularly in multi-party systems. So, it would be unrealistic to assume that voters would be aware of all sorts of details of the positions of parties on various issues. Ideology could play an important heuristic role here as well (Downs 1957). Voters who are familiar with the main principles that a party stands for do not need to know many details about the policy positions of the party, because most can be deduced from the party's ideology. Moreover, the behaviour of a party on future issues becomes predictable if the party is guided by its ideology. So, the bottom line of the discussion so far is that substantive representation requires that ideologies structure the behaviour of parties, that voters are aware of those ideologies and interpret them in a similar way to the parties.

The third requirement is that voters vote for the party they agree with the most (i.e. rather than relying primarily on other, non-ideological factors such as leadership evaluations, scandals, campaign events, or strategic considerations). If voters indeed use ideology as a cognitive cue, this allows them to vote for the party with an ideology that is most similar to theirs. Voting for an ideologically similar party is a relatively easy way to decide which party will represent one's views best. However, whether this indeed produces meaningful representation depends on whether the other two conditions are also met. If (1) voters' attitudes on policies are structured by the same ideological dimension as parties, if (2) voters are informed about the ideological positions of parties on that dimension, and (3) if they vote for the party with the ideology that most closely resembles their own, their policy preferences will be well represented.

THE SPATIAL MODEL

Various models of voting behaviour exist, but the ones that are most closely related to the perspective on substantive representation are the 'spatial models' that build on

Down's (1957) *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. In this spatial model, policy positions of parties and voters are represented in a joint *ideological* space. The basic features of his model are that one ideological dimension (Left–Right) essentially describes the preferences of voters for parties, that voters vote for the nearest party on this dimension, and that parties adjust their position on this dimension in order to attract a maximum number of votes. Voters' preferences for public policies generally will be well represented if parties and voters behave according to the Downsian model, even though not all criteria are met in a two-party system.¹ In multi-party systems with low thresholds for new parties to enter, voters will be well represented by parties if voters and parties behave according to the Downsian model.

However, it seems unrealistic that the differences between political parties can be captured just by a Left–Right dimension, which mainly addresses the question of 'how much government intervention in the economy should there be?' (Downs 1957: 116). There are obviously all sorts of unrelated, yet important issues in politics. Already in the 1970s and 1980s, several scholars argued that a second dimension was needed to describe the main differences between political parties in most countries. This dimension has been given different labels, such as libertarian–authoritarian (e.g. Kitschelt, 1995), or GAL-TAN (Hooghe et al. 2002). It structures attitudes on issues that pertain to matters of individual autonomy versus compliance with collectively shared norms. More recently, it has been argued that this second dimension has changed in character as a result of globalization of world markets, mass migration, and Europeanization, which increased the salience of cultural values (e.g. Kriesi et al., 2008). As a consequence, this dimension is less about law and order and religious identity, but increasingly about immigration and European unification. Kriesi et al. (2008) label the dimension cultural demarcation vs. cultural integration. Again others argue that the political party space is more adequately described by three dimensions, as the older cultural dimension still operates alongside—but partly independent from—the newer one (e.g. De Lange 2007; Aarts and Thomassen 2008). Next to an economic dimension, Kitschelt and Rehm (2014) distinguish a cultural dimension concerning the norms within the group (libertarian–authoritarian) and a more recent one about the definition and borders of the group (cosmopolitan–nationalist).

While most political scientists would probably acknowledge that Left–Right cannot structure citizens' attitudes on all conceivable issues, distances between voters and parties on the Left–Right dimension are powerful predictors of party choice (e.g. Van der Eijk et al. 2005; Dalton et al. 2011b). Dalton (2006) shows that a (usually overwhelming) majority of the citizens in all democratic states included in the World Values Studies of 1999–2002, are able to place themselves on a Left–Right scale (see also Dalton et al. 2011b). Moreover, when citizens are asked where parties are located on the Left–Right scale, there tends to be much more agreement in their perceptions than when they are asked where parties stand on specific issues (e.g. Van der Brug and Van der Eijk 1999). All of this suggests that voters consider the Left–Right division very useful as a device to simplify and understand complex political realities. This seems contradictory: Left–Right does not structure attitudes towards many issues that voters

consider important, but Left–Right positions are nevertheless strongly related to party choice. Yet, as argued by Sartori (1976: 338): ‘When the citizen speaks, he may have many things to say. But when he is coerced into casting a . . . vote, he may well have to . . . vote for the party . . . perceived as closest on the Left–Right spectrum.’ This is, of course, especially the case if the supply side of the electoral ‘market’ is largely structured by Left–Right. However, if the supply side is structured by Left–Right while voters’ opinions are structured by multiple dimensions, their attitudes cannot be well represented because there are no parties available that represent their combination of positions (Van der Brug and van Spanje 2009).

Several studies have shown that Left–Right positions of voters were strongly correlated to their issue positions on various matters (e.g. Sani and Sartori, 1983) and in most European countries it was clearly the dominant ideological dimension of party competition (e.g. Fuchs and Klingemann 1990; Klingemann et al. 1994; Van der Brug et al. 2008). Yet, the meaning of the terms ‘left’ and ‘right’ varies across countries, over time, and between citizens as new issues emerge that are integrated in the Left–Right dimension (Gabel and Huber 2000). For this reason, the Left–Right dimension has also been called a ‘super-issue’ (Pierce 1999; Van der Eijk et al. 2005) as it summarizes positions on the most salient issues in a country at that time (Marks and Steenbergen 2002). In a study of the Netherlands, De Vries et al. (2013) demonstrate that Left–Right positions have become more strongly correlated to sociocultural issues over time at the expense of socio-economic issues, although the latter remains important. Rekker (2016) demonstrates that there is a clear generational component to these changes: the youngest generations interpret Left–Right more in sociocultural terms than older generations, even though socio-economic policy positions are also important for them.

So, one could be tempted to argue that Left–Right is as powerful in structuring opinions and party choice as it was thirty years ago, but that the issues have changed and so has the meaning of Left–Right. However, there are indications that Left–Right positions are nowadays a less powerful predictor of party choice than they were in the past, particularly for younger voters (e.g. Van der Brug 2010).

In sum, we have argued that the extent to which voters’ substantive policy preferences are represented by the party they voted for depends largely on the degree to which the behaviour of voters and parties is structured by the same ideological dimension. In most countries this dimension is labelled Left–Right. Yet, the role of Left–Right may change over time, it may be different between generations and it may differ across countries with other historical legacies. Changes over time and differences between countries are not necessarily problematic for representation. However, if different generations lack a shared understanding of the meaning of left and right, this would be potentially more problematic. In the next sections we will focus on three aspects of the Left–Right dimension:

1. Whether and how Left–Right structures public opinion;
2. Whether voters have a common understanding of parties’ positions on the Left–Right dimension;
3. To what extent voters make use of Left–Right to determine their vote choice.

Since we have reasons to expect that the role of Left–Right has decreased over time, our analyses take an over-time perspective. When analysing social and political changes over a longer period of time, one needs to take into consideration that the composition of the electorate changes, as younger generations replace older ones (e.g. Van der Brug and Franklin 2018). In our analyses, we will therefore distinguish between birth cohorts. We will compare between four birth cohorts: those born before 1940 (‘Pre-war’); between 1940 and 1959 (‘Post-war’); between 1960 and 1979 (‘Generation X’); and from 1980 onwards (‘Millennials’).

REQUIREMENT 1: ARE VOTERS’ ATTITUDES STRUCTURED BY THEIR IDEOLOGY?

In this section we examine to what extent voter attitudes are based on an underlying ideology. When ideology structures voters’ attitudes, one would expect to find clearly structured attitude scales and strong correlations between these attitude scales and ideological positions. In this section, we look at both. We employ data from the World Values Studies (WVS), which provides a wide array of public opinion questions from many countries on different continents. In order to assess changes over time, we examined both the most recent wave of the WVS/EVS survey (gathered between 2010 and 2014) and the same survey in the early 1990s (gathered between 1990 and 1994).

In line with the focus of this *Handbook*, our analyses are restricted to established democracies and we selected only those countries for which data are available in both surveys. Investigating the institutional and other factors that promote representation is beyond the scope of this chapter. However, we will examine regional variation in a descriptive way by distinguishing between countries located in the following regions: North-Western Europe; Southern Europe; Nordic countries; United States of America.² We realize that this is a crude distinction and that there could be as much variation in terms of political institutions, culture, or history amongst, for instance, Southern Europe countries as there is between Southern Europe and the Nordic countries. Yet, we cannot explore all of these differences in detail. We think this regional categorization strikes a middle ground between creating many homogeneous but very small categories on the one hand, and very large heterogeneous categories on the other.

The WVS data sets contain items that measure attitudes in three policy domains that are seen to reflect important conflicts in society. The first is the socio-economic policy domain, with four items.³ The second domain consists of four items that pertain to policies in matters of religious or traditional values versus individual freedoms (which we label ‘libertarian–authoritarian’).⁴ The third domain consists of three items relating to nationalism and immigration (which we label ‘demarcation–integration’ in line with Kriesi et al. 2008).⁵ We tested the strength of the attitude scales by means of Mokken scaling, which is a method for testing the construct validity of cumulative scales, based

Table 14.1 H Coefficients of the Three Issue Dimensions, by Wave

	Libertarian–authoritarian	Integration–demarcation	Socio-economic
WVS/EVS 2010–2014	0.541	0.626	0.302
WVS/EVS 1990–1994	0.506	0.573	0.358

Source: World Values Studies and European Values Studies.

on Item Response Theory (Mokken 1971; Van Schuur 2003). Loevinger's H is a measure that is proposed by Mokken to evaluate the strength of the cumulative scale.

The H-values of the different scales are presented in Table 14.1. According to Mokken (1971), H-values below 0.3 indicate that the items do not form a scale. H-values higher than 0.5 indicate that the items form a strong scale. The results in Table 14.1 are based on the pooled data set across all countries and generations. These results demonstrate that the 'libertarian–authoritarian' items form a strong scale, as do the items that measure 'demarcation–integration'. Across all these countries and generations, it thus appears that voters have clearly structured attitudes on matters of immigration and nationalism, as well as on libertarian–authoritarian issues. Moreover, the H-values of both scales have become stronger over time, which could indicate that there is an increase in ideological structuring of these attitudes.

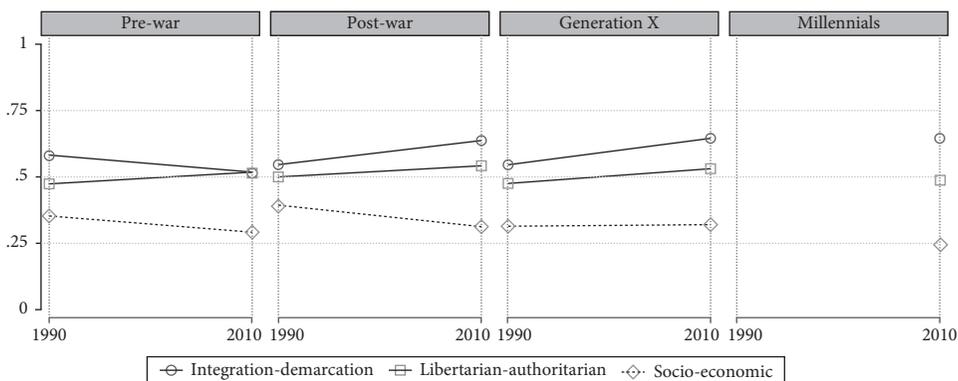
Things are different however for the socio-economic issues. First of all, the item of income redistribution, which has always been seen as a central component of the socio-economic dimension, hardly correlates with the other socio-economic items. The only way in which an acceptable scale could be constructed was by removing this item from the scale (the H coefficients in Table 14.1 are therefore calculated for the remaining items only). We will analyse this item separately in the analyses below. Second, the remaining three items form a rather weak scale in the 1990s. By 2010, the H-value has dropped even further to 0.302, which means that it is a very weak scale. So, voters have become less coherent in their ideas about government intervention in the economy, which suggests that these attitudes are decreasingly defined by an underlying ideology.

Table 14.2 shows the correlations between the sum scores of these dimensions and voters' positions on the Left–Right scale. While the construct validity of the socio-economic scale has declined somewhat over the years (Table 14.1), the correlation with Left–Right increased (Table 14.2). In both years, the socio-economic attitude scale is most strongly correlated with Left–Right ($r = 0.24$ in 1990 and $r = 0.30$ in 2010). We also see a slightly increasing trend in the correlation between Left–Right and income equality (from $r = 0.24$ to $r = 0.27$), while we had expected this correlation to decrease. In 1990, libertarian–authoritarian values were almost as strongly correlated to Left–Right ($r = 0.23$) as socio-economic attitudes ($r = 0.24$). In 2010 this is different, since the correlation between socio-economic issues and Left–Right has increased in strength (to $r = 0.30$), while the correlation between Left–Right and libertarian–authoritarian issues

Table 14.2 Correlation with Self-reported Left–Right Scale, by Wave

	Libertarian– authoritarian	Integration– demarcation	Socio– economic	Income equality
WVS/EVS 2010–2014	0.158	0.158	0.304	0.271
WVS/EVS 1990–1994	0.233	0.147	0.244	0.235

Source: World Values Studies and European Values Studies.

**FIGURE 14.1** H Coefficient by Cohort

have decreased ($r = 0.16$). The correlation between integration–demarcation and Left–Right is slightly stronger in 2010 than in 1990, but the difference is minor (from 0.15 to 0.16). Contrary to expectations, Left–Right has *not* become more defined in sociocultural terms, but more in socio-economic terms. A possible explanation is that the 2010 study was in the middle of the financial crisis, which urged many governments to impose austerity measures, so that socio-economic policies were on the top of the agenda.

The patterns that we have observed may differ across generations and regions. To assess generational differences, we first repeat the analyses for different age cohorts. For ease of presentation, these results are shown graphically in Figure 14.1. Three patterns stand out. First, attitudes on libertarian–authoritarian issues and particularly on demarcation–integration issues are clearly structured in all generations. The strength of the libertarian–authoritarian scale has become even stronger in all three generations that can be compared over time, while the integration–demarcation dimension has become less strongly structured amongst the oldest generation. When comparing the scale values for these two scales, only minor differences among the different generations can be noted.

Second, we see much less structure in the socio-economic scale among all generations and we observe a further decrease across the board. Amongst the oldest and

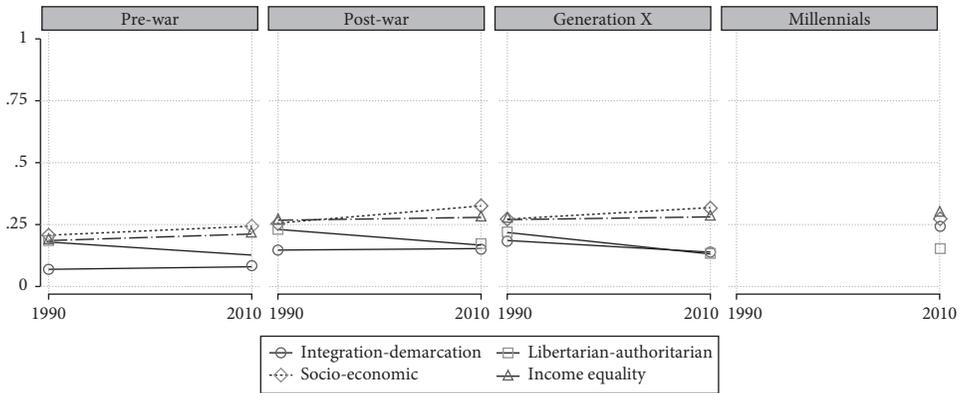


FIGURE 14.2 Correlation with Self-reported Left-Right Scale, by Cohort

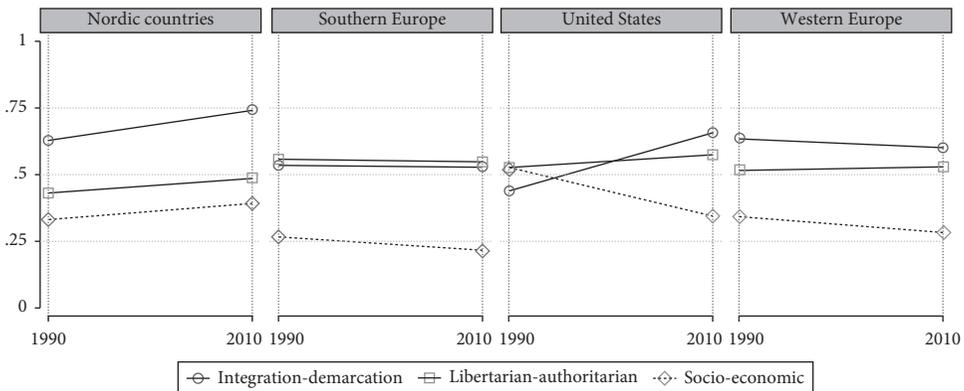


FIGURE 14.3 H Coefficient by Region

youngest generations the H-values are even below 0.30, which means that the items do not form a scale. On the basis of these results, we should seriously question whether nowadays any underlying ideology precedes attitudes towards state interventions in the economy.

Figure 14.2 shows the correlations between the attitude scales and Left-Right in the different generations. A first observation is that for all generations the two socio-economic attitudes display the strongest correlation with left right. These correlations become even stronger among the oldest generations. Libertarian-authoritarian issues become less related to Left-Right amongst all generations. The most notable difference between the generations is that demarcation-integration is more strongly related to Left-Right among the Millennials than among the other generations.

In the last step in this section, we conducted the analyses separately for different regions. Figure 14.3 shows the results for the scale values. We only examined countries for which we have data at both time points, to ensure that the differences are really changes over time, rather than changes due to exclusion of certain countries.

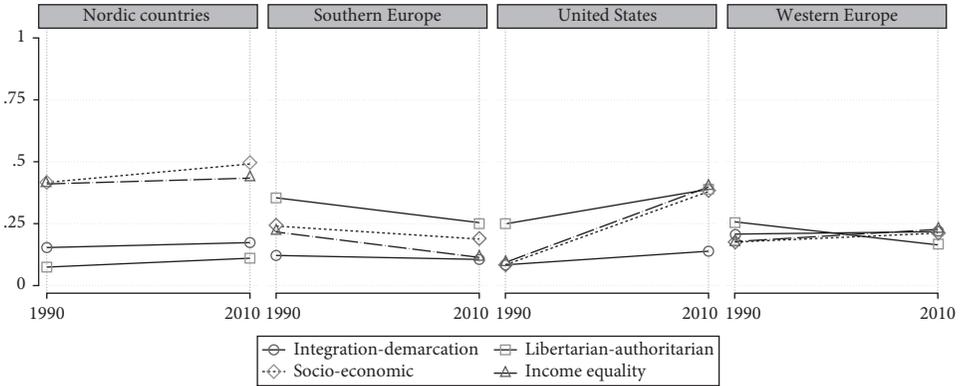


FIGURE 14.4 Correlation with Self-reported Left-Right Scale, by Region

Figure 14.3 shows that attitudes on libertarian–authoritarian issues and particularly on demarcation–integration issues are clearly structured in all regions. The strength of the integration–demarcation scale has substantively increased in the Nordic countries and in the US. The H-values for the libertarian–authoritarian scale are quite stable in each region. Another pattern is that the scale values of the socio-economic dimension have increased somewhat in the Nordic countries, but have decreased everywhere else. Surprisingly, the socio-economic dimension shows most constraint in the US, while in Southern Europe, which was hit the hardest by the financial crisis, the items do not form a scale.

Figure 14.4, finally, shows the changes over time in the correlations between the attitude scales and Left-Right in the different regions of the world. Contrary to the scale values, the results in Figure 14.4 show a lot of variation across regions and over time in the way the Left-Right dimension (or ‘liberal–conservative’ in the US) is connected with different attitude scales. In Nordic countries all correlations increase and Left-Right is strongly correlated with socio-economic policy positions. In Southern Europe, we see a very different pattern. All correlations become weaker and the libertarian–authoritarian scale is most strongly related to Left-Right. In the US, all scales have become more strongly related to the liberal–conservative dimension, but particularly the socio-economic policy scales. Demarcation–integration was the least important by 2010. In Western Europe, the scales of all of the issues are correlated with Left-Right, but none of the correlations is strong. The lack of an overall pattern probably means that the labels ‘left’ and ‘right’ mean something different, depending on the saliency of issues and on the way these issues are framed in terms of left and right in party-voters communication.

While there are differences between regions and generations, the overall conclusion should be that the first requirement for substantive representation is not met anywhere. Attitudes are relatively unconstrained, and as a result positions on one or two ideological dimensions hardly reflect citizens’ attitudes on issues; and the correlations between Left-Right positions and issue attitudes are generally quite weak.

REQUIREMENT 2: DO VOTERS AGREE ON THE IDEOLOGICAL POSITION OF PARTIES?

As discussed above, the second condition for political representation—according to the responsible party model—is that the electorate has a *common understanding of the position of parties on a Left–Right scale*. In the previous section, we saw that voters’ opinions are structured by at least three dimensions, all of which are (rather weakly) correlated with positions on an ideological superstructure of Left–Right. In this section, we assess whether voters agree on where parties are located on such a Left–Right dimension. We do so by looking at voters’ level of agreement in placing parties on this dimension in those established democracies for which data are available over the period 1996 to 2016.

We are especially interested in three sources of variation in such agreement: between countries, over time, and across generations. While we cannot discuss details for each country, we report trends in different regions of the world. As discussed, we expect that there will be a trend towards decreasing agreement among voters on where to locate parties, particularly among the younger cohorts.

To investigate agreement about Left–Right placement in this section (and their role in vote choices in the next), we rely on the *Comparative Study of Electoral Systems* (CSES) data, modules 1 through 4, a collection of harmonized national election studies (Giebler et al. 2016).⁶ The key variable of interest is voters’ placement of up to nine parties on a scale from 0 (‘left’) to 10 (‘right’). To measure voters’ degree of agreement about the location of parties on this scale, we use Van der Eijk’s measure of agreement *A* (Van der Eijk 2001). It describes the ‘peakedness’ of the distribution of perceptions. The agreement score *A* ranges from -1 (perfect disagreement, or fully bimodal at the extremes) to 0 (flat distribution) to 1 (perfect agreement). All conclusions remain valid when replicated using a standard deviation rather than the *A* measure.

We distinguish between countries located in the following regions, which correspond as far as possible to the categorization of the previous section: Oceania (Australia and New Zealand), Western Europe, the Nordic countries, Southern Europe, and North America (United States and Canada).⁷ To track changes over time, we split the sample into four periods of 5 to 6 years: 1996–2000; 2001–2005; 2006–2010; and 2011–2016. To compare cohorts, we distinguish the same four cohorts as in the previous analyses.

Figure 14.5 shows the trend in the agreement score for each region and generation. This was calculated by taking the average agreement score, amongst a certain cohort, for all parties taking part in the region at the various elections during the period. We see, first of all, that levels of agreement range roughly between 0.3 and 0.6, showing there is quite some agreement amongst voters. The largest differences, if any, occur between regions rather than between generations and over time. The average agreement scores are highest in the Nordic countries, but they are also high in the other parts

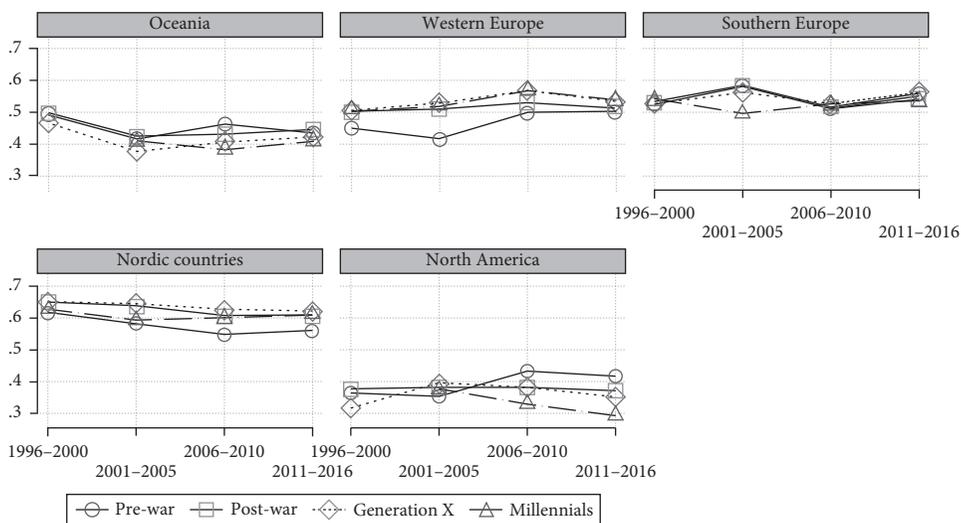


FIGURE 14.5 Agreement Score, by Cohort and Region

of Europe, while they are lower in Oceania and especially in North America. The latter likely reflects the generally lower number of parties (and thus less triangulation) and weaker party unity (and thus a broader variation of positions among party elites) in these contexts. The similar scores in the Nordic countries and Western Europe on the one hand, and Southern Europe on the other, suggests that the age and consolidation of democracies does not play an important role. In terms of over-time variation, the average across all regions varies slightly, but not significantly, between periods. There is no general trend towards decreasing agreement.

Focusing on generational differences, it turns out that the levels of agreement are relatively similar across the cohorts—if anything, older—rather than the younger—agree somewhat less on parties' position in Western Europe. In the other regions, the younger generations are somewhat less likely to agree. Indeed, 'Millennials' are slightly more likely to indicate they do not know the Left-Right position of at least one party (8.8 per cent, compared to 8.2 to 8.3 per cent amongst the other groups; $p < 0.001$).⁸ Furthermore, the trend in all cohorts suggests a weak overall decrease, but these are neither substantial nor significant.

It thus appears that voters *do* agree to a large extent about the Left-Right positions of parties. This agreement is strongest in European democracies and somewhat less so in democracies with low party unity. In most regions this situation is relatively stable: we find no structural trend towards confusion about parties' position, nor a convergence towards the level of agreement experienced in the oldest democracies. Neither do we find large differences between cohorts, although Millennials seem to agree slightly less about the position of parties. In short, even though the previous section showed that the meaning of Left-Right has changed, there is no evidence of a deterioration of citizens' ability to agree on where parties are located.

REQUIREMENT 3: DOES LEFT–RIGHT PREDICT VOTERS’ CHOICE?

Finally, we turn to an assessment of the third requirement: the extent to which voters rely on the Left–Right dimension to make their vote choice. To this avail, we again rely on the CSES data. Respondents not only located each party on a Left–Right scale, but also themselves. We calculated the absolute differences between the respondent and each party on this scale. If the third condition holds, we should find that this Left–Right distance is a powerful predictor of respondents’ vote choices. If many respondents vote for a party that is located at a large distance from themselves, Left–Right cannot function as a vehicle for representation.

Of course, any correlation between self-reported ideological distance and vote choice is probably to some extent endogenous. If voters decide to vote for a particular party (for whatever reason), they are less likely to describe this party as ideologically remote, due to projection and consistency motivations. Still, if considerations *other* than Left–Right congruence are becoming more important in voters’ decision-making, we should find that the relative weight of Left–Right distance as an explanatory variable should decrease over time (and probably especially amongst younger cohorts).

To control for, and make a comparison with, other drivers of respondents’ vote choices, we include socio-demographic variables. We selected a set that is consistently available across the period and regions: gender; level of education (primary, secondary, or post-secondary); unemployment status; blue-collar worker status; and private sector employment.⁹ Because we explain voting for very diverse parties, the direction of the effects of these control variables will differ between parties. We therefore rely on a procedure to obtain a ‘generic’ variable that controls for socio-demographics (Van der Eijk et al. 2006; see Note 8).

Figure 14.6 shows the trend in the marginal effects of absolute ideological distance on vote choice in the various regions and generations, controlling for the effects of socio-demographic variables.¹⁰ In all periods and regions, the effect of ideological distance is negative, which was to be expected: a larger distance to a party *decreases* the probability of voting for it. While there is some variation over time, most regions do not show any trends. Only in the Nordic countries did the effects become somewhat weaker (less negative) over time. In the other regions, Left–Right distance remains a relatively stable predictor of vote choices.¹¹

Is this different for the younger generations? Figure 14.6 shows that the effect of Left–Right distance is indeed somewhat stronger among older cohorts (the effect among Millennials over all regions differs significantly from the other groups combined). One exception is the youngest cohort in Southern Europe in the first wave, but this is a very small group of voters, so this estimate is quite unreliable. Other than that, generational differences are not substantial, nor does the gap widen over time.

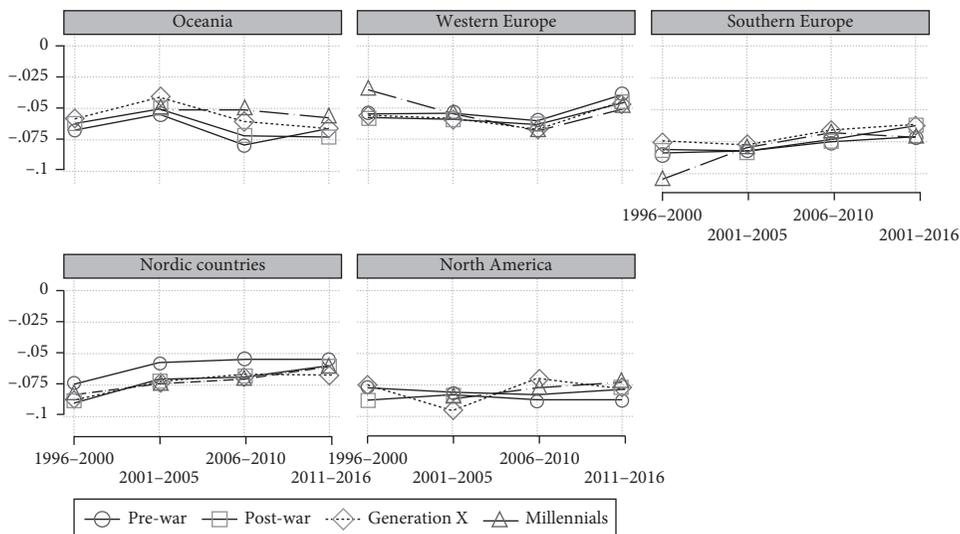


FIGURE 14.6 Marginal Effect of Ideological Distance on Vote Choice, by Cohort and Region

To sum up, the explanatory power of Left–Right shows a pattern that is pointedly similar to that observed with regard to voters’ agreement about a party’s location. There are some differences between regions, but no sign of convergence, and no clear downward trend. The meaning of Left–Right has changed, but in many respects it plays the same role as it did before—at least for now.

CONCLUSION

This chapter looked into the extent to which voters behave according to the requirements needed for substantive representation, as prescribed by the party government model. We have argued that substantive representation requires that the behaviour of parties and voters is structured largely by one single underlying dimension (such as Left–Right or liberal–conservative). This dimension should (1) structure public opinion, it should (2) inform voters about party positions and (3) voters should use this ideological dimension to decide which party to vote for. On the latter two conditions we observed mainly some regional differences, but remarkably little change over time and remarkably few differences between generations. Obviously Left–Right provides more structure in the context of multi-party systems than in North American political systems with two dominant parties that tend to be internally divided. However, in the majority of the established democracies, Left–Right remains an important perspective through which voters orient themselves on the party system, and there remains much perceptual agreement about the positions of parties in Left–Right terms, even among the younger cohorts. Moreover, even the youngest groups of voters tend to use

Left–Right to decide which party to vote for. Some of the requirements for democratic representation are thus clearly met.

However, the main challenge for democratic representation is how Left–Right positions are linked to policy preferences. Given the fact that party positions are structured in a different manner than attitudes of citizens (e.g. Van der Brug and van Spanje 2009), it may not come as a surprise to learn that the relationship between issue positions and Left–Right is weak at best. Also, it may not be very surprising that the correlation is strongest for socio-economic issues, particularly issues regarding the role of the state in the economy. Many scholars think of Left–Right as mainly capturing ‘how much government intervention in the economy there should be?’ (Downs 1957: 116). On the other hand, attitudes regarding government intervention in the economy are barely structured and in many established democracies these items do not form a scale. Given that opinions on the role of the state in the economy are barely structured, we may doubt whether a socio-economic ideological dimension even exists amongst voters. If such an ideological dimension does not exist, voters are unlikely to be represented well on those issues.

Many scholars have argued that Left–Right takes on a different meaning depending upon the way the terms ‘left’ and ‘right’ are used in the contemporary political debate (e.g. Inglehart and Klingemann 1976; Mair 2007; De Vries et al. 2013). So, when new issues become salient and if positions on these issues are integrated in Left–Right, voters who vote on the basis of Left–Right will be well represented on those issues. However, the relationship between issue preferences of voters and their Left–Right positions is weak.

We cannot rule out the possibility that there are other mechanisms that lead to a rather good substantive representation of voters by the party they voted for. However, the mechanisms of the party government model that we investigated are not very functional in realizing substantive representation because of the weak structuration of public opinion. In particular, the lack of overarching structure in policy preferences of voters on socio-economic issues is a barrier to substantive representation in this policy domain.

NOTES

1. Several scholars have argued that party government requires parties to offer distinct packages of policies so that voters have a real choice in elections. However, when Downs applies his model to a two party contest, he predicts that the two candidates will both position themselves close to each other near the median voter. This would imply that there is little to choose from in a two-party system, even though the median voter will be well represented.
2. The countries included in these regions are: Austria, Belgium, Germany, France, Great Britain, Ireland, and the Netherlands in Western Europe; Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden in the Nordic countries; Spain, Portugal, and Malta in Southern Europe; and the US is analysed separately.

3. The items used concerned statements regarding private vs. state ownership of business, whether competition is good, regarding income inequality, and the state's responsibility to provide for all citizens.
4. The items concern abortion, homosexuality, divorce, and suicide.
5. The items concern whether you wouldn't like certain groups as your neighbour and whether you think natives should get a priority position on the labour market.
6. The harmonized file for modules 1 through 3, as well as the data of module 4 are available at cses.org.
7. The countries included in these regions are: Australia and New Zealand in Oceania; Austria, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, France, Great Britain, Ireland, and the Netherlands in Western Europe; Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden as the Nordic countries; Spain, Greece, Italy, and Portugal in Southern Europe; and Canada and the US in North America.
8. Only a part of the countries involved included an explicit 'don't know' option, while others further distinguished between 'I don't know the party' and 'I don't know what Left-Right is'. These numbers should therefore be interpreted with some caution.
9. Unfortunately, religiosity, income, or subjective social class were not available (or only in a small subset).
10. To obtain these results, the data was transformed into a stacked structure with respondent-party dyads (in other words, each row represents one respondents' evaluation of one of the parties). We subsequently specified a logistic regression model in which respondents' vote for a party is predicted by the absolute Left-Right distance to the same party. Left-Right distance was interacted, first, with the respondents' region and, for the last figure, with the respondents' cohort. All models have controls using the \hat{y} procedure. The standard errors were clustered on the level of respondents.
11. Furthermore, the effect of socio-demographics—that is, the \hat{y} —somewhat *decreases* over time.

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CHAPTER 15

PARLIAMENTARIANS AND PARTY GROUPS

The Role of Intra-Party Unity

REUVEN Y. HAZAN AND
REUT ITZKOVITCH-MALKA

INTRODUCTION

PARLIAMENTARY democracies show little variance in party unity because the vast majority of parliamentarians vote in near perfect unity with their party on recorded votes (Carey 2009; Depauw and Martin 2009; Sieberer 2006). Over the years, this empirical fact achieved a normative status (Crowe 1983; Strøm 2000), making the study of party unity relatively underdeveloped as legislative scholars often treated parties as monolithic, unitary actors (Hazan 2003; Bowler et al. 1999). The results have affected both the theoretical and the empirical study of party unity. Theoretically, party unity was considered a precondition rather than an interesting situation that scholars should aim to explain (Kam 2009). Empirically, scholars were presented with a paradox: in those systems where party unity is most needed, it is the hardest to study. In recent years, however, scholars have returned to research on party unity, understanding not only that it is a phenomenon that should be explained, but also that such explanations have important implications for our understanding of representation in general and legislative behaviour in particular (Van Vonna et al. 2014).

The first step in this direction was to understand why legislative unity is one of the distinguishing features of modern political parties, and to examine how such unity is achieved. Scholars then began to question whether parties enter parliament as unified actors, or whether they are moulded into this model by the legislature. The next step was to address the conceptual confusion surrounding party unity and to disentangle it. We now have an impressive array of theoretical and conceptual scholarly work aimed at decomposing the concept of party unity, redefining terms such as party cohesion,

party discipline, party agreement, party loyalty, party socialization, and party homogeneity. A parallel development is that of scholars examining how different institutional factors—at the system, party, or individual level—affect party unity, or its various components.

The focus of this chapter is on the elected representatives of the party, the party's MPs (Members of Parliament), or as they are known in the field of legislative studies the PPG (parliamentary party group). This chapter addresses the importance of party unity in parliamentary democracies, as well as the conceptual confusion surrounding party unity. It presents a new model for assessing party unity that begins to solve the puzzle of how to explore party unity when near perfect unity is recorded in parliamentary voting, and delineates the recent developments in research on party unity. It concludes by proposing an agenda for future research.

This chapter argues that decomposing the concept of intra-party unity into its elements is a requirement if we seek to evaluate the role of parliamentary party groups in our understanding of representation. That is, party unity cannot be deduced based only on legislative roll-call voting analysis, as this cannot expose the true nature of intra-party relations and dynamics. A more nuanced approach—in a new model of party unity as presented in this chapter, which is based on well-defined concepts—shows that while parties remain the central, most important actors in the parliamentary arena, they are finding it harder and harder to control their parliamentarians.

THE RELEVANCE OF PARTY UNITY FOR REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY

The basic precondition for the establishment and survival of governments in parliamentary democracies is the political parties' ability to control their elected representatives and present a coherent ideological image. Party unity is essential for any parliamentary regime, from both a normative and a practical point of view. Normatively, the existence of a cohesive parliamentary majority based on unified parties is necessary for stability and governance (Bowler et al. 1999; Saalfeld 2009). From a practical perspective, sustained party unity is the only way in which the party can both promote its agenda and be accountable to its voters (Andeweg and Thomassen 2011; Depauw 2003). Moreover, the more a party is unified the more likely it is to be considered a reliable coalition partner and to successfully bargain for positions in the parliament and the government (Pedersen 2010; Giannetti and Benoit 2009; Sinclair 2003). Parliamentary government *is* party government.

Yet, representative democracy presents an inherent tension between party and personal representation. While the balance between parties and individual legislators varies across time and across countries, the tension between these two is apparent in

almost any representative system (Colomer 2011). This tension is largely, but not completely, a result of the combination of the political system and the electoral system. Most European political systems are parliamentary, or semi-presidential where the government is still based on legislative confidence (Duverger 1981; Elgie 2011), and thus legislators' representational role conceptions are biased towards the party. The fact that in parliamentary systems the government can be brought down by a vote of no-confidence forces the parties in government to guarantee that their members will act in unison (Diermeier and Feddersen 1998). Following the same logic, opposition parties who aspire to bring the government down also have an interest to act in unison since without the opposition voting together, it does not have a chance to challenge the government (Williams 2016; Tuttnauer and Hazan 2018). As a result, parliamentary systems produce higher levels of party unity compared to presidential systems (Carey 2009; 2007; Bowler et al. 1999; Huber 1996).

From an electoral perspective, party unity makes the party label a valuable cue that accurately predicts what the candidates running under a particular label will do once elected (Cox and McCubbins 1993). Nevertheless, even if public opinion must perceive parties as united and cohesive as they perform their representative roles, at the same time individual legislators must also appear as accountable to their constituencies, which might create what Carey (2009) calls 'competing principals' inasmuch as the preferences of constituencies differ from those of the party. To a large extent, the degree of the discrepancies between these competing principals' preferences is the result of the electoral system in use. Electoral systems, regardless of the political system, can be more candidate-centred—where, for example, individual candidates run in single-member districts, or voters can cast a preference vote among different candidates; or more party-focused—where lists of candidates run in large districts and no preference vote is allowed. This combination of the political and the electoral system in parliamentary democracies creates possibilities for more or less tension between individual parliamentarians and their PPGs.

The tension between parliamentarians and their party groups has been at the centre of research on party unity for the last fifty years. We now turn to why members of a PPG vote together, whether this is voluntary or induced, and why we need to look inside parties based on a new conceptualization of party unity as a sequential process.

CONCEPTUAL AND EMPIRICAL DEVELOPMENTS

The theoretical literature on party unity has, until quite recently, suffered from severe conceptual confusion, as there was no widely accepted terminology among scholars. The first to suggest a distinction between cohesion and discipline—but still mixing the two—was Özbudun (1970), who argued that party discipline is a part of party cohesion

and is imbedded within it. Özbudun claimed that party cohesion describes an outcome by which party representatives act in unison, and that party discipline is only one of many ways to achieve such an outcome. The basic distinction in Özbudun's argument is thus whether legislators act the way they do voluntarily or by coercion. Hazan (2003) continued with this line of thought, but argued in favour of separating the two concepts. He claimed that not only are the two concepts distinct, they are associated with different theoretical approaches to the study of legislative behaviour and are affected by different factors. Party cohesion is related to the sociological/behavioural approach and is affected by factors external to the parliament, while party discipline is connected to the institutional approach and is affected largely by internal parliamentary factors.¹ Cohesion stems from the homogeneity of ideological policy preferences between legislators from the same party, while discipline is the result of the positive and/or negative sanctions used on legislators who do not share those same policy preferences. As Krehbiel (1993: 238) pointedly asked, do co-partisans act in unison in the legislature because of their agreement on policies or in spite of their disagreement?

Notwithstanding scholarly attempts to distinguish between party cohesion and party discipline, the two are empirically intertwined and share a reciprocal connection. On the one hand, a minimal level of party cohesion is needed in order for party discipline to be effective; if there is no common ground among the members of the PPG, then no reward or penalty can keep them united. On the other hand, if the level of party cohesion exceeds a certain threshold then party discipline will no longer be necessary, as legislators will voluntarily act in unison without the need for party discipline.

Even if one is able to distinguish cohesion from discipline, the conceptual confusion does not end there because scholars have used the term 'party cohesion' interchangeably with other terms, such as 'party agreement' or 'homogeneity of preferences', which fuels further confusion. Party cohesion is complex, it can be accomplished as a result of legislators' shared preferences (also referred to as party agreement) or as a result of legislators self-adherence to the norm of party unity in the absence of such shared preferences (also referred to as party loyalty).

The involuntary character of party discipline is what differentiates it from party cohesion—whether party agreement or party loyalty. The mechanisms that sustain party cohesion result from shared preferences or internalized norms, and as such are voluntary. Both party agreement and party loyalty are voluntary behavioural strategies that match the general understanding of party cohesion in the literature, but as we will show, they can mask very significant differences. Party discipline is the use, or the threat, of either sanctions or incentives in order to elicit legislators to subscribe to the norm of party unity. Party discipline is the result of measures that party leaders use to make legislators involuntarily toe the party line.

It is easy to confuse party loyalty with party discipline, which also contributes to the conceptual confusion, especially since both give the outward appearance of party unity. Many scholars erroneously attribute any instance in which a legislator subscribes to the norm of party unity—in cases of disagreement—to the (anticipated) benefit of

incentives or fear of sanctions, and not to the voluntary role conceptions of loyalty to the party internalized by the legislator.

To recount, this chapter opened by defining party unity as the observable degree to which legislators act in unison. As such, scholars studied party unity mainly by using Rice index scores of roll-call votes (Rice 1925). This measure—though easy to calculate and understand—has several shortcomings, such as its overestimation of the voting unity of small parties (Desposato 2005) or its inability to include and address non-responses (Rosas et al. 2015; Hix et al. 2005). However, its most notable shortcoming is the minimal variance it produces, especially when addressing West European parliamentary systems (Carey 2009; Depauw and Martin 2009; Heidar 2006; Sieberer 2006). In other words, when one attempts to measure party unity using the Rice index, it becomes evident that most parliamentary systems present a highly limited level of variance, which makes it difficult to study this phenomenon.

The impressive array of scholarly research that has appeared in recent years now conceptually describes party unity as a process, not a result. This alternative approach—more pronounced and more common these days—is justified by Hazan (2003: 8), ‘ . . . examining voting behavior is not enough, because we must look inside parties as well, at what takes place before voting decisions are made. Parties are internal coalitions, comprising factions as well as fragmented and non-aligned tendencies. It is during this entire process that levels of cohesion will be appraised, and assorted tools of party discipline will be put to the test.’ The new approach calls for a different conceptualization of party unity as a legislator’s sequential decision-making process leading ultimately to casting a vote. Unlike voting behaviour, which is heavily constrained, legislators’ pre-floor attitudes and norms of behaviour are far less constrained and present much more variance. Thus, this approach provides an understanding of the inner processes that legislators and parties undergo before legislators cast their vote in the plenum.

The more recent conceptualization of party unity argues that it occurs in a sequential process in which agreement, loyalty, and discipline combine together to produce some level of observable party unity (Close and Núñez 2017; Itzkovitch-Malka and Hazan 2017; Van Vonno et al. 2014). These studies point towards a hierarchical decision-making model that shows a legislator’s sequential reasoning when facing a decision about policy. As suggested by its name, the model presents a decision tree for individual legislators. That is, the unit of analysis is that of the individual legislator and the model reflects the sequential reasoning of individual legislators. However, unity is a party attribute and as such it is measured at the level of the party. As a result the variables we discuss (agreement, loyalty, discipline) are in fact aggregations of individual legislators’ decisions. Hence, the successive stages of the model refer to the aggregate outcome of these individual decisions at the party level. Using the individual legislator as the initial unit of analysis—throughout the different stages of the decision-making model—helps us decompose the concept of party unity, which is much more useful than the aggregative floor-voting models that provide only a party-level measure of unity at the end of the process.

Before we proceed with the description of the model, one important clarification is in order. We state that party agreement is the result of congruence between a legislator's personal policy preferences and those of her party policy. This might sound simple enough, however there can be many factors shaping such policy preferences and determining whether those personal preferences will be in congruence with the party leadership's stand. A legislator's personal policy preferences could result from her most inner convictions or conscience and be seen as endogenous, as the classic trustee perspective would entail. However, other perspectives would suggest that legislators as public representatives are responsive to a variety of groups, depending on their focus of representation, which is defined as the entity that the representative aims to represent. This entity could address the electorate as a whole; the voters of a particular constituency or social group; party voters; party members or activists; or even individuals voters. Clearly, it is quite common for legislators to have to balance conflicting foci. Inasmuch as party leadership is not in congruence with a legislator's focus of representation, disagreement will arise. The first stage of the model captures this process via its end result: agreement versus disagreement. However, in order to keep the model as parsimonious as possible, it does not elaborate on the sources for disagreement and uses the legislator's personal preferences to encapsulate the above-mentioned dynamic.

The model proceeds as follows. First, when a parliamentarian must cast a vote in parliament, she will evaluate whether her personal policy preferences are in conflict with those of her party. If there is no conflict, a legislator will vote with her party as a result of party agreement.

In the second stage of the model, if a legislator's policy preferences are different from those of her party, party agreement will no longer be relevant and the legislator will have to decide whether to self-adhere to the norm of party unity—in other words, whether to use her internalized role conceptions and norms in order to toe the party line even when she does not agree with it. In this case it is party loyalty, not party agreement, that sustains party unity.

Party discipline is the third and final stage of a legislator's decision-making process regarding a vote in parliament. Discipline becomes relevant only if a legislator does not share the same policy preferences as her party and has not internalized the norm of party loyalty to make her voluntarily vote with her party, despite disagreeing with it. This third stage, providing that the sanctions and/or benefits prove to be successful, will also result in party unity when the Rice index votes are counted.

This approach makes the study of party unity more empirically feasible because it can unravel the lack of variance that is produced in parliamentary democracies, which hindered research in the past. The sequential approach shows that there are several different paths to party unity and they cannot be bound together in a uniform way, which is what is done when we address only the final outcome. Pursuant to this logic, one cannot claim that institutions affect party unity directly, but rather that different institutions influence different stages in the legislators' decision-making processes. In other words, once we realize that party unity is comprised of a number of facets—be

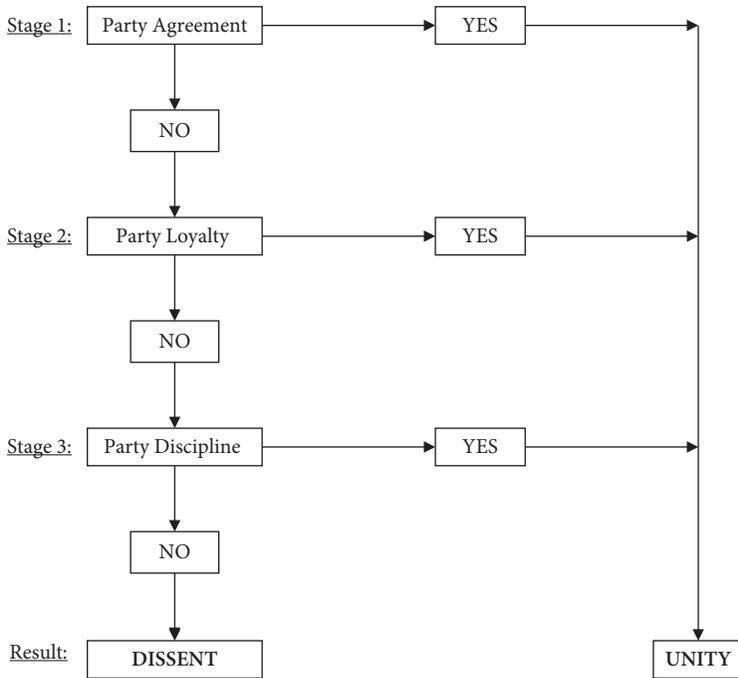


FIGURE 15.1 A Sequential Multi-stage Model of Party Unity: Agreement, Loyalty, and Discipline
Sources: The sequential model was inspired by Kingdon (1977) and developed with the help of Van Vonnó and others (2014). See also Itzkovich-Malka and Hazan (2017).

they party agreement, party loyalty or party discipline—we need to study each of these elements and what affects them, and not just the end result.

Adopting a more nuanced approach to party unity, one that takes into account the different stages in the legislators’ sequential reasoning, allows us to break unity into its facets and better understand it. Party size, for example, can affect different facets of party unity in contradictory ways. Small parties might demonstrate higher levels of party agreement due to a larger homogeneity of preferences, while large parties might demonstrate higher levels of party discipline due to the resources they can provide legislators as a reward for their obedience. The end result may be the same—that legislators are most likely to vote together—but the path is very different. After all, as Field (2013: 361) pointed out, ‘Voting is only one aspect of unity and unified voting can go side-by-side with disunity in other respects’.

While the sequential approach is innovative and assists in solving some of the difficulties facing party unity research, it has problems of its own. The first problem has to do with its use of attitudinal-subjective data instead of behavioural-objective data, as is done in roll-call voting research. The collection of attitudinal data—especially data on political elites—is challenging, time-consuming and expensive, which often limits the scope of research. The second problem has to do with the nature of attitudinal data and its reliability. When dealing with parliamentarians, one must

consider the accuracy and honesty of the replies regarding the frequency of disagreement with the party, the adherence to the norm of party loyalty, or the experiences of being disciplined by the party. This problem is especially acute with regard to party discipline since, as noted by Sieberer (2006: 164), ‘No comparative data are available on the sort of sanctions the leadership could use and, even less, the credibility of their use’.² Despite these drawbacks, the sequential model offers an improved, more nuanced understanding of the role of party unity in parliamentary democracies, and scholars are increasingly adopting the use of attitudinal data in the study of party unity (Itzkovitch-Malka and Hazan 2017; Andeweg and Thomassen 2011; Kam 2009; Krehbiel 1993).

CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH DEVELOPMENTS

Parallel to the conceptual development, an empirical development is also evident in the literature on party unity, with scholars examining how different factors—at the system, party, or individual level—affect party unity, or its various components. In a way, this is not a new phenomenon because scholars such as Rae (1967), Özbudun (1970), Epstein (1980) and Gallagher and Marsh (1988) already have noted the consequences of various factors on party unity. However, in recent years such research has substantially evolved, with scholars not only expanding the scope of explanatory variables, but also probing into their effect on the different facets of party unity.

System-level Factors: The Electoral System

Since electoral systems shape the conditions under which legislators compete for reelection, they are expected to affect party unity depending on the candidate-centred versus party-based nature of the system (van Vonna et al. 2014). Some of the studies on electoral systems and party unity emphasize the importance of the electoral formula and the district magnitude (Mayhew 1974; Fenno 1978; Bowler and Farrell 1993; Stratman and Baur 2002; André and Depauw 2014). Others find ballot structure to be a key characteristic in shaping the candidate-centered versus party-based nature of the electoral system (Carey and Shugart 1995; André et al. 2014). That is, if voters can directly elect their representatives it can shape the extent to which politicians will be rewarded for their personal reputations, which in turn will influence whether politicians have an incentive to cultivate a personal vote. This cultivation can be achieved by serving their constituency, in the case of single-member districts, or by engaging in intra-party competition with their fellow candidates, in the case of preferential

systems—and both can harm different facets of party unity, as we will soon show (Carey 2009, 2007; Carey and Shugart 1995; Cain et al. 1987).

Despite the saliency and centrality of the connection between electoral laws and party unity in the literature over the last decades, research aimed at testing this connection has had mixed results (Martin 2014). For example, while Carey's (2007, 2009) research in Latin America supports the existence of a connection between the electoral law and party unity, Depauw and Martin (2009) find that in European parliaments the electoral system can only partly explain party unity. Even more puzzling is Sieberer's research (2006), which finds evidence for the opposite connection—candidate-based electoral systems create higher levels of party unity than party-based systems.

In light of the conceptual clarifications made earlier in this chapter and presented in the sequential model, we are now able to refine our understanding of the causal mechanisms, and elaborate how various facets of party unity are affected by different electoral systems. Hence, instead of addressing the effect of electoral systems on party unity in general, we address their effect on party agreement, party loyalty or party discipline. For example, a party's control of the order of candidates on its list (in party-centred electoral systems) allows the leadership to choose candidates who are largely in agreement with the party platform, thereby minimizing the heterogeneity of preferences within the party already at the first stage of party agreement and positively affecting party unity (Hazan and Rahat 2010). The personal connection between a legislator and voters in more candidate-based electoral systems harms party loyalty. In such cases, legislators are less likely to adopt the norm that dictates that even if they are at odds with their party, they should not vote against the party line (Carey 2009). Finally, candidate-based electoral systems have a negative effect on party discipline since the ability of the party leadership to use rewards, or the threat of sanctions, is more limited given their reduced control over the re-election prospects of dissident parliamentarians.

Party-level Factors: Candidate Selection Methods, and More

Some scholars argue that it is, in fact, variations in the candidate selection methods used by parties—and not variations in electoral systems—that explain party unity (Depauw and Martin 2009). Bowler (2000) argued that the best explanation of party unity lies in the nomination procedures, in general, and in the identity of those who are in charge of the nominations, in particular. Sieberer's (2006) research on parliamentary democracies found that candidate selection is an even better predictor of party voting unity than electoral rules.

Candidate selection methods were only recently classified according to several criteria, with the central criterion being the inclusiveness of the selectorate—who

may take part in selecting the party candidates (Hazan and Rahat 2010). The more inclusive the selectorate, the less control the party has over the process of candidate selection and, as a result, over the behaviour of these candidates once they are elected (Close et al. 2019; Katz and Cross 2013; Cross 2008; Hix 2004; Faas 2003; Bowler et al. 1999).

The inclusiveness of the selectorate can affect party unity in three distinct ways based on the earlier conceptual clarifications (Close et al. 2019; Hazan and Rahat 2010). First, it affects party agreement. Selectorates that are more inclusive hamper the party's ability to create a united, ideologically coherent, homogeneous list. As a result, the heterogeneity of preferences among legislators who belong to parties that use inclusive selectorates is higher—and party agreement is lower—than amongst legislators who belong to parties that select their candidates by methods that are more exclusive. Second, in order to reach a larger, more fluid audience, larger selectorates will negatively affect party loyalty by introducing non-party actors, or by increasing their relevance for candidates (these include the mass media, interest groups, financial backers, etc.). Legislators selected by methods that are more inclusive are thus exposed to various external pressures that could be different from, or even contradictory to, those of the party programme, and to which they must be responsive. Finally, since the main motive in the behaviour of legislators is their desire to be re-selected—in order to be re-elected—disciplinary carrots and sticks are less effective in the case of inclusive selectorates because the party does not necessarily control the legislators' chances of being re-selected.

Notwithstanding the importance of examining the independent effect of both the electoral system and the candidate selection method on party unity, the most recent scholarship suggests that researchers should examine the conditional combined effects of election and selection processes (Itzkovitch-Malka and Hazan 2017; Shomer 2017). According to this new and evolving research agenda, despite the fact that election and selection processes are two distinct institutions, both conceptually and empirically, the effect of one institution is contingent upon the nature of the other. For instance, Itzkovitch-Malka and Hazan (2017) show that under exclusive candidate selection methods there are significant differences between how proportional representation or plurality electoral systems affect party agreement and party loyalty. However, under inclusive candidate selection methods, such differences are much less apparent.

In line with the examination of the candidate selection methods that parties adopt and their effect on party unity, scholars have recently begun to adopt a party-based approach to the study of party unity. Although the study of party-level mechanisms is sometimes hindered by the lack of sufficient reliable cross-national data, scholars have demonstrated the impact of factors such as party size, government status, party organization and party ideology on unity. But, regrettably, the recent scholarship is inconclusive, producing inconsistent and at times contradictory findings, which shows that it is still in its early stages. For example, while Lanfranchi and Lüthi (1999) show that small parties demonstrate higher levels of party unity compared to large parties,

due to their homogeneity of preferences (hence affecting party agreement), more recent studies (Tavits 2012; Sieberer 2006) show that it is large parties that demonstrate higher levels of party unity, probably due to the resources at their disposal that can be used to reward loyal legislators (hence affecting party discipline).

Government status is sometimes perceived as increasing party unity, since party unity is essential for the government's survival (Carey 2009; Owens 2003). If we use the more nuanced approach to party unity and its facets, we can say that government status can strengthen party unity by affecting party loyalty—since members of governing parties will self-adhere to the norm of party unity in order to keep their governing status—or by affecting party discipline—since the leadership of governing parties has many more carrots (or sticks) to offer its members in exchange for their obedience. However, the opposite claim, that government participation is expected to harm party unity—due to the government's obligation to implement policy across a broad range of issues, even when not all of its members are in agreement or when it is not popular—is also valid (Rahat 2007; Sieberer 2006). This claim addresses the harm caused to party unity by the absence of party agreement.

As for the strength of party organization, while Tavits (2012) shows that greater party strength is associated with higher levels of party unity, Little and Farrell (2017) find only limited support for party organizational strength as a predictor of party unity. Party family or, in a wider sense, party ideology, is also considered by scholars as a possible, though noisy, explanatory indicator for party unity. Close (2018) finds that party family has an effect on party loyalty, especially in green and radical right parties, while Little and Farrell (2017) find statistically significant differences in Rice index scores between Social Democrats and both Liberals and Left Socialists.

Individual-level Factors

Finally, a few scholars have also addressed individual-level factors that influence party unity, or its different facets. Little and Farrell (2017) contend that legislators can use their individual resources to develop their own policy positions, independent of their party, which can damage party unity, particularly by harming party discipline. They measure legislators' strength based on the staff at their disposal, the subsidies given directly to them (and not to their parties) and the relative ease by which a new PPG can be formed. Sieberer (2006) also finds a negative correlation between legislators' individual resources and party unity, for similar reasons. Shomer (2009) focuses on a single individual attribute—parliamentary seniority—and claims that senior legislators will concentrate less on vote-seeking behaviour, which might harm party unity, than junior legislators. Her emphasis is thus on the effect of seniority on party loyalty: junior legislators have not been exposed sufficiently to the formal and informal norms of the legislature and have thus not yet developed a collective perception of representation.

CONCLUSION: IMPLICATIONS FOR REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Since the sequential model of party unity is a relatively new research agenda, and there are no longitudinal data available, it is hard to say whether the homogeneity of preferences among party members has declined, whether the norm of party loyalty has eroded, or whether parties today are forced to use more discipline than in the past. What we can say is that assessing party unity based on roll-call votes alone—that is, examining a long and complex process only at its final stage—is problematic. It probably hides as much as it reveals, and is responsible for the confusion that has engulfed the field for decades. As Bailer (2018: 164) correctly argued, ‘As long as we have not looked inside party groups, it remains indeterminate where the voting unity comes from.’ And, as Krehbiel (2000) pointed out, a disciplined party and an undisciplined party can generate identical party voting measures, which he calls the problem of observational equivalence.

The conceptualization of party unity based on a sequential decision-making process allows us to decompose it, to address its different facets, to gauge their relative importance and to assess which factors influence them—and how, in turn, they affect party unity. The use of a three-stage model based on individual legislators’ scores at each stage allows us to decompose the concept of party unity and to get a better aggregated party-level outcome for each stage, not just for the end result as is the case in floor-voting measures.

Voting unity can be the result of legislators’ shared preferences (party agreement), of their voluntarily subscribing to the norm that a legislator should toe the party line even when she personally disagrees with it (party loyalty), or of the use of involuntary disciplinary instruments by the party leadership (party discipline). While the end result in all of these cases is the same voting unity, the intra-party dynamics leading to it can vary dramatically. The dynamics in a party with high levels of party agreement are different from the dynamics in a party whose legislators lack party agreement but possess high levels of party loyalty; and these dynamics are, in turn, very different from those in a party whose legislators lack both party agreement and party loyalty, thus requiring discipline. Each type of party unity reflects a different atmosphere within the party, different dynamics between co-partisans and, most importantly, different types of relationships between the party leadership and its parliamentarians. Therefore, it is important to flesh out these processes and to analyse the factors affecting them.

Notwithstanding the continued lack of variance in voting unity across parliamentary democracies, if we expand our indicators of party unity we will be able to better understand the challenges parties face when trying to control the behaviour of their parliamentarians. Indeed, legislators can (and increasingly do) demonstrate disunity by voicing positions against their party line (Zittel and Nyhuis 2019), by challenging their

party leadership (Little and Farrell 2017), and by exhibiting more personalized behaviour (Rahat and Kenig 2018). The party leadership can overlook expressions of intra-party opposition by backbenchers, or even ministers, providing that ‘when push comes to shove’—that is, voting in parliament—legislators adhere to the party line and maintain ‘substantive’ party unity. Some of these behaviours can be thought of as representing ‘a separation between the appearance and the substance of politics’ (Katz 2001: 293), meaning that legislators demonstrate un-cohesive behaviour in a variety of ways other than voting. For example, Cordero et al. (2018) found that while more inclusive candidate selection methods generate less loyal MPs, they have yet to erode the internal cohesion of parliamentary groups. Itzkovitch-Malka and Shapira (2013) found that there is a significant gap between the ‘noise’ that Israeli MPs make in the mass media and their actual voting in the parliament.

It is unclear how long parties will be able to maintain this balance between appearance and substance, since the equilibrium between the two tends to be fragile and is hard to sustain in the long run. Recent research shows that while parties remain the central, most important actors in the parliamentary arena, they are finding it harder and harder to control their parliamentarians (Zittel and Nyhuis 2019; Hazan 2014). Van Vonno et al. (2014: 118) conclude that, ‘... the two components of party cohesion [party agreement and party loyalty] account for 81 percent of party unity. Nevertheless, this still leaves almost one in five legislators who are unlikely to toe the party line voluntarily.’ That is, while parties can rely on voluntary mechanisms to sustain party unity in the majority of cases, in an indissoluble portion of cases the party cannot count on its members’ shared preferences or internalized norms of behaviour, and is forced to use involuntary disciplinary measures to make its members toe the line. If parties are forced to impose discipline more frequently than in the past, it makes sense to speculate that the crude division between appearance and substance will blur, or in other words, that disunity could begin to express itself in voting behaviour as well. Needless to say, such an evolution will have tremendous repercussions on parliamentary democracy, but we will be unaware of its imminent development if we examine only the final stage of party unity (voting).

The sequential approach to party unity is therefore valuable to our understanding of how parties fulfil their representative function. While it is important to ask what parties can do to counter internal conflict, it is no less important to ascertain how we can discover whether or not a party has significant internal divisions before having either to implement disciplinary measures in order to force deviant party members to act in line with the party or to see party unity decline. This is the case all the more so since frequent use of party discipline will also eventually have negative ramifications for party unity.

Party leaders can seek to mask internal disunity by using gentler measures than the sanctions at their disposal (Olson 2003; Heidar and Koole 2000). For instance, party leaders may choose to avoid voting on controversial issues, or allow the party members freedom to vote (remove the whip) on such issues—for example, in Ireland and Norway parties granted their parliamentarians the freedom to vote on moral and

ethical issues, and in Britain parties do not enforce discipline in voting on capital punishment (Bowler et al. 1999). But despite the myriad positive and negative institutional tools assisting parties to sustain unity, a party in need of substantial disciplinary measures is, by any definition, a party in distress.

The main message of this chapter is that traditional research on party unity (understood in terms of recorded votes) is rather sterile because of the high level of party unity in parliamentary democracies. The sequential approach leads to a better understanding of representation in general and legislative behaviour in particular, but it also leads to a more interesting research agenda because it unravels the underlying processes that result in party unity. It is important for scholars to see party unity as a sequential development, before open conflict manifests itself on the floor of the parliament. Future research on party unity must therefore adopt a comprehensive understanding of party unity, the mechanisms affecting it and their political consequences. Party unity scholars should expand the scope of their research and refrain from a unidimensional focus on voting data only. We must decompose party unity into its elements and theorize about the way different factors, at different levels of analysis, affect each aspect of, and the interaction between, the different facets of party unity. We should focus on collecting and analysing longitudinal, cross-national, reliable data on party unity, despite its methodological challenges. And finally, we need to expand our viewpoint and incorporate pre-voting legislative behaviour into our study of party unity, assessing the way it interacts with voting behaviour, from both a theoretical and an empirical perspective. In this way we will better understand not only parliamentarians and their party groups, but also the more general issue of political representation in parliamentary democracies.

NOTES

1. Hazan (2003) also argued for the existence of a third set of factors, the electoral ones, influencing both cohesion and discipline.
2. For an interesting attempt, see Bailer (2018).

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CHAPTER 16

INTRA-PARTY DEMOCRACY AND REPRESENTATION

Necessity, Complement, or Challenge?

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How do parties organize their internal decisions, and how does this affect the nature of party-based representation writ large? These questions matter, not least because parties' organizational choices are far from static. Whereas parties are generally conservative in terms of organizational change (Bille 2001; Harmel and Janda 1994; Panebianco 1988), since the 1990s parties in many countries have been experimenting with new procedures for making internal decisions, particularly in the field of candidate and leadership selection (Cross and Pilet 2015a; Sandri et al. 2015). Often, parties make such changes swiftly, and in response to specific political events rather than with an eye to long-term consequences. Yet parties' internal decision procedures are not merely internal affairs: they can have wider implications for the democracies in which they operate, affecting which interests will be prioritized within a party, which types of people will participate in these decisions, how the party's candidates are selected and held accountable, and even the extent to which that party adjusts its policy priorities or leaders in electorally advantageous ways. In all these ways, parties' internal decision rules shape party-mediated representation.

Given this importance, it is not surprising that there are long-running debates about how parties' should or do organize their decisions. On a normative level, does a well-ordered democracy require parties' internal decision procedures to be as similar as possible to those of national constitutions—or might such rules even have adverse representational effects on the clarity of electoral mandates? On a practical level, to what extent do rules actually affect outcomes in the ways described above? More fundamentally: do rules which claim to empower grass-roots party supporters actually

have such effects—in other words, how much democracy is really possible within organizations whose success is decided in competitive electoral markets? This chapter will review some of the debates surrounding these questions, considering changing views of the meaning and desirability of intra-party democracy, and looking at different ways in which parties have implemented grass-roots control. It then presents evidence about trends involving parties' adoption of more inclusive decision-making procedures. As will be seen, despite growing scholarly interest in how party rules affect more general political outcomes, there is still much disagreement about what it means for a political party to be internally democratic, and about the ways in which such democracy (or its lack) may affect the nature or quality of representation in electoral democracies.

INTRA-PARTY DEMOCRACY: DESIRABLE, NECESSARY, OR IMPOSSIBLE?

Perhaps not surprisingly, the subject of this chapter has provoked strong debates almost since the rise of party-based democracy itself. Given that electoral democracies are founded on the principles of broad participation and transparent procedures, it might seem obvious that they should also apply to the parties that compete within them. Yet, many successful types of organizations are not democracies, with business firms and public bureaucracies being the most obvious models. And indeed, to the extent that political parties are viewed as actors competing in 'electoral markets', the efficiently hierarchical structures of business firms might seem to be an equally obvious model (Schumpeter 1993).

Efficiency aside, the normative question is whether the quality of democracy and representation within a country depends on the quality of democracy within the political parties that channel representation. Equally pertinent is the more practical question of to what degree intra-party democracy is even possible. Scholars have been trying to answer the latter question for almost as long as they have been studying the role of parties in popular government; many of them have been quite pessimistic as to whether any procedures can ensure that party leaders heed their grass-roots supporters.

Over a century ago the German sociologist Robert Michels crystallized this view in his famous iron law of oligarchy, concluding that 'oligarchy is . . . a preordained form of the common life of great social aggregates' (Michels 1915: 390). A few years earlier Moisei Ostrogorski had profiled the US party machines, and painted a similarly bleak view of efforts at party reform, concluding that 'the State is as powerless against the despotism wielded over the members by the party or its representatives, legitimate or not, as it is against the despotism wielded by the Church over its followers, each despotism being founded on the willing or passive assent of the very persons who it presses' (Ostrogorski 1982: 268). Such views suggested that efforts to democratize parties were futile, at least until citizens were willing to devote more effort to wresting control away from the parties.

In the first decades of the twentieth century, progressive reformers in the United States attempted to do just that, campaigning for state-level reforms that were advocated as measures to undermine the control of party bosses and weaken party machines; these included laws requiring parties to use primary elections to select their candidates. Between 1901 and 1915, thirty-three non-Southern US states adopted laws mandating or allowing for primary elections (Lawrence et al. 2013: 9). Whether these new rules reduced oligarchy was another question.

Writing thirty years after Michels, American political scientist E.E. Schattschneider argued that primary elections and other legal regulations had not, and would not, change power relations within political parties, but that this was not necessarily lamentable: 'If it is true that the democratization of the parties is impossible, what is to be gained by insisting on it? ... If the party is described as a political enterprise conducted by a group of working politicians *supported* by partisan voters who approve of the party but are merely partisans (not members of a fictitious association), the parties would seem less wicked. After all, we support many organizations without belonging to them and without asserting a right to control them' (1942: 59). V.O. Key, another great observer of American party democracy, agreed that party organizations were inevitably oligarchical (deliberately using Michels' term), even if primaries were used, but he still considered them preferable to the only alternative he could imagine: *no* party organization. In his words, 'Paradoxically the operation of a democratic order depends on having some oligarchies about the premises seeking to grasp public office for one of their number' (Key 1958: 379). In this view, shaped by experiences of the 1920s and 1930s, the broader *demos* was potentially more extreme than career politicians, and more susceptible to the charms of demagogues; thus it was desirable to place party elites as a buffer between parties and the public at large. (For more on the development of views towards intra-party democracy, see Carty 2013).

For much of the twentieth century, the use of primary elections was a distinctly American practice, and it was one that seemingly helped to explain and reinforce cross-national differences between party organizational practices in the United States and in established parliamentary democracies. Parties in European parliamentary democracies practised a different sort of internal democracy, based on permanent membership organizations. This model of 'subscriber democracy' (Scarrow 2015; Neumann 1956) stood in contrast to the committee-based organizational model of US parties (Duverger 1954; Katz and Kolodny 1994). Under the former model, a party's most committed supporters purchase annual memberships which entitle them to participate in all internal proceedings, including the vote for local party leaders; these leaders are held to account in regular meetings at which they present reports to the party membership. Each local branch sends delegates to regional and/or national meetings at which the pattern is repeated, with delegate assemblies electing smaller executive boards, which conduct the real business of the party. Traditionally these elected party leaders had strong control over candidate selection, though practices varied as to the relative power of the different party arenas. In its ideal form, such rules make parties into

representative democracies. In practice, the powers of party conferences often have been limited by rules as well as norms; leaders are generally given the most autonomy when the party is in government. Yet for the purposes of this discussion, the larger point is that for most of the twentieth century there was a divergence between the United States and parliamentary democracies in terms of how parties organized their intra-party democracy, to the extent that they practised it. Whereas the prevailing US model for making party personnel decisions was based on relatively broad participation through party primaries or local candidate-selection caucuses, the European parliamentary model was based on delegate-democracy resting on a much narrower base of supporters at the lowest level (dues-paying members). The models looked a bit more similar when it came to the production of policy documents for elections; in both cases, these were usually adopted by delegate congresses—but in the US these presidential nominating congresses consisted of delegates from state parties who were selected through some kind of primary process (open to a broad electorate), whereas in the parliamentary model they were delegates from local or regional branches of the (much more restricted) party membership.

In recent years these differences have begun to blur. The first signs of this came in the 1980s, when new parties (primarily Greens and Alternatives) in parliamentary democracies began challenging the now-classic idea that intra-party oligarchy was inevitable. Sometimes citing (and rejecting) Michels' diagnosis, they adopted novel internal structures that were supposed to empower active supporters, proclaiming that parties aspiring to build democratic societies must first practice democracy within their own organizations. Their solutions included term-limits for party leaders at all levels, and giving all supporters a say (and a vote) at party meetings which made important party decisions (Poguntke 1987a, 1987b; Kitschelt 1988). This message of more grassroots control resonated with a broader public in a period when many parliamentary democracies were also increasing their use of direct elections for selecting executive office-holders (mayors: Schiller 2011; Hendriks and Michels 2011) and for policy decisions (referendums: Butler and Ranney 1994; Setala 1999). Such reforms were promoted by cultural shifts, which led citizens to turn away from organizationally mediated political participation, in favour of more direct participation opportunities (Barnes and Kaase 1979; Inglehart 1977; Dalton 1984). They also were intensified by new digital technologies, which made it easier for parties to organize (and for supporters to demand) direct participation opportunities. Indeed, 'outsider' parties in several countries made organizational innovation—specifically, more inclusive procedures—a major part of their initial appeals. For instance, in Canada in the 1990s the Reform Party pioneered and publicized using telephone ballots for including members in votes on party policies (Barney and Laycock 1999). After 2010, the German Pirate Party made news and won supporters with its 'liquid democracy', an online platform for distilling supporters' preferences. At the same time, the Italian 5 Star Movement promoted its own brand of internet-based decision forums, citing its novel organizational architecture as proof of its strong popular roots (Diamanti 2014; Mosca et al. 2015).

However these innovations actually affected power balances within parties, parties that implemented them struggled to stick to their novel ways, in part because popular leaders chafed against the personal implications of term limits, and parties found it more difficult to succeed in electoral and legislative contests under the leadership of a revolving cast of politicians, each with short time horizons (Poguntke 1994). Nevertheless, the efforts of these and other parties to combat oligarchy go some way to explaining why so many other parties have been reshaping their own internal procedures during the past three decades, most notably through the spread of party primaries (as discussed in the following sections) and the shift towards more inclusive methods of leadership selection (Cross and Pilet 2015b: 166).

The seeming electoral popularity of new-style parties altered many established parties' attitudes towards organizational reform. As these parties lost members (Webb and Keith 2017; van Biezen et al. 2012; Scarrow and Gezgor 2010) and voters, expanding intra-party democracy seemed like a good prescription for party renewal. Thus, in contrast to the early twentieth-century U.S. reformers who had campaigned for party primaries as *devices to weaken party machines*, many contemporary advocates of intra-party ballots portray them as *instruments of party renewal*, ones that can increase party membership and intra-party participation, and that can strengthen parties' connections with their supporters.

VARIETIES OF INTRA-PARTY DEMOCRACY

We have so far referred to intra-party democracy in a general sense without exactly defining it. Given the multiple usages of the term 'democracy', it is inevitable that intra-party democracy is equally multifaceted and contested (Cross and Katz 2013b). While it is evident that intra-party democracy is used in analogy to democracy at large, we want to provide a more precise conceptualization here. The discussion above has indicated that the essence of democracy lies with the possibility to participate in political decisions—hence our concern with the widening of participation rights. Equally important is the possibility to hold leaders to account. This is directly connected to participation rights because only those who are able to participate in the selection of leaders can wield the ultimate weapon of political accountability: the removal of elites from their positions. This suggests that the core of intra-party democracy is the degree of inclusiveness of decision-making (von dem Berge and Poguntke 2017; Cross and Katz 2013a; Scarrow 2005). In other words, parties which allow more people to participate in decisions over personnel and policy are more democratic than those whose internal procedures exclude many or most party members or supporters from having a say in these matters.

In the first instance, this raises the question of who is considered to be a potential participant: is it only dues-paying members, or supporters, or even anyone who declares that he or she would like to participate? As noted above, different models of

party-based democracy have answered this question in different ways. On the one hand are the US-style committee-based parties with loosely defined and fluid memberships. For them, to widen participation rights meant to move decisions from the proverbial smoked-filled backrooms to the daylight of at least relatively open primaries. On the other hand, parties with a tradition of permanent membership organizations (largely the European model which has been exported to other parts of the world) can make their internal decision-making more or less inclusive for their membership. In addition, and this is a more recent trend, they can transcend the boundaries of their own organization and grant participation rights to non-members who fulfil certain conditions.

Inclusiveness is, however, not the sole dimension that defines intra-party democracy. Equally important is the mode of decision-making, and particularly whether it follows an assembly based or plebiscitary decision logic. The former connects deliberation and decision in that policies or personnel are discussed by an assembly (of delegates or members/supporters). The meeting has the power to amend or change the options it has been convened to decide upon. In contrast, plebiscitary decision-making disconnects the deliberation over the substance of the decision from the actual decision. In other words, those who decide cannot amend or change the options (von dem Berge and Poguntke 2017). Arguably, the latter gives even more power to those who set the agenda, and they tend to be elites rather than the party's grass roots (Katz and Mair 1995). This is important, because it means that widening plebiscitary modes of intra-party decision-making may not be equal to extending the accountability of party elites. The other important caveat is that in order for this kind of participation to contribute to democracy, it must have a real chance of affecting party decisions rather than only offering the illusion of choice. This reasoning leaves us with two variants of intra-party democracy, namely assembly based intra-party democracy (AIPD) and plebiscitary intra-party democracy (PIPD); a special variant of the latter is open plebiscitary intra-party democracy (OPIP) which opens intra-party decisions to non-members.

Linkage through collateral organizations is another important aspect of intra-party democracy that may or may not be directly related to the democratic quality of party decision-making. Parties forge durable formal or informal ties to relevant societal interests, which connect them to important segments of their electorate (Poguntke 2002; Allern and Bale 2012); whether these organizations (which may or may not overlap organizationally with the party) have a say in party decisions over personnel and policy is a crucial aspect of intra-party democracy and interest representation. Arguably, the most conspicuous current example of such formal ties is the British Labour Party, which grants the trade union movement an important role in its internal affairs (Webb and Bale 2017). However, many parties on the Left have terminated these formal ties, or never had them, and rely instead on informal ties to targeted segments of their electorate (Allern and Bale 2017; Allern 2010). The same applies to other former parties of mass integration such as Christian Democratic or Agrarian parties. The weakening of party ties to interest groups arguably increases the representational impact of parties' internal decision-making procedures.

IPD TODAY: THE STATE OF PLAY

It is striking that most parties in contemporary parliamentary democracies are themselves organized as formally democratic organizations. This is by no means inevitable. As noted at the outset, it is conceivable that top-down, personalistic, models might be more electorally successful. It is true that the European mass party model has been strongly reinforced by party laws and/or party finance laws in both established and newer European democracies that either require some kind of membership-based organizational democracy, or at least incentivize its use (van Biezen and Piccio 2013). But even so, in the first years of the twenty-first century a few parties in established democracies won multiple elections using organizational forms which effectively allowed leader domination, and which made few nods to grass-roots power (for example, Silvio Berlusconi's *Forza Italia* party, or Geert Wilders' memberless Party for Freedom in the Netherlands). Yet on the whole, parties in contemporary parliamentary democracies show a strong preference for 'subscriber democracy' organizational formats, one in which dues-paying members constitute the party's organizational polity, and in which they or their representatives make decisions (Poguntke et al. 2016); this is the AIPD described above.

Data collected by the Political Party Database Project (Poguntke et al. 2016) has facilitated an empirical test of the practical value of our logical distinction between assembly based (i.e. AIPD) and plebiscitary intra-party democracy (PIPD). The project covers a wide range of variables on party resources and rules on internal decision-making, focusing mainly, but not exclusively on the so-called 'official story' as it can be obtained from party statutes and other party documents. Round 1a data covers 122 parties in 19 electoral democracies from 2010 to 2014. To determine the extent to which contemporary political parties provide for AIPD and PIPD, it is possible to code parties' formal procedures for making decisions about intra-party affairs, candidate selection, leadership selection, and party manifestos. For example, parties score high on AIPD if they stipulate that decisions about personnel or policy are made by inclusive bodies such as a party congress and not by exclusive ones such as the party executive. Parties score high on PIPD if such decisions can be made by plebiscitary means (for more details, see von dem Berge and Poguntke 2017).

The analyses show that AIPD has been the empirically dominant mode of intra-party democracy in these countries. In this period all but one of the 122 parties explicitly recognized AIPD as a mechanism for party decision-making. Plebiscitary decision-making, on the other hand, was clearly an add-on: about 50 per cent of the parties made no provisions for such procedures (von dem Berge and Poguntke 2017; Bolin et al. 2017). These data give a sense of current practices with regards to the relative importance of these two forms of intra-party democracy. Although the spread of plebiscitary decision-making has attracted much attention from scholars and journalists, much party decision-making still occurs in assemblies that allow for debate, negotiation, and compromise.

There is also a legal bias towards intra-party democracy in some presidential democracies, even if parties themselves are weakly institutionalized. Candidate selection laws in some presidential democracies have required parties to involve party members in these decisions (for example, Honduras, Panama, Paraguay), though in other countries such laws have stipulated that these decisions should be open to all citizens, not just party members (for example, Argentina, Bolivia, and Uruguay; Freidenberg 2003). Elsewhere in Latin America laws may require that parties practice some kind of democracy in their candidate selection processes, but leave parties latitude in implementing this mandate.

There are two caveats to this general picture. First, there is the question of the relation between political leaders and their parties, particularly when the political leader holds executive office (president or prime minister). The question of whether the subscriber-democracy organization could dictate to leaders holding an electoral mandate arose in the British Liberal Party as early as the 1880s—and according to Ostrogorski (1902/1964), the leaders won. To help clarify these different roles and responsibilities, some parties have completely separate selection processes for their top electoral candidates and for the leaders of their membership organizations. The separation is even more apparent in many presidential democracies, where a president clearly speaks for his or her party, but may not hold any formal position within the party organization.

The second caveat to this general picture of subscriber-democracy models is that since the 1990s many parties in both parliamentary and presidential democracies have been adding layers of plebiscitary procedures on top of these frameworks (the PIPD described above). In many cases, the old institutions remain, but the new rules offer alternative modes for conducting specific decisions. In some cases, these new plebiscitary rules encompass publics that extend far beyond the dues-paying membership, thus raising new questions about whom the party represents, and to whom it is accountable.

Most visibly, many parties have introduced membership ballots to select party leaders or to ratify party coalition agreements, key decisions previously taken by party conferences or party executive committees. According to one count, from 1990 to 2012 parties in fifteen established and new parliamentary democracies used membership ballots at least 107 times as part of their leadership selection process (Scarrow 2015: 184). Another study documented over thirty presidential and parliamentary countries in which at least one party had used a primary election to select a party leader or presidential candidate (Sandri and Seddone 2015: 10). Other researchers have documented similar changes (Scarrow et al. 2000; Kenig 2009; Hazan and Rahat 2010; Cross and Blais 2012a; Kenig et al. 2015). Parties in presidential democracies have much longer experience with primaries, starting of course with the United States. In Latin America this expansion began in the 1908s, soon after the wave of re-democratization, and has continued to spread (Freidenberg 2003, 2016).

It is important to remember that the ‘primary’ label covers a wide variety of practices, particularly in regards to the inclusiveness of the process. Participation

rules differ widely, even within the US states, with potentially important political consequences. Thus, some of the parties that have recently added membership ballots for leadership selection have restricted participation to those who pass comparatively rigorous membership requirements (e.g. paying membership dues and waiting periods of weeks or months).

The message of this section is that many parties have been adopting more inclusive decision-making rules, often layering these shifts on top of older structures. In some cases, ‘more inclusive’ means empowering party members; in others, it means inviting non-member supporters to participate. But how much do these changes really matter? The following section examines this question, looking in particular at their effects on relations between legislators and parties, and on whose interests get prioritized.

DEMOCRACY *WITHIN* VS. DEMOCRACY BETWEEN PARTIES: COMPATIBILITY AND (POTENTIAL) COSTS

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One question about the impact of more inclusive party procedures is whether they produce systematically different outcomes. That would happen if different sets of potential decision makers had systematically different preferences. Indeed, there is a long-standing expectation that such differences are common, with party activists presumed to hold more policy-extreme preferences than do those whose personal careers depend on winning votes. This view was classically summarized in Weber’s distinction between those who live from politics and those who live for it, and in John May’s ‘law of curvilinear disparity’ (1973; see also Katz 2014). The conclusion from this expectation about systematically differing preferences is that parties’ internal rules affect their choices of candidates and policies, with rules favouring activists likely to produce hardline solutions that may be out of touch with a party’s potential electorate.

Yet while these assumptions are firmly established, the evidence is more ambiguous. The best evidence on outcomes comes from the United States, with its long experience of having candidates selected by party primaries. Turnout rates in party primaries tend to be very low, and those who do vote are an unusually partisan subset of the electorate. This has been blamed for the growing polarization in Congress, with candidates ‘running to the extremes’ in the primaries. Yet both theoretical and normative research has cast doubt on whether this is a sufficient or even supplemental reason for observed polarization in US politics (Hirano et al. 2010; McGhee et al. 2013; May and Pirch 2016; Serra 2018). Research from other countries also has produced mixed evidence as to whether more inclusive selection processes will inevitably produce less-centrist candidates, or ones who differ from those who might have been selected under other rules (Sasada 2010; Mikulska and Scarrow 2010; Buquet and Piñeiro 2011; Bruhn 2013;

Smith and Tsutsumi 2016). One possible explanation for the failure to find such effects is because the underlying assumption of ‘curvilinear disparity’ does not hold: maybe party activists do not necessarily have systematically different priorities than party leaders or party voters. In fact, an accumulating body of research on members of political parties in parliamentary democracies suggests just this (Rose 1962; Kitschelt 1989; Norris 1995; Narud and Skare 1999; Van Holsteyn et al. 2015). There is even some evidence that parties with more inclusive decision procedures may attract different kinds of members, actually *reducing* ideological gaps between members and other party voters (Achury et al. 2020).

A second question about more inclusive participation rules is how they affect which individuals advance in politics. Early research suggested that there might be a trade-off between more open candidate selection procedures and descriptive representation—at least in winnable seats and in winnable positions on party lists (Rahat et al. 2008). Subsequent research has found only mixed support evidence of this effect (Gauja and Cross 2015; Pruyers et al. 2017). And indeed, there is also evidence that primaries may promote other types of candidate diversity, such as wider age representation (Indriðason and Kristinsson 2015). On the other hand, more inclusive systems may favour incumbents and party insiders; paradoxically, the party elite may be more open to newcomers than are the party grass roots (Vandeleene 2016).

A third question about the impact of more inclusive decision rules is whether they affect electoral outcomes—either positively or negatively—in countries where party rules differ in this regard. There is some evidence that parties do gain from having relatively more open rules. Thus, Latin American parties that were less hierarchical and more internally democratic enjoyed greater electoral success (Wills-Otero 2016). Similarly, parties which used presidential primaries seemed to benefit, perhaps because they chose candidates who are better campaigners, and could use the primary to discern public opinion and issue saliency (Carey and Polga-Hecimovich 2006; Adams and Merrill 2008). But particularly at the level of legislative candidates, the internal discord emphasized by the holding of primaries sometimes may outweigh the potential advantages of having campaign-tested candidates and pre-election mobilization of supporters (Bruhn 2010; Ichino and Nathan 2013; De Luca and Venturino 2017).

A fourth question about intra-party rules concerns their possible impact on legislative behaviour. To whom will party legislators be accountable when the views of their selectorate (the local party activists or primary voters) differ from those of their party leader, or of their party’s general supporters? And to what extent will legislators publicize their differences with the party leadership in order to boost their own appeal to local selectors? Theory suggests that more inclusive candidate selection rules, and ones that publicize intra-party competition for nominations, may encourage more personalization of campaigns and less party unity in legislative voting; at the least, legislative behaviour should change systematically if rules shift so that different groups will decide on their re-selection (Carey 2007; Hennl 2014).

Some research has found evidence of these effects (Hix 2004; Hazan and Rahat 2006; Papp and Zorigt 2016; Close et al. 2018.). Yet these effects are by no means clear cut or

universal (for example, Smith and Tsutsumi 2016; Rombi and Seddone 2017), probably because rules on candidate selection are not the only ones that matter for a legislator's career. For example, leaders can provide incentives aside from party nominations, such as campaign finance, staff, access to ministerial office, etc. (Katz 2001; Felipe 2008; Shomer 2009). Above all, it is influenced by the regime type, in that parliamentary democracies systemically require high parliamentary cohesion in order to keep the executive in office. Finally, it also depends on the electoral system, which provides a different set of incentives for party unity (Itzkovitch-Malka and Hazan 2016; Shomer 2016).

A fifth question touches upon the essence of intra-party democracy, namely the power of party leaders. More inclusive selection rules for party leaders may boost leaders' influence within their own parties, because it strengthens their claim to hold a mandate from the party's entire support base (Faucher 2014; Musella 2015). At the same time, it might make parties more vulnerable to takeover by candidates from outside the 'inner circle' (Cross and Blais 2012b: 170–3). To be sure, this could be regarded as a gain in intra-party democracy in that it might weaken the party oligarchy. However, it would also undermine the mechanisms of intra-party accountability that are based on intra-party negotiation as part of assembly based procedures. It would work in the same direction as trends towards the presidentialization of party leadership caused by party leaders gaining and maintaining their positions based on their alleged electoral appeal rather than due to their ability to forge a dominant coalition among the party's middle-level elites (Poguntke and Webb 2005; Webb et al. 2012).

In short, moves towards more inclusive intra-party decision-making certainly have the potential to alter intra-party power relations, but evidence so far demonstrates the difficulty of predicting which party 'face' gains most autonomy from such reforms.

CONCLUSION: INTRA-PARTY DEMOCRACY AND REPRESENTATION

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As we have tried to make clear in this chapter, many questions remain regarding the relation between intra-party democracy and the wider state of representative democracy. On a normative level, it is not even settled whether parties' internal rules affect the quality of the wider democracy, or whether all that matters is that parties present voters with clear alternatives. And even among those who agree on the necessity of having internally democratic parties, there are disagreements about how open such processes should be—open to party members, to party supporters, or even to anyone who chooses to participate?

On an empirical level, there are also mixed messages about how political outcomes are shaped by the level of democracy in parties' internal decision processes, be those processes based on party conferences or on balloting of supporters. Primary elections have been blamed for increasing political polarization and making candidate slates less

representative, but they have also been lauded for producing higher quality candidates; in any case, both the positive and negative findings are contested.

The crucial yardstick is the quality of representation. Parties are supposed to provide a representative linkage between the institutions of government and the mass public (Sartori 1976: 25). To a considerable degree, this requires different intra-organizational designs due to specific mechanics of parliamentary and presidential democracies. In an ideal parliamentary democracy, disciplined and cohesive parties should keep governments in office while presidentialism functions better with legislative parties that are open to compromise with other political camps. Hence, while presidential democracies can afford intra-party rules that allow for a healthy degree of heterogeneity within the legislative party, parties in parliamentary democracies need to keep a watchful eye on party unity when designing their internal rules. Clearly, much of this requires more and careful research. In the end, however, it is popular consent that is the ultimate benchmark of political parties' representative performance. If parties' internal decision-making processes produce personnel and policies that meet the demand of large parts of mass publics, that will be reflected by their electoral performance. Conversely, whatever the arguments in favour of parties adopting more inclusive decision-making procedures, there is little evidence that established parties can insulate themselves from the apparently growing appeal of populist parties and outsider candidates merely by tinkering with their internal rules.

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CHAPTER 17

PARTIES' ELECTION MANIFESTOS AND PUBLIC POLICIES

ROBERT THOMSON

PARTIES' election manifestos contain details of parties' priorities and intentions for the governing periods after elections.¹ Therefore, manifestos themselves posit linkages between their contents and future public policies. The implicit or explicit message in manifestos is: 'if our party is given sufficient government power, these are the policies we will carry out'. This chapter reviews the theory and practice of this supposed linkage between manifestos and future policies. According to the popular view, while democratic theory states that parties should make and fulfil campaign promises, parties often break their promises. This chapter shows that such a popular view is an oversimplification of both theory and practice. Theorists of representative democracy are divided on whether there is a compelling reason to expect a high level of congruence between manifestos and subsequent policies, even for manifestos of electorally successful parties. Nonetheless, the practice of politics is that parties follow through on the contents of their manifestos at least in certain circumstances. This chapter presents and discusses the current state of theoretical and empirical research that links manifestos and policies. It concludes by examining how developments in contemporary politics affect the manifesto-policy linkage.

THE LINKAGE BETWEEN ELECTION MANIFESTOS AND FUTURE POLICIES IN DEMOCRATIC THEORY

Many popular definitions of democracy posit that public opinion should exert a strong influence on governments' policy decisions. When these definitions are applied to

modern representative democracies, they imply that there should be a high degree of congruence between parties' election manifestos and subsequent government policies, at least for some parties. Democracy is a system in which there is a 'necessary correspondence between acts of governance and the equally weighted interests of citizens with respect to those acts' (Saward 1998: 51; McDonald and Budge 2005). This understanding of democratic representation is found in the responsible party model, which is also known as the mandate theory of democracy and more generally 'promissory representation' (APSA 1950; Downs 1957; Mansbridge 2003: 515). The responsible party model highlights the central mediating role played by political parties. Parties select issues and formulate policy proposals on those issues to present to voters during election campaigns. Competing parties should present voters with distinct policy alternatives. Parties that win the popular vote then have a mandate to enact the policies they put to voters during the election campaign. This model assumes that voters select parties on the basis of their manifestos, and that parties follow through on the proposals they put to voters if given the opportunity to do so in government. Proponents of the responsible party model have tended to favour majoritarian two-party systems, and have criticized existing systems for failing to adhere to some of the model's propositions.

Downs's influential book *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (1957) is a succinct formalization of the responsible party model. Downs's theory of democracy is an important addition to the responsible party model for the following reasons: (1) it is explicit about its assumptions concerning the motivations of parties and voters; (2) it presents its arguments in empirical rather than normative terms; and (3) it contains ideas that have influenced a broad range of theories of party competition, cabinet formation, and policymaking. Downs's stylized description consists of two sets of actors: voters and parties. Voters are assumed to have clear preferences regarding the desirable future direction of public policy. Parties, by contrast, are only interested in securing the material benefits associated with holding government office; that is to say, they are office-seekers, rather than policy-seekers. Parties take policy positions in order to appeal to voters. Voters choose the party whose policies are closest to their preferences, but would also punish a governing party that failed to deliver on its previous commitments. In a two-party system, the party that wins the most votes forms the government. When in government, the electorally successful party has a strong incentive to carry out the policies on which it campaigned, not because of the intrinsic value it attaches to those policies, but for fear of being punished at the next election for not doing so. The Downsian model shows that we need not hold overly optimistic views about the extent to which politicians genuinely believe in the policies they support in order to expect strong linkages between their manifestos and subsequent policies.

A prominent critique of Downs's model takes issue with its oversimplification of parties' motivations, and this critique provides an additional reason to expect parties to implement their manifestos when they have the opportunity to do so. Parties are historical entities rooted in particular societal cleavages, such as the division between

church and state, and processes of industrialization (Lipset and Rokkan 1967: 47). This means that parties are not the flexible political entrepreneurs depicted in the model. Their identities are associated with distinct policies, which means that parties receive intrinsic rewards from pursuing and implementing those policies. This policy-seeking motivation is therefore another reason to expect a strong manifesto–policy linkage.

Liberal democratic theorists dispute the idea that there is a normative reason to desire a strong linkage between parties' manifestos and subsequent policies, even for parties that enter government after elections. Such critiques often portray the responsible party model as commonsensical, but fundamentally flawed and 'populist' (e.g. Riker 1982; Achen and Bartels 2016). One variant of the critique contends that voters do not hold coherent enough policy preferences or sufficient knowledge of policies to cast their votes in an informed manner. Wouter Van der Brug et al., in Chapter 14 of this *Handbook*, examine the role of voters in party government and the mixed evidence on the extent to which voters' behaviour is informed by policies. Researchers in one subfield of public opinion argue that there is coherence to public opinion at the aggregate level, such that shifts in aggregate public sentiment contain signals on the desired direction of policy (e.g. Erikson et al. 2001).

Another variant of the liberal critique of the voter-centric model of representation argues that electoral results lack meaning in terms of the public policies desired by the public, even when voters do hold coherent policy preferences. Election results rarely identify clear winners in a way that would justify a mandate. In majoritarian systems, parties that form single-party executives generally receive far less than 50 per cent of the popular vote. In proportional systems, the difference between winners and losers is even more blurred. In his landmark study *Liberalism Against Populism*, Riker (1982) formulated a sophisticated version of this argument using social choice theory. Using Arrow's (1963) theorem, Riker argued that election results cannot uncover 'the will of the people'. Arrow's theorem demonstrates that under a set of plausible assumptions, the aggregation of individual preferences to a single collective outcome is essentially arbitrary, in that any outcome can be overturned by another outcome that has more support through endless voting cycles.

Liberal democratic theorists justify the need for democratic institutions based on the selection and control of leaders. Elections are not about voters selecting policies, but rather about voters selecting leaders and ensuring that leaders do not abuse power. Edmund Burke, the eighteenth-century Irish Member of Parliament and philosopher, argued that elected representatives should be trustees, who should exercise their own judgement on behalf of voters, rather than delegates, who would follow instructions from voters. The trustee model has also been criticized for the tension, if not contradiction, between the proposition that voters are able to select leaders who can act in their interests, and sanction leaders who abuse power, but that voters are unable to cast their vote based on their opinions on policies that affect them (Held 1996: 191–8). The trustee model also appears antiquated in an age in which parties formulate detailed manifestos, making it impossible to separate decisions on who should govern from the policies that parties support.

Theorists have adapted mandate theory in response to some of the criticisms levelled at it. One of these adaptations privileges the policy preferences of the median voter and the party whose manifesto reflects those preferences (Huber and Powell 1994; Powell 2000). McDonald and Budge (2005) argue that the median voter holds a unique claim to be the truly democratically justifiable policy outcome. The justification for this unique claim lies in Black's (1958) median voter theorem, which shows that the position of the median voter is the policy that would beat all other policies in a set of pairwise competitions and satisfies several theoretically important conditions. The existence of a median voter implies that voters' preferences can be effectively summarized on a single ideological dimension. Ideology prevents the instability and voting cycles found in Riker's critique. Ideology is also relevant to ameliorating the effects of voters' supposed cognitive and informational deficits. Citizens might not hold detailed policy preferences on specific issues or knowledge of the intricacies of parties' pledges, but they are able to cast votes based on accurate perceptions of the ideological proximity between themselves and different parties.

A different line of defence of mandate theory expands the set of parties for which a high level of congruence between their manifestos and subsequent policies is desirable. To the greatest extent possible, public policies should reflect the policies and priorities contained in the manifestos of all parties that received significant shares of the popular vote in previous elections. This 'proportional vision' of democracy 'emphasizes the importance of equitable reflection of all points of view in the legislature' (Powell 2000: 26; Lijphart 2012). This position recognizes that election outcomes seldom produce clear winners and losers, and that parties that do not enter executive office often have considerable electoral support. If the manifestos of several parties are to be translated into public policies, they must be compatible with each other at least in the sense that the realization of one manifesto does not entirely preclude the realization of other manifestos. This raises the question of the extent to which the manifestos of competing parties can be compatible while still offering choices to voters.

WHY SHOULD WE TAKE PARTIES' MANIFESTOS SERIOUSLY IN PRACTICE?

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Parties' manifestos are generally where we find the most considered and comprehensive statements of parties' policy commitments. This might be considered sufficient justification for studying these documents. However, when it comes to the practice of democracy, it must be recognized that few voters actually read manifestos. This raises the question of whether these documents are of sufficient practical relevance, notwithstanding their importance in democratic theory. With this in mind, political scientists put forward several additional arguments for studying manifestos. First, while few voters read manifestos, the contents of manifestos feed into the political process.

Candidates give campaign speeches and engage in debates based on positions set out in their parties' manifestos, which are reported on in the media. Second, manifestos perform an intra-party function. They contain priorities and policies that are of special importance to various party factions, and therefore have an important role in maintaining party cohesion. Third, manifestos have an inter-party function, which is most relevant in systems where coalition governments are the norm. Party leaders know that when forming a governing coalition, protracted negotiations on detailed and controversial policy questions must be held. The prospective coalition partners' manifestos form the basis for their positions in these negotiations. Fourth, manifestos have an important governmental function, meaning that they allow senior civil servants in the ministries to prepare policy initiatives on behalf of incoming governing parties. This function is particularly relevant in systems where single-party governments are the norm, because civil servants know they will be expected to implement the manifesto of one of the main parties in its entirety, rather than a coalition agreement.

THE SALIENCY APPROACH TO RESEARCH ON THE MANIFESTO-POLICY LINKAGE

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The saliency approach to the study of the manifesto-policy linkage is based on the saliency theory of party competition (Robertson 1976; Budge et al. 1987). Saliency theory posits that parties are policy-seekers as well as office-seekers, which means that they obtain utility from the enactment of their preferred policies even if they are out of office at the time. One implication of this policy-seeking assumption is that parties are not as footloose as the pure office-seeking assumption implies. A second proposition is that parties tend to be associated with, and may even be perceived to 'own', certain issues or themes. Some of these issues are so-called valence issues, which are issues on which there is only one generally acceptable position at least among mainstream parties and public opinion. Valence issues include general support for economic growth, social welfare, and environmental protection. While all mainstream parties may take similar positions on valence issues at an abstract level, they typically support quite different specific policies associated with these issues. Non-valence issues or themes are also typically associated with certain parties; for example, the theme of 'support for privatization of state industries' is typically associated with conservative parties.

The main observable implication of saliency theory is that parties distinguish themselves from each other by selectively emphasizing and de-emphasizing issues or themes relative to each other. The defining characteristic of party competition is that parties 'talk past each other'. For instance, in response to one party emphasizing the need for strong social welfare protection, a competing party does not typically call for weaker social welfare protection. Instead, it will try to shift the debate by focusing on its support for deregulation. Parties' differential emphasis of issues and themes is

systematic, such that it gives voters clear choices among parties in terms of their policy priorities. Saliency theory does not imply that parties confine their campaign messages to generalities and avoid making specific pledges, but it does imply that specific pledges are not the main ground on which elections are fought.

The operationalization of this theory of party competition took the form of a categorical coding framework developed by the Comparative Manifestos Project (CMP) and the Manifesto Research Group, which is now managed by the Manifesto Project at the Science Centre in Berlin (see Klingemann et al. 2006). These successive projects are one of the most influential comparative research programmes in political science. The main coding framework consists of dozens of categories, each of which represents a policy theme, such as support for 'Market Regulation', 'Welfare State Expansion', 'Free Market Economy', and 'Law and Order'. Each sentence or quasi-sentence (i.e. part of a longer sentence) is placed in one of these categories by human coders who are country specialists. Most of the categories are directional, in that they indicate parties' support for a particular theme. The framework also includes negative categories for themes on which parties may take negative stances, such as 'Welfare State Limitation' and 'Protectionism Negative'. The framework has been applied to over 1,000 parties from over fifty countries from five continents from 1945 to the present. It has been adapted and refined over the years as it has been expanded to more countries. In recent years, the Manifesto Project has devoted more attention to issues of inter-coder reliability and data accessibility, which have further increased the impact and use of the dataset.

The evidence supports the validity of the CMP measures on two main counts. First and foremost, using information on parties' thematic emphases in successive manifestos, researchers are able to locate parties relative to each other and to plot shifts in parties' ideological positions that correspond with many country experts' assessments of these locations. For instance, the UK parties' thematic emphases accurately identify the Labour Party's shift to the centre under Tony Blair in the 1990s and its more recent shift to the left under Jeremy Corbyn in 2016. Second, the evidence supports one of the main propositions from the saliency theory of party competition, namely that parties' policy-based competition with each other is, to a large extent, indirect. Parties tend to compete by focusing on different themes to one another, and generally place little emphasis on negative themes. Notwithstanding the considerable support and widespread use of the CMP dataset in published research, the CMP measures of parties' positions correlate modestly with some other measures of parties' positions, such as those based on expert surveys (e.g. Benoit and Laver 2007). While CMP measures and expert surveys are sometimes depicted as adversarial approaches, there is a compelling case to be made that these and other measures, such as those based on public and elite opinion, are complementary ways of estimating the same underlying latent dimensions (König et al. 2013).

Several comparative studies have examined the linkage between the CMP's assessments of manifestos and subsequent public policies. One of the earliest and most comprehensive comparative studies was a book by Klingemann et al. (1994), *Parties,*

Policies and Democracy, which was accompanied by several journal articles. This research examined the linkage between parties' thematic emphases and subsequent public spending in related policy areas over extended time periods of up to four decades in ten countries: seven West European countries plus Australia, Canada, and the US. The authors quantified the strength of the linkage between the contents of parties' manifestos and subsequent spending patterns. Approximately 50 per cent of variation in governments' spending priorities was foreshadowed by corresponding variation in parties' thematic emphases. The country-by-country analyses tested a series of models that posited different patterns of linkage between the contents of manifestos and subsequent spending. The mandate model posited that there is congruence between the manifestos of parties that held executive office after elections (i.e. governing parties) and subsequent government spending, but that there is not necessarily any congruence for the manifestos of parties that did not go on to hold executive office. The agenda model posited that there is congruence between manifesto emphases and subsequent spending on relevant policy areas regardless of whether parties held executive office after elections. The authors expected to find that the mandate model would fit best in majoritarian systems, such as the UK, while the agenda model would fit best in proportional systems, such as the Netherlands. The evidence did not, however, clearly support this institutional expectation. Instead, the findings were rather mixed with respect to the specific model that best fitted the data in each country.

A later study by McDonald and Budge (2005) extended this work to examine the median mandate model referred to earlier. Median mandate theory directed their attention to the linkage between the manifesto of the party of the median voter and subsequent government spending. This later study used a broader set of countries and more comparable data on governments' spending priorities. They concluded that policy regimes develop slowly, but in line with the long-run preferences of electorates represented by the positions of median voters. Some of the evidence suggests that policies in countries with proportional electoral systems are more responsive to the positions of median voters than in countries with majoritarian systems.

Research that examines the linkage between thematic emphases in manifestos and subsequent spending has been criticized in several ways. First, parties that place larger amounts of emphasis on a policy theme do not necessarily propose or prefer to spend larger percentages of public funds on relevant policy areas. This is, however, a core assumption made in research that examines the manifesto-policy linkage in this way. Second, a more general formulation of this criticism is that there is a distinction between policy positions and salience, and that saliency theory and the corresponding CMP coding framework does not sufficiently take this distinction into account. It is possible for parties to attach equally high levels of salience to spending on a particular policy area, but to have very different positions on the exact amount to be spent. Proponents of saliency theory respond that this criticism disregards the key proposition of the theory: namely that parties mainly compete by the saliency they attach to different policy themes, rather than by staking out different positions on the same themes. Third, at a more technical level, questions can be raised concerning the

spending categories with which particular themes have been linked. While there is a conceptual link between the thematic categories and spending categories that were matched, researchers selected the thematic categories that produced the strongest linkages, and these were not necessarily the thematic categories that were conceptually most closely related to the spending categories (Hofferbert and Budge 1992: 162). For instance, in the UK analyses, the thematic category 'Social Justice' was linked to spending on social services and education, while there are CMP categories that relate specifically to social welfare and education (Royed 1996: 52). Fourth, critics of this approach point out that focusing exclusively on public spending neglects public policies in the forms of regulations of markets and civil liberties that do not incur large expenses.

This fourth line of criticism is addressed by research that uses the saliency approach to examine the linkage between the thematic emphases found in manifestos and government policies other than spending. An example of this type of research was a study of the linkage between parties' manifesto emphases of environmental protection and national governments' environmental policies (Leinaweaver and Thomson 2016). The researchers examined governments in twenty-seven countries in the European Union, which meant that their study focused on comparable policies across countries and included different types of government systems. They considered the difference between governing executives that are centralized, where chief executives are able to impose coherence across ministries, and decentralized executives, where cabinet ministers have more autonomy. Amongst the countries with centralized executives are France, Sweden, and the UK, while those with decentralized executives include Austria, Belgium, and Germany (Kassim 2013). Leinaweaver and Thomson (2016) found that parties' manifesto emphases on environmentalism foreshadowed governments' positions on environmental policies, with more manifesto emphasis being linked to stronger environmental policies in the next governing period. In centralized systems, the manifestos of chief executives' parties were linked to governments' policies. In decentralized executives, the manifestos of the environmental ministers' parties were linked to subsequent policies. This finding indicates that the manifesto-policy linkage is mediated by the allocation of ministerial portfolios and the strength of coordinating mechanisms within national executives.

Another criticism of research on the manifesto-policy linkage clarified that there may be a strong linkage without parties exerting a causal effect on public policies (King et al. 1993). This criticism was directed specifically at Budge and Hofferbert's (1990) research on the link between US parties' thematic emphases and subsequent spending. King and Laver (in King et al. 1993) pointed out that Budge and Hofferbert's analysis did not control for previous spending, and that if this was taken into account in the models then the significant effects associated with parties' thematic emphases largely disappeared. The response to this criticism was to point out that the original study made no claim that parties causally determined spending. As Budge and Hofferbert stated in the article that King and Laver criticized: 'It is enough for mandate theory that expenditures should *correspond* to emphases rather than there should *necessarily* be a

cause and effect relationship between them' (1990: 118; italics in original). A model that includes a lagged budget variable as an independent variable is wholly inappropriate to evaluating the proposition of mandate theory. Using a model with a lagged budget variable, manifesto emphases and spending priorities could go in opposite directions, while the model produces positive mandate coefficients. Nevertheless, King and Laver's contribution clarified two important points. First, the manifesto-policy linkage is empirically distinct from the partisan effect. They show that evidence of one can be present while evidence of the other is not. Second, most of the congruence in Budge and Hofferbert's (1990) study between winning US presidential parties' thematic emphases and subsequent spending priorities can be explained by the fact that they both follow similar trends in government spending priorities. In other words, parties are mediating institutions, rather than causal ones. Although King and Laver's criticism was directed towards the saliency approach to the manifesto-policy linkage, its implications also apply to the pledge approach.

THE PLEDGE APPROACH TO RESEARCH ON THE MANIFESTO-POLICY LINKAGE

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The pledge approach consists of identifying the substantive campaign promises or 'election pledges' made by parties and then assessing whether the government kept or broke each of those promises in the governing periods after the elections. Although theories of party competition do not explicitly refer to election pledges, their core assumptions imply that parties make pledges. Consider the classical Downsian model of party competition in which parties are office-seekers and voters are policy-seekers. Voters who care about policy are unlikely to be convinced by parties that confine their policy statements to general principles, particularly if those parties have a reputation for being motivated by the spoils of office. A similar argument was made by former British Prime Minister Edward Heath: 'people today are so cynical and sceptical about the whole machinery of government that detail is needed to convince them that you really intend to carry out your promise' (quoted in King 1972). Moreover, if parties are also policy-seekers, they have additional reason to make election pledges. Parties that articulate their policy preferences as election pledges and subsequently enter government office can claim a normative right to fulfil those pledges (Schedler 1998: 194). Election pledges are, therefore, a means for parties to achieve their policy goals.

Research on election pledges has become increasingly coherent and comparative in recent years. Much of this work is coordinated by the Comparative Party Pledges Project (CPPP). So far, CPPP researchers have examined pledge fulfilment in twelve countries: over 20,000 pledges made by parties during fifty-seven election campaigns (Thomson et al. 2017; Naurin et al. 2019). The CPPP builds on a series of earlier studies that focused on single countries or pairs of countries (e.g. Pomper 1968; Pomper and

Lederman 1980; Rallings 1987; Royed 1996). Compared to the saliency approach, the pledge approach is more labour intensive and therefore cannot produce the same breadth of country or time coverage as the saliency approach. It involves detailed qualitative research to identify election pledges and assess their fulfilment. To assess fulfilment, researchers consult relevant sources, which depend on the content of what is promised. For example, pledges to change income tax rates lead researchers to consult the tax code; pledges to increase spending on particular programmes lead researchers to examine public spending accounts; and pledges to change rules on retirement ages lead researchers to examine relevant legislation. This means that some of the country studies of pledge fulfilment are limited to a few governments.

The evidence from comparative research on election pledges indicates that pledges are a significant feature of parties' manifestos, and therefore worthy of sustained scrutiny. Almost all parties make large numbers of pledges, usually well over 100 in each manifesto, on substantively important policy issues. Parties make large numbers of important pledges regardless of the context or types of parties concerned. Parties of the left make equally large numbers of pledges as parties of the right; parties that are incumbents at the time of the election campaigns make equally large numbers of pledges as do opposition parties. There is also some evidence that parties have been making more pledges in recent years. Parties differ, however, in the types of pledges they make. Parties to the left generally make relatively more pledges to expand policy programmes, while parties to the right generally make relatively more pledges to cut taxes. Parties that hold executive office during election campaigns generally make more status quo pledges than parties that are in opposition. In most countries, the evidence supports the saliency theory of party competition in that most pledges do not relate directly to pledges of other parties. These patterns, while not wholly surprising, indicate that pledges are a significant feature of parties' manifestos, and that the question of whether they are fulfilled is worth investigating.

Figure 17.1 summarizes the latest comparative quantitative evidence on pledge fulfilment in twelve countries from the CPPP. Pledges made by parties that enter government in countries that generally have single-party executives, such as the UK, Sweden, and Portugal, are very likely to be fulfilled. The likelihood is lower in countries that generally have coalitions, such as Austria, Italy, and the Netherlands. More detailed analysis shows that holding executive office alone as a single-party executive, rather than holding a majority of the legislature, increases the likelihood of pledge fulfilment (e.g. Thomson et al. 2017). Single-party minority governments perform at least as well as single-party majority governments in terms of pledge fulfilment. This is an important finding given the prevalence of minority governments. It also supports theories of coalition formation that demonstrate the power of parties that are able to form governments alone without holding a legislative majority (Crombez 1996). These parties are usually large parties that control the median legislator, such as was the case for the Swedish Social Democrats for many years. Other institutional and contextual factors matter too. For instance, within governing coalitions, holding the prime ministership positively affects the likelihood that a party fulfils its pledges. For junior

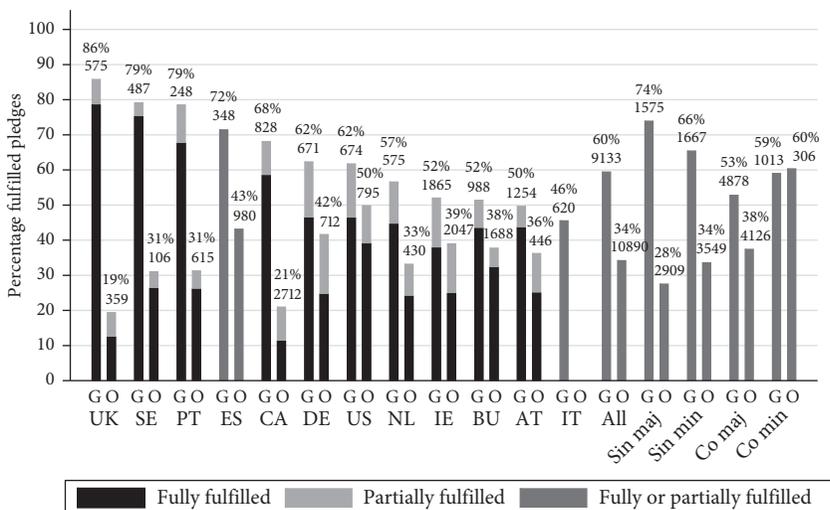


FIGURE 17.1 The Fulfilment of Campaign Pledges from Manifestos by Country and Government-type.

Note: UK: United Kingdom; PT: Portugal; SE: Sweden; ES: Spain; CA: Canada; DE: Germany; US: United States; NL: The Netherlands; BU: Bulgaria; IE: Ireland; AT: Austria; IT: Italy; G: Parties that held executive office after the elections; O: Parties that did not. Study of Italy does not include pledges made by opposition parties. Sin maj: single-party majority governments; Sin min: single-party minority governments. Co maj: majority coalitions; Co min: minority coalitions. Percentages above bars refer to the percentages of pledges that were fully or partially fulfilled; numbers refer to the total numbers of pledges tested for fulfilment.

Source: Naurin et al. (eds.) (2019).

coalition partners—that is, coalition partners that do not hold the prime ministership—holding the relevant ministry increases the likelihood that a party fulfils its pledges. This gives qualified support to theories of policymaking in coalitions that emphasize prime ministerial power and the allocation of ministerial portfolios (e.g. Laver and Shepsle 1996).

The information summarized in Figure 17.1 also shows that pledges made by parties that do not enter government office have a reasonable likelihood of being fulfilled, although significantly less so than those of governing parties. The fulfilment of opposition parties’ pledges is consistent with the proportional vision of democracy referred to earlier (Powell 2000). According to this proportional vision, there is not a sharp distinction between electoral winners and losers in terms of the normative desirability of pledge fulfilment. All parties that receive significant vote shares represent societal demands to which democratic governments should respond. Detailed analysis of the fulfilment of opposition parties’ pledges indicates that agreements between governing and opposition parties is part of the explanation of why opposition parties’ pledges are sometimes fulfilled. This agreement can take the form of agreement between parties on specific pledges, and also general agreements by opposition parties to support minority governments. Pledges made by opposition parties with ideological positions that are close to the median legislator are more likely to be fulfilled than

pledges by more extreme opposition parties. However, being in government has a larger effect on pledge fulfilment than proximity to the median legislator.

Qualitative analyses of pledge fulfilment examine the extent to which campaign promises are congruent with the flow of significant policy and political developments in each country in the analysis. By way of illustration, we will briefly consider two of these country studies: the US and Ireland. Research on election pledges in the US highlights the distinctiveness of this presidential system with its separation of executive and legislative powers. Comparative research on election pledges describes the party of the president as the 'governing party', since it defines governing as holding executive office. However, under divided government, where the executive and legislative branches are held by different parties, the party holding a congressional majority of the House and/or the Senate could also claim to be the governing party. Royed et al. (2019; see also Royed 1996) give a detailed analysis of pledge fulfilment during six presidential periods, 1977–2000, and a discursive analysis of pledge fulfilment in more recent periods. They find that the majority of pledges in both the Democrats' and Republicans' presidential platforms were fulfilled. The party that won the presidency usually has somewhat higher fulfilment rates, although the difference is not large. They show that many substantively important policy initiatives were foreshadowed in parties' election pledges. A range of significant economic policy reforms was passed in the early 1980s in line with Reagan's neo-liberal agenda and that fulfilled Republicans' platform pledges. For example, the Economic Recovery Tax Act (ERTA) of 1981 fulfilled a pledge to index tax brackets, thereby protecting tax cuts from erosion through inflation. At the same time, the Democrats fulfilled platform pledges to close tax loopholes, and these policy successes were aided by their control of the House during that period. More generally, Royed et al. (2019) show that many, although not all, of the major laws identified by Mayhew (2005) were foreshadowed by election pledges.

Research on pledge fulfilment in Ireland sheds particular light on the impact of economic conditions on pledge fulfilment, among other explanations (Thomson et al. 2019; see also Thomson and Costello 2016). The evidence shows relatively high levels of pledge fulfilment by governing parties when economic conditions were favourable in the late 1990s and early 2000s. By contrast, relatively few pledges were fulfilled in the 2007–2011 governing period, when the financial crisis hit unexpectedly in 2008. In the post-2008 period, Ireland's national policy was effectively determined by the European Union and the International Monetary Fund. To meet the requirements of the international assistance package, the Fianna Fáil-led government of 2007–2011 produced a National Recovery Plan, setting out a series of measures designed to address the huge gap in public finances. For the first three years of the next 2011–2016 Fine Gael–Labour government, the country was officially part of this EU–IMF programme. Both Fine Gael and Labour were committed to working within the broad terms of the bailout, although both parties wanted to renegotiate aspects of it. The high level of fulfilment for opposition Fianna Fáil's pledges in the 2011–2016 period can be explained partially by the new government's adherence to the National Recovery Plan. This narrative

provides a qualitative illustration of the point made by King and Laver's above-mentioned critique of research on the manifesto-policy linkage. A high level of congruence between the contents of manifestos and subsequent policies does not mean that the former are the causes of the latter.

One of the main implications of research on election pledges for democratic representation is that campaign promises are kept to a considerable extent, arguably more often than the popular conception of promise-breaking politicians would suggest. Indeed, when asked if they agree with the statement that politicians keep their promises, most citizens in most countries disagree.² This discrepancy between the research findings and public opinion on whether parties keep their election pledges has spurred a growing area of research on public opinion regarding pledge fulfilment. This research includes analyses of Ireland, Sweden, and the UK, in which citizens were asked to assess the fulfilment of specific campaign promises that were made in previous election campaigns (Thomson 2011; Naurin and Oscarsson 2017; Thomson and Brandenburg 2019). This research suggests that citizens distinguish accurately between promises that were kept and broken, contrary to what widespread cynicism about promise-breaking politicians might suggest. In addition, citizens' evaluations are shaped by a range of individual-level characteristics, including their knowledge of politics, partisanship, and trust in politicians. Like the early research on actual pledge fulfilment, this work on public opinion has to date been country-focused, and more insights could be gained from an integrated comparative study.

THE PRESENT AND FUTURE OF THE MANIFESTO-POLICY LINKAGE

The desirability and form of the manifesto-policy linkage are being shaped by significant ongoing developments. The populist wave that has swept many liberal democracies makes liberal-minded people question the desirability of there being strong manifesto-policy linkages. Populism is a contested concept, but political scientists have clarified the distinctive features of this phenomenon (e.g. Schedler 1996; Mudde 2007; Van Hauwaert and Van Kessel 2018). Populist parties claim to be the true representatives of the people, and cast doubt on the integrity of mainstream political parties. Many populists portray 'the people' as a homogeneous group, in contrast to the pluralist vision of society. They argue that the people are under threat from corrupt elites, abstract entities such as the European Union or free trade agreements, and outgroups such as immigrants and religious minorities. Populists' campaign promises typically disadvantage vulnerable groups and may even curtail their civil liberties.

There are several possible responses to populist parties with respect to the manifesto-policy linkage. The first is to acknowledge that no matter how unpalatable they are to liberal sensitivities, populist parties are performing their democratic

function of channelling societal demands. As long as their policies are lawful, which is up to legislators and the courts to decide, these parties have every right to implement their manifestos when they have the opportunity to do so. A second response puts confidence in the discipline of governing to blunt some of the sharp vociferousness of populists' manifestos. Praprotnik and Ennser-Jedenastik's (2019) study of the populist Austrian Freedom Party's participation in government after the 1999 elections is illustrative in this respect. Their election pledges were largely unfulfillable due to their political and technical unfeasibility. This failure led to the split of the party and a more moderate party emerging with somewhat less objectionable policies. The third response is to assert the primacy of respect for individual freedoms and minority rights, and to argue that these principles trump any need to respond to popular demands even if, hypothetically, they were supported by a majority of citizens (Riker 1982).

Globalization has been identified as one of the underlying causes of the rise of populism, and it also affects the manifesto–policy linkage in several ways. Increasing economic, political and cultural interconnectedness raises new issues to which parties are compelled to respond in their manifestos. At the same time, individual national governments have limited power to bring about change on some of these issues. Globalization is marked by increasing interdependence, which means that national governments depend on each other to realize desired outcomes. This requires a new kind of responsiveness by parties. While parties were traditionally oriented towards responding to demands expressed by relevant social groups within their territories, in order to be credible governing parties, they must also respond to the international arena. For instance, the protracted Eurozone crisis, which began in 2008, has animated many national election campaigns, particularly in countries that were the main recipients and providers of bailout packages. In addition, the manifesto–policy linkage has the capacity not merely to respond to globalization but also to disrupt it. For instance, in the US, the Trump administration's imposition of new tariffs on imports was foreshadowed by the Republican Party's 2016 manifesto, which anticipated a more robust approach to US trade relations. Similarly, the UK's referendum on EU membership, which disrupted the furthest reaching form of international cooperation, was foreshadowed by a clear election pledge in the UK Conservative Party's 2015 manifesto.

Technology is also changing the nature of election campaigns, how parties appeal to voters, and the manifesto–policy linkage. While traditional media still play a significant role, parties' communication with voters is becoming increasingly fragmented as candidates release short and digestible messages through social media. Communication is increasingly direct, without the intervention and filtering by newspaper and broadcast media editors. Recent developments in mining large datasets have enabled campaign managers, sometimes backed by foreign governments, to obtain detailed individual-level voter profiles and to target individual citizens directly with tailored messages. This fragmentation challenges the pre-eminence of the manifesto as the unifying document, which clearly states the party's blueprint for government. At the same time, the potential incoherence associated with fragmentation means that there is arguably a greater need for manifestos as a point of reference for political candidates

who are engaged in evermore fragmented campaigns. Developments in contemporary politics therefore imply that parties' manifestos and the manifesto–policy linkage will maintain central, if not uncontested, positions in the theory and practice of representation.

NOTES

1. Throughout this chapter I use the term 'manifestos'. Other terms—such as platforms or programmes—are used in some countries for campaign documents that have practically the same functions.
2. The relevant question, found in the Role of Government Survey IV, is available at <http://www.issp.org/>.

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CHAPTER 18

OPINION—POLICY CONGRUENCE

ZOE LEFKOFRIDI

CONGRUENCE: A ‘MUST’ FOR *DEMOCRATIC* POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

THE abstract term ‘congruence’ connotes agreement, harmony, or compatibility between two entities; in the context of political representation, it refers to the state of representation. It is a criterion for assessing whether representation works; it focuses on the extent to which citizens’ opinion is reflected by the preferences or behaviour of representative elites. Comparing citizens’ opinion with those who make policy on their behalf helps assess the *democratic* character of political representation (Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012: 87). Since citizens delegate their power to rule to their representatives, congruence between the two implies ‘empowerment’ of the citizenry—the major promise of democracy.¹

Different tales of democratic representation imply congruence. For instance, the selection model (Mansbridge 2009) focuses on the selection and sorting mechanisms that facilitate citizens’ choice of representatives that have objectives aligned with their own. Aligned objectives are an important key for citizens to—indirectly—have a say over policy outcomes without the need to monitor or punish their representatives, who are assumed to be self-motivated in pursuit of good public policy (Mansbridge 2009: 12). In contrast, the sanction model of political representation (Fiorina 1974; Mayhew 1974) assumes representatives to be self-interested actors; their desire for (re-)election incentivizes them to advocate positions echoing those who possess the power to hire or fire them. Interestingly, despite divergent assumptions regarding the underlying motivations of political actors, both the selection and the sanction models expect that the represented and their representatives will not be far apart from each other. The empirical literature on congruence scrutinizes to what extent, and under what conditions, this is indeed the case.

The present chapter² aims at providing a comprehensive overview (but by no means an exhaustive review³) of key debates in the field.⁴ For this purpose, it considers works on different types of congruence at different levels of aggregation. It is structured around the following questions: *How is congruence conceived and measured? Under what conditions is congruence higher/lower? What are the consequences of congruence, or lack thereof?*

CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES IN THE STUDY OF CITIZENS-ÉLITES CONGRUENCE

How we study congruence depends upon how we conceptualize the relationship between citizens and the elites that make policy on their behalf. Most research in this field shares a conceptualization of the linkage between citizens and elites in *spatial* terms: to illustrate, in the minds of congruence scholars, high congruence means small distance, whereas low congruence connotes large distance. Beyond this basic idea, however, the field exhibits a rich diversity, which is a combined result of different underlying normative models of representation and their varied applicability across different empirical realities (see Thomassen 1994) and the high creativity of congruence research.

Conceptualizing and Operationalizing the Representational Relationship

Earlier debates in the field of congruence revolved over the distinction between ‘dyadic’ (e.g. Miller and Stokes 1963; Kuklinski and Elling 1977) and ‘collective’ (e.g. Holmberg 1999a; Weissberg 1978) representation.

Following Miller and Stokes (1963) ‘dyadic’ representation concerns how well the individual deputy acts as an agent for her/his constituency; dyads, however, may also concern the relationship between a party and its voters (e.g. Dalton 1985). US studies of dyadic representation typically place the focus on individual deputies and their geographic constituency. This is suitable for systems where each geographic constituency elects a single legislator (single-member districts—SMDs); such systems are candidate centred, and party discipline is loose (Chapter 13 in this *Handbook*). However, this perspective is less fruitful for systems using multi-member districts, which are party-centred, such as European parliamentary democracies (see Thomassen 1994). In the words of Weissberg (1978: 537): ‘one of the major purposes of party discipline is to

eliminate purely dyadic representation'. In Europe, research employing the concept of dyadic representation focuses on the link between voters and parties (e.g. Dalton 1985).

'Collective' representation refers to whether the policy preferences of the parliament *as a whole* reflect those of the electorate *as a whole* (Andeweg 2011). However, the term has also been used to indicate the relationship between a party and its voters (Holmberg 1999b).

In an influential piece, Golder and Stramski (2010) try to go beyond the dyadic/collective dichotomy by suggesting that the way the representational relationship should be conceived depends upon whether we think (i) about one or many citizens and (ii) one or many representatives (Golder and Stramski 2010: 91). In this understanding, we can distinguish between 'one-to-one', 'many-to-one' and 'many-to-many' representational relationships (Golder and Stramski 2010: 92-6). The first two relationships correspond to the concept of dyadic representation, while the third concept concerns collective representation. Drawing on the literature on economic voting, Mayne and Hakhverdian (2017) distinguish between 'egocentric' congruence, which connotes a 'one-to-one' relationship, and 'sociotropic' congruence, which concerns 'many-to-one' and 'many-to-many' relationships.

'One-to-One':

If the representational relationship is conceptualized from the perspective of an individual citizen ('one-to-one' relationship, 'egocentric' congruence) what matters is her/his distance from her/his representative. Congruence is high when the absolute distance between the citizen and the representative is small (Golder and Stramski 2010: 92). Although for representatives, who can be individual deputies, parties or governments (assuming that they are unitary actors) and represent not one but many citizens, this conceptualization makes little sense (2010: 92), this perspective has proven useful for research examining citizens' behaviour in pursuit of policy representation, such as the party choices of cross-pressured voters (Lefkofridi et al. 2014a), vote-switching across electoral arenas (Bakker et al. 2018) and turnout (Lefkofridi et al. 2014b); also, it has been used in work assessing congruence's effects (Mayne and Hakhverdian 2017).

'Many-to-One':

A 'many-to-one' representational relationship concerns many citizens and one representative. Within the body of work that conceptualizes representation in this way, however, there are important variations. First, the works sharing the 'many-to-one' conceptualization vary regarding the kind of representational relationship they assess: whose preferences are compared to those of the citizens/voters? The 'representative' can be an individual deputy, a party or a government (assuming they are unitary actors). Given the central role of governments in the policymaking process, some studies examine the ideological distance between the citizenry and the government (Golder and Stramski 2010; Huber and Powell 1994). Others pay attention to congruence between parties and voters (e.g. Giger and Lefkofridi 2014; Thomassen 2012; Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012). This approach generates knowledge of

representational relationships between citizens and parties that do not often feature in cabinets, such as those at the margins of party systems (e.g. Lefkofridi and Casado-Asensio 2013). This concept has also been used to assess the relationship between voters and individual members of parliament (e.g. Vasilopoulou and Gattermann 2013).

Second, works in this tradition differ regarding their operationalization of the representative's distance to the citizens/voters: some use the absolute distance between the median citizen and the representative (e.g. Powell 2006, 2000; Powell and Vanberg, 2000; Huber and Powell 1994); others use the average absolute distance (e.g. Lefkofridi and Casado-Asensio 2013; Thomassen 2012; Blais and Bodet 2006; Achen 1978), or the relative citizen congruence (e.g. André and Depauw 2017; Vasilopoulou and Gattermann 2013; Golder and Stramski 2010), which take the dispersion of citizen preferences into account.

'Many-to-Many':

When viewing representation as a 'many-to-many' relationship, we conceptualize congruence as the distance between the citizenry and the body of representatives or the legislature (e.g. Thomassen and Schmitt 1999; Holmberg 1999a; Thomassen 1994). This concept has been operationalized as the median citizen's position to that of the median legislator's positions (e.g. Golder and Lloyd 2014). As central tendencies tend to be 'crude' measures of this type of relationship (Golder and Ferland 2018; Andeweg 2011), more promising methodological routes include curve shape analysis (e.g. Holmberg 1999a) and the comparison of (cumulative or non-cumulative) distributions of citizens' preferences and those of their legislators (e.g. Andreadis and Stavrakakis 2017; von Schoultz and Wass 2015; Andeweg 2011; Golder and Stramski 2010). As Golder and Stramski (2010: 96) explain, 'congruence is high when the distributions of citizen and representative preferences are similar; it is perfect when the two distributions are identical'. Nearly perfect congruence is possible in the empirical world, as suggested by Andeweg's (2011) study of the Netherlands (but see also Thomassen's 2012 Dutch study below).

Drawing on developments in distant disciplines (e.g. graph theory, pattern recognition, cryptography, molecular biology) Lupu et al. (2017) propose a new operationalization of the many-to-many relationship: the Earth Measure Distance (EMD). Three promising features of this method are: first, the variable-size signatures (generalized histograms), which reduce the need for data binning; second, the calculation of all pairwise distances across signatures ensures that the amount and location of all available information enters the calculation of congruence (Lupu et al. 2017: 96). Third, it can be used to measure congruence on multiple issue dimensions (2017: 96). A prerequisite is that citizens and elites are surveyed based on identical scales (more on data issues below).

In essence, the concept of representation used by different studies of congruence depends on the specific research question at hand; some conceptualizations suit some research goals better than others. At the same time, how we conceptualize congruence affects how we go about operationalizing and measuring it, and as a result, the picture

of the representational relationship different studies produce may vary accordingly. A related issue in the literature concerns what exactly is being assessed, to which we now turn.

What Kind of Congruence?

Most studies examine ‘ideological congruence’ between citizens and elites, which is typically understood as their distance on the general left–right dimension (e.g. Golder and Stramski 2010; Powell 2009; Blais and Bodet 2006; McDonald and Budge 2005; Powell 2000; Chapter 13 in this *Handbook*). The left–right heuristic, which is rooted in the French Revolution, summarizes divergent policy positions and provides an organizing principle for party competition and voting behaviour. The conceptualization (and measurement) of congruence as proximity on the left–right dimension provides valuable information about the match between parties and their supporters regarding their general ideological orientation. This approach has been particularly useful for comparative research on congruence and for related works that study parties’ dispersion in relation to the distribution of citizens’ preferences (e.g. Ezrow 2008, 2007).

In a seminal piece entitled ‘The Blind Corner of Representation’, Jacques Thomassen (2012: 13) suggested that studies focusing on the left–right may offer ‘a too optimistic picture of the effectiveness of the process of political representation’. This optimism lies on the implicit or explicit assumption that ‘representativeness on the left–right dimension automatically implies representativeness on a range of other issues as well’ (2012: 13). Thomassen (2012) challenges this assumption with evidence that casts doubt to the ‘almost perfect’ ideological congruence shown by Andeweg (2011): Dutch parties and their supporters fail to achieve congruence on some specific issues—especially those poorly related to the general left–right dimension (see also Schakel and Hakhverdian 2018).

Costello et al. (2012) extend this finding to Europe as a whole: political preferences are not structured along a single dimension; instead, three dimensions are necessary to describe the policy attitudes of voters and candidates: an economic left–right dimension, a cultural dimension, and a dimension tapping views on the EU. While congruence between parties and their supporters is high on the general left–right dimension, the picture changes when examining specific socio-economic issues, cultural issues, and gender issues (Dalton 2017). Moreover, congruence between citizens and elites on European integration and European policies is worse than on the (general or the economic) left–right dimension (e.g. Lefkofridi and Katsanidou 2014; Costello et al. 2012; Lefkofridi and Casado-Asensio 2013; Mattila and Raunio 2012, 2006; Thomassen and Schmitt 1999; but see Schmitt and Thomassen 2000).

Variation of congruence levels across issue dimensions is also manifested by a collection of studies of Latin American countries (Joignant et al. 2017). For example, Lupu and Warner (2017: 283) find high overall congruence in Argentina, but mass-elite

agreement varies across issue dimensions (e.g. the trade-off between public order and civil liberties). What all these studies suggest is that we should be cautious when we treat the left–right as ‘a complete measure of democratic representation’ since ‘voters, and party elites can be identified as Left–Right without holding consistent or even informed views on the issues that are typically associated with this label’ (Dalton 2017: 618).

These developments led congruence research to rethink conventional concepts of congruence and enrich spatial understanding by incorporating issue salience or priorities (Traber et al. 2017; Reher 2015; Giger and Lefkofridi 2014). This rests on the assumption that issues citizens consider important may exert a stronger influence than non-salient issues or broad ideological orientations on their selection of parties. In fact, for many citizens a fully congruent option at the party level may not exist (Thomassen 2012; Van Der Brug and Van Spanje 2009). Such citizens are thus cross-pressured between getting either their sociocultural or their socio-economic views represented. To illustrate, the party choices of left-authoritarian voters, who hold left-wing socio-economic views and right-wing sociocultural views, are shaped by their level of concern about the economy and immigration (Lefkofridi et al. 2014a).

Finally, some studies examine congruence between citizens and their representatives in terms of their preferences for the representational roles and foci of elites. This different type of congruence, which is often studied along with policy congruence (e.g. André and Depauw 2017, Belchior et al. 2016), concerns citizens’ elite views of the representational process. Styles of representation have been found to have close links to citizen-elite congruence regarding political preferences (Önnudóttir 2014). Since such data are not always available in comparative datasets, this line of inquiry has been mainly advanced by case-study research: studies of Spain (Méndez-Lago and Martínez 2002) or the Netherlands (Andeweg and Thomassen 2005) show less positive findings for this type of congruence than, for instance, studies of Finland (Von Schoultz and Wass 2015) and Sweden (Holmberg 1989).

Measurement of Congruence Based on Different Sources of Information

Since the study of congruence requires the combination of valid and reliable information about mass and elite preferences, a fundamental methodological issue concerns suitable sources of information for deriving their positions, and the compatibility of measurements at mass and elite levels. Within the field, higher variation is observed regarding the sources of elite preferences. Though estimates of party positions based on different data sources (e.g. manifestos, voters’ perceptions of party locations, surveys of candidates/members of parliament or experts) generally converge (Marks et al. 2007), each source’s use raises different concerns. Regarding the sources of citizens’ preferences, there is less variation: they are typically derived from mass surveys. To be sure, when survey respondents are asked to place themselves on a scale, they may interpret

the meaning of questions and scales differently and give ‘different responses even though they may have identical underlying attitudes’ (Krosnick and Presser 2010: 269). This danger is inherent to all survey-based approaches to the measurement of congruence (and survey research more generally). Here I briefly review five approaches that employ different (combinations of) data sources, and highlight their respective strengths and weaknesses.⁵

Citizens’ Self-Placements and their Perceptions of Party Locations:

One methodological approach is to combine citizens’ self-placements on the x issue dimension (most commonly the general left–right dimension) with citizens’ perceptions of party positions on the same dimension. This fits the ‘many-to-one’ conceptualization of congruence and can be used to measure citizens’ representational relationship with parties in government and/or in parliament (Blais and Bodet 2006).

This approach allows citizens their own interpretation of the scale and enables researchers to place parties and citizens on the same distance metric (Golder and Stramski 2010; Blais and Bodet 2006). The assumption, however, that voters can accurately locate party positions has not gone unchallenged. In fact, many survey respondents lack information about where parties stand (Kritzing and McElroy 2012). Also, voters’ sympathy for some parties over others might affect their placement of parties (Drummond 2011; Merrill et al. 2001): voters tend to perceive the parties they like as being closer to them than they actually are (‘assimilation’); and they do the opposite with the parties they dislike (‘contrast’). Finally, respondents may place themselves and their preferred candidate/party in the middle of the scale while pushing those they dislike towards the extremes; this would result in the electorate appearing as less polarized than it actually is (Hare et al. 2015: 760). This form of Differential Item Functioning (DIF) (see King et al. 2004) may pose problems in comparative analyses since it can constrain comparability between respondents across ideologically distinct electoral or geographic units (Hare et al. 2015: 760).

Citizens’ and Elites’ Self-placements:

A second approach combines citizens’ self-placements on the x issue dimension with elites’ placements on the same dimension. Sources of elite opinion are surveys of candidates standing for office or members of parliament (e.g. Ramstetter and Habersack 2019; Leemann and Wasserfallen 2016; Andeweg 2011; Thomassen and Schmitt 1997, 1999). This approach uses items with very similar or identical wording at the elite and mass levels, and thus approaches the ‘ideal’ (see Krosnick and Presser 2010). This enables the assessment of congruence between citizens and their representatives in legislatures, since it allows comparing the distribution of both actors’ preferences on the same issues. It also allows exploring variation within parties in legislatures vis-à-vis their congruence with citizens. Nonetheless, the possibility that elites and masses might not understand the issue dimensions in the exact same way still exists, which is a potential source of bias. The problem with this approach is that the rich data it necessitates are expensive to collect, and thus unavailable in many countries

(with the Netherlands and Sweden being notable exceptions, Andeweg 2011; Holmberg 2011). This method can also be utilized to study congruence regarding views on representation or policy priorities; besides self-placements, some countries' representation studies and some cross-sectional candidate surveys include open questions about which policy problems the respondents view as most important.

Citizens' Self-placements and Experts' Placements of Parties:

This measurement approach combines data on individual citizens' self-placements collected via a mass survey with political parties' positions derived from a survey among experts (political scientists). As they follow parties closely, experts are thought to best know the 'true' party positions (Powell 2009), which they evaluate on the basis of legislative behaviour, manifestos, leaders' speeches etc. Steenbergen and Marks (2007: 358–9) show that there is remarkable agreement amongst experts about party positioning, which suggests they use the same evaluation criteria. Reliability tests and cross-validation analyses of the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) vis-à-vis other expert survey data suggest considerably high levels of inter-expert reliability and a common structure across different measures (Hooghe et al. 2010). An argument against this approach is that citizens and experts might not always have the same things in mind when interpreting scales (Powell 2009; Blais and Bodet 2006). Indeed, this combination of citizen and expert survey data is prone to DIF; to minimize validity concerns, the data used for the study of congruence should ideally come from surveys, which are conducted at the same point in time and employ the same scales or wording (Golder and Stramski 2010: 99). While there is no study showing that citizens and experts interpret the scales in a *different* way, different interpretations of questions and answer scales are possible among citizens as well (as discussed above).

Citizens' (perceived) Preferences or Behaviour vs. Elite Behaviour:

A fourth alternative to measuring congruence between citizens' preferences and their representatives combines information on citizens' opinion with roll-call votes. Representation here is assessed as the association between constituency opinion and roll-call voting on a pairwise basis. In fact, this is how the entire literature on the ties between citizens and their representatives began. The pioneer study by Miller and Stokes (1963) examined whether individual deputies' behaviour in congress was congruent with their district's opinion; these authors identified two conditions for constituency influence: first, voters would choose congressmen whose policy preferences were close to their own; second, congressmen, who sought re-election, would follow their perceptions of constituents' preferences (Miller and Stokes 1963: 50).

A criticism of this approach, which combines mass survey data with legislators' roll-call votes (e.g. Kuklinski and Elling 1977) concerns the 'inherent incommensurability' between attitudes' scales and roll calls (McDonagh 1993: 178): while what we measure at the citizen level (attitudes) are 'psychological predispositions to act', what we measure at the elite level (roll call) are not attitudes, but overt acts. To solve this problem, Eileen McDonagh (1993: 189) derives constituency opinion from referenda

votes, which are ‘behaviors commensurate with representative roll-call votes’. Despite being informative of the bond between what citizens opine and what policymakers do, studies using roll-call votes face an important empirical problem, namely that roll calls do not constitute a random sample of the universe of votes cast, but only a small fraction of them (Carruba et al. 2006). Outside the US and the European Parliament, roll-call vote analysis is rare (see Chapter 6 in this *Handbook*).

Citizens’ Votes combined with Party Manifestos:

The fifth approach derives parties’ positions based on their published manifestos (Budge and Klingemann 2001). This method (similarly to the second) relies on direct measurement of the positions of parties, which are viewed as unitary actors. Where this method differs substantially from all others is how it measures citizens’ opinion: rather than their attitudes, this method focuses on citizens’ behaviour (but see Klingemann 1995, who compares citizens’ preferences with party manifestos). The position of the median voter is derived from the estimated party positions and the vote shares of these parties (Kim and Fording 2003). A key assumption here is that voters support the party closest to them (see Warwick and Zakharova 2013 for related criticism).

Powell (2009: 1478) discusses this method’s merits compared to the survey-based approaches: manifestos provide ‘election-specific measures’ of party stances; also, rather than relying on an abstract survey question, it concentrates on citizens’ votes, which is a ‘behavioural manifestation’ of their preference; moreover, this approach uses the same metric for parties and their voters; finally, because manifesto data cover long time periods, this approach enables a longitudinal study of congruence. That said, this method has been criticized for its tendency to produce higher congruence scores (but see Powell 2018); this approach to congruence is ‘circular’ because the same information (party position derived from manifestos) is utilized for the voter and party ideology dimensions compared (Andeweg 2011; Blais and Bodet 2006). Another concern⁶ related to the content analysis of manifestos is their focus on the frequency with which issues are mentioned, which captures better the salience of left–right issues (compared to positions) (Andeweg 2011: 40) than the position of a party.

DETERMINANTS OF CITIZENS-ELITES CONGRUENCE

As a property of the representational relationship, congruence can be influenced by factors that facilitate or obstruct the ‘match’ between those seeking expression and representation and those seeking electoral support in pursuit of public policy. This suggests that the alignment between citizens and representatives (understood as parties, parliamentary deputies, entire legislatures or governments) may be affected by different factors operating at different levels of analysis.

Political Institutions

Given political scientists' strong affinity with institutions, it comes as no surprise that congruence research has sought to uncover the structural-institutional determinants of congruence.

The biggest controversy over the institutional determinants of congruence concerns the potential effect of electoral rules, and is mainly due to the use of different methodologies and data (for a detailed discussion, see Golder and Ferland 2018). Proportional representation (PR) has been considered more conducive to congruence because it produces more parties, and thus more choice for voters. While several studies focusing on the median voter find that PR systems perform better in terms of congruence (e.g. Huber and Powell 1994; Powell 2000; Powell and Vanberg 2000; McDonald and Budge 2005; Powell 2006), others refute this claim (Blais and Bodet 2006; Golder and Lloyd 2014). Moreover, while some studies show that non-PR systems produce higher congruence with the government and that PR generates higher congruence with legislatures (Wessels 1999; Golder and Stramski 2010, Lupu et al. (2017) find no PR superiority in congruence between citizenries and legislatures (on the left-right or multiple dimensions). Moreover, electoral systems seem inconsequential regarding party-voter congruence (Belchior 2013; Dalton 2017; see also Chapter 13 in this *Handbook*).

However, Rohrschneider and Whitefield (2012: 183) show that the effect of electoral institutions on congruence is conditional on the characteristics of electorates: proportionality matters more for congruence with electorates composed of many partisans, and less for electorates with many independents. Moreover, Bernauer et al. (2015) show that the electoral system proportionality and especially large district magnitudes help in closing the ideological congruence gap between rich and poor voters.

Congruence research has also examined the potential effects of political institutions beyond electoral rules. Recent studies of congruence in complex multilevel polity structures show that parties are generally capable of channelling citizens' demands and producing congruence (Van Haute and Deschouwer 2018; Lefkofridi and Katsanidou 2014). Also, research found that when representation is combined with direct democratic institutions, initiatives help bridge citizens-elite congruence gaps (Matsusaka 2018; Leemann and Wasserfallen 2016).

Characteristics of Parties and Party Systems

Given differences in historical, political, socio-economic, and institutional trajectories, a puzzling finding is that congruence in Western and Eastern Europe is hardly different (Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012: chapter 5). In fact, achieving congruence is more difficult in the more affluent European West as voters' preferences become more diverse and less socially rooted, which increases the complexity of the issue space on which parties seek to represent (Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012: 173). This work

underlines the role played by parties: strong party organizations help increase congruence with diverse voters, while a large class base decreases congruence to the partisans of large centre-left and centre-right parties (Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012: chapters 6 and 7).

Another important factor for congruence is parties' ideological clarity (Walczak and Van Der Brug 2013). Parties take extreme positions and emphasize them if other parties in the system fail to do so, if this helps them to distinguish themselves from other parties, and if they are relatively small in terms of vote share (Wagner 2012). Inquiries into congruence achieved by parties on the fringes finds that radical right parties, whose most publicized issue is opposition to immigration, score higher on sociocultural issues; but radical left parties, which capitalize on opposition to neo-liberal economic policies, do not score higher on socio-economic issues (Walczak and Van Der Brug 2013; Lefkofridi and Casado-Asensio 2013).

Within parties, there may be variation in the extent to which elites are in line with voters' wishes: elites with accurate perceptions of their voters' ideological position consistently manifest higher congruence with their electorate (Belchior 2013; but see Holmberg 1999b), while ideologically polarized elites tend to be less congruent with voters' positions (Belchior 2013; Chapter 13 in this *Handbook*).

Polarization at the party system level seems to decrease congruence between parties and their supporters in Europe (Carroll and Kubo 2018; but see Lefkofridi and Horvath 2012 on the issues of immigration and immigrants' integration). In Latin America, electoral volatility and party age (as proxies for party system institutionalization) do not seem to affect congruence; there, congruence is negatively affected by parties' long terms in office (Lupu et al. 2017).

Voters' Characteristics

A recent debate in the literature on congruence concerns inequalities in political representation (Lefkofridi et al. 2012). Since representative bodies do not mirror closely the socio-demographic diversity of the represented (in terms of age, gender, income, ethnic background, etc.), studies of unequal representation are essentially concerned about the links between descriptive and substantive representation (see Chapters 8–10 in this *Handbook*). Whereas previous studies of congruence focused on all citizens or all voters of specific parties, this specific strand asks whether the representational relationship is systematically weaker or stronger for some groups of citizens than for others.

Motivated by the absence of poor elites, research analyses potential effects of income on congruence. Despite variation amongst countries, Giger et al. (2012) show that party systems are skewed towards the rich, while governments are further away from the poor in almost half of their country cases. Moreover, Lupu and Warner (2017) show that Argentinian elite preferences are closer to the wealthy (along with residents of the capital, and government supporters).

Against the backdrop of worldwide underrepresentation of women, Dingler et al., (2018) examine congruence on multiple dimensions and find that women exhibit higher congruence with their representatives than men; this is brought about by women's levels of electoral participation, not by the numbers of female deputies.

Finally, attitudes of educated, middle-class and politically knowledgeable European voters seem better represented by elites (Walczak and Van Der Brug 2013). Generally, congruence appears higher for those with higher political sophistication (Boonen et al. 2017), who are more able to identify with the most congruent parties. In this regard, party identification affects congruence negatively (Boonen et al. 2017). Interestingly, a study of congruence within Swedish parties shows that ideological incongruence appears higher for 'emancipated' party members (i.e. higher levels of political interests and a more independent self-conception) (Kölln and Polk 2017).

Macroeconomic Factors

In Latin American countries, Lupu et al. (2017: 109) find a statistically significant association between economic development and diminished mass–elite congruence across multiple dimensions. In Europe, macro-level economic factors have not been shown to exert strong effects on congruence. That said, the congruence gap on gender issues appears lower in affluent countries (Dalton 2017). Moreover, congruence research shows that the elite bias towards the rich is stronger in economically unequal societies (Rosset et al. 2013).

Finally, party–voter congruence is sensitive to economic shocks, which impact both parties' policy options and issue salience. The economic and financial crisis in Europe appears to decrease policy and issue salience congruence, but not congruence on issues that pertain to the representation process as such (Traber et al. 2017; Belchior et al. 2016).

EFFECTS OF CITIZENS-ÉLITES CONGRUENCE

Recent comparative work shows that congruence between citizens and representative elites matters greatly for citizens' participation in, and satisfaction with, representative democracy. Ideological incongruence with viable parties seems to matter for citizens located on the left and right margins of the political spectrum: when no viable party advocates ideological positions close to their own, extremist citizens in countries using PR are likely to abstain (Lefkofridi et al. 2014b). Ideological congruence also impacts citizens' satisfaction with democracy (SWD): egocentric congruence affects SWD, especially among citizens with high levels of political sophistication; interestingly, however, sociotropic congruence does not impact SWD—not even among political

sophisticates (Mayne and Hakhverdian 2017). Importantly, the relationship between congruence and satisfaction with democracy holds when looking at multiple policy issue dimensions. Stecker and Tausendpfund (2016) study citizens' congruence with the government on six issue dimensions (left-right, redistribution, European integration, social lifestyle, immigration, and environmental protection). Their analysis shows that SWD declines when the government pursues deviating policies, particularly on the general left-right dimensions and the issues of redistribution and European integration. They also find that SWD is reduced by incongruence, especially for citizens exhibiting high levels of political interest. In addition to policy congruence, congruence between citizens and elites in terms of views on the representational process is also consequential for SWD (André and Depauw 2017). Finally, policy priority congruence impacts the likelihood of non-partisans' electoral participation (Reher 2014), while its effect on SWD increases with democratic experience (i.e. the age of democracies, and the quality of governance) (Reher 2015).

CONCLUSION

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Though all works on congruence are interested in the link between the represented and their representatives, they conceive this relationship in different ways. The 'many-to-one' concept fits those scrutinizing individual deputies' or parties' agreement with their supporters, or the link between the government and the median voter. The 'many-to-many' is most suitable for examining the representativeness of assemblies, and the 'one-to-one' is useful for works analysing citizens' behaviour in pursuit of policy representation (e.g. turnout and party choice). In sum, depending upon the specific research question, 'representatives' can be understood as individual deputies, parties (assuming they are unitary actors), governments or legislatures; and the 'represented' can be understood as the average voter, parties' supporters, or individual citizens. More recent congruence research pays attention to the link between representatives and different *types* of citizens, for example, partisans versus independents, men versus women, poor versus rich.

Besides differences in conceptualization, studies in the field differ regarding the kind of congruence they analyse: congruence can mean broad ideological agreement (left-right), or agreement on multiple issue dimensions; it can also mean accordance in terms of policy issue priorities, or styles and foci of representation. Moreover, congruence studies also differ regarding their data sources: while surveys are predominantly used for citizens' opinions, information on elites comes from several sources: mass, elite, and expert surveys, party manifestos and roll calls. Every approach has advantages and disadvantages.

The richness of congruence research lies precisely in its diversity in terms of research designs and approaches to conceptualizing, operationalizing and measuring the representational relationship. Crucially, our knowledge of the quality of representation is advanced because congruence scholarship is creative: while representation looks good

for the median voter on the left–right dimension, a more fine-grained (and not as rosy) picture emerges when looking at sub-constituencies and beyond broad ideological orientations. While the debate on the determinants of congruence is far from being settled, evidence about its positive effects on political behaviour and satisfaction with the system is accumulating.

NOTES

1. For congruence in competitive authoritarian regimes, for example, Angola, see Belchior et al. (2018).
2. I am grateful to Viktoria A. Jansesberger and Franziska Obermair for research assistance for this chapter.
3. Given the breadth and diversity of this field, this would go beyond the scope of a single chapter.
4. To be sure, congruence is not the only approach to studying the linkage between the opinion of (parts of) the public and their representatives. A closely related concept is responsiveness; the two concepts are often mixed in the literature (Arnold and Franklin 2012). Here, it suffices to say that congruence is a static concept that reveals the extent to which the positions or actions of representatives are in line with citizen preferences at a fixed point in time. While congruence can be used to study representation dynamically (e.g. Schmitt and Thomassen 2000), longitudinal studies tend to use the concept of responsiveness. Responsiveness mainly concerns the extent to which representatives change their positions or behaviour to increase congruence with the represented over time (Golder and Ferland 2018); related works also examine the extent to which public opinion responds to government's policy change. Given consensus in the literature that congruence and responsiveness are two distinct concepts (for a comprehensive discussion see Beyer and Hänni 2018; see also Golder and Ferland 2018; Wlezien 2017), in the present chapter I discuss work that uses the concept of congruence. This choice results in a key difference between this and other discussions of the opinion–policy link, which focus mainly on responsiveness and US-research (e.g. Burstein 2003; Wlezien 2017). In discussing research, I adopt a comparative approach but place special emphasis on Europe, whose rich variation in terms of institutions, party systems, compositions of electorates, and issues of conflict helps to provide a balanced account of the key debates in the literature.
5. See also Powell (2009: 1477–80) for a detailed account of the first, third, and fifth approaches discussed here.
6. For a critical discussion of merits and pitfalls of this kind of data, see Gemenis (2013).

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CHAPTER 19

MANDATE VERSUS ACCOUNTABILITY

G. BINGHAM POWELL, JR

How can competitive elections systematically induce good representative governments, that is, governments that are ‘acting in the interests of the represented, in a manner responsive to them’ (Pitkin 1967: 209)? This apparently simple question has many complex elements. Every chapter in this *Handbook* elucidates something relevant to it. But the political science literature emphasizes two major types of electoral connection between citizens and their governments.

One type of connection focuses on public commitments made by prospective policymakers in an election, forward-looking voters selecting preferred commitments, and the newly elected policymakers enacting those commitments. I shall refer to this type of connection as ‘mandate’ representation, referencing the frequent claim by election winners to have a ‘mandate’, which includes both an authorization by the voters and an obligation to enact promised policies. Another type of connection focuses on backward-looking voters considering the record of incumbent policymakers and using the election to reward (retain) those they deem successful and punish (evict) those they deem unsuccessful. I shall refer to this type of connection as ‘accountability’, referencing the idea that incumbents are held accountable through sanctions for their behaviour.

Each type of electoral connection could play a supportive part that encourages good government representation. The mandate connection induces prospective policymakers to offer attractive alternatives in the election and selects the more appealing of these to become post-election policy. This forward-looking connection is especially important because some policies are not easily reversed once initiated.¹ In the accountability connection the prospect of electoral punishment for failure to keep promises (whether through unfaithfulness or incompetence) provides an incentive to fulfil mandates and, ultimately, a mechanism for getting competent promise-keepers into policymaking offices. Sometimes, however, mandates and accountability collide, as discussed in the third section.

MANDATES AND REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENTS

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The place to begin in thinking about mandates is the simple *promissory relationship*. The candidate or party makes a campaign promise. Citizens expect the winner to keep that promise. If the candidates make competing promises, voters can choose the one they like best, which will create a connection between what the voters want and the policies to which their representative is committed.

Promissory Connections Between Collective Principals And Unified Governments

Deep complexities emerge when this simple relationship moves into the world of national politics. There are many real and potential issues and even more possible policies. ‘Voters’ and ‘citizens’ are collectives, with many, many possible configurations of preferences about these issues and policies to deal with them. Parties and governments are also collectives, but for the moment I shall simplify by assuming that they act cohesively.

We can survey the citizens about their preferences. But we cannot ask about all possible issues and solutions, about many of which citizens will have no developed preferences. For this reason we probably can never know about the ‘true’, underlying configuration of total preferences.

Even if we could discover the preference configuration, social choice theory has shown that in many configurations there is no single preferred position that would always emerge from choosing amongst them. The chosen outcome would depend on the order and manner of choosing, on strategic manipulations, and so forth (see, e.g. Arrow 1951; Riker 1982). These kinds of considerations led William Riker (1982) to dismiss the whole idea of policymakers matching what citizens want as intractable and misleading.

Many studies over many years have also demonstrated that even in experienced democracies with educated citizenries and sophisticated mass media, most citizens remain largely ignorant of many political issues and proposed alternatives (e.g. Lazarsfeld et al. 1948; Campbell et al. 1960; Achen and Bartels 2016). The absence of an ‘enlightened’ citizenry, aware of which policies are in their own interests, is theoretically discouraging to the prospects for good representation (Dahl 1989: 111–12).

Moreover, what happens when upon assuming office, the winner discovers that his or her proposed policy was in fact not in the interests of those who voted for him or her? Ideally, the good representative should not blindly carry out policies against the

interests of his principals, but deliberate with them, educate them, and lead them to discover their best interests. This is one of the ways in which good representation is not merely a mechanical substitute for direct voting on issues, but something capable of delivering better policies (Mansbridge 2003: 515). But will the representative behave appropriately or exploit his or her greater information for selfish interests?

Or, what should happen if the voters change their minds about the policies they prefer? Perhaps the voters learn better, or perhaps new voters enter the electorate, or perhaps unexpected events (an international recession, like that of 2008–2010) changed the range of possibilities. Mansbridge (2003) suggests that *anticipation* of what voters will want at the next election is a legitimate form of good representation that can appropriately supersede the initial promissory connection when they differ.

The remarkable empirical research enterprise called the ‘promise-keeping project’, has examined over 20,000 promises by eighty-one parties in fifty-seven governments in twelve countries to estimate whether a specific promise had been kept in the three years after the election (Thomson et al. 2017; Naurin et al. 2019). This team of scholars has learned much about which promises are more likely to be kept (promises to retain the status quo) and under which conditions (improving economic conditions, single-party governments, pre-election coalition governments). Their research shows that single party parliamentary governments in developed democracies did implement around 80 per cent of their campaign promises. But they have not (yet) determined whether the promises that were *not* kept were the ones that contradicted the emergent preferences or interests of the citizens.

‘Ideology’ as Structured Promises or ‘Gyroscopic’ Type

Social choice theory does tell us that there are some structures of voter preferences that permit us to identify the policy choice that best matches the configuration (e.g. Riker 1982: 128). If by ‘ideology’ we simply mean a “single-peaked” structure of issue preferences that lines up possible policy positions on a single dimension (call it ‘left’ to ‘right’), we can identify the ideological position that could defeat any other position if rational voters chose between them. That socially preferred position is the one held by the median voter. (This result is often called the Medium Voter Theorem.)

When we ask voters about prominent issues, if their preferences line up that way, so that we can predict their positions on other issues from knowing their preference on the first issue, we have a unidimensional issue structure. (For example, a voter who is ‘right’ on restricting welfare benefits is also ‘right’ on restricting immigration.) Or, if we ask the voters to place themselves on a ‘left to right’ continuum, and to place the political parties on it, and if they can confidently place themselves and agree about placing the parties, we are in a situation where we can ascertain the most representative single ideological position, the one that minimizes the numbers of voters who oppose it, the position of the median voter.

The world is always more complicated than a unidimensional structure can reflect (see, e.g. Thomassen 2012). But the partisan discourse between the major contenders seems often to induce a very substantial degree of perceived unidimensionality in electoral competition. At times the emergence of new issues may create differences within the electorate or between electorate and party system. When the ‘post-materialist’ values gained more support and Green parties appeared reflecting these, there was initial uncertainty about the placement of such parties in established party systems (see Inglehart 1984, 1990). Some Green parties were perceived as ‘anti-system’, clearly adding a new dimension to competition. But eventually the Greens became widely perceived—on a slightly reconstructed left–right dimension—as on the moderate left. More recently, anti-immigration sentiments and some ‘radical right’ parties also strain the currently conventional understanding of the dimension (Dalton 2017). The ‘ideological’ structure is always changing its content. These changes have important implications for the content or even the possibility of ideological mandates. (For the implications of earlier changes for Social Democratic parties, see Kitschelt 1994.)

Such ideological structuring may reflect different things. Ideological organization may be a specific reflection of deeper underlying structuring of the policy universe at a given time. Or, it may be that voters identify with ideological groups and use that identification to interpret information and to organize issue sympathies. They may use party identification as a similar organizing device (Achen and Bartels 2016: chapters 9 and 10); or, it may be that the ideological perceptions are very superficial and are even artificial perceptions of a few salient issues, glued together by current media presentation of partisan discourse; or, some combination of these factors.

But whatever their origin, unidimensional ideological structures have two marked advantages over adding up specific policy promises. One advantage is that such a structured situation can greatly simplify the informational needs of the voter (Downs 1957) and of the media. Voters need not know deep nuances of many issue positions to choose their best party. They need only know their own ideological positioning and the positions of the party alternatives. The advantage of being able to describe electoral competition in unidimensional terms is likely one of the reasons for its ubiquity. But analysts need to know more.

A second advantage is that knowing a party’s ‘ideology’ may be to know its general ‘type’ with regard to most current, and even future, policy positions. This is, I think, close to what Mansbridge 2003 calls ‘gyroscopic’ representation, in which voters choose a representative whose committed type they know, confident that when new issues, or variations on issues, emerge, the representative will adopt specific policy positions consistent with the type. Importantly, if conditions change and the original promise seems no longer appropriate or possible to achieve, the representative can be relied upon to make policy adaptations that will conform to type—and thus to the voters’ preferences.

Of course, this advantage only holds insofar as the structure of the ideological discourse in the election matches reasonably well the policy alternatives salient to the electorate. In the last twenty-five years² a substantial body of research has emerged in

comparative politics matching the ideological positions of governments emerging after the elections with the position of the median citizen in that country (e.g. Huber and Powell 1994; Cox 1997; Powell 2000; McDonald et al. 2004; McDonald and Budge 2005; Blais and Bodet 2006; Dalton et al. 2011; Budge et al. 2012; Warwick 2016; Powell et al. 2018). Much of this literature has focused on which election rules (Single Member District or Proportional Representation, strong or permissive) and/or party configurations (two-party or multiparty, convergent or polarized) better facilitate election-driven ideological congruence between citizens and their governments. Two large and important cooperative research enterprises, the Comparative Manifesto Project and the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems, have facilitated this work.

Naturally, as in any new research focus, the participants have debated the most appropriate measurement tools and methods, the robustness of various empirical patterns, the appropriate time frames, and the broader implications of the findings (see, e.g. the ‘Symposium’ essays by Warwick; Best, Budge and McDonald; and Powell in *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, Powell et al. 2018). More recent research has not only delved deeper into these connections in the Western democracies, but has begun to explore them in Central Europe and in Latin America (Doering and Hellstrom 2013; Powell 2014; Crisp et al. 2020). This research has increased our understanding of the strengths and limitations of mandate connections.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENTS

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The second type of connection in which elections can induce good representation focuses on citizens evaluating the performance of incumbent office-holders. In principle these retrospective evaluations at the time of elections should encourage governments to behave as they think citizens want them to behave, thus reinforcing the reliability of mandates. Moreover, citizens might not need to know the nuances of policy promises or ideology. They could simply decide whether or not they like what the incumbents have done before the election, so the information requirements of a retrospective focus might be less. For these reasons many scholars believe that ‘accountability’ is both more workable and more important than ‘mandate’ in producing governments representative of their citizens (e.g. Achen and Bartels 2016: chapters 2 and 4).

Economic Accountability

Political scientists have produced a very large body of research on aspects of political accountability. Some attention has also been given to scandals, clientelism, and

corruption (Fisher and Hobolt 2010; Kitschelt and Kselman 2012; Schwindt-Bayer and Tavits 2016) and to other issue dimensions. But the bulk of this work has focused on citizen reactions to economic conditions before the election (Duch and Stevenson 2008: chapter 1). Most observers of elections within and across countries think that the performance of the economy affects voting outcomes. Voters are presumed to want good economic performance. Thus, good performance is presumed to help incumbents; poor performance, to hurt them. ‘It’s the economy, stupid’, the famous mantra of the Clinton presidential campaign in the United States in 1992, is a slogan of campaigns everywhere.

But, as with promise-keeping and mandates, there are many complications, even if policymaking power is concentrated and it is clear who are the policymakers. Consider just ‘the economy’:

- (1) ‘The economy’ is a very complex structure with many elements, many dimensions of performance, measured in many ways. Inflation, unemployment, growth, balance of payments, budget deficits, and so forth may not go together, and will be of varying importance to different parts of the electorate. Studies seem to indicate that per capita growth is the most consistently important of these for the average voter, but not necessarily to all groups of voters at all times.
- (2) Is it the personal impact of ‘the economy’, or national economic performance, or something in between, which most voters care about? If it’s national performance (as many studies conclude that it is), where do the voters get their information and upon which sources/indicators do they rely? Are different groups of voters embedded in different information environments?³ Are these consistent and accurate?
- (3) Do voters care more about absolute levels of performance, performance relative to past levels (shocks), or performance relative to neighbouring countries? Under what circumstances? These can all generate different assessments of performance across individuals and countries. Different studies offer different answers (e.g. Kayser and Peress (2012) find relative assessments, while Bartels (2014) finds absolute performance assessments).
- (4) In what time frame—the full period of incumbent tenure, only the most recent year before the election, or some decay pattern—should voters assess economic performance? Various studies suggest that in practice it is the most recent year or so, with rapid decay of the weight of earlier years. Achen and Bartels (2016: chapter 6) and others have criticized this voter ‘myopia’. It creates an incentive for new governments to get painful choices out of the way early and to pump up the economy as the election approaches, with potentially distortive implications in the long run. On the other hand, there is typically a time lag between any government policy and its consequences (e.g. McDonald and Budge 2005: chapter 10; Budge et al. 2012). So perhaps voters should not be weighting those early years of economic performance very heavily?

- (5) How are voters to use their performance assessments? The research has largely relied on two somewhat different models. Pure ‘sanction’ models evaluate incumbent performance and reward or avenge that performance, regardless of the opponents and the political context. ‘Selection’ models use performance of the economy in the past as a signal of economic competence of the incumbents, which will be one factor to take into account in making voting choices that shape future governments. Competence in executing distasteful policies may not be palatable, so ‘selection’ models must also take account of what the parties are promising.
- (6) How much account should voters take of the practical responsibility of their government for economic outcomes? If the national economy is shaken by events in other countries, as many national economies were by the 2008–2010 ‘Great Recession’ that originated in the United States, should the national government be punished? Bartels (2014) shows that many of them were. Similarly, is the government responsible if a continent-wide drought shatters local agriculture? Should that punishment depend on the gross economic shock or the national government’s efforts to respond to and ameliorate it? Too often, Achen and Bartels suggest, voters just ‘kick the dog’ in frustration and anger, evicting incumbents who may be competent and doing their best, but whom are punished anyway (2016: chapter 5). Other scholars have pushed back against some of their specific examples, but there certainly is evidence of ‘blind’ punishment and of the difficulties in assessing blame for various distressing social and economic outcomes.

General Consequences of Accountability

While these difficulties are easiest to illustrate in the often-studied area of general economic performance, they apply much more generally. Should the prime minister or her party be blamed for discovered corrupt behaviour by a member of the cabinet? Should the government be blamed for a failure to reduce immigration to promised levels, when constrained by treaty commitments or faced with surges in immigrant demand or illegal penetration? What are appropriate ways to cut welfare allotments or military spending when faced with a sharp decline in income, itself precipitated by a decline in demand for key exports? Should the government have anticipated these?

Given these complexities in accountability, especially in assessing blame, it is understandable if citizens often just adopt a ‘blind’ punishment strategy. But there are two important implications of blind punishment to keep in mind. First, an increasingly globalized, interdependent world may not only make it harder (on average) for parties to keep promises, but also for citizens to assess blame for policy failures. Thus, relying on accountability is not necessarily an easy substitute for relying on mandates in the face of globalization. At least, not if citizens are to do better than blind sanctions.

Second, if citizens punish incumbents for negative shocks regardless of their efforts, then what happens to policymakers' incentives to enact representative policies? If there are lots of uncontrollable shocks for which they are punished, the government is going to lose support (which aggregate data suggests that most governments do) regardless of their performance as representatives. In his more optimistic mode, Riker argues that this situation will make incumbents work harder in the interests of citizens (1982: 243). But in his more pessimistic mode, he warns us that the representational connection engendered by a purely retrospective strategy in a world of complex preferences is very shallow, indeed: 'The kind of democracy that thus survives is not, however, popular rule, but rather an intermittent, sometimes random, even perverse, popular veto' (1982: 244).

As with mandates, the nuances of the accountability connection can be so complex as to lead us to despair of strong inducement to good representation. Yet, there is much evidence from individual country studies and from controlled comparative analyses that voters do punish governments for perceived poor performance that corresponds to objective economic shocks and that they do take at least some account of conditions beyond the government's control (Duch and Stevenson 2008: chapters 6 and 7; Kayser 2014). Most governments make some effort to avoid conduct believed to result in such blame. We continue to learn more about these connections and conditions.

MANDATE VERSUS ACCOUNTABILITY

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Setting aside these various nuances, but still assuming concentrated governmental power, we can imagine an equilibrium of reinforcing ideological mandates and accountable governments. The combination leads to governments that are reasonably close to the median voter. Governments change as preferences change, or when incumbents prove incompetent, or when one of the parties ideologically close to the median benefits from random events.

If voters listen only to ideologically friendly information sources, or disregard contrary messages, they will hear about only supportive performance. If voters readjust their ideological or policy preferences, or their perceptions of the parties' ideological positions in response to poor (or outstanding) policy performance, this projection will also reinforce the (apparent) equilibrium. Some combination of information and projection (about which we need to know more) and genuine ideological choice leads about two-thirds of the voters in the parliamentary democracies in modernized societies to vote for the party that they perceive is the one closest to them (Best and McDonald 2011: 96; McDonald et al. 2012: 1113). About half of the voters choose a party that is both the closest as they perceive it and also in their ideological region as seen by the average citizen (Piotrowska and Powell 2017).

Mandates and Accountability in Conflict

But, if the voter finds that his or her ideological favourite has stumbled badly while in office, or that the disdained policies of a distant party turned out to work very well, then mandate and accountability will be out of balance. Sometimes, the presence of multiple votes or multiple parties with similar ideologies, or other strategic possibilities, will enable the voter to send multiple messages, punishing one party while supporting another in the same ideological region. However, a substantial number of voters (on average about a fifth of the electorate, but varying from country to country and election to election), choose to vote for a party that they themselves report is not the closest one and which the consensus perceives to be in a different ideological region (Piotrowska and Powell 2017).⁴

We do not know for sure, but it seems very probable that many of these deliberate ideological defections are driven by accountability concerns, as well as closely associated perceptions of relative leader attractiveness. When Duch and Stevenson find that on average (but varying by context) a perception of poor economic performance costs the incumbent about 5 per cent of the electorate, they have had already to take account of perceived ideological distance (2008: chapter 3). This specification is needed because sometimes the perceived poor national economic performance is disregarded by ideologically proximate voters or exaggerated by ideologically distant ones. According to Duch and Stevenson, the effects of economic perception and ideological distance are roughly equal in magnitude (2008: 93). This is an area about which we would like to know much more, including the degree to which biases in campaign-driven information and issue priming, and biases in projection and rationalization of perceived party positions and performance, understate the potential conflict between mandate and accountability connections.

Context and Consequence: Polarization

Naturally, we would also like to know much more about the implications of accountability-driven ideological defection for government representation. Warwick and Zakharova (2013) show, logically and empirically, that it is not the frequency of voter ideological defections, but their consistency in a single direction that pushes the represented party system to the right or left of the median voter. Objective shocks to economic growth are a strong candidate for inducing such directional defection (Warwick 2016). They are often associated with poor estimation of the competence of incumbent leaders. These and other analyses suggest that the need for accountability, which no one denies, is sometimes achieved at the cost of more congruent mandates (also see Powell 2019: chapter 8).

How much difference accountability shocks make to mandate congruence depends on factors that shape the formation of a government after the election. One of the most important of these is the polarization of the party system. If the political parties in the election are not very widely dispersed in the ideological space, then replacement of one governing party with another may not greatly alter the level of congruence. The new

government’s mandate may include cleaning up the scandal or softening the impact of declining international demand for exports, but the substantive ideological policy commitments of the new government are not very different from the commitments of the former incumbents. In such a low polarization (ideologically convergent) partisan context the tensions between accountability and mandates may be slight.

Figure 19.1 shows at the top the party configuration in Ireland in 2007 as an example. The two largest parties, which have traditionally alternated in government participation, are perceived as ideologically very similar. When in 2011 Ireland’s economy was severely shaken by the international Great Recession, an unpopular austerity policy deal with the European Union and the IMF, and domestic political

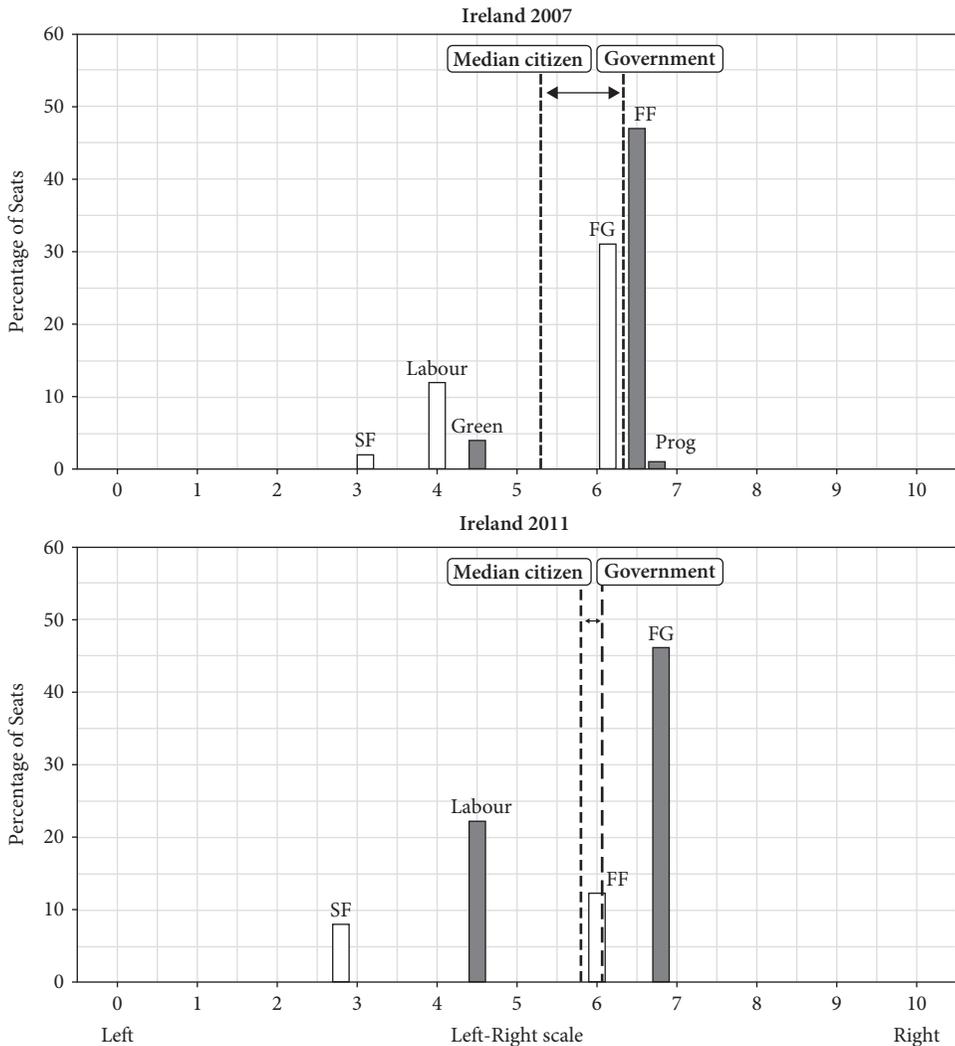


FIGURE 19.1 Ireland in 2007: Similar Large Parties and Consequences of Very Large Anti-incumbent Vote (25%) (Accountability) in 2011

Source: CSES (2015).

scandals as well, the incumbent Fianna Fail party lost 24 per cent of the electorate, the largest incumbent loss in any country according to the analysis of Bartels (2014: 191). But the new government in 2011 was dominated by Fine Gael, which, as we see at the bottom of Figure 19.1, was perceived as holding similar ideological commitments. In fact the new Fine Gael/Labour coalition was now closer to a slightly more rightist electorate than its predecessor. The huge accountability shock in 2011 actually slightly improved mandate congruence.

On the other hand, Figure 19.2 shows the implications of the election in Spain that same year. Here the incumbent Socialist government elected in 2008 lost nearly 15

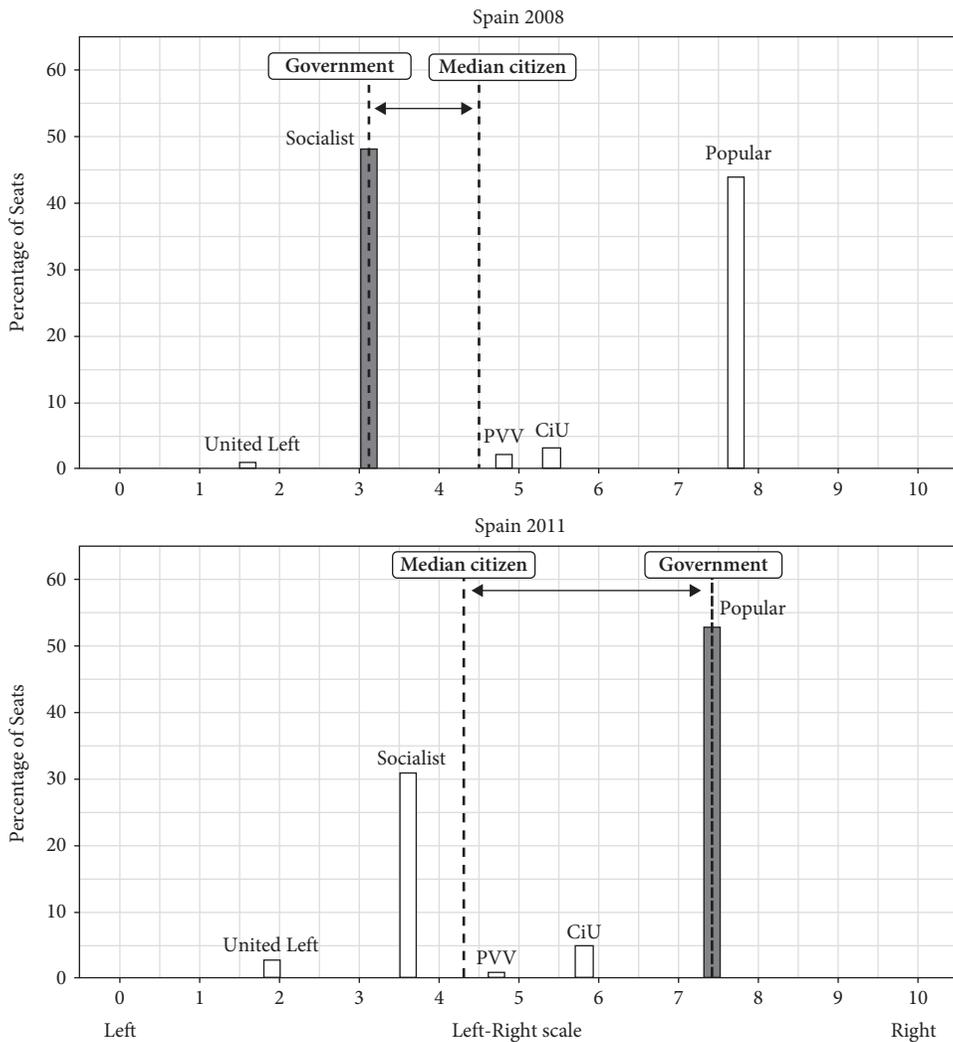


FIGURE 19.2 Spain in 2008 and 2011 Polarized Parties: Two Large Parties Quite Far Apart and Consequences of Very Large Anti-incumbent Vote (Accountability)–15% in 2011

Source: CSES (2015).

per cent of the electorate in 2011 in response to similar severe economic conditions and unpopular policies. Spain, like Ireland, had a national party system dominated by two large parties. But, unlike Ireland, the two major political parties were perceived as very far apart ideologically, with around 4 ideological points (on a 0–10 scale) separating the Socialists on the left and the Popular Party on the right.

The ideologically defecting choices of the Spanish voters, driven by accountability factors, were almost surely restrained from being even larger by the ideological configuration (see Dalton (2008) for how greater polarization sustains ideological voting). But these large losses were still sufficient to bring into office a much, much more distant government. In the situation of Spain in 2008–2011, with only two large national parties and great distance between them, there is a structurally driven conflict between these two mechanisms that induce representation. We can also see in Figure 19.2 that because the Socialists are closer to the median citizen, accountability punishment of a PP government could dramatically improve congruence. So polarization creates the possibility of conflict between accountability and ideological congruence; it does not guarantee it.

The contrast between the implications of voter punishment of incumbents for the pain of the Great Recession in Ireland and in Spain is only a particular example of conditions in which these two theoretically supportive mechanisms for good representation can undermine each other. McDonald and Budge contrast Canada and Sweden as a similar example (2005: 186). Multivariate analyses of the negative impact of party system polarization on ideological congruence appear in Kim et al. (2010), using manifesto data (as do McDonald and Budge), and in Powell (2011 and 2019: chapter 3) and Powell et al. (2018), using citizen perception data. However, that the degree of party system polarization can diminish or exacerbate the problem that valence-driven accountability poses for the goal of congruence is seldom emphasized.

COMPLICATIONS OF CONTEXT: DISPERSED POLICYMAKING POWER

The discussion to this point has assumed that voters directly choose a single government policymaker that can carry out promised policies and that can be held accountable for those actions. But many democratic governments are not like that. Rather than the power to make and implement public policies being concentrated, it is very often dispersed. Policymaking power may be dispersed across multiple policymaking institutions, as in presidential systems, multi-cameral legislatures, or federal constitutions; or, it may be dispersed across multiple policymaking actors, as in coalition governments or organized party factions; or, both (see, e.g. Lijphart 1999, 2012; Powell 2000; Tsebelis 2002). These patterns of dispersion of policymaking power affect both mandate and accountability connections between citizens and their governments.

Advantages of Concentrated Policymaking Power

Promise-keeping. The promising-keeping project examined over 20,000 campaign promises in twelve countries. They found that single party governments saw about 80 per cent or more of those promises fulfilled. This (surprisingly) turned out to be true whether or not the government party commanded a clear majority of its own representatives in the legislature. Parties who were members of coalition governments saw significantly fewer of their campaign promises fulfilled, although still usually more than half of them. It was significantly more helpful to hold the prime ministership than to be a junior partner, and nearly significantly helpful to hold the ministry relevant to the issue. Where the governing coalition partners had made the same promises, these were more likely to be fulfilled (all of these results are from Thomson et al. 2017). There seems little doubt that concentrated executive power helped sustain the basic promissory bond. However, this connection does not tell us, of course, whether the promises that were kept were those that were in the interests of the constituents.

Accountability. The very large literature on economic voting has been less definitive about concentrated power, but most of the scholarship agrees that citizens hold their governments accountable for perceived economic performance more clearly where executive power is concentrated. Moreover, under coalition governments citizens tend to focus the economic performance connection on the party of the prime minister. Duch and Stevenson (2008) also find the connections are clearer when the national government provides the greater proportion of effective policymakers. Measures of objective economic performance have less powerful effects than perceived performance, but seem to follow the same general pattern of stronger connections where power is more concentrated. More open, globalized economies seem to diminish both the electoral rewards and costs of economic performance.

Thus while, as we have seen, in some partisan contexts accountability and ideological congruence can work against each other, the same general condition of concentrated political power seems to encourage each of them.

Disadvantages of Concentrated Policymaking Power

Artificial advantage of minority preferences. One problem of concentrated policymaking power is that even with helpful electoral rules and homogeneous populations, it is rare for democratic elections to produce a single party that wins a majority of the votes. Thus, single party (or highly concentrated) executives must emerge from vote-seat distortion or supported minority governments. In this sense the concentration of policymaking power is artificial, created by the institutions or elite bargains, not by the preferences of citizens. The government in power, then, may represent preferences with which the majority would disagree, contrary to the most basic premises of democracy.

A majority of the voters has very often voted for parties other than the single party holding or dominating the executive. These losing parties, although collectively representing a majority of the electorate, typically see many fewer of their promises realized under single party governments than under coalition governments. Non-governing parties in such countries as Britain, Sweden, Portugal, and Canada saw only 20–30 per cent of their promises fulfilled (Thomson et al. 2017: 535).⁵

Distortion and incongruence. All election rules tend to help the larger parties and harm smaller parties (Rae 1967, 1971; Taagepera and Shugart 1989). (There are, of course, many complexities in this generalization, such as geographic concentration and pre-election coalitions, that are beyond the scope of this chapter.) But the extent of distortion is on average much greater under some types of election rules, such as single member districts, than others. If a single party wins more votes than any other and also holds the median position in the election, such vote-seat distortion can help create both concentration and congruence. When the median party and the largest party in the election are different, as they are about two-thirds of the time in the developed parliamentary systems, the enhancement of the latter into a dominant position through ‘strong’ election rules usually creates poor ideological congruence in the legislature and government (Powell and Vanberg 2000; Powell 2019: chapters 5 and 6). Yet, conditions for voters to exercise accountability in the next election have been created.

The large parties that dominate single party-type executives may also face problems of coherence and internal strain from different parts of their electorate, making the mandate bond less clear for their supporters than it might seem (Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012).

Moreover, advocates of dispersed political power systems have been traditionally more concerned to provide proportional voices in policymaking for all the groups, not only the majority or plurality (e.g. Mill [1861] 1958; Lijphart 1984, 1999). The presence of representative voices for all preference groups is seen as providing protection for minorities, or even majorities, against unpalatable policies of concentrated power governments (e.g. Dahl 1989: chapter 7).

Seeking representative voices to advocate for constituents, rather than effective policymaker mandates, is another way to transform the promissory bond (and its supportive sanctions) from the model of an individual constituency to a collective national legislature or executive. Cox argues, on the other hand, that ‘The nature of the representational problem is quite different when one talks of enacted rather than advocated policy. Ultimately, the government must choose a single policy to pursue’ (Cox 1997: 227). There are different normative values at stake here, as well as different emphases on empirical institutions of representation (Powell 2000: chapter 1).

Mandate Versus Accountability: Grand Coalitions

A striking form of policymaking power dispersed between political parties appears in the large coalition governments that include both of the two largest parties. These are

often called ‘grand coalitions’. Some liberal democracies, such as Switzerland and Finland, produce such grand coalitions quite often. Others, such as Netherlands, Germany, Austria, and Iceland, do so occasionally, in response to particular circumstances. I observed twenty grand coalitions, according to this definition, in the seventy-one elections that I analysed in nineteen parliamentary democracies (Powell 2019). The work of the promise-keeping project and the accountability research would lead us to expect that individual parties in such large coalitions would have trouble fulfilling their promises and also to be somewhat insulated from accountability. Thus, grand coalitions would seem harmful both to accountability and to individual party mandates.

However, the two largest parties are very often on the opposite sides of the median citizen. Dispersion of government ministries across these large parties often leads to government positions that are, on net, close to the median citizen (Powell 2019, chapters 6 and 8). Thus, these governments represent ideological congruence and collective mandates. Yet, accountability is still a problem for voters trying to evaluate party responsibility at the next election. In this respect the two virtuous connections are again often in conflict.

Such grand coalitions exemplify an extreme form of dispersed political power and show another way that collective ideological mandates and accountability can be in conflict when policymaking power is dispersed. When different parties control different policymaking institutions, such as upper and lower legislative houses, or legislatures and strong presidencies, a similar conflict can emerge.

REPRESENTATION AS MORE THAN A SUBSTITUTE FOR DIRECT DEMOCRACY

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Mansbridge (2003) argued that representation can be more than a practical substitute for direct democracy. Dispersed power institutions particularly both facilitate and require something more than direct democracy. First, dispersed power institutions require bargaining and negotiation in order to make good policy. Even if parties have similar ideological platforms or if the same party controls all the institutions, this bargaining will check hasty implementation of ill-considered campaign promises. (For the pitfalls of too hasty implementation, see the sobering discussion by Anthony King and Ivor Crewe of British government policies in *The Blunders of our Governments*, 2013. For analysis of the pitfalls of direct democracy see Achen and Bartels 2016: chapter 3.) Second, in dispersed policymaking contexts the citizen needs highly informed and skilful advocates if his or her preferences are to have influence on policies made by bargaining across institutions and/or partisans. Thus, we would expect dispersed power settings to emphasize advantages of representation over direct democracy.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Mandates and accountability are the two principal types of mechanisms that connect the preferences and interests of citizens with the behaviour of their political representatives. Under helpful conditions, such as concentrated policymaking power, low or moderate partisan polarization, and a consensus on a unidimensional space, they can work together effectively. The threat of sanctions encourages parties to offer palatable policies and presses the electoral winners to keep their promises in a responsible way. Good representatives can help educate their citizens to discern enlightened choices. Today, an increasingly globalized and interdependent world of unpredictable shocks makes it harder for both citizens and representatives to play their roles. But in helpful institutional contexts, the mandate-accountability equilibrium seems to hold pretty well, as we saw despite the multiple, party-shattering shocks in Ireland in 2007–2011.

When conditions are not as helpful, as when there are large policy distances between the major party alternatives or some parties are excluded from government, mandates and accountability can conflict. A large accountability shock may bring to power a new government whose policies are very different from those of the citizens. In dispersed power situations creative representatives may be able to construct multiparty governments that in net, are committed to policies close to the median citizen. But in those diverse multiparty governments individual parties will fulfil fewer of their specific promises and policy responsibility will be harder to determine. If Grand Coalitions are needed to form congruent governments, their power-sharing dampens accountability voting. Mandates and accountability then conflict strongly, or at best, exist in tension.

In a world of continuing shocks driven by increasing globalization of economies and population movements, it may seem especially advantageous to rely on broader ideological mandates, rather than specific policy mandates. Permitting greater flexibility for the representative to interpret his or her mandate may be a better way to reflect voter preferences. Yet, those very shocks can destabilize the structure of the ideological space or increase the polarization of parties within it. Each case brings its own complexity, but following the twin shocks of the Great Recession of 2008–2010 and the Refugee Crisis of 2015–2017 it has seemed difficult for even conscientious representatives to reconcile citizens' interests and convince their constituents that they are doing so. Unscrupulous representatives can more easily take advantage of the complexity and lack of transparency to shelter self-interested behaviour, as citizens tend to fear (Fortunato 2019). In these newly unhelpful contexts the uncontrollable shocks from international interdependence can exacerbate the tension between mandate and accountability.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my thanks to Robert Rohrschneider and Jacques Thomassen, who assigned this essay and provided helpful comments on its development, and to Jane Mansbridge, who provided valuable conceptual and editorial comments on an earlier version. This chapter also represents the most recent expression of a quarter century of wrestling with these issues in

books and articles since Huber and Powell 1994. The many, many scholarly debts that I have accumulated are briefly summarized in Powell 2019, x–xii.

NOTES

1. The question of policy reversibility is a topic in its own right, beyond our scope here, but we might consider both policy damages (to the environment, to individuals) that are hard to reverse or compensate and the creation of beneficiaries who will rally to defend their new advantages.
2. Slightly less directly, see the earlier seminal work of Miller and Stokes (1963), Dalton (1985) and others reviewed in Powell (2004).
3. In many European countries the first mass parties organized contending camps with their own media and secondary organizations (such as churches and labor unions) to support, but also shape, the perceptions of their constituents. The clarity of these configurations has faded, as have the strengths of churches and unions. But, today, widespread Internet access and multiple media sources facilitate self-selection into homogeneous information networks whose influence and vulnerabilities we are striving to understand.
4. We cannot explore here the many complexities in these rough estimates, but they seem fairly robust.
5. There are many complexities here. The differences between the promises of winners and losers seems to play a critical role. The ideological polarization of the party system would seem to be highly relevant. The difference between realization of individual party promise-keeping versus realization of sometimes conflicting promises of a collection of parties needs further analysis and exploration.

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CHAPTER 20

POLITICAL EQUALITY AND TURNOUT

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AND FILIP KOSTELKA

Low turnout is usually considered to be a ‘problem’. Most democratic theorists argue that a substantial level of citizen involvement is a requisite of a thriving democracy (Pateman 1970; Cohen 1971; Pennock 1979). This is why Powell (1982) chose to focus on voting participation as the very first standard by which to assess democratic performance.

Low turnout is also considered problematic because it is assumed to entail unequal participation (and high turnout equal participation). While it is well known that some groups turn out less than others (Verba et al. 1978), the connection between low turnout and inequality was developed theoretically by Tingsten (1937). He formulated the ‘law of dispersion’, according to which lower overall turnout implies stronger variations in turnout across groups. Equal participation is used as an indicator of the quality of democracy (Armingeon and Schädel 2015: 3). It is posited that all citizens should have an equal voice, regardless of whether they are of high social class or a member of the working class, rich or poor, and irrespective of whether they have a PhD or have not finished primary school. The assumption that low turnout results in unequal turnout is examined at some length in the following section.

In this chapter, we review the literature that has empirically studied the consequences of low turnout for political inequality. We wish to determine which groups are less (more) likely to vote, whether these groups also tend to be less (better) represented in Parliament, and whether their interests and values are less (better) defended in the actual policies that are adopted and implemented by governments.

WHO ABSTAINS?

Before studying the consequences of low turnout for political inequality, it is important that we answer the question: Who is less likely to vote? Our focus is on different

socio-demographic groups that are more prone to abstain and that are therefore—possibly—disadvantaged in terms of descriptive and substantive representation.

The most systematic analysis of who does and does not vote is Wolfinger and Rosenstone's (1980) seminal book *Who Votes?* Using census data from the United States, they find that age and education are the two strongest correlates of turnout (1980: 102); the young and the less educated are less likely to vote. Updating this work more than three decades later, Leighley and Nagler (2014) report essentially the same age-related patterns. Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980) interpreted youth's lower participation as a life-cycle effect. A life-cycle effect would mean that the same individual will be very likely to abstain when she is young but become more prone to vote as she becomes older. Proponents of the life-cycle theory argue that the likelihood of voting increases with age because experiencing a number of life-cycle effects, such as marriage, and home ownership, increase citizens' utility to vote (Smets 2016). Others have interpreted the correlation between age and turnout as a consequence of the fact that turning out to vote is self-reinforcing (for a review, see Dinas 2012). While the correlation between age and turnout is fairly uncontested, some have argued that observed age effects also reflect generational differences in turnout (Blais et al. 2004; Wass 2007, 2008). Such insights come from studies that analyse long-time series of data or panel studies, because cross-sectional data—such as those used by Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980)—do not allow distinguishing between age and generational effects. The reason is that at a fixed point in time, age and period effects are perfectly collinear (Dassonneville 2017).

As for education, Wolfinger and Rosenstone argue that education increases cognitive skills, making it easier to make sense of politics. Education is also thought to enhance gratification, and it is assumed that education makes it easier to overcome procedural hurdles to register (1980: 35–6). The correlation between education and turnout is without dispute, but it is not absolutely clear that education as such 'causes' electoral participation (Persson 2014). This causal mechanism, however, is not a crucial issue for our purposes since the bottom line remains, at the descriptive level, that the less educated are less likely to vote. Perhaps Wolfinger and Rosenstone's most striking conclusion is that education matters much more than income (1980). In their update of *Who Votes?*, Leighley and Nagler pay more attention to income inequality, but in line with Wolfinger and Rosenstone, they recognize that education matters more than income (2014: 66).

In addition to education and income, Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980) look at occupational groups and point out that turnout is quite high among two particular groups: farmers and public-sector employees. Subsequent research has not given much attention to turnout differences between occupational groups,¹ and so an interesting question is whether these two groups benefit from their higher participation rate.

The work of Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980) and that of Leighley and Nagler (2014) are confined to the American case, which is clearly not a typical case with respect to turnout. A large body of comparative research on the individual-level determinants of turnout allows validating the findings of the US-based literature in other contexts. Using data from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) project in 23 countries (and 33 elections), Nevitte et al. (2009) examine the relationship between socio-economic status and non-voting. They conclude that five SES variables have consistent effects across countries: age, education, income, marital status, and religious attendance. The first three variables are the same that were reported by Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980) and Leighley and Nagler (2014). The impact of marital status had also been noted in the American case, and this raises the intriguing issue whether this leads governments to pay special attention to family issues. The same concern would apply to religion: Does higher turnout of more religious citizens have political ramifications?

Let us finally consider Smets and van Ham's (2013) meta-analysis of individual-level determinants of turnout. Among the many socio-demographic correlates of turnout, the only ones to be systematically supported in the empirical literature² are education, age, generation, and organizational membership.

Previous research has thus established unequivocally that the two groups that turn out the least are younger and less educated citizens. The impact of income appears to be more ambiguous. Income matters less than education but at the bivariate level there is clearly a relationship. There is also some evidence that the relationship is not linear and is better described by a step function where the main contrast is between the least affluent and all other citizens. It thus makes sense to not only focus on the young and the less educated, but to add the poor among the groups that systematically turn out at a lower rate.³

But we should also keep in mind that some groups exhibit exceptionally high levels of turnout, most especially farmers and public-sector employees, and it is important to determine whether this has consequences in terms of both descriptive and substantive representation.

Finally, it should be pointed out that even though socio-demographic factors such as age, education, and income are systematically correlated with the likelihood of voting, all of these groups can be successfully mobilized to turn out. Traditionally, partisanship (Converse 1976), but also membership of unions or associations, were found to be effective mobilizers (Verba and Nie 1972). In fact, actively mobilizing turnout seemed a particularly effective way to increase the participation of the less resourceful (Verba et al. 1978). Over-time changes, such as the decline in partisanship, secularization, and weaker trade unions, imply that mobilization efforts have decreased in most advanced democracies (Gray and Caul 2000). As a result, socio-demographic factors arguably matter even more for differences in participation. But do such differences in turnout also lead to different representation? That is the question to which we turn in the next section.

TURNOUT AND REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT

Does Low Turnout Lead to Inequality?

Equality in participation is thought of as an indicator of the quality of democracy. However, this equality is seemingly in danger—as it is feared that the decline in electoral turnout that can be observed in most advanced democracies (Blais and Rubenson 2013) leads to growing disparities between who turns out to vote and who does not. The previous section has clarified that age is one of the strongest predictors of turnout. Scholars that have investigated inequalities in turnout, however, have focused mostly on stable individual-level characteristics, such as education and income. The focus of this section will therefore be mostly on these covariates of turnout.

The basic intuition behind Tingsten's (1937) 'law of dispersion', that inequalities will be very small when turnout is high, and completely absent under full turnout, is undisputed. What is more disputed is whether disparities are necessarily large when turnout is low? According to Lijphart (1997: 2), low participation 'means unequal and socio-economically biased participation'. But is low turnout, and a decline in turnout, almost mechanically, related to growing inequalities in electoral participation? If the trend towards abstention is concentrated among, for example, the poor, the implication is that participation will indeed be more unequal. However, if all groups of citizens are equally affected by a decline in turnout, socio-economic biases in turnout will be roughly stable regardless of the overall level of turnout. To illustrate these possibilities, we present in Figure 20.1 two stylized examples of the probability that different groups of citizens turn out to vote in low and high turnout elections.

For the purpose of illustration, we focus on differences between rich citizens (grey lines in Figure 20.1) and poor citizens (black lines). We start by looking at the scenario in the left panel. First, we see that the poor have a lower probability to vote ($Pr(\text{turnout})$) than the rich, which is consistent with what we know about the

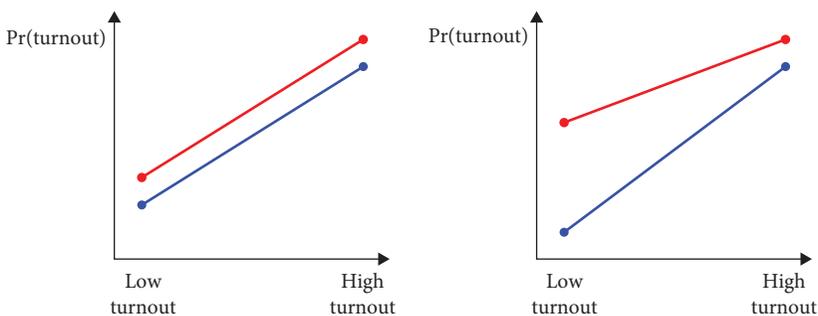


FIGURE 20.1 Stylized Examples of the Impact of the Decline in Turnout

determinants of turnout. Second, in this example, the gap in turnout between the poor and the rich is the same regardless of whether it is a low or a high turnout election. The different turnout rate could, for example, be a result of a difference in competitiveness of the elections. And in the scenario to the left, this difference in competitiveness affects the probability that a rich citizen turns out to vote in the same way as it affects the probability that a poor citizen votes.

That result changes in the second scenario (the right-hand panel in Figure 20.1). Here as well we see, first, that the rich (grey) have a higher probability of voting than the poor (black). The difference between the turnout rate of the rich and the poor, however, is much larger in a low turnout election than it is under a high turnout election. Assuming once more that differences in competitiveness cause the different turnout rates, in the scenario to the right this different level of competitiveness affects the poor more than it affects the rich. While the rich are somewhat less likely to vote in a low competitive election, the poor are much less likely to vote when competitiveness is low. As a result, in this second scenario, the turnout gap between the rich and the poor is larger under low turnout than it is under high turnout.

Figure 20.1 presents two stylized examples of the relationship between turnout rates and inequalities in turnout. We now review empirical research on this topic to evaluate which of these two scenarios—the left panel or the right panel—is closer to reality.

The available empirical evidence does not unequivocally support the idea that inequalities in turnout, in terms of social class, income, or education, are more important when turnout is low. Studying class and education inequalities in turnout in the United States and in Europe, Sinnott and Achen (2008) find that the working class and the lower educated are less likely to turn out to vote. However, they do not find evidence that these groups are *more* disadvantaged in low turnout elections in the United States. Their analyses of European data are somewhat more supportive of the idea that lower turnout increases inequalities, though in Europe as well differences appear to be modest. Kostelka's (2014) analyses cast further doubt on Lijphart's concern that inequalities are more pronounced when turnout is low. Focusing on low turnout elections in Central and East European post-communist countries and comparing the socio-demographic characteristics of voters with those of the full adult population, he finds that the lowest-educated and low-income groups are under-represented. However, he qualifies the size of the socio-demographic bias in turnout as 'not impressive' (Kostelka 2014: 955). This bias, furthermore, is not larger in the low turnout elections in post-communist countries than it is in established democracies in Western Europe, where turnout is substantially higher. The findings of Sinnott and Achen (2008) and those of Kostelka (2014), therefore, are fairly consistent with the left-hand scenario in Figure 20.1. While there are systematic socio-demographic biases in turnout, disparities do not seem to be (much) more pronounced when turnout is low.

Other works offer evidence that is more in line with the right-hand panel in Figure 20.1. Studying the consequences of the decline in turnout in ten established democracies that have long time series of national election study data, Dalton (2017) finds that the effect of education on turnout has increased in all but one country.⁴

Similarly, Armingeon and Schädel (2015), who study the determinants of turnout in eight Western European countries between 1956 and 2009, find that turnout has not only declined, but has also become more unequal. Focusing on the effect of educational attainment on electoral participation, they conclude that ‘the lower social strata tend to withdraw more from politics’ (Armingeon and Schädel 2015: 11). This observation of a widening gap in turnout rates does not seem to be limited to Western democracies, as Northmore-Ball (2016) shows that the effect of education on participation has increased over time in Eastern Europe as well. Further evidence comes from Dassonneville and Hooghe (2017). Studying the impact of educational attainment on turnout in Western Europe, they find that the education gap increases over time, implying that participation is becoming more unequal. In addition, analysing the impact of the abolition of compulsory voting in the Netherlands in 1970—a reform that was associated with a 16 percentage points decline in turnout—they show that educational attainment becomes a significant predictor of turnout after the reform. These results are consistent with the right-hand side scenario in Figure 20.1.

Other works have directly compared the determinants of participation in low and high turnout elections. Persson et al. (2013) study the determinants of turnout in the 2010 Swedish county council elections. Because of irregularities in the county of Västra Götaland, a re-election was organized in 2011 in each of the five constituencies of this country. The 2010 election was organized simultaneously with the national and local elections, which resulted in a high turnout of 80.6 per cent. Turnout for the 2011 re-election, in contrast, was only 44.1 per cent (Persson et al. 2013). This sharp decline in turnout appears to have been associated with larger disparities in turnout. Studying the effect of income in both elections, Persson et al. (2013: 180) report that the ‘difference in voter turnout between the poorest and richest was about 15 percentage points in 2010 and about 20 percentage points in 2011’. The difference between the two elections is even more pronounced when looking at education. The turnout gap between voters with seven years of schooling and voters with sixteen years of schooling, increased from 19 percentage points in 2010 to 32 percentage points in 2011. Bhatti et al. (2019) come to a similar conclusion. They study the determinants of turnout in local, national, and European elections in Denmark. Bhatti et al. use a massive panel dataset with information about 2.1 million citizens and validated turnout rates for the 2013 local elections (turnout rate 71.9 per cent), the 2014 European elections (56.3 per cent) and the 2015 national elections (85.9 per cent). They find stark differences in the impact of education between the three elections, and these differences are consistent with the expectation that disparities are stronger when turnout is lower. More specifically, they find that the turnout gap between the lowest and the highest educated⁵ is 16 percentage points in the high turnout national elections, 22 per cent in the local elections, and 33 per cent in the low turnout European elections. Clearly, the analyses from Persson et al. (2013) and those of Bhatti et al. (2019) suggest that when turnout is lower, inequalities are larger, just as Lijphart (1997) argued.

The most comprehensive analysis of inequalities in turnout is probably Gallego’s (2015) work on the topic. Comparing the effect of educational attainment on

participation in different countries for which the CSES project provides data, she finds that ‘gaps in the participation rates of highly and less educated people are very small or non-existent in countries in which turnout rates are near the 100 percent participation ceiling’ (Gallego 2015: 53). In countries where turnout is very low (55 per cent or less), in contrast, educational attainment has a strong impact on electoral participation. However, for elections that fall in between these extremes, Gallego (2015) finds that there is almost no connection between the level of turnout and the size of bias in educational attainment. The overall correlation between biased participation and turnout levels is thus mostly driven by extreme cases. According to Gallego (2015), the absence of a clear relation between turnout levels and turnout inequality—when disregarding very low and very high turnout elections—is a result of the heterogeneous effect of contextual factors that influence turnout. As an example, Gallego (2015) shows that increasing the cognitive cost of voting by changing the ballot structure decreases turnout more amongst the lower educated than the higher educated.

In summary, there seems to be some ground for the fear that both low, and a decline in, turnout rates will increase inequalities in participation. Scholars who have compared the determinants of turnout in low and high turnout elections find that biases are systematically larger in the former. Inequalities in educational attainment in particular appear to be larger in low turnout elections. The second scenario in Figure 20.1 thus seems to hold some truth. However, previous research also adds nuance to this basic observation; most variation in turnout across educational groups is small, and such variation will have little impact on the bias in electoral participation.

Are Electoral Outcomes Different when Turnout is Low?

When turnout is low, it is the poor and the lower educated in particular who disproportionately drop out of voting. Such differential turnout rates, however, are not by definition detrimental for the representation of low-income and lower-education groups. Their representation will only suffer from low turnout rates if the party preferences and voting behaviour of members of the lower social strata—who tend to abstain—differ from the preferences of those who do turn out to vote.

Scholars who have studied this question have mostly—but not exclusively—focused on analysing whether the Democratic party in the US, and left-wing parties in a European context, suffer from low turnout rates (Brunell and DiNardo 2004; Martinez and Gill 2005; Pacek and Radcliff 1995; Lutz 2007). The assumption of this stream of research is that left-of-centre parties will better represent the interests of the working class, the poor, and the lower educated. If such parties indeed fare less well when turnout is low, the implication is that unequal participation also entails unequal representation in Parliament.

A number of studies find evidence that is in line with this basic assumption. Analyses that simulate the election outcome under full turnout in the United States, for example,

indicate that Democrats would do better under high turnout. This effect, however, seems quite variable (Brunell and DiNardo 2004; Martinez and Gill 2005), is generally small (Highton and Wolfinger 2001) and it rarely changes the outcome of an election (Citrin et al. 2003). Others have shown that left-of-centre parties would benefit, or have benefited, from high turnout in countries in Europe (Kohler 2011; Pacek and Radcliff 1995). Furthermore, a simulation based on survey data in Australia—where voting is compulsory—suggests that the decline in turnout that would follow from abolishing compulsory voting would lead the left-wing party Labor to lose votes (Mackerras and McAllister 1999). Focusing on Australia as well but exploiting variation in the introduction of compulsory voting between states, Fowler (2013) also finds that Labor benefits from higher turnout under compulsory voting.

Others confirm that changes in turnout rates can alter the outcome of elections, but they disagree on who benefits from high turnout. Lutz (2007), for example, finds that right-of-centre parties benefit from high turnout in Switzerland, while McAllister and Mughan (1986) find that not Labour but the British Liberals fare better under high turnout. Bernhagen and Marsh (2007), for their part, find that high turnout does not systematically advantage parties of particular ideological leanings, but small parties and non-incumbents do benefit from high turnout. This is also consistent with DeNardo's (1980) theoretical expectation that the out-party benefits from high turnout.

Adding further uncertainty to the direction of the partisan effects of low turnout, a large number of publications report mixed, or null results. Van der Eijk and van Egmond (2007), who study turnout effects in European Parliament elections, find that partisan differences are extremely small, and 'virtually unrelated to substantively interesting characteristics of parties or contexts' (Van der Eijk and van Egmond 2007: 571). Analysing the impact of full turnout in the 2000 Canadian federal election, Rubenson et al. (2007) also find very little evidence of an impact on parties' electoral success. Works that have studied the effects of exogenous shocks in turnout as well have sometimes produced mixed results. Miller and Dassonneville (2016), who study the partisan effects of the abolition of compulsory voting in the Netherlands, show that the Social democratic party benefited from the decline in turnout, while small left-wing parties suffered. Ferwerda (2014), who leverages over-time variation in the abolition of compulsory voting in Austria, also finds that the Social democratic party did somewhat better after the repeal of compulsory voting, while minor parties slightly lost. His reading of the evidence, however, is that differences are substantively extremely small.

Even though the poor and the lower educated are less likely to turn out to vote—in particular in low turnout elections, it seems as if left-of-centre parties are not doing worse when turnout is low. Why is the effect so small? Scholars have pointed to two explanations that can be complementary. First, it has been argued that the absence of a clear partisan effect of low turnout is a consequence of the fact that the preferences and opinions of abstainers are not that different from those of voters. There is no clear indication, therefore, that abstainers prefer the more progressive policies that left-of-centre parties stand for (Highton and Wolfinger 2001; Rubenson et al. 2007; van der Eijk and van Egmond 2007). Second, contextual factors—and electoral rules in

particular—have an impact on the size of partisan effects. According to Ferwerda (2014), in order for a decline in turnout to translate into ‘a meaningful loss in party vote share, there must simultaneously be a large decline in turnout between elections as well as a large skew in preferences between the voting and non-voting population’. Ferwerda (2014) argues that the combination of both is very rare. A first reason is that declines in turnout are generally fairly modest. Second, a large skew in party preferences is unlikely when there are multiple parties, which holds especially in fragmented party systems. As a result, a decline in turnout levels only rarely alters the outcome of an election.

TURNOUT AND SUBSTANTIVE REPRESENTATION

Although voter turnout does not systematically affect election outcomes, there is solid evidence that it does exert a sensible effect on public policy. A large body of research shows that the level of electoral participation matters for redistribution and welfare and for the quality of the democratic process.

Turnout and Redistribution

If voter turnout usually does not influence who wins an election, can it alter public policy? In terms of redistributive policies, the underlying theory draws on an extension of the Downsian spatial model (Downs 1957) by Meltzer and Richard (1981). In a unidimensional space and under a majoritarian rule, the preference of the median voter is decisive for building a winning majority. Simultaneously, in the population, income is typically positively skewed (mean > median). The median voter’s preference for redistribution is thus likely to be proportional to the distance between her income and the population mean. While the (pre-tax and pre-transfer) population mean reflects the country’s wealth, the level of the median’s voter income, and her preferences for redistribution, depend on voter turnout. As long as Tingsten’s law of dispersion applies, the higher the voter turnout, the lower will be the median voter’s income (i.e. low-income citizens turn out to vote), and the stronger will be the demand for redistribution.

The reason why changes in participation rates may affect public policies without altering election results (cf. section “Are Electoral Outcomes Different when Turnout is Low?”) is that political parties adapt their manifestos to the effective electorate and its preferences (Toka 2004: 1; Birch 2009: 128). Pontusson and Rueda (2010) demonstrate that, in established democracies, left-wing parties’ positions shift to the left as voter turnout (and low-income voters’ participation) increases. Of course, such a shift occurs

only if parties are office-seekers. Accordingly, Bechtel et al. (2016) study voting in Swiss referenda (1908–1970) and find that compulsory voting (and thus higher turnout) had significant partisan consequences on referenda outcomes. The electoral compulsion boosted support for positions defended by the Swiss Social Democratic Party by up to 20 percentage points.

The hypothesized positive association between voter turnout and redistribution has been generally confirmed by the empirical literature. In particular, a large number of studies find that, in the US states, an income bias in turnout, which is a typical corollary of low turnout, is associated with more stringent welfare policies, smaller government expenditure, and larger income inequality (Hill and Leighley 1992; Hill et al. 1995; Husted and Kenny 1997; Fellowes and Rowe 2004; Avery 2015).

Work that has shown a link between turnout and redistribution, however, may be criticized for a number of reasons. First, one could object that what matters in the specific US context, where much of the research is based, is campaign funding (see Bartels 2008: 280; Gilens 2012: chapter 8). This factor is usually not controlled for in the existing studies, and it may be correlated with the income bias in voter turnout. Yet, there is overwhelming comparative evidence on the positive effect of high turnout on the generosity of redistribution. And this evidence includes work on countries where political parties are publicly funded (Hicks and Swank 1992; Lindert 1996; Iversen and Cusack 2000; Franseze 2002: 103; Kenworthy and Pontusson 2005; Chong and Olivera 2008; Mahler 2008, 2010; Fumagalli and Narciso 2012).

Second, critics are concerned with the potential presence of endogeneity in work that links turnout and redistribution, or even reverse causality as inequality may hinder participation (Solt 2008, 2010; but see Stockemer and Scruggs 2012 for an alternative view). Such concerns can be addressed by ingenious strategies instrumenting turnout. For example, Aggeborn (2016) leverages the 1970 reform in Sweden that changed the election calendar to hold local and national elections simultaneously. The resulting increase in turnout in local elections provoked a sudden surge in government spending in Swedish municipalities, in sharp contrast to the stability in spending that was observed in neighbouring Finland. Further evidence comes from Australia, where the adoption of compulsory voting (and rise in turnout) in the 1920s seems to have increased pension spending well above the level in other comparable OECD countries (Fowler 2013).

Third, the relationship between changes in turnout and redistributive policies is unlikely to be linear. The effects of small changes in turnout on the electorate's preferences may sometimes go almost unnoticed, and thus fail to significantly alter public policies—especially in the short term.⁶ Conversely, large changes in turnout or changes affecting voters with a clearly distinct set of preferences sometimes may trigger sweeping reforms. A case in point is historical extensions of suffrage that have increased absolute turnout (expressed as a share of the total population). Social science research provides robust evidence on how, in various contexts and periods, the (effective) enfranchisement of lower-class citizens (Acemoglu and Robinson 2000; Linder 2004; Aidt and Jensen 2009), women (Aidt et al. 2006; Miller 2008; Bertocchi 2011), ethnic minorities (Naidu 2012), and non-citizens (Vernby 2013) resulted in

additional public expenditure benefiting these, legally circumscribed and previously excluded, groups.

Overall, despite the minor caveats, it is clear that politicians care who votes and they seem to know who participates and who does not, which, in most cases, affects welfare and redistributive policies. This is also shown by geographic disparities in public spending. In the United States, members of the Congress strategically allocate funds to those areas within their electoral districts that vote at higher rates (Martin 2003). Similarly, in Mexico, voter turnout at the municipal level accounts for sewage and water coverage (Cleary 2007).

Turnout and the Quality of Democracy

Voter turnout not only matters for who gets what in democracies. There also is evidence that turnout influences the quality of the democratic process. Following Manin et al. (1999) and Roberts (2010), democratic quality can be understood as the strength and nature of linkages between elected public officials and the electorate.

In the United States, Martin and Claibourn (2013) argue that legislators use turnout as a cue for the degree of public scrutiny. The higher the level of electoral participation, the more legislators care about citizens' preferences. Martin and Claibourn validate this hypothesis by means of an analysis of nearly four decades of legislative politics in the US House of Representatives. They show that legislative districts with higher voting rates exhibit greater policy responsiveness. Similar findings are obtained by a series of distinct analyses that focus at the level of local communities. Verba and Nie (1972), Hansen (1975), and Hill and Matsubayashi (2005) all demonstrate that voter turnout is associated with mass-elite agenda agreement. These results suggest that, in local politics too, the higher the turnout, the better information politicians have about citizens' preferences and the more pressure they feel to follow these preferences.

Other research shows that, particularly in developing democracies, high turnout may favour universalistic and programmatic party competition as opposed to clientelism and patronage. Nooruddin and Simmon (2015) show, through their empirical analyses of spending patterns in Indian states, a negative effect of participation on private spending and a positive effect on public spending. Similarly, Nathan (2019) studies political behaviour in Ghana and argues that the low turnout of urban elites helps perpetuate the vicious circle of the country's particularistic and patronage-based electoral politics.

CONCLUSION

We have shown that the youth, the lower educated and the poor are less likely to vote. Furthermore, considerable research finds that these groups disproportionately drop out of

voting in low turnout elections, though this is mostly limited to established democracies. A substantial number of studies have looked at the political repercussions of this lower turnout. The usual assumption is that a lower turnout means greater inequality, that is, fewer votes for leftist parties and policies that disadvantage these groups.

Focusing on partisan effects of low turnout first, the empirical evidence that we have summarized in this chapter does not consistently support the assumption that low turnout disadvantages the left. Regarding the policy consequences of low turnout, the empirical findings are not entirely consistent, but the bulk of the evidence does suggest that high (low) turnout contributes to more (less) redistribution. There is also some support for the hypothesis that a higher turnout may foster greater policy responsiveness.

We note, however, that little attention has been paid to the political consequences of low youth turnout. We do not know, for instance, if politicians are less prone to invest in education if and when they know that younger citizens are prone to abstain. We also know little about the consequences of high turnout among specific occupational groups. Are politicians paying more attention to the demands of farmers and public-sector employees, because these groups are much more inclined to vote?⁷ Future research should address these issues while disentangling the effect of voter turnout from those of other types of political participation (e.g. protesting, campaign contributions) and the influence of organized interests.

NOTES

1. But see Blais et al. (1991).
2. We use a success rate of at least two-thirds in terms of both tests and studies as a criterion of 'systematic support'.
3. It should be pointed out, however, that this positive correlation between income and turnout appears to be context-dependent. Kasara and Suryanarayan (2015) have argued that the rich are more likely to turn out to vote in states that have strong taxation capacities. In some developing democracies, such as India, the turnout rate of the rich is similar or even lower than that of the poor.
4. The countries included in Dalton's analysis are Canada, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The effect of education on turnout increases over time in all countries except for the United Kingdom.
5. They compare citizens who have only completed elementary school with those who completed more than five years of higher education.
6. This is probably one of the reasons why a small number of studies do not find an association between turnout and redistributive policies (e.g. Barnes 2013; Hoffman et al. 2017). Another reason is that, in some cases, politicians may resist the pressure for redistribution by capitalizing on flaws in public opinion formation and by emphasizing other (e.g. symbolical, cultural, and societal) issues (e.g. Bartels 2005; Hacker and Pierson 2014).
7. See Blais et al. (1997) for an examination of the link between public sector employees and leftist parties.

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CHAPTER 21

FEELING REPRESENTED

SÖREN HOLMBERG

REPRESENTATIVE democracy is an invention. An elitist invention, one could claim. The inventors in the late 1700s—a James Madison in America, an Edmund Burke in England and a Charles-Louis de Montesquieu in France—were not inspired by the ancient Athenian system with active (male) citizens in a direct democracy. On the contrary, their ideal was more passive citizens who elected representatives and not much more (Manin 1997). Leadership, division of labour and efficiency were the inventors' guiding principles. Voter participation was part of the rule, but relegated to election times when people were to give or not to give consent to the representatives' decisions. The grand plan was that elected politicians should lead and citizens should approve or disapprove come election time. Thus, the main task of voters in a representative democracy was to consent or dissent, and in between elections let the rulers rule. As Madison said in *The Federalist Papers*, stable self-government requires the 'total exclusion of the people in their collective capacity' from actual governance (Galston 2018: 20; Mounk 2018). Representation from above, not from below, was the idea (Esaiasson and Holmberg 1996; Holmberg 2011).

It is debatable to what extent these minimalistic or elitist thoughts about how to design a representative democracy really were inspired by the modern thought that democracy means popular sovereignty, with people as the sole source of legitimacy (Galston 2018; Dahl 1963; 1989). The overarching normative goal of a representative democracy is to fulfil the will of the people (Westerståhl and Johansson 1981). Democracy means rule by the people. No matter how that rule is practically designed, the purpose is to assure that the will of the people has a final say.

The degree to which this aim is fulfilled in present-day democracies is a controversial question. Academic research does not have an agreed-upon opinion (Esaiasson and Heidar 2000). The same is true for the chatter amongst pundits in the media. Part of the problem is that there are many different ways to address the question. Who are the people, what do we mean by the will of the people, and when can we say that the will has been fulfilled (Pitkin 1967; Dallmayr 2017; Runciman 2018)? At the core of the modern debate—amongst scholars as well as in the public sphere—is policy

representation. Does democracy deliver what it is expected to deliver—some form of agreement between rulers and ruled on the policies that rule the land (Soroka and Wlezien 2010, Gilens 2012, Persson and Gilljam 2017)? Or expressed more concretely, do elected politicians have the same opinions as their voters (Dalton 1985, 2015)? Do decisions taken by parliaments reflect what people want? Are representatives responsive to changes in the will of the people (Wlezien 2004; Arnold and Franklin 2012; Miller and Stokes 1963)? These are difficult questions to measure and answer. Hence, a lack of consensus and an ongoing discourse.

An alternative way to analyse the problem is to circumvent ‘objective’ policy representation and go straight for something that arguably is as important—if not more so—and that is, the *feeling* of being policy represented amongst people. In doing so we would not be studying ‘real’ policy representation, but instead subjective feelings/perceptions of having one’s own views represented by elected politicians. Obviously, a subjective measure of policy representation is not the same thing as an objective measure. But that does not mean that a subjective measure is irrelevant. Quite the contrary. Independently of how the objective level of policy representation looks, it is relevant to ask to what extent people feel that they are policy represented by their elected officials. The subjectively experienced degree of policy representation says something about how citizens judge the functionality of their representative democracy. It is indicative of how politically legitimate people perceive their rule to be (Gilley 2009). Acknowledging the potential problem of false consciousness, it is positive for a system if many of its citizens perceive that they are well policy represented by their elected politicians. Normatively, it is what we want and hope for. The opposite—that most citizens feel that their representatives do *not* share their views—is more negative. It is not our ideal representative democracy.

NORMATIVE AND EMPIRICAL EXPECTATIONS

Having established the relevance of subjective feelings of being policy represented, the task is now to empirically study the phenomenon. That means measure the concept and relate it to theoretically important explanatory factors. In doing that two empirical hypotheses, followed and specified by two auxiliary versions, will be tested. Furthermore, a normative hypothesis related to political equality will also be examined.

The first hypothesis is derived from social learning theory and institutional learning (Bandura 1977; Rohrschneider 1996, 1999; Ferrin and Kriesi 2016). Experience and exposure hones skills and knowledge. Applied to democratic systems, the hypothesis is that how long democratic tools have been in use matters. Practice makes perfect. Thus, older democracies who have long applied electoral mechanisms are expected to have more citizens with feelings of being represented compared to newer democracies where

elections are a more recent phenomena. It takes time as well as trial and error to make a representative democracy work well.

Our second main hypothesis has to do with how the democratic system is designed. The theoretical inspiration comes from studies on the Responsible Party Model and the distinctions between a Consensus/Mandate system and a Majoritarian/Sanction system (Lijphart 1975; Thomassen 2014; Holmberg 2014; Golder and Stranski 2010). The major function of a Consensus/Mandate system is to achieve a close resemblance between representatives and voters. Representation is the prime purpose. As a contrast, in a Majoritarian/Sanction system, accountability is the most important function. Selection of a majority government that can provide a transparent and responsible rule, which is possible to evaluate come the next election is the primary purpose.

Previous research has tended to show that Consensus/Mandate systems perform better in many democratic respects than Majoritarian/Sanction systems (Lijphart 1999; Powell 2000; Dahl 2015; for somewhat differing results see Aarts and Thomassen 2008). Examples are the link between public opinion and public policies, satisfaction with the working of democracy, electoral turnout, and representation of women.

Since representation in theory is the number one goal for the Consensus/Mandate system our hypothesis is that these systems should, on average, exhibit higher levels of feeling represented amongst its citizens than Majoritarian/Sanction systems. In the empirical tests, Consensus/Mandate systems are distinguished by having Proportional voting. Majoritarian/Sanction systems are operationalized as countries employing Plurality/Majoritarian electoral systems or Mixed electoral systems. Possible 'causal' mechanisms are more cohesive parties and more emphasis on representation in Consensus/Mandate systems, while the focus is more on individual candidates and strong government in Majoritarian/Sanction systems.

The two auxiliary hypotheses highlight the possible difference between representation via political parties or via political leaders. Which is best for attaining feelings of being represented—collective representation through parties or individual representation through leaders? Acknowledging the importance of the question, we will not be able to answer it in any more precise manner. However, indirectly we can shed some light on it by specifying two hypotheses.

The first and rather obvious auxiliary hypothesis is that feelings of representation via leaders, as compared to representation via parties, should be more prevalent in countries with plurality/majority electoral systems. The rationale being that majoritarian voting systems are more individualistic in emphasis. And likewise with the rationale that proportional systems are more party oriented, perceptions of being policy represented via parties, instead of via leaders, are expected to be more common in nations with proportional electoral systems.

Our second auxiliary hypothesis could be somewhat controversial. It proposes that feelings of being represented ought to be more common through leaders than through parties in emerging democracies. In old established democracies our expectation is reversed—perceptions of being represented should primarily be channelled through parties, not leaders.

The theoretical background is how political power has evolved in a historical perspective. Rule through strong leaders and elite groups came first and is the traditional form of ruling, with roots back in ancient times, and carried through the ages by the institution of chieftains, kings, queens, tsars, and warlords; in more recent times supplemented by authoritarian dictators. Political parties, as we understand them today, are a more modern invention dating back only some 150–200 years in Western Europe and the USA. In the rest of the world, parties are an even more recent novelty. Forming and sustaining cohesive and electable parties is a process that takes time and resources. A political system based on competitive parties is more modern and ‘advanced’ than a system ruled by strong leaders. Consequently, and footed in institutional learning theory, we expect more voters in older democratic systems to feel represented by parties than by leaders, while citizens in new and emerging democracies should reveal an opposite pattern—perceiving leaders as providing more policy representation than parties.

Our concluding normative hypothesis is derived from the cornerstone value of any democratic system. That value is political equality (Dahl 1963, 2015). All citizens (legally included in the electorate) should, in principle, carry the same equal weight. In the best of all democratic worlds, people of all sorts—young and old, women and men, rich and poor, minority groups and majority population—would weigh equal when democratic decisions are taken. Applied to our research problem this means that feelings of being represented should not differ between relevant social groups in a democracy. The ideal outcome of democratic decision-making is that most (all) people feel represented and that eventual group differences in the subjective feeling of being represented are kept at a minimum. Hence, our normative hypothesis is that differences in perceiving being represented between social groups are low to nonexistent in democratic systems.

However, representative democracy is supposed to be run by majorities. If consensus cannot be reached, what most people want should carry the day. There is a partisan element. To the extent there are correlations between memberships in social groups and vote choice, it is a tough call to expect the same levels of feeling represented across all groups no matter the outcome of elections. In practice, we would think that winners should feel more represented than losers. But, ideally it would still be normatively preferable if everybody, winners as well as losers, perceive representation the same way. Winners are probably not the problem here. Losers are (Anderson and Tverdova 2001; Esaiasson 2010). However, in a well-functioning democracy, electoral losers should accept outcomes and not blame the representative system. Consequently, not only social groups but also political groups are normatively expected to not differ much in their perceptions of how well their democratic system is representing their views.

The hypotheses will be examined using data from the international project *Comparative Study of Electoral Systems* (CSES). Citizens in forty-six countries after eighty-six elections have been asked if any party or any party leader represents their views reasonably well. Interviews were done at elections during the period 2001–2011. All in all, some 144,000 respondents from all over the democratic world participated in the

study.¹ It is important to note that what we study is how people perceive being policy represented by a party or a party leader, not by a whole parliament (Norris 2008; Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012). Hence, what we analyse is party-based representative democracy, and the extent to which parties and party leaders fulfil their roles as representatives of the people.

PERCEPTIONS OF BEING POLICY REPRESENTED

It is worth repeating that the focus of our analysis is on representation through political parties and party leaders—two possible and important vehicles in the representational process. The focus of most previous research and the major instrument of representation—the elected parliament—are not at centre of our interest in this context.² Examining how citizens perceive that elections bring about issue congruence between voters and elected parliaments is possible to perform and has been done using early CSES data from the years 2001 to 2004 (Sanders et al. 2014; Holmberg 2014). Some of the results of these studies will be drawn upon here for comparisons.

The CSES interview questions on party and party leader representation were phrased the following way: ‘Would you say that any of the parties in (country . . .) represent your points of view reasonably well?’ followed by ‘Irrespective of what you think about the parties, would you say there is any party leader that represents your views reasonably well?’. In both cases, the response alternatives were a dichotomous yes or no. No explicit don’t know alternative was provided.³ Note that—strictly speaking—the interview questions ask about perceptions of representation, not feelings of representation. Yet, there is no fixed line between perceptions and feelings.

The results in Table 21.1 show the extent to which citizens in our forty-six different countries perceive that a party or a party leader represents their views ‘reasonably well’. Countries have been rank-ordered according to the highest result on the party question. About half of the countries have participated in CSES on more than one election occasion. In those cases the highest party result is listed first.

On average across the forty-six countries, a majority of citizens perceive that there is a party that represents their views. Results in the 50+ range are present in thirty-two of our forty-six countries; that is, in a clear majority of the examined countries (70 per cent). Normatively, this is a positive result. In a substantial majority of democracies people feel policy represented by a party. Parties as successful vehicles for subjective policy representation are most frequently mentioned in New Zealand (93 per cent), Denmark (89), and Switzerland (87). Norway, Australia, and Sweden are also placed high with ranks of 4 to 6. Two other old-established Anglo-Saxon democracies can also be found on the upper half of the ranking list. USA is placed at number 12 and Great Britain number 14. It is noticeable that all top-ranked countries are old established

Table 21.1 The Feeling of Being Represented by a Party or Party Leader Amongst Citizens in 46 Countries and 86 Elections

	Country	Year	Percentage Yes		
			Party	Leader	Diff
1.	New Zealand	2008	93	92	1
		2002	80	83	-3
2.	Denmark	2007	89	84	5
		2001	84	73	11
3.	Switzerland	2003	87	80	7
		2007	77	-	-
4.	Norway	2009	84	75	9
		2005	82	72	10
		2001	82	72	10
5.	Australia	2004	83	79	4
		2007	77	85	-8
6.	Sweden	2002	78	64	14
		2006	77	63	14
7.	Ireland	2002	78	77	1
		2007	76	77	-1
8.	Czech Rep.	2002	78	56	22
		2006	59	51	8
		2010	53	48	5
9.	Finland	2007	77	61	16
		2011	76	64	12
		2003	64	51	13
10.	Turkey	2011	76	73	3
11.	Slovakia	2010	75	73	2
12.	USA	2004	74	77	-3
		2008	66	79	-13
13.	Spain	2004	74	73	1
		2008	63	59	4
14.	Great Britain	2005	73	67	6
15.	Netherlands	2002	73	-	-
		2010	-	86	-
		2006	-	80	-
16.	Hungary	2002	73	81	-8
17.	Uruguay	2009	73	74	-1
18.	Canada	2008	72	67	5
		2004	69	68	1
19.	South Africa	2009	70	71	-1
20.	France	2007	69	77	-8
		2002	58	60	-2
21.	Israel	2003	68	57	11
		2006	51	40	11
22.	Thailand	2007	68	67	1
23.	Estonia	2011	65	61	4
24.	Iceland	2003	64	56	8
		2007	62	52	10
		2009	48	47	1

25.	Albania	2005	63	72	-9
26.	Mexico	2006	62	73	-11
		2009	61	55	6
		2003	48	38	10
27.	Germany	2009	61	55	8
		2005	58	60	-2
		2002	58	42	16
28.	Greece	2009	59	61	-2
29.	Portugal	2009	58	59	-1
		2002	56	59	-3
		2005	48	52	-4
30.	Japan	2004	57	53	4
		2007	45	43	2
31.	Poland	2007	56	55	1
		2005	45	51	-6
		2001	40	39	1
32.	Austria	2008	54	45	9
33.	Romania	2009	49	68	-19
		2004	45	48	-3
34.	Croatia	2007	49	53	-4
35.	Peru	2011	46	62	-16
		2006	34	46	-12
36.	Bulgaria	2001	46	44	2
37.	Latvia	2010	44	46	-2
38.	Chile	2005	44	70	-26
		2009	42	76	-24
39.	Italy	2006	43	41	2
40.	Brazil	2010	40	70	-30
		2002	40	64	-24
		2006	29	47	-18
41.	Russia	2004	39	61	-22
42.	S. Korea	2008	39	46	-7
		2004	25	22	3
43.	Taiwan	2008	37	53	-16
		2004	37	47	-10
		2001	37	46	-9
44.	Slovenia	2008	35		
		2004	29	35	-6
45.	Philippines	2004	29	31	-2
		2010	25	35	-10
46.	Kyrgyzstan	2005	24	61	-37

Question: Would you say that any of the parties in (country . . .) represent your views reasonably well? Response alternatives: yes or no.

Question: Disregarding what you think of the parties, would you say that any party leader represents your views reasonably well? Response alternatives: yes or no.

Notes: Based on CSES data modules II–III covering the years 2001–2011. Percentages have been computed amongst respondents who answered the questions. Non-response is on average below 10 per cent for both questions. The countries have been rank-ordered according to the highest results on the party question.

Source: CSES.

democracies. An indication of what will be evident later on when we do the more formal hypothesis testing.

At the lower end we find countries like Kyrgyzstan, Philippines, Slovenia, and Taiwan with only some 24–37 per cent of citizens indicating that their views are well represented by any political party. Another country ranked very low is Russia on place number 41, just ahead of Brazil—all of them emerging democracies. A West European country with a longer democratic pedigree, but ranked towards the bottom, is Italy on place number 39. A minority of Italians perceive that they are well policy represented by a party (43 per cent).⁴

A majority of citizens in a majority of examined countries feel that there is a party that represents their views. An encouraging result for party-based representative democracy. Further strengthened (or perhaps not) by the result that an even larger majority of nations has majorities of citizens who claim that their views are well represented by a party leader. Representation through party leaders can be seen as a complement to representation via parties, but also as something competitive—a strong individual leader versus the collective party. Across the forty-six countries, in thirty-nine a majority of people perceive that there is a party leader who represents their views reasonably well.⁵

Thus, across all the different countries, leaders were perceived as useful for securing policy representation as parties—or as more useful. As a matter of fact, in slightly more countries, leader representation was judged to be more prevalent than representation through parties, twenty-four cases versus twenty cases. Although, amongst old established democracies citizens tended to feel better represented by a party than by a leader, eight cases versus four. Examples of old democratic countries that stick out as clearly party-oriented are Finland and Sweden. Clear cases of countries with the opposite perception dominating (leaders better at representation than parties) are emerging democracies like Chile, Brazil, Peru, Taiwan, Romania, Russia, and Kyrgyzstan—but also the USA.⁶

HYPOTHESES TESTING ON THE AGGREGATE COUNTRY-LEVEL

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As was readily revealed in Table 21.1, old established democracies rank high when citizens perceive whether they are policy represented by a party or not. Clear majorities in countries like Denmark, USA, and New Zealand tend to feel that a party represents their views reasonably well. At lower ranks we find many emerging democracies like Kyrgyzstan, Slovenia, and the Philippines. Here only minorities can find a party they feel represents their political thoughts. Thus, there are obvious indications that our first main hypothesis will be confirmed. Citizens in more experienced and older democracies feel on average better represented by political parties than people in new emerging and less experienced democracies. Institutional learning works.

The more systematic tabulations in Table 21.2 prove the point. Amongst citizens in Old Established Democracies, on average 75 per cent consider that a party represents their views. The comparable average outcome for citizens in Emerging Democracies is a more modest 48 per cent. The results in New Established Democracies and in Authoritarian Regimes are also lower than in older more experienced democracies, 57 per cent and 54 per cent, respectively.⁷ Practice makes, if not perfect, at least better.⁸

Eyeballing the results in Table 21.1, the outcome of our second main hypothesis is more doubtful. Countries with proportional representation (PR) systems are ranked high, like Denmark and Norway, but also at the bottom, like Slovenia. Similarly, there are high-ranked majoritarian countries like Australia, and low-ranked like Kyrgyzstan. It is not evident that PR countries on average will—as hypothesized—outperform majoritarian countries when it comes to citizens' subjective feelings of being represented by a party. This absence of a transparent verdict is borne out in Table 21.3.

Conventionally, we distinguish between three types of electoral systems—Plurality/Majoritarian, Proportional, and Mixed. No big differences are discernable between the three election systems. No matter what system is used, a majority of citizens perceive there is a party that stands for their views. But contrary to the hypothesis, the highest average proportion of citizens who feel they are being represented by a party is found amongst people in majoritarian countries (67 per cent), not amongst citizens in PR countries (61 per cent). Citizens in countries with mixed electoral systems exhibit a hypothesized result, however. They tend, on average to a lesser extent, to perceive being represented by a party (52 per cent). If we, for the sake of the argument, lump non-PR countries together and compare the result with the outcome amongst PR countries, a small difference is brought to light. In non-PR countries an average of 57 per cent of citizens feel that their political views are being reflected by a party. The comparable

Table 21.2 The Feeling of Being Represented Amongst Citizens in Old and New Established Democracies, in Emerging Democracies, and in Authoritarian Regimes

	Number of Elections	Average Percentages		
		Consider that a Party Represents Their Views	Consider that a Party Leader Represents Their Views	Difference: Party – Leader
Old Established Democracies	29	75	71	+4
New Established Democracies	15	57	53	+4
Emerging Democracies	35*	48	54	-6
Authoritarian Regimes	5	54	67	-13

Notes: The unit of analysis is 83–84 elections in 46 countries during the years 2001–2011. The classification of the countries into various types of democracies is presented in note 7. The percentages are averages.* 34 elections for the party leader analysis.

Source: CSES.

Table 21.3 The Feeling of Being Represented Amongst Citizens in Countries with Different Electoral Systems

Electoral System	Number of Elections	Average Percentages		Difference: Party – Leader
		Consider that a party Represents Their Views	Consider that a Party Leader Represents Their Views	
Plurality/Majority	10	67	72	–5
Mixed	23	52	55	–3
Proportional	51*	61	61	±0

Notes: See Table 21.2. The classification of the countries into electoral systems is presented in Note 7. The percentages are averages. *50 elections for the party leader analysis.

Source: CSES.

result is 61 per cent amongst people in PR countries, a not very impressive difference, but anyway a difference—and in favour of PR systems and in accordance with the hypothesis—admittedly, though, a very weak support of the hypothesis. A more cautious conclusion would be that there are no major differences between electoral systems when it comes to levels of policy representation (Miller et al. 1999; Rohrschneider 2005; Holmberg 2014).

A similar conclusion of no big differences between electoral systems can be drawn when we look at how citizens perceive being represented by parties or party leaders. Our hypothesis is that leaders should outperform parties in majoritarian systems (and perhaps also in mixed systems) while the opposite should happen in PR systems. To a limited extent that expectation is fulfilled. The results in Table 21.3 reveal that citizens in both majoritarian and mixed election systems somewhat more often feel policy represented by a party leader than by a party. The difference is very small, however, only 3 to 5 percentage points. Amongst citizens in PR countries there is no difference. Representation through parties does not surpass representation through party leaders as expected. The conclusion must be that the hypothesis gets a zero or at best a very weak support.

The support for our second auxiliary hypothesis is somewhat stronger. Institutional learning should benefit party representation in old established party-based democracies. In less experienced emerging democracies and in authoritarian regimes we expect more old-fashioned leader fixation to play a more prominent role. The results in Table 21.2 give some positive support to these expectations. On average, more citizens in old as well as in new democracies perceive being well represented by a party compared to being well represented by a party leader (a difference of 4 percentage points in both cases), while people in emerging democracies and in authoritarian regimes on the contrary feel better represented by leaders than by parties (a difference of 6 and 13 percentage points, respectively).

The result highlights that it takes time to establish a well-functioning party-based democracy. Policy representation through parties is less ‘natural’ and more complicated than representation through leaders. Consequently, it takes more time and institutional learning to make a well-working democracy founded on parties.

NORMATIVE EXPECTATIONS EXAMINED

Our ideal party-based representative democracy should provide people with parties and party leaders that most citizens can relate to and feel they are being represented by. And those feelings should not be restricted to certain social groups or to winners at elections. They should ideally be present all over a society and be evenly spread across social and political groups.

These, perhaps overly rosy, expectations are, to an astonishing degree, met in our study. On average, 59 per cent of the citizens who were asked, after some eighty elections in forty-six countries, declared that they thought their views were being represented by a political party. The comparable result for party leaders is an even higher 61 per cent. The results are especially impressive in old established democracies, where over 70 per cent of citizens perceive being well represented by a party as well as by a party leader. Least positive results are found in emerging democracies and in authoritarian regimes. Here perceptions of having one’s views represented by a party comprise about 50 per cent of the citizens.

Thus, so far our normative hypothesis has been more proven than disproven. Can a similar positive conclusion be drawn when we look at feelings of being represented amongst different social and political groups? A first preliminary answer to that question tends to be in the negative, at least if we look at patterns across countries. In clear majorities of countries, men, older folks, university educated, and the middle class tend to feel better represented than women, younger people, less educated, and the working class. These results are most dramatic for the difference between young and old people. Older people (+60 years) more than young people (30 years or less) perceive being well represented by a party or a party leader in close to 90 per cent of our investigated countries.

Similar, rather large, differences between groups in feelings of being represented can be noticed for some political groups when we look at the results across countries—most obvious and not surprising for party identification. People identifying with a party perceive that their views are represented by a party or a party leader to a larger extent than people not identifying with a party. This is the case in all countries. The patterns are much less visible for ideological left–right groups and for election winners versus losers. But people placing themselves on the right feel better represented in more countries than people on the left. The same is true for electoral winners compared to losers.

However, most of these normatively unwelcome country-level outcomes become much less unwelcome when we look at individual level results. As it turns out, in most cases

Table 21.4 The Difference in the Feeling of Being Represented Between Social Groups

	Difference in Percentages Yes	
	Feel Represented by a Party	Feel Represented by a Party Leader
Women—Men	-2.6	-1.1
Young—Older	-9.7	-10.9
Basic Education—University	-3.3	-3.1
Working class—Middle Class	-3.6	-4.9

Notes: CSES-data covering 35–38 countries for gender, age, and education, and 27 countries for class. Mean differences averaged across countries. Young = 16–29 years, older = 60 years and up.

Source: CSES.

group differences tend to be very small in most countries. More men than women feel represented by a party (Table 21.4). But only by an average difference of 2.6 percentage points. The university educated perceive having their political thoughts represented by a party to a higher extent than people with less schooling (+3.3 pp). For the middle class versus the working class, the comparable result is +3.6 percentage points⁹—in all cases not very dramatic differences. Looking at age group differences, the result becomes less normatively positive. Old people, usually with higher levels of electoral turnout, clearly perceive being better represented by a party or a party leader (+9.7 and +10.9 pp) than young people, with most often lower levels of voting participation.

Looking at the individual-level results for the political groups, the strong difference in feeling represented between party-identified and not-party-identified persons is still very much present; but not so for ideological left–right groups and for election winners and losers (Table 21.5). Right leaning citizens on average see a party representing their views slightly more than people on the left. Similarly, the winners in the last election compared to the losers perceive somewhat more being well represented by a party or a party leader.

These are small differences and they bode well for party-based representative democracy. Left leaners and right leaners as well as electoral winners and losers—they mostly all feel equally well represented by parties and party leaders. And that applies also for women and men, for people with short or longer education, for the middle as well as the working class. Cases of young versus old people and party identifiers compared to people without party attachments are the odd ones out here.

From a political-psychological view it is quite understandable that party identification is strongly related to feelings of being represented. The two ‘emotions’ strengthen each other. However, seen normatively, it is not the ideal outcome in a democracy that people who identify with parties should, to a larger extent, feel represented than people

Table 21.5 The Difference in the Feeling of Being Represented Between Political Groups

	Difference in Percentages Yes	
	Feel Represented by a Party	Feel Represented by a Party Leader
Party ID–No Party ID	+42.8	+32.6
Left–Right	–1.1	–3.3
Winners–Losers	+2.1	+3.8

Notes: CSES–data covering 37–38 countries for party identification and left–right self–placements, and 25 countries for winners and losers. The Left–Right classification is based on a self–placement question. Winners = voted for a party represented in government; Losers = voted for a non–governing party. The unit of analysis for the winner–loser analysis is elections (=30–32) from 25 countries during the years 2005–2011.

Source: CSES.

without such identifications. The ideal is that both groups should perceive that their views are being reflected equally well by a party. The same ideal applies to citizens of different ages. Representative democracy should not make more old people feel well represented than young people. But that is what we find.

MULTILEVEL CONTROLS

Three findings stand out in our study. First, institutional learning plays a decisive role when people get to feel policy represented by a party or a party leader. The more practice the better. Citizens in old established democracies tend to perceive being policy represented to a larger extent than people in new emerging democracies. Second, we find the normatively unwelcome result that older people on average, and in most countries, feel better policy represented than younger people. Third, party identified citizens perceive that they are policy represented by a party to a much larger extent than people without a party with which to identify. A not surprising result, but nevertheless a normatively not-wished-for result. Before we accept these findings, they should be put to a tougher test. They must be resilient after relevant controls in multivariate analyses.

In Table 21.6 we try to do just such a test. A series of multilevel regressions are performed where citizens' perceptions of being policy represented by a party are regressed on a number of individual as well as system characteristics. On the system level, institutional learning (age of democracy) and a variable for electoral design are included. Individual level factors are three social variables—gender, age, and education—and two political variables—party identification and ideological left–right self–placements.¹⁰ Given our previous results based on bivariate analyses, our

Table 21.6 Multilevel Regression Analyses of the Impact of System- and Individual-Level Characteristics on Citizens' Perceptions of Being Policy Represented by a Political Party in Their Own Country

	Bivariate		Model 1		Multivariate Model 2		Model 3	
	Regr Coeff	Std Err	Regr Coeff	Std Err	Regr Coeff	Std Err	Regr Coeff	Std Err
<i>System Level</i>								
Institutional Learning	.23	.05	.24	.05	–		.20	.04
Electoral Design	.02*	.06	.05*	.04	–		.06*	.04
<i>Individual Level</i>								
Gender	.03	.00	–		.01	.00	.01	.00
Age	.09	.01	–		.05	.01	.05	.01
Education	.03*	.02	–		.02	.01	.03	.01
Left-Right	.04	.01	–		.03	.01	.02	.01
Party Identification	–.42	.03	–		–.39	.03	–.39	.03
Constant	–		.47	.04	.74	.02	.64	.05
No. Countries	–		38		40		38	
No. Respondents	–		52,298		53,115		52,298	
Estimate R ²	–		.04		.18		.20	

Notes: All variables are scaled between 0 and 1. The Institutional Learning variable (Age of Democracy) is scored 1 for Old Established Democracies, 0.5 for New Established Democracies and 0 for Emerging Democracies and Authoritarian Regimes. Proportional Electoral Systems are scored 1, while Mixed and Majoritarian Systems are classified as 0. Women=0, Men=1; Young=0, Middle Age=0.5, Older=1; Basic Education=0, Some Added Education=0.5, University=1; Left-Right Self-Placement, Left=0, Neither Nor=0.5, Right=1; Party Identification is coded 1 for respondents who answered Yes to a question on whether they usually think of themselves as close to any particular party. Respondents who answered No were given the code 0. Estimate R² is computed according to Kreft and De Leeuw (1998) and Dahlberg (2009). Random country intercepts were applied. Thanks to Nicholas Charron, Stefan Dahlberg, and Per Hedberg for help with data runs and model specifications. * *not* significant on $p < .05$.

Source: CSES Module III

expectation is to find the strongest effects for the institutional learning variable together with the age of citizens and party identification variables. Electoral system design as well as our other social and political variables should have weaker relationships with the extent to which people feel they are being policy represented by a party or a party leader.

Our preliminary conclusions were based on bivariate analyses. Now we can see that those conclusions hold tight after the multilevel and multivariate tests. The strong effect of the institutional learning variable, and the likewise comparatively strong effects of the age of citizens and party identification variables, survive the controlled examinations. Their independent and controlled effects are the most powerful. The independent effect of electoral design as well as of the other social and political variables proves to be less potent.¹¹

Tests using the same models but substituting representation through parties for representation through leaders yield very similar outcomes. Institutional learning as well as the age of citizens and party identification matter most, even when we study representation through party leaders. And electoral design and the other social and political factors matter less.

CAUSE FOR CELEBRATIONS?

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That institutional learning works when representative democracies grow old and more experienced must be judged very positive. Practice matters. Citizens in older and more mature democracies feel represented to a larger extent than people in new and emerging democracies. That is a good cause for celebrating. The opposite would be very problematic—that citizens in old established democracies would feel *less* represented than people in emerging inexperienced democracies. But thankfully, that is not the case.

Another reason to celebrate is that feelings of being represented were fairly well spread across all democracies. In a majority of countries, majorities of citizens perceived being well policy represented by a party as well as by a party leader. Furthermore, those positive feelings of being represented turned out to be reasonably evenly spread amongst different social and political groups, as we normatively wished they would be. Political equality means that every grown up citizen should weigh equal when it comes to democratic decisions—and as well feel equally democratically represented. And that is what we found for women and men, for people with different educational levels, for working and middle-class citizens, for people on the left as well as on the right and for winners and losers in elections. However, we found two cases where this normative goal was not attained. Old people clearly perceived being represented to a larger extent than young people. Likewise, citizens identifying with a party felt better represented than people without any such identification. The latter result is perhaps very understandable, but nevertheless not normatively welcome. Citizens should not need to identify with a party in order to feel represented by a party.

The fact that electoral system design did not matter much for the extent to which citizens perceive being policy represented by a party or a party leader can be seen as a positive result. The election system does not matter much when it comes to peoples' feelings of being well represented. Majoritarian, proportional, or mixed systems do equally well on the whole. Proponents of proportional voting may be a bit saddened by this result, as may constitutional engineers. The political science toolbox is apparently not very effective in this context. What is more consequential is institutional learning. Time and practice will do the job. That has been proven by the old experienced democracies. And in this lies a hope for emerging democracies, which today have citizens who, to a lesser extent, feel well represented.¹²

NOTES

1. In CSES II there are 64,256 respondents and in CSES III, 80,163.
2. CSES modules II and III covering the years 2005–2011 do not include any interview question on perceptions of how well national parliaments represent the views of voters.
3. On average non-response was below 10 per cent for both questions across our eighty-six election studies in forty-six countries.
4. In the study based on CSES data for the years 2001–2004, citizens more often recognized representation through political parties than they perceived that their national parliament represented their views very or rather well, twenty-three cases out of a total of thirty-three (Holmberg 2014). Not an all that surprising result. After all, people vote for parties, not for parliaments as a whole.
5. As for the political parties, more countries in the 2001–2004 CSES study have citizens who feel well policy represented by a party leader than perceive that they are well represented by their national parliament. That is the reality in twenty-four out of thirty-two studied countries (Holmberg 2014).
6. Not surprising, on the individual level there is a strong correlation between perceiving parties and party leaders as representing one's views. Overall in CSES III data the correlation is 0.55, and it is positive in all countries. However, the strength varies across countries from a low of 0.34 in Denmark to a high of 0.83 in Thailand. The pattern of the relationship can vary in revealing ways as well. We can take USA and Sweden as illustrating examples. The correlations are 0.46 and 0.36 respectively in USA and in Sweden. The most evident difference between the two countries being that in USA, with a majoritarian election system, leader-only representation exceeds party-only representation by 18 to 5 per cent, while in Sweden with proportional voting the relationship is the other way around—party-only representation surpasses leader-only representation by 21 to 8 per cent.
7. Old established democracies are: New Zealand, Great Britain, Denmark, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, Australia, Ireland, USA, Finland, Canada, Iceland, France, and the Netherlands. As New established democracies we have classified: Germany, Spain, Israel, Japan, Portugal, Italy, Austria, and Greece. Emerging democracies are: Czech Republic,

Slovakia, Hungary, Uruguay, Mexico, Bulgaria, Romania, Chile, Brazil, Poland, Taiwan, Slovenia, Philippines, South Korea, South Africa, Estonia, Croatia, Peru, and Latvia. As Authoritarian regimes we have classified: Turkey, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Albania, and Thailand.

8. Our hypothesis implicitly assumes that feelings of being represented should increase over time. All in all we have twenty-seven countries with at least two elections represented in the data. In this sample, over time across elections, feelings of being represented by a party increase on average by +1 percentage point. Not much, but in the direction of the hypothesis.
9. Observe that the results build on data from the early 2000s before the later rise of populist parties in Western democracies. However the somewhat lower levels of feeling represented amongst workers, people with less education, and the young provide some evidence for the dissatisfaction that populist parties can benefit from.
10. Party Identification has by far the strongest impact on whether people feel policy represented or not. However, including the party identification variable in the regression tests or not including it, does not affect the conclusions. Since, with some reason, it can be argued that party identification theoretically is very close to our dependent variable (feeling represented by a party), it should be excluded in the regressions. But, for the sake of inclusiveness, we have opted for keeping party identification in the model tests. After all, theoretically, party identification and feeling to be represented by a party or a leader are two different things. And the individual level correlation in the CSES III data set between the two phenomena is 'only' 0.44 and 0.32 respectively, making it feasible to treat party identification and feelings of representation as separate variables.
11. Two individual-level variables with a very limited bivariate relationship with people's feelings of being represented are not included in the regressions. Those variables are occupational class and the winner versus loser factor. For both of them we only have information from half of the studied countries. Consequently the number of respondents goes down to about 17,000 from about 53,000 if the two variables are included in the regressions. However, analyses done with them included, and on the smaller sample of only twenty countries and some 17,000 respondents, do not yield any different results from those reported in Table 21.6. All coefficients basically stay the same and the independent effects of occupational class and the winner versus loser variable are very modest. Our results are robust, as are the conclusions.
12. This, maybe too optimistic, ending needs the reservation that our CSES data come from the years 2001 to 2011—a period when at least in the beginning most international measures of democracy were on the way up. In later years all studies of the level of democracy have become more reserved. Positive trends have stagnated or begun to point down. For example, *Freedom House* shows that the level of democracy across the world culminated in 2005 and has gone slowly down since then (*Freedom in the World* 2018; Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018). The rise of populist and nationalist parties in Europe, and the election of Donald Trump in America, are also later phenomena. Future will tell if our somewhat rosy picture of Western representative democracy in the early 2000s was a parenthesis (Wästberg and Lindvall 2017; Galston 2018; Mounk 2018; Runciman 2018; Muller 2016; Barrling and Holmberg 2018).

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P A R T V

BEYOND
ELECTIONS AS
INSTRUMENTS OF
REPRESENTATIVE
DEMOCRACY

CHAPTER 22

REFERENDUMS AND DIRECT DEMOCRACY

CÉLINE COLOMBO AND HANSPETER KRIESI

INTRODUCTION

MODELS of democracy can be divided into two broad types (Mendelsohn and Parkin 2001; Kriesi 2005): representative or liberal models, where citizens exercise their sovereign rights through regularly repeated elections of political representatives; and participatory models of democracy, where citizens supposedly participate directly in political decision-making. Direct democracy aims at translating the people's will into political decisions with little interference by intermediaries. In contrast to liberal or representative democracy, citizens do not transfer their decisional mandate to elected representatives, but instead they make their own decisions on policy questions at the ballot box.

While critics perceive a tension between direct forms of legislation and representative democracy, supporters rather perceive them as complementary and even think of direct democracy as an enhancement of representative democracy. Scholars of participatory democratic theory see direct participation of citizens in political decision-making as a means to compensate for the deficits of representative democracy.

In this chapter, we will start by tracing the origins of modern-day direct democracy back to the ideas of participatory democrats, and we will give a systematic overview of the different forms of direct democratic practices existing today, as well as of the main criticisms of direct democracy. Next, we will review existing empirical evidence on some of the crucial debates surrounding direct democracy: Does direct democracy lead to systematically different policy outcomes and to a better representation of voters? Do popular votes hurt minority rights? To what extent does direct democracy undermine the relevance of participation in elections? Are citizens competent enough to decide over policy at the ballot box? What is the role of the elite and of campaigns in direct democracy? Finally, we briefly discuss the relationship between direct democracy and populism.

PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY THEORY

Participatory democracy theory originates from a critique of liberal or ‘realistic’ democratic models and was proposed mainly by the new left in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Participatory democrats such as Pateman (1970) and MacPherson (1977) maintain that the liberal idea of ‘free and equal’ individuals cannot be fully realized by the formal right to elect representatives but, rather, that participation opportunities have to be extended to all areas of people’s lives. In representative elections, existing social inequalities (e.g. in gender, ethnicity, or class) are often reproduced. This reproduction of inequalities is supposed to be counteracted through a comprehensive participation of citizens in decision-making. Furthermore, participatory democrats question the assumptions of a ‘realistic’ democratic theory (most prominently Schumpeter 1943), which assume that due to a widespread lack of interest in, and knowledge of, politics on the part of citizens, their role should be restricted to choosing the people who decide (Pateman 2012).

Participatory democracy entails two different principal aims or expected benefits, one *instrumental* and one *emancipatory*. Instrumentally, participation aims at increasing responsiveness and protecting individual rights more adequately than is possible by representative institutions. Emancipation-wise, participation is supposed to foster ‘liberty and individual development’ (MacPherson 1977: 211), by increasing citizens’ sense of political efficiency, and their trust in government. From this point of view, the citizens’ political disinterest is the result of a lack of participation opportunities and cannot be used as a justification for denying them those opportunities, or in Barber’s (1984: XXIV) words: ‘Autonomy is not the condition of democracy, democracy is the condition of autonomy. Without participating in the common life that defines them and in the decision-making that shapes their social habitat, women and men cannot become individuals.’ This emancipatory effect goes back to early philosophers such as de Tocqueville, Rousseau, and John Stuart Mill, and it was even more strongly emphasized by participatory democrats of the new left, who focused on the empowerment of politically disadvantaged minorities by participatory means (Pateman 1970).

Held (2006), however, argues that participatory democrats fail to answer the question of how their model can be realized in reality. In response to this objection, different possible interpretations were developed. Theorists agree on the point that participatory instruments can never fully *substitute*, but always only *complement*, institutions of representative democracy (see e.g. Budge 1996; Pateman 1970). Direct democracy through referendums or popular initiatives, where citizens have a say on policy issues, is the most widely used example of an institution designed to increase citizens’ participation in today’s democracies (Smith 2009). Other examples are deliberative polls, town-hall meetings, or workplace democracy.

PROS AND CONTRAS OF DIRECT DEMOCRACY TODAY

Whereas in political theory models of representative and direct democracy are often depicted as contrasting, in reality ‘pure’ direct democracies do not exist. Modern democracies institute representative political systems, which potentially embed a range of direct democratic elements. Direct democratic instruments thus have merely a complementary status in modern liberal democracies.

Elements of direct decision-making were introduced for different tactical and political reasons with the goal to strengthen purely representative systems (Qvortrup 2014). First, direct democracy is often equated with pure or unmediated popular sovereignty (Budge 1996; Barber 1984). It supposedly represents the people’s sovereign will more accurately than representative institutions. Direct democratic options in a political system should, in theory, increase the elected representatives’ responsiveness and move policies closer to the median voter’s preferences (Matsusaka 2004).

Second, citizen-initiated mechanisms of direct democracy (in contrast to top-down instruments) constitute a check on elected representatives, which can be used to prevent their misuse of power. Altman (2010: 2) describes them as ‘intermittent safety valves against perverse or unresponsive behavior of representative institutions and politicians’. For Hug and Tsebelis (2002), these mechanisms introduce voters as an additional veto player in the political system. Furthermore, citizen-initiated mechanisms of direct democracy can be a vehicle for political outsiders or minority civil society groups, such as social movements, to put their concerns on the political agenda. Finally, as mentioned above, direct citizen participation constitutes a way to ‘bring citizens back in’, and is a possible remedy for widespread political alienation and disinterest (Zittel and Fuchs 2007).

Yet direct democracy has always been criticized as well. On the one hand, critics fear that the use of direct democracy could undermine the representative system and lead to a repressive, majoritarian mass democracy, overriding plurality and minority rights (Tierney 2012; Qvortrup 2014). They also point to a trade-off between direct and representative democracy in terms of citizen participation.

On the other hand, direct democracy is suspected to lend itself to elite manipulation, which can be (ab)used by elites as a control-instrument—mainly in the form of plebiscites launched to consolidate the power of the government (Altman 2010; Tierney 2012). In this way, direct democratic instruments can be used by elite actors to bypass state institutions and procedures in order to achieve their aims or to ‘disengage from the responsibility of tough politics’ (Altman 2010: 10). Finally, probably the most frequent and pervasive criticism of direct democracy is the lack of competence and ability of regular citizens to decide important policy issues, and the poor decision-making standards in direct democracy (Kriesi 2005). We will examine empirical evidence about each of these criticisms later in the chapter. Before that, however, we will give a brief overview of the main forms of direct democracy in use today.

Support for direct democratic procedures in the population is generally very high (Dalton et al. 2001; Donovan and Karp 2006), but studies yield mixed results as to who are the most vocal proponents of direct democracy: the politically interested and engaged citizens or rather the dissatisfied critical citizens with low trust in traditional authorities.

TYPES OF DIRECT DEMOCRATIC INSTRUMENTS

Direct democracy comes in many different forms and facets and is certainly not a homogeneous concept. Various classifications exist (see e.g. Hug and Tsebelis 2002). Altman (2010) provides a comprehensive and useful classification which is based on three main criteria: the *initiator* of a measure—either the constitution, the political elite (top-down), or the citizens (bottom-up); the *purpose* of the measure—either to maintain the status quo (optional referendum) or to alter the *status quo* (initiative); finally, ballot measures—these can have a *binding* or a *non-binding* (consultative) character. In addition to these basic criteria, direct democratic measures are characterized by some important procedural qualifications, in particular the number of signatures required to launch a measure as a proportion of the electorate, the time limit of signature collection, participation quorums and approval quorums, and, finally, possible qualifiers that exclude certain issues from consideration.

The most commonly used forms of direct democracy are the mandatory constitutional referendum, the elite-initiated referendum or plebiscite, the optional or popular referendum, and the citizens' initiative. Some scholars include the recall, a mechanism that allows citizens to dismiss and replace an elected authority in the definition of direct democratic mechanisms. This latter instrument, used, for example, in US states, differs from referendums and initiatives as it is directed at persons, not policies. Other democratic innovations such as participatory budgeting, town hall meetings, or citizens' forums are usually not included in the definition of direct democracy.

Mandatory constitutional referendums are triggered automatically because certain legislative actions require popular approval to be enacted. They are supposed to 'shield citizens from legislative haste' (Qvortrup 2017: 145). In Switzerland, for example, every constitutional amendment is subject to a mandatory referendum. *Ad hoc referendums* initiated by the political elite are often called *plebiscites*. The Brexit vote in 2016 or the 2014 Scottish independence referendum are examples for such plebiscites. Plebiscites can be called by governments or Presidents—in France, for example, it is the President who has the constitutional right to call a plebiscite—or by parliamentary majorities.

Amongst the two most popular forms of citizen-initiated, bottom-up mechanisms, the *popular or facultative referendum* aims at maintaining the status quo by preventing a proposed law to be enacted (as in the Swiss case) or by abolishing an existing law (as in

the case of the Italian referendum abrogativo). *Popular initiatives or citizens' initiatives* on the other hand aim at changing the status quo by proposing new legislation. In both cases, citizens are required to gather a certain number of signatures, often within certain time limits. Signature requirements vary widely between, and even within, countries.

Taking a closer look at how direct democracy works is particularly important because direct democratic instruments enjoy increasing popularity throughout the democratic world (Ruth et al. 2017). Not only in the United States and in Switzerland, where initiative use has continuously accelerated over the last thirty years, but also in other parts of the world initiatives and referenda have gained currency as political decision-making devices. For the United States, where more than half of the states and cities provide for the initiative and referendum, Lupia and Matsusaka (2004) note that while more states have been adopting direct democratic procedures over the years, no state has ever abolished them. Also, Europe has seen a series of referendums related to drafting an EU constitution and membership matters in the last decades (Hobolt 2009; Hug and Sciarini 2000). Smith (2009) points out, however, 'while the referendum is becoming a more commonplace element in the institutional architecture of advanced industrial democracies, it tends to be used sparingly and for the majority of polities it is not a significant democratic device'.

In a recent analysis, Qvortrup (2017) shows that the increase of direct democratic procedures over the last thirty years happened mainly in free democracies as classified by Freedom House, and much less in illiberal states. Furthermore, for the most part, the rise is due to citizens' initiatives and constitutional referendums and not due to top-down plebiscites. Similarly, Altman (2010) finds that more frequent use of direct democracy, and in particular citizen-initiated direct democracy is correlated with higher levels of democracy.

PARTICIPATION IN DIRECT DEMOCRACY

Proponents of direct democracy frequently stress the educative effects of popular rights (Smith and Tolbert 2004). Studies find evidence for the positive effect of citizens' direct participation on various measures of political sophistication and civic engagement, such as internal and external political efficacy (Bauer and Fatke 2014; Bowler and Donovan 2002); political knowledge and interest (Benz and Stutzer 2004; Mendelsohn and Cutler 2000; Smith and Tolbert 2004; Seabrook et al. 2015); and even life satisfaction (Frey and Stutzer 2000; Stadelmann-Steffen and Vatter 2012; Bernauer and Vatter 2012; Radcliff and Shufeldt 2016).

These studies reverse the logic of critics of citizen competence and put forward the hypothesis that citizens become more politically competent once they are offered the opportunity to participate in political decisions. One positive consequence of such citizen empowerment is said to be increased political engagement and turnout. However, there are competing hypotheses regarding the effect of direct democracy on

participation levels, and the empirical evidence remains mixed. We need to address two questions in this regard: First, *Does direct democracy have a positive effect on voters' political participation levels?* Second, *Who participates in direct democracy—the disadvantaged or the privileged?*

Starting with the first question, scholars propose two hypotheses. The original idea of participatory democracy is that direct democracy increases political engagement by expanding the range of participation opportunities. An increase in electoral turnout through direct democracy can be due to the general empowerment of citizens, or to the fact that putting salient issues on the ballot alongside representative elections might motivate more voters to come to the polls in the first place. Indeed, some studies from the US context find higher turnout by one to four per cent in national elections in states where initiatives appear on the ballot at the same time (Smith and Tolbert 2004; Dyck and Seabrook 2010). However, this voter mobilization through initiatives seems to hold mostly for low-salience mid-term elections, where turnout is generally lower than in presidential elections.

The opposite hypothesis suggests a participation trade-off in systems with direct democracy, and predicts a negative effect on turnout. Direct democracy might lower turnout by undermining the salience and relevance of elections and by inducing voter fatigue (Linder 2010). Studies from the Swiss context find some evidence for a decrease in electoral turnout in cantons with more frequent direct democratic votes (e.g. Freitag and Stadelmann-Steffen 2010), while other studies find no effect on local-level participation (Ladner and Fiechter 2012). We might explain these differing findings in the Swiss and the US in part by study design and in part by differences between the political systems. In the US, studies compare direct democracy states with states without any direct democracy, while in Switzerland, all cantons have direct democracy, but the frequency of use differs. Furthermore, in the US, initiatives frequently appear on the ballot on national election days, while in Switzerland, direct democratic votes take place much more frequently, up to three to four times a year in between elections.

Regarding the second question, whether direct democracy leads to more socio-economically stratified participation, empirical evidence is scarce and inconclusive so far. Participatory democracy theory predicts a more equal participation in direct democratic contexts, as popular votes can provide a relatively easy democratic training ground, where people have to decide on simple yes or no questions (Kern and Hooghe 2017; Dalton and Weldon 2013). This should allow even people with low education or with general political interests to participate. The counterargument says that direct democracy provides an additional complication of the political system, where voters, in addition to knowing their electoral preferences, need to inform themselves about a whole range of different policy issues. In such a context, participation is more complex and peripheral voters might be deterred even more than in mere representative systems (Marien et al. 2010; Fatke 2015).

Moreover, the two systems with the most democratic participation, Switzerland and the US states, have relatively low general turnout, and lower turnout often implies more socio-economically skewed turnout. So far, this question is under-researched and the

few existing studies are inconclusive. Marien et al. (2010) and Kern and Hooghe (2017) find more strongly stratified participation in non-institutionalized forms of democracy as compared to voting in elections. Note, however, that in a system such as the Swiss one, direct democracy has become institutionalized over the years. Accordingly, Fatke (2015) does not find more socio-economic bias in electoral participation in Swiss cantons with more direct democracy. In sum, finding a research design that really gets to the heart of this question has proven difficult so far.

EFFECT OF DIRECT DEMOCRACY ON POLICY OUTCOMES

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Perhaps the most important question is whether direct democracy has any impact at all on public policy, and if so, what kind of impact. We can broadly subsume empirical research on these questions into three different answers (Lewis et al. 2015). Here, as well, most studies rely on comparisons of subnational units, such as Swiss cantons or US states, comparing policies in units where direct democracy is available or more extended with states where it is not available or more restrictive. A first, rather sceptical line of research, does not find any effects of direct democracy on policy outcomes (Lax and Phillips 2009, 2012), because ballot propositions are generally imperfect reflections of public preferences and, according to these authors, special interest groups to attain their own objectives often use them.

A second set of studies finds that direct democracy has mostly a conservative effect on policy outcomes (see Lupia and Matsusaka 2004 for a review). This holds for fiscal policy as well as for social policy. Fiscal policies are probably the domain where this question has been studied most extensively (Feld et al. 2010). Authors consistently find that direct democracy produces lower public expenditure, less public debt, lower tax rates and less redistribution (Matsusaka 2004; Feld et al. 2010; Funk and Gathmann 2013). Other studies point to more efficient provision of public services (Pommerehne 1978; Lewis et al. 2015).

Regarding social and cultural policies, Gerber (1999) finds that US states with direct democratic procedures are more likely to allow for the death penalty and to require parental notification before a minor can get an abortion (see also Arceneaux 2002). Further, Bowler and Donovan (2004) find that direct democracy states adopt more restrictive abortion laws, as well as more restrictive campaign finance laws. Finally, the vast majority of US states that adopted term limit laws allow for direct democracy (Bowler and Donovan 2004)—this shows how direct democracy can literally serve as a check imposed by the people on political elites. Lupia and Matsusaka (2004), however, point out that there were times in history, such as the progressive era at the beginning of the twentieth century or the post-Second World War era of welfare state expansion in the US, where direct democracy was used mostly to advance progressive causes.

Finally, a third, and probably most important, set of studies concludes that direct democracy acts as a ‘median-reverting’ institution (Lupia and Matsusaka 2004), moving policy output closer to the median voters’ preferences (Arceneaux 2002; Matsusaka 2004; Lupia and Matsusaka 2004; Hug 2011; Gerber 1999). In this view, direct democracy is neither inherently conservative nor liberal, but serves its original function of increasing the policy responsiveness of elites quite well. Leemann and Wasserfallen (2016) qualify this finding by showing that such an alignment with median voters’ preferences through direct democracy is particularly effective in cases where the policy preferences of political elites and voters deviate more strongly in the first place.

At least two important points need to be addressed when it comes to direct democracy’s effect on policymaking. First, direct democracy can have direct effects (amending legislation) as well as indirect effects (Kriesi and Trechsel 2008; Matsusaka 2014). The availability of direct democratic instruments might affect policymaking even when no proposition appears on the ballot. The mere threat of a referendum or an initiative in a certain policy domain can affect legislators’ actions in this domain. In the Swiss case, a prominent hypothesis suggests that direct democracy crucially contributed to the formation of a consociational political system, because the constant threat of direct democratic action forced political forces to resort to cooperative practices rather than to confrontation (Kriesi and Trechsel 2008; Linder 2010).

A second point to consider is that the size of the effect of direct democracy on public policy depends on the specific institutional design of its instruments. Effects are found to be stronger where the cost of using direct democracy are lower, in particular the signature requirements. Furthermore, the leeway that legislators and government employees have to implement measures varies largely between different states (Bowler and Donovan 2004; Gerber et al. 2004). Gerber et al. (2004) point out that the propositions put on the ballot usually concern policies that legislators were not willing to address in the first place. Once a proposition is accepted, the same legislators are often forced to implement measures they previously opposed. This often leads to incomplete implementation according to the authors.

DOES DIRECT DEMOCRACY HURT MINORITY RIGHTS?

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A common critique of direct democracy posits that minority rights are endangered when citizens decide directly over policy at the ballot box. While representative institutions filter political decisions by mechanisms of power-sharing, such as bicameralism and judicial review, as well as through requirements for deliberation, justifications, and accountability, no such protective mechanisms exist in direct democracy.

While the discussion about direct democracy’s effects on minorities for a long-time remained a theoretical one (see e.g. Butler and Ranney (1994) for an explanation of the

critique), in recent decades, empirical studies have attempted to settle the question. To date, however, the results remain somewhat inconclusive, suggesting that the answer depends on the specific direct democratic context, as well as on the minority under scrutiny. In an early study, Gamble (1997) finds that initiatives that restrict civil rights experience significantly higher rates of electoral success than popular initiatives on average. Later studies yield similar findings for US states (Haider-Markel et al. 2007; Lewis 2011). In fact, in the early 2000s, in a backlash against civil rights extensions, US states experienced a wave of referendums attempting to ban same-sex marriages, with eleven such referendums on state ballots in 2004 alone.

Other studies, however, relativize these negative findings to some extent, with Bowler and Donovan (1998) suggesting that referendums restrict minority rights only in smaller communities, but not in larger ones, where the electorate is more heterogeneous. Hajnal et al. (2002) found negative effects for Latinos, but not for other ethnic minorities in US state referendums. In the Swiss context, Vatter and Danaci (2010) find different effects for different minorities, with direct democracy undermining rights of immigrants, and in particular of less integrated and non-Christian immigrants, mainly Muslims (see also Helbling and Kriesi (2014) and Hainmueller and Hangartner (forthcoming) on municipal naturalization decisions). Women suffered some negative effects from direct democracy as well, while language minorities and the handicapped did not experience negative effects. They also find that direct democracy rarely imposes restrictions on minority rights, but rather often acts as a brake and hinders the extension of minority rights.

Even though the results are mixed on the question of whether direct democracy negatively affects minority rights, we should point out here that there are no studies explicitly attesting to a positive effect of direct democracy on minority rights. Regarding measures that can be taken to prevent direct democracy from hurting minorities, Smith (2009) suggests restricting the range of issues that can be placed on the ballot or designing the signature requirements to include relevant minorities. The European Union's 'European Citizen Initiative', for example, introduced in 2007 with the treaty of Lisbon, allows EU citizens to invite the European Commission to propose legislation on matters where the EU has competence to legislate. It has to be backed by at least one million EU citizens, coming from at least seven out of the twenty-eight member states.

CITIZEN COMPETENCE IN DIRECT DEMOCRACY

Doubts about ordinary citizens' competence to decide over important policy matters directly constitute probably the most prominent criticism of direct democracy. This criticism has two aspects: On the one hand, citizens are assumed to be largely

disinterested in, and uninformed about, politics and therefore their opinions are assumed to be incoherent and unstable.

On the other hand, deliberative democracy theorists argue that the majoritarian institutional logic of direct democracy does not provide any incentives for deliberation and exchange of arguments (Chambers 2001). In other words, direct democracy is much stronger in emphasizing the *legitimacy* and *political equality* aspects of ballot decisions, where ‘all citizens have equal effective inputs into collective decision-making’ (Saward 1998: 43), than in fostering its *educative* and *enlightening* effects. On the other side, some scholars argue that direct democratic votes offer a near-perfect setting of public deliberation, where citizens have incentives to get informed and discuss policy issues (Frey 1994; Feld and Kirchgässner 2000).

Indeed empirical studies on voters’ knowledge throughout the last century have found exceedingly low levels of political knowledge (Converse 1964; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996; Somin 2004). Consequently, ‘minimalism’ (Sniderman et al. 1993), that is to say, the image of a politically ignorant citizenry, was for a long time the predominant account of public opinion—a worrying perspective with regard to direct democratic decision-making. However, in the 1990s, a more positive perspective emerged under the heading of ‘low information rationality’. The main proposition is that citizens are often able to make reasonable political decisions in an efficient way by using information shortcuts, such as following the positions of parties and other elite actors (Lupia et al. 2000; Lau and Redlawsk 2001). In particular, the role of party cues in direct democracy is by now well documented (Kriesi 2005; Hobolt 2009; Boudreau and MacKenzie 2014; Colombo and Kriesi 2017). This research introduces a more optimistic perspective, concluding that voters efficiently use the incomplete information they have at hand to reach informed decisions.

Another point worth noting is that the measures that are commonly used to assess political sophistication are not necessarily the most appropriate measures of voter competence in direct democracy. Surveys usually ask respondents factual political knowledge questions on generic aspects of national politics, such as the names of certain officeholders (see Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996) for a standard definition of general political knowledge). Whether such questions constitute an appropriate measure of citizen competence has been debated (Lupia 2006; Gilens 2001). Possible alternatives are to employ issue-specific (Gilens 2001; Colombo 2016) or local-level knowledge questions in survey research (Shaker 2012; Barabas et al. 2014).

However, the idea of using cognitive shortcuts does not answer the deliberative critique of direct democracy, as relying on cues does not foster deliberation and discussion of different viewpoints. What is more, recent studies of motivated reasoning raise the question of whether high political knowledge alone makes for competent citizens (Lodge and Taber 2013; Leeper and Slothuus 2014). These studies show that citizens select and process information in a biased way, preferring information that is consistent with their existing knowledge and disregarding and/or devaluing incompatible information. Therefore, high information levels do not necessarily prevent incompetent judgement. Such motivated reasoning processes have been documented

also in direct democracy (Colombo and Kriesi 2017; Boudreau and MacKenzie 2014; Slothuus and de Vreese 2010). To sum up, while low information levels might be overcome by public discussion, media information, and the efficient use of heuristic cues, information selection and interpretation often proceeds in a biased way, relying more on voters' partisan or social identity than on a deliberative exchange of arguments. This process, however, happens similarly in direct democratic votes as in representative elections. Finally, when it comes to citizen competence, it is important to remember the crucial role of the political elites in guiding public opinion formation, as we discuss in the next section.

THE ROLE OF ELITES

One way in which sceptics suspect direct democracy to undermine representative democracy is by weakening the role of the political elite, that is to say of elected representatives and political parties (Ellis 2002). Many scholars of direct democracy, by contrast, agree that political elites play a crucial role also in direct democratic decision-making and that, therefore, this apparent contrast between the two ways of decision-making is often exaggerated (Budge 1996; Barber 1984; Kriesi 2006). Political elites can influence procedures of direct democratic decision-making on three levels: the launching of initiatives or referendums, the campaign preceding the ballot vote, and the implementation of accepted decisions.

First, before people get to vote on a measure, political elites crucially affect the probability of a measure being put on the ballot to begin with. This is obvious in the case of top-down initiated referendums (plebiscites), where a government or a parliamentary majority decides to submit a piece of legislation to popular vote. Governments can launch referendums for strategic reasons, for example to circumvent parliament or to solve tensions within their own parties, or simply to gain additional legitimation for the passage of important legislation (Qvortrup 2017). Even when it comes to citizen-initiated mechanisms, however, studies have shown political elites to have a large influence.

As mentioned above, the possibility of a citizen-initiated vote can affect legislators' behaviour, which in turn means that legislative behaviour affects the use of citizen-initiated mechanisms. In fact, studies have found that more consensus between the elites on a certain issue, significantly decreases the likelihood of a referendum being launched (Treichsel and Sciarini 1998), while referendums are more likely when the elite is more fragmented. Furthermore, elite actors are most frequently the ones launching ballot measures in the first place. In Switzerland, a majority of citizen initiatives is launched by political parties, who use citizen initiatives as an effective electoral mobilization device (Leemann 2015), while in the US states, they are often initiated by powerful interest groups (Gerber 1999). Furthermore, the elites also set the

agenda of popular votes, that is, they decide on their timing and on the composition of the proposals that are submitted to the vote on a given date.

Second, once a measure is submitted to a popular vote, political actors crucially shape the campaign and the information provided to citizens, which constitutes the basis for the voters' decisions. On the one hand, parties and powerful interest organizations issue their own voting recommendations, thus supplying voters with important decision cues. On the other hand, elite actors decide also on the information, the arguments, and the frames transmitted to the voters during the campaign (Hänggli and Kriesi 2010; Vreese and Semetko 2004; Hobolt 2009). The mass media play a decisive role in transmitting this information (Hänggli and Kriesi 2010; Tresch 2012). Campaigns are crucial in referendums, maybe even more so than in elections. Because referendums are about single issues, which may be unfamiliar to voters, they might have little knowledge and no clear pre-existing opinion, so campaigns have potentially considerable room for effects (LeDuc 2002; Semetko and de Vreese 2004; Hobolt and Brouard 2011).

With regard to campaign mobilization, the role of money in winning direct democratic campaigns is much more unclear and complex than some critical voices contend. First, as Kriesi (2006) shows, the amount of money spent for a campaign is often endogenous to the expected closeness of the outcome—that is, actors spend more money when they expect a close vote. Second, empirical findings show that spending large sums on campaigns can sometimes help in defeating measures through popular votes in referendums, but money has much less influence in citizen initiatives (Gerber 1999; Lupia and Matsusaka 2004; Kriesi 2006).

Finally, as described above, how a measure is implemented once it is accepted in a popular vote remains completely in the hands of political elites and public administration, who are often left with considerable room for interpretation. For all these reasons, we would like to point out once more that, even though direct democratic measures undoubtedly introduce an additional element of unpredictability into the political process, they are still largely controlled by political elites. Direct democratic decision-making, as it exists today, is deeply embedded within representative power structures and far from being out of the control of the elites. Or, in Smith's (2009: 123) words: 'The manner in which political parties (among other actors) play a crucial role in the outcomes of direct legislation makes a mockery of the common distinction drawn between direct democracy and representative democracy.'

POPULISM AND DIRECT DEMOCRACY

Populist parties have been on the rise in recent decades in established democracies around the world. Most of these populist parties combine criticism of how liberal democracy functions with claims for more direct citizen participation (Mudde 2007; Bowler et al. 2017; Akkerman 2017). The common defining characteristic of different populist parties is, according to most authors (Canovan 1999; Kriesi 2014), that they

pitch a homogeneous and highly positively connoted ‘people’ against a corrupt, and negatively connoted ‘elite’. Consequently, the call for more democracy is at the same time a call to restore the sovereignty of the pure people against the corrupt elite. Populists, while rejecting the liberal element of representative democracy, see themselves as ‘real democrats’, demanding for a maximum of unmediated citizen participation. With this, as Canovan (1999) points out, the populist claims are very similar to the claims made by participatory democrats as described above. However, while participatory and deliberative democrats put a stronger emphasis on the educative process of the deliberation and formation of enlightened opinions through participatory instruments, populists focus on the act of voting as a possible check of the elite.

This claim for citizen participation contrasts, to a certain extent, with the tendency of populist parties to be led by strong and charismatic leaders. In fact, recent studies have analysed whether voters of populist parties support their parties’ claims for more direct participation, and have found mixed results (Bengtsson and Mattila 2009; Pauwels 2014; Bowler et al. 2017). When it comes to the implementation of direct democratic instruments, Akkerman (2017) and Jacobs (2011) find that when radical right populist parties participate in governments, they hardly introduce any direct democratic reforms. Despite the frequency of their claims for direct democracy, such reforms do not appear to rank high on the policy agenda of right wing populist parties so far. The populists’ relationship with direct democracy thus seems somewhat ambivalent.

CONCLUSION

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In this chapter, we attempted to offer an overview of the main debates surrounding the relationship between direct and representative forms of democracy, and to review corresponding empirical evidence. Debates about direct democracy in political science remained for a long time mainly theoretical and normative, and systematic empirical research on the subject has started only in the 1990s. Therefore, this is a relatively young field of research and many questions remain open. In the light of an increased popularity and use of direct democratic instruments all over the world in recent years, more empirical research on various aspects of these decision-making mechanisms appears particularly important. Highly controversial, and at the same time consequential popular decisions, such as the British vote to leave the European Union, add to this increased interest in the subject.

In order to better understand how direct democracy works and to develop suggestions for institutional reform to improve the quality of decision-making through direct democracy, more country-comparative studies are needed. Comparative designs have so far been limited mainly to a comparison of subnational units. Furthermore, a better understanding of the differential effects for different types of instruments, such as elite-imposed plebiscites versus citizen-initiated initiatives and referendums, is necessary. Many scholars still overlook these differences and lump together different forms of

popular votes. Our main conclusion from this review is that the sharp contrast often drawn between direct democratic and representative decision mechanisms is often vastly exaggerated.

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CHAPTER 23

INTEREST GROUPS AND THE MARKET FOR REPRESENTATION

JEREMY RICHARDSON

INTRODUCTION

STEIN Rokkan's classic analysis of how Norwegian democracy worked in the post-war period captures perfectly the central argument I wish to present in this chapter. Thus, he argued that the yearly negotiations between interest groups *and government* meant 'more in the lives of rank-and-file citizens than formal elections' (Rokkan 1966: 107). My argument is that interest groups, rather than parties, were (long before 'the decline of parties' debate) the main channel of representation for very long periods in Western democracies. Thus, I am a pluralist, though certainly not an uncritical one. This chapter was completed a few weeks after the 2019 massacre of fifty Muslims in Christchurch, New Zealand. In the wake of that massacre the ruling coalition rushed through legislation banning the sale and ownership of automatic weapons. Similar reforms had been proposed before, but had never been brought forward in legislation due to opposition from the gun lobby. Any pluralist living just a few hundred metres from this massacre (as I do) would have cause for doubts about their support for systems of government which accord interest groups a key role. Yet I do challenge the view that the main 'representation chain' in democracies is generally taken to be a smooth process whereby electors vote for political parties, those parties form governments, which in turn churn out policies, more or less consistent with their electoral policies. If a party, or group of parties, can secure a majority in the legislature, then policy outputs are 'legitimate'. The alleged centrality of this system of representation is captured perfectly by Caramani as follows:

The working of representative democracy depends on political parties and on a number of functions they fulfil, the most important one being the structuring of the

vote. The ideal type of representation through the mechanism of party competition sees parties offering alternative policy choices based on which citizens mandate them and hold them accountable. Representative democracy is thus primarily party government in which political parties represent—i.e., respond to people’s preferences—and govern. (Caramani 2017: 54)

In the first section of the chapter, I suggest that party government can be problematic and that for representation to be effective societies need multiple forms of representation. I then go on to describe what I consider to have been a common model of representation based on a consensual policy style in which a high degree of interest incorporation was the norm. I then suggest that this system of interest representation has been challenged by many governments as policy styles have changed from consensual to impositional. I conclude with some brief observations regarding the link between this change in policy style and the rise of populism, or as I term it ‘Farumpism’.

The Tyranny of Party Government?

The elections/party representation chain is very *public* and relatively transparent. In a sense, this representative chain is analogous to Bagehot’s concept of ‘dignified’, as opposed to ‘efficient’ (Bagehot 1867), though he was, of course, discussing the way that the British constitution worked. It keeps (at least until the recent rise of populism) the masses (ill-informed masses, so Bagehot thought!) reasonably happy in the belief that they are being ‘represented’. Voting for parties is the core of this system of representation. However, like Bagehot’s ‘dignified’ aspects of the British constitution, there is more than an element of myth about it. Casting one’s vote in favour of a particular party might often be of no more use than cheering one’s favourite football team to victory. It will make one feel good for a while but probably won’t deliver much direct benefit.

Moreover, this neat model of representation, if it actually worked as commonly described, can also be seen as tyrannical. Writing in the first half of the nineteenth century, the American political theorist and Seventh Vice-President of the US, John C. Calhoun, made the distinction between a numerical majority and a concurrent majority. To Calhoun, government by a numerical majority alone is to ‘confuse part of the people with the whole of the people, and is in fact no more than the rule of the smaller by the larger part’. On the other hand, in a concurrent majority the community is regarded as being made up of different and conflicting interests with these interests having an effective veto over the majority. Calhoun argued:

It is the negative power—the power of preventing or arresting action by government—be it called by what term it may—veto, interposition, nullification, checks or balance of power—which in fact forms the constitution. They are all but

different names for negative power. In all its forms, and under all names, it results from the concurrent majority. (Quoted by Wiltse, 1951: 417)

The concurrent majority is necessary, according to Calhoun, because under a system of numerical majority, government could degenerate into absolutism. The Brexit case is an example of the problem. The 'leave' campaign defeated the 'remain' campaign by a mere 3.8 per cent in the June 2016 referendum, yet Britain set out on a historic path to leave the European Union as a result of a winner-take-all decision. Not only was the majority in favour of leaving tiny, thereby raising exactly the concerns outlined by Calhoun, but the 'leave' vote was heavily skewed towards older voters, with a fifty-year-old some 10 per cent more likely to have voted leave than a thirty-three-year-old (Hobolt 2016: 1269), thus raising very important issues of intergenerational equity. The simple model of representation outlined above is at best problematic and at worst undemocratic because it risks trampling on the right of minorities. In the Brexit case the minority was a very large minority indeed. The fact that the 'hard Brexit' faction in the Conservative Party finally won the internal party fight (resulting in Britain leaving the EU on January 31st, 2020) meant that the wishes and rights of that large minority were brushed aside. The 2000 and 2016 US Presidential elections are even more glaring examples of the risk of tyranny under the simple model of representation as in neither case did the elected President win a majority of the votes cast. Minorities can fall through the gap under the simple model of representation where parties are the central channel of representation. Elections and party programmes cover but a small proportion of policy problems that need to be resolved in day-to-day governing. The 'noise' of elections and the 'stuff' of day-to-day politics where public policies get decided are, in practice, quite different worlds. My argument is that the market for representation has to be complex and varied for representation to be 'efficient' as well as 'dignified'.

FILLING THE REPRESENTATION GAP: INTEREST GROUPS AND CONSENSUAL DEMOCRACIES

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It is not surprising, therefore, that democratic societies have, over a very long period, developed processes to fill the 'representation gap'. These processes might be seen as a modern-day equivalent of what Bagehot termed the 'efficient' branch of the constitution, namely arrangements that enable both the vast range of societal interests to gain representation and influence in the policy process and for policymakers to design policies that might work. Parties and elections are often the tip of the representative iceberg. Whilst I would never argue that markets always work to the common good, I think it reasonable to argue that modern democracies have developed quite

sophisticated and well-organized, though essentially privatized, 'markets for representation', simply because the conventional ('dignified') model of public representation is often flawed.

The notion that governments should develop some kind of ongoing *exchange relationship* with interest groups has, for example, been historically embedded in the study of American politics. The father of interest group studies, Arthur Bentley, argued over a century ago that '*all phenomena of government are phenomena of groups pressing one another, forming one another and pushing out new groups and group representatives (the organs and agencies of government) to mediate the adjustments*' (Bentley 1908, emphasis added). To Bentley, this was how things got done. It was efficient but was very different to the 'dignified' model of public representation outlined above. In fact the pluralist phenomenon that Bentley described at the beginning of the twentieth century was very evident in Britain long before that. As Patricia Hollis has pointed out, the Victorians were very familiar with pressure groups as channels of representation. Thus, she argues:

... pressure was a necessary tool of social reform, a necessary aid to government, evidence of healthy public concern. Pressure from without had both stretched the arena of government and access to government, and in the process had thrown up feminist groups on the rights of prostitutes, evangelicals on the wrongs of prostitutes, public health groups on the diseases of prostitutes, Shaftsbury and Gladstone on refuges for prostitutes, and sabbatarians for no prostitutes on Sundays. Victorian life was engagingly pluralist. (Hollis 1974: 25)

In the post-war period, David Truman's study of American politics, *The Governmental Process: Political Interests and Public Opinion*, first published in 1951, echoed these early works by emphasizing the often close relationship between groups and government in public policymaking. Truman was describing what became very familiar to students of democratic systems over many decades, namely 'bureaucratic politics', far distanced from elections and parties. Truman's characterization of the process of representation was very similar to Bentley's (and was, essentially, pluralist). Thus, he argued that:

Within limits, therefore, organised interest groups, gravitating towards *responsive* points of decision, may play one segment of the structure against another... the total pattern of government over a period of time represents a protean complex of crisscrossing relationships that change in strength and direction with alterations in the power and standing of interests, organised and unorganised.

(Truman, 1951 251, emphasis added)

Truman had a dim view of parties. To Truman, 'national parties, and to a lesser degree those in the states, tend to be poorly cohesive leagues of locally based organizations rather than unified and inclusive structures' (Truman 1951 250). All of these American

early group theorists were observing what became later known as the iron triangle system of governing. As Jordan puts it:

Decisions about such policy areas as water or agriculture were seen as taking place in triangles composed of (1) the interest group(s), (2) the relevant administrative agency or section of the federal bureaucracy, and (3) the relevant Congressional committees. Access to these triangles was difficult: even the Presidency or departmental head had difficulty impinging on these private worlds. (Jordan 1981: 96)

Whilst the iron triangle system of governance might be seen as a purely American phenomenon (or *problem* as critics would label it), it had its variants in very many European states. However, this rather closed and exclusive system of representation in the US was gradually changing towards a more *diffuse* (permeable, and more pluralist) system of representation producing a system of *shared power*, quite different to 'winner takes all' power where the majority party, or parties, claim a mandate to rule. Hugh Hecló, writing in 1978, identified a system of government that he described as *network governance*, something now seen as ubiquitous in the Western World. He noted that policy problems often escape the confined and exclusive 'worlds' of professionals (i.e. escape the iron triangles) and are resolved in a much looser configuration of participants in the policy process. Hecló argued that the nature of power in Washington had begun to change. Exercising power was not as much fun as it used to be in the 'clubby' days of Washington politics (Hecló 1978: 94). Thus 'as *proliferating groups have claimed a stake* and clamoured for a place in the policy process, they have helped diffuse the focus of political and administrative leadership' (Hecló 1978: 94–5, emphasis added).

In Continental Europe, this more diffuse system of representation and power was also well recognized as an effective means of responding to people's preferences. For example, Stein Rokkan argued (when discussing Norwegian politics) that we had moved a very long way from systems of government that can accurately be described as by numerical majority. Writing in 1966, he argued that the Norwegian government can 'rarely, if ever, force through decisions on the basis of its electoral power but has to temper its policies in complex consultations and bargains with major interest organisations' (Rokkan 1966: 107). Rokkan recognized that hierarchical, top-down government was not really the norm at that time. As the quote from Rokkan at the head of this chapter illustrates, his description of the Norwegian system representation is quite at odds with the conventional parties > elections > legislature model. He did not discount the importance of elections (neither do I), but his thesis was that elections might not always be the biggest game in town. As he put it succinctly, 'votes count but resources decide' (Rokkan 1966).

Similar observations can be found in much European literature of the 1970s. Heisler and Kvavik (in formulating a systematic characterization of what they termed the 'European polity') saw much of Europe as exhibiting a policy style '... characterized by continuous, regularized access for economically, politically, ethnically and/or

subculturally based groups to the highest levels of the political system . . . as one of the central features of the European polity model' (Heisler and Kvavik 1974: 48). Their central argument was that there was a very effective system of representation in Western Europe, facilitating *continuous* access (as opposed to intermittent access via periodic elections) to the centres of power. The classic examples of this were the Scandinavian democracies that placed huge emphasis on interest group access to the policymaking process. The Swedish *Remiss* system was a model example of a strongly representative system of policymaking as it guaranteed pretty well any interest could get its say in policy deliberations and the subsequent policy compromises. There were multiple variants of this policy style around western Europe, even in countries where political and social cleavages were, unlike Scandinavia, very considerable. Such countries recognized that, as Calhoun had for the US, simple majority rule would not work. Other means had to be found for ensuring a more broadly based system of representation.

In Britain, the same trends were identified. For example, in the late 1970s academic studies shifted in focus from the study of traditional representative institutions, such as elections, parties, and legislatures, towards a different world of (rather 'messy') power and representation. Indeed, Richardson and Jordan went so far as to describe the system of representation as essentially '*post-parliamentary*' (Richardson and Jordan 1979). Echoing Rokkan, they characterized the British policy process as follows:

in describing the tendency for boundaries between government and groups to become less distinct through a whole range of pragmatic developments, we see policies being made between a myriad of interconnecting, interpenetrating organizations. It is the relationships involved in committees, the policy community of departments and groups, the practices of co-option and the consensual style, that perhaps best account for policy outcomes than do examinations of party stances, of manifestos or of parliamentary influence. (Richardson and Jordan 1979: 74)

In fact these claims were not new. Exactly the same characterization of the British system of representation had been made by W.J.M. Mackenzie just under a quarter of a century earlier. By then a Professor of Politics, Mackenzie was a wartime civil servant and had an insider's view of British policymaking. He argued that 'since 1949 we have entered a phase in which party programmes seem relatively unimportant' (Mackenzie 1955: 133). In a telling passage, written some four years before the publication of Charles Lindblom's classic article, 'The Science of Muddling Through' (Lindblom 1959), Mackenzie characterized British post-war politics as a 'continuous process of adjustment and not as a contest between alternative principles' (Mackenzie 1955: 133).

His observations were made much more explicit by one of his contemporaries, Robert McKenzie. He became the leading expert on British political parties in the post-war period, yet saw pressure groups as the core participants in the democratic process. In what became a classic description of the role of groups in the British political system, he wrote:

I have suggested that any explanation of the democratic process which ignores the role of organised interests is grossly misleading. I would add that it is hopelessly inadequate and sterile and that it leaves out of the account *the principal channels through which the mass of the citizenry brings influence to bear on the decision-makers whom they have elected*. In practice, in every democratic society, the voters undertake to do far more than select their elected representatives; they also insist upon their right to advise, cajole, and warn them regarding the policies they should adopt. This they do, for the most part, through the pressure group system.

(McKenzie 1958: 9, emphasis added)

Some writers, notably Rhodes, have gone much further and appear to almost excise *government* from the picture altogether, leading to a ‘hollowed out’ state. Rhodes argued ‘the state has been hollowed out from above (for example by international interdependence); from below (by marketization and networks); and sideways (by agencies and several species of parastatal bodies)’ (Rhodes 2007: 1248). Similarly, Mair argued that ‘... government becomes subordinate and deferential, and no longer seeks to wield power or even exercise authority. The relevance of government declines while that of non-governmental institutions and practices increases’ (Mair 2013: 4).

I make this historical diversion for a good reason, namely that there has been a long-standing recognition in the US and Europe that there were two *parallel* systems of representation, the conventional system of representation (via elections and parties), and an alternative system of representation with interest groups at its centre and which de-emphasized parties, parliaments, and legislatures. Modern democratic societies are characterized by multiple channels of representation via parties (increasingly new parties), interest groups, social movements, and representation via social media.

Representation via interest groups has not followed one pattern. It has varied from a quite pluralistic system to a relatively (undemocratic) corporatist system. However, these interest group-based systems of representation have had one feature in common, namely a policy style that emphasized *consultation* and *bargaining* in order to resolve specific policy problems.

It is no accident that in many Western democracies, membership of pressure groups far exceeds that of political parties, as party membership has declined. For example, in Britain in the mid-fifties the membership of the Conservative Party was approximately 3 million, but by the 2015 election it had dropped to approximately 150,000, whereas the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds had over 1 million members, and Amnesty International and Friends of the Earth had over 100,000 members each. Using my ‘market for representation’ analogy, pressure groups have steadily expanded their market share at the expense of political parties. Citizens have increasingly demanded more (and effective) representation, and policymakers have been historically ready to supply it. (For a more detailed discussion of the challenges that groups present to political parties, see Richardson 1995) Western democracies had adopted a policy style that emphasized consensus relationships with groups. However, this form of representation sometimes had concomitant costs, notably a tendency for interest groups to resist much-needed policy change, leading to policy reform deficits.

THE CHALLENGE TO REPRESENTATION VIA INTEREST GROUPS

The system of representation here (what I term ‘policy style’) implied bargaining, negotiated environments, usually incremental policy change, and, above all, stability. Yet, this system, like any market, has proved vulnerable to shocks and challenges. In this section, I argue that the system of representation based on interest group participation and influence has been subject to serious challenges, especially in countries (such as in Britain and Scandinavia) where it appeared embedded. In short, my suspicion is that there has been a change in policy style which has (possibly temporarily) shifted the system of representation towards a more elections- and party-based system, akin to the conventional or ‘dignified’ model outlined above.

The existence of a trend towards a more *impositional* policy style in Western democracies is the theme of recent work by Capano et al. They suggest there are ‘...strong arguments in support of the view that governments continue to play a pivotal role in policy-making...’ (Capano et al. 2015: 311). They challenge the influential ‘governance without government’ thesis developed by Rhodes (Rhodes 1996) and argue that ‘there is plenty of evidence suggesting that while the role of the state may indeed have changed to adapt to and accommodate more complex and rapidly changing environments, the *dominant* role of government in these new governance arrangements remains intact’ (Capano et al. 2015: 312, emphasis added). Their findings have clear implications for who gets represented and how. Power shifts have the potential for changing the market for representation. Capano et al. see the recurrent security and economic crises since the 1990s as having taken the need for an active state to an unprecedented level. Such perturbations present choice opportunities for governments, in this case an opportunity to be more *dirigiste*, less consensual, more impositional (with implications for systems of representation). Peters has also highlighted the capacity of governments to change the rules of the game when governments deem policy reform is necessary (Peters 1997). The rules of the policy game act as filters through which representation has to pass (or not). He argues that policy networks (what I have argued used to be a key channel of representation) might not always be efficient in that they may fall prey to Scharpf’s ‘joint decision trap’, namely ‘...an institutional arrangement whose policy outcomes have an inherent (non-accidental) tendency to the sub-optimal...’ (Scharpf 1988: 271). This argument is similar to Mancur Olson’s thesis that those countries that have the longest period of undisturbed freedom of organization ‘will suffer most from growth repressing organizations and combinations’ (Olson 1982: 77). Peters suggests that where sub-optimal policies have developed, ‘the role of government then becomes providing the leadership to shape the debate and move decisions away from the lowest common denominator realm into a more socially desirable space (Peters 1997: 57). The Peters’ thesis is that there is an almost natural dynamic in policy processes, in that reform deficits build up over time,

eventually leading to a shift in how policy is made, that is, a change in policy style. This dynamic may become intensified in times of resource constraint in that policy change can be seen to be even more necessary, but the dynamic appears to work irrespective of ideational shifts or resource squeeze. Thus, there is a link between changes in policy style and systems of representation. Put simply, *dirigisme* and representation do not sit well together.

All systems of representation have an inbuilt bias in that the winners get the policy spoils (for a discussion of what an *unbiased* interest group system might look like see Lowery et al. (2015)). Although, as I have argued above, interest groups have for decades filled the representation gap left by parties, it is undeniable that those groups who have gained from existing representative systems will defend their gains by arguing against policy change. As Schattschneider put it ‘the flaw in the pluralist heaven is that the heavenly chorus sings with a strong upper class accent’ (Schattschneider 1960: 35). Also, as Baumgartner has argued, ‘normally, defenders of the status quo can argue that their policies, whilst perhaps not perfect, have stood the test of time and that, while some marginal adjustments may always be in order, any fundamental shift in the general orientation carries too many risks’ (Baumgartner 2012: 14). The problem with policy processes that are characterized by this kind of path dependency is that policy problems can build up with serious consequences, especially to the under- or unrepresented. As Drutman’s study of business lobbying in the US demonstrates, the privileged position of business lobbyists in the US system means that ‘major political change has become more difficult. When major legislation does pass, it is increasingly an incoherent set of compromises necessary to buy the support of a wide range of particular interests’ (Drutman 2015: 3).

However, we all know that policy change does take place. For example, particularly since the 1960s, Western democracies have seen a huge extension of environmental legislation, much of it opposed by business interests. Thus, the winners seem not to be able always to completely ‘freeze’ public policy. Their policy gains eventually become tomorrow’s policy problems, hence Wildavsky’s famous *Law of Large Solutions in Public Policy*, ‘when the solution dwarfs the problem as a source of worry’ (Wildavsky 1979: 62). The *inexorable march of problems*, as Kingdon put it, will sooner or later generate a crisis of some sort, followed by subsequent crises (Kingdon 1984). Such policy crises present big challenges to existing systems of representation, especially to organized interests. As Baumgartner has suggested ‘... in face of the 2008 financial collapse... it was not credible to suggest that no changes were needed. The only question is how far reaching the policy changes would be. At best, defenders of the status quo can move to limit the damage in such situations’ (Baumgartner 2012: 14).

Moreover, it is not just crises that force policy change against the resistance of groups. ‘Reform deficits’ (Richardson 2018a, 233, 2018b, 38–43) build up over time and, eventually, they have to be addressed by governments. This process, I argue, has involved a quite big disruption in the market for representation. Put simply, *the decline of mass parties might now be being followed in many systems by the decline of interest groups as channels of representation.*

Britain is one of the most compelling cases of long-term changes in the market for representation. As argued above, Britain had seen a long-term decline in parties as the main institutions of representation, compensated by the creation of a very dense system of interest-group representation. Yet, the group system itself has been eroded with a steady shift towards *government* and away from *governance* (this chapter draws on my fuller discussion of the changing British policy style, see Richardson (2018a, 2018b)). This shift has gradually restricted opportunities for meaningful representation on specific policy issues. Thus, the 1979 Thatcher Government presaged a shift in policy style from governance to government via two key developments. First, the drive for *austerity* in public finance, and, second, the drive to address a range of *reform deficits*. The emphasis on austerity had implications for the UK policy style as a whole. For example, there were growing demands for higher public expenditure that were not met, thus changing the relationship between government and groups. A considerable amount of policy change emanated from the *austerity turn*. Policy change came from the political level, top-down, not emerging from interest groups in co-operation with civil servants, bottom-up. The austerity turn's importance was its effect on actor behaviour, irrespective of its actual financial outturn. For Mrs Thatcher and subsequent governments, austerity was an overarching belief system, from which nearly all action flowed. This belief system had a seismic quality about it and had the capacity to cut across hitherto autonomous policy sectors. Representation became quite *constrained* in the sense that the scope for policy bargaining was greatly reduced.

Second, an equally important trend has been underway, namely attacking 'reform deficits'. The Thatcher Government started a continuing process of tackling what it saw as reform deficits created by an oversupply of representation. Groups had been too effective in representing their own interests. The trend has been for reduction of power for many established interests such as the professions, trade unions, and even hitherto powerful business interests.

There have also been important changes *within* government departments that have affected representation, namely a change in the balance of power between senior civil servants on the one hand, and ministers and their personal partisan staff ('ministerial advisers') on the other. The increase in external advice from external policy experts has meant that ministers arrive in office with a more *ideational* policy portfolio. They have their own priorities on what policy change is needed. There has been a shift from civil servants warning ministers and keeping them out of trouble, towards 'carriers' of ministerial ideas, willing to try to implement policies even when lacking broad external support. Civil servants often arrive at the table with decisions already made, rather than to engage in a process of mutual learning and exchange in order to generate policy solutions. This changes the policy style itself. It places more emphasis on *imposition* than on *representation*.

Finally, the *pace* of policy change in Britain, particularly driven by 'the centre', is quite *frenetic*, quite the opposite of a deliberative policy style which allows for meaningful representation. For example, David Halpern (Head of the Government's Behavioural Insights Team) describes life behind the shiny black door of Number 10 as akin

to a hospital Accident & Emergency Department! (Halpern 2015: 185). He comments that ‘in such a world, there’s often not the time, nor the patience, for the answer to be “more research needed”, let alone a randomised control trial—though perhaps there should be...’ (Halpern 2015: 186). There is a lack of desire to consider a range of representations from those who might know where the shoe pinches.

As with many aspects of the changes in the British policy style, this lack of time for proper analysis might not be a uniquely British phenomenon, however. For example, Nispen and Scholton note that ‘... the role of policy analysis in inducing learning in times of crisis seems rather limited’ and that ‘policy change seems to be primarily due to powering; puzzling takes place mainly in the shadow of powering’ (Van Nispen and Scholton 2015: 5 and 7).

Of course, one might argue that, even in the absence of crisis, the role of robust policy analysis in inducing learning might be limited. Indeed, Jennings et al.’s typology of policy blunders includes what they term ‘*hyper-excited politics*’ under which ‘... politicians and officials rush policy announcements only to repent at leisure when these commitments turn out to be counter-productive, more costly than expected, fail to achieve intended outcomes, or generate no interest’ (Jennings et al. 2017: 3, citing Bryer 1993). They suggest (drawing on Kahnemann 2013, and Jones and Baumgartner 2005) that ‘specifically “fast thinking” by key decision makers acting under political pressure may make them vulnerable to cognitive biases, such as disproportionately “locking on” to particular bits of information’ (Jennings et al. 8: 240). Howlett and Migone have made a similar point in relation to Canadian policy-making. They argue that ‘... potential innovations are often highly touted, promoted, and adopted relatively quickly...’ (Howlett and Migone 2019: 139). Again, we see a connection between policy style and representation. Representation takes both time and, more importantly, a willingness to listen to those wanting to make representations. Frenetic or hyper-excited policymaking sits no more comfortably alongside meaningful representation than does *dirigiste* policymaking.

Scandinavia is an especially interesting case as, even in what are seen as the most corporatist countries, the need for policy reform has caused a decline in the representative role of groups. For example, Christiansen argues that ‘the Scandinavian societies have reformed state–group relations exactly as a response to the dangers that Olson saw as affiliated with a *too* close integration of interest groups in the state apparatus’ (Christiansen 2016). He goes on, ‘... interest groups have to some extent lost their privileged position in policy formation’ (Christiansen 2016: 44) and ‘there are examples of major reforms carried through with interest groups at arm’s length in many different policy areas’ (Christiansen 2017: 42). Sweden has exhibited the same tendencies. As Petersson argues, ‘neo-corporatist arrangements, such as interest groups being represented in the board of state agencies, were dismantled already in the 1990s’ and ‘... commissions of inquiry have more or less ceased to be an arena for negotiation and consensus seeking’ (Petersson 2015: 653).

The erosion of corporate structures is also noted in Sciarini’s study of what used to be seen as corporatist Switzerland. He concluded that there had been a rebalancing of

influence from the pre-parliamentary phase to the parliamentary phase in Swiss policymaking, leading to the ‘...strengthening of the governing parties and the weakening of interest groups’ (Sciarini 2014: 128). Papadopoulos and Maggetti have also noted that in Switzerland, previously the home of ‘Konkordanz’ (i.e. corporatist traits), ‘... the professionalization of the federal administration is one of the factors that led to the decline of the influence of the neo-corporatist circuit, which resulted in a more prominent role for the partisan arena’ (Papadopoulos and Maggetti 2019: 175). Similarly, Zohlnhöfer and Tosun describe the German policy style as ‘... rather more exclusive than inclusive of societal groups’ (Zohlnhöfer and Tosun 2019: 64). Interest group influence is, of course, difficult to measure. However, a major study of policy histories in the US also found that ‘... interest group influence rose from the 1940s to the early 1960s, and then declined... the most striking finding is that reported interest group influence failed to increase during the numerical explosion of group mobilization and advocacy in the 1970s’ (Grossman 2012: 180). This finding seems consistent with Peters’ analysis of the changing US policy style which he describes as exhibiting increased polarization and increased imposition (Peters 2019: 186).

Exogenous changes in policy fashion, ideas, and policy frames also present a serious challenge to existing systems of representation in the sense that the ideas espoused by those organizations who have hitherto gained representation are questioned. New ideas have a *virus-like* quality and have an ability to disrupt existing policy systems, power relationships and policies (Richardson 2000: 1017–20). The commitment to *austerity* in public finances, has been particularly important transnationally. As Blyth argued, as an idea ‘... austerity has been astonishingly successful and serves as the contemporary instruction sheet...’ (Blyth 2013: 176). A whole raft of traditional representative bodies, such as the professions and trade unions, have seen their power diminished by both new ideas and the actors who advocate them. It is difficult to see these new actors as in any way ‘representative’ of other than themselves. For example, Helgadóttir’s study of the transmission of economic ideas underpinning austerity policies in Europe is a fascinating account of how a group of economists, originating from the University of Bocconi, became embedded in academic circles and economic institutions. What she terms the ‘Bocconi boys’ gained prominence in elite universities such as Harvard, Yale, Columbia, Stanford, and Cambridge, as well as on the boards of prestigious academic journals. Moreover, ‘... their success has not been isolated to academic positions. As their academic star has risen, many members of the Bocconi network have gained access to the revolving door between academia and the economic policy-making sphere’ (Helgadóttir, 2016: 402). New ideas, such as austerity, deregulation, privatization, contracting-out, marketization within the public sector, and the financialization of traditionally publicly funded services, did indeed spread virus-like across policy sectors within nations and across national borders. The comparative study of pension reforms in Germany and Britain by Ebbinghaus provides a perfect example of how changes in the market for ideas can lead to a rebalancing of the market for representation. Thus, ‘... governments of all colours had been engaged in advancing pension reforms in both countries, though it would not have been possible without

the support of organised capital and the weakness of labour to defend the status quo' (Ebbinghaus 2019: 534). His study also illustrates the decline of one of the major institutional pillars of representation in modern times, namely the trade unions. As he notes, union membership in Britain is now (at 6 million) about half what it was before the election of the Thatcher Government in 1979. Similarly, the German union have lost about half their membership since German unification in 1990 (Ebbinghaus 2019: 528).

Governments can certainly change the market for representation in that some interests gain and some lose, but by becoming more *dirigiste*, governments reduce the *total* amount of effective representation in the system. The originators of the policy style concept predicted in 1982 that we might be seeing a shift away from a consensus-orientated (what for the purposes of this chapter I would term 'representation-heavy') policy style towards a more impositonal (what for the purposes of this chapter I would call 'representation-lite') policy style.

The combination of a shift towards a more *impositonal* and more *frenetic* policy style, (illustrated in Figure 23.1, below, adapted from Richardson (2018b, 13)) has weakened traditional forms of representation and has played a significant role in the rise of populism, as I suggest in my conclusion.

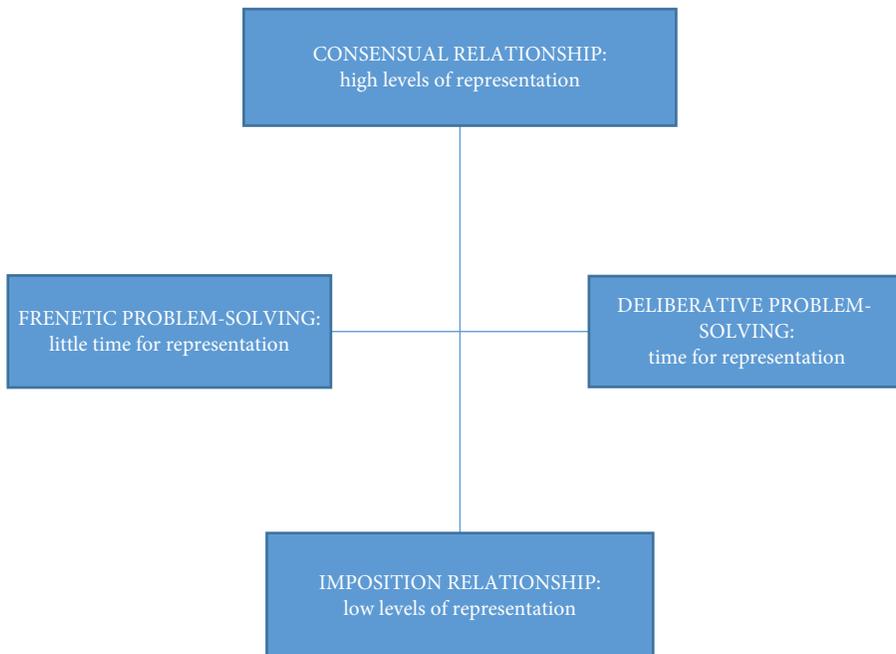


FIGURE 23.1 The Changing Policy Style: The Decline in Representation

CONCLUSION: DISTORTIONS IN THE MARKET FOR REPRESENTATION, AND THE RISE OF POPULISM

I conclude with some brief observations on the possible link between distortions in the market for representation and the rise of populism. Markets do fail, but usually new actors emerge to fill the void. I think this is what has happened with the current rise of populism. Parties (certainly established parties) and interest groups have failed as a system of representation that is able to deliver the specific policy outcomes that voters want. My argument is that parties were never particularly good at delivering effective representation and that interest groups filled the market gap reasonably well. However, the interest group systems themselves created market distortions due to simple rent seeking. For much of the post-war period these distortions were disguised by rising prosperity. Some interest groups got more of the cake than others, but almost everyone was getting more cake.

However, too much interest group power (an oversupply of representation) eventually created inefficiencies (what I term, 'reform deficits') leading to an attack on group influence alongside the emergence of new policy fashions, particularly 'austerity'. The 'austerity turn' was especially important as it undermined the efficacy of interest group representation in that groups were less able to deliver tangible policy benefits via their efforts at representation. Policymaking elites have become detached from their peoples with, first, the erosion of the importance of parties, and then the erosion of the importance of interest groups. Elites have had their own strong commitments not just to austerity but also to, for example, the expansion of free trade and globalization, relatively liberal immigration policies, and often little regard for steadily rising economic inequality.

Most importantly, the elites failed to take note of the fact that people still had the vote. As Bogdanor argued regarding the Brexit referendum, 'the referendum was a genuine grass roots insurgency, a revolt from below' (Bogdanor 2016). Trump's election in 2016 was a similar phenomenon. Effective channels of representation might have been eroded, but the losers in society had one last shot in their locker, the power to vote. Existing representative institutions were vulnerable to new market entrants. New parties (often more like single issue interest groups?) have proved, across Europe at least, to be disruptive innovators, supplying to voters the kind of representation they wanted. To some degree, we have actually seen something of a resurgence of parties as important representative institutions, such as UKIP in the UK, Alternative for Germany, in Germany, and the Five Star Movement in Italy. Such parties have articulated and represented views (particularly on immigration) to which established representative institutions were opposed (or were reluctant to recognize). For example, it was often joked by the 'chattering classes' in Britain that the then leader of UKIP,

Nigel Farage, sounded like someone in the local pub. He had the last laugh in the end, however, simply because he did represent the views of the average man and woman in the pub who felt unrepresented on questions of EU membership and immigration. The Farage story is, however, not just a story about one man. It is a story about the failure of traditional representative systems in Western democracies. Whether we see new parties emerging or old parties, such as the Republican Party in the US, taken over by anti-politicians such as Donald Trump, the fact is that what were thought to be stable democratic systems are turning out to be much more fragile. Traditional systems of representation have proved vulnerable to what might be termed ‘Farumpism’. Ruling elites cannot simply ignore views and interests that do not sit easily alongside elite mores. Immigration is the most obvious example, but, as President Macron found to his cost in France, a *dirigiste* policy style brought forth the French version of the Brexit revolt from below. Thus, many Western democracies face a crisis of representation. It is time for established parties to more accurately represent the views of voters and for governments to be less *dirigiste*, less frenetic, and more consultative with (though not governed by) interest groups.

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CHAPTER 24

NON-ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION

JAN W. VAN DETH

INTRODUCTION

PARTIES, elections, and responsive government establish the core of liberal democracies. According to the ‘chain of representation’ (see Introduction to this volume) these three elements enable the conventional depiction of liberal democracy as institutionalized representation: citizens elect parties, parties-in-parliaments articulate the public interest and form governments, governments shape policies, and policies in turn reflect the views of citizens. The widely recognized significance and uniqueness of parties, elections, and responsive government for liberal democracy have been challenged by three seemingly related developments in the last few decades. First, citizens in many countries are staying away from the polls in record numbers and are less and less willing to be involved in party-related activities (cf. Solijonov 2016). Second, with rapidly increasing interdependencies and complexities in a globalized world ‘nongovernmental politics’ and non-state actors have become increasingly important for political decision-making (cf. Feher 2007; Walker et al. 2008). Third, non-electoral forms of political participation are rejoiced by growing numbers of citizens in many countries. By now, the repertoire of participation is virtually endless, covering forms as different as signing petitions, demonstrating, attending flash mobs, buying fair-trade products, supporting social movements, guerrilla gardening, volunteering, suicide protests, or writing blogs—and, yes, also by casting a vote in elections (cf. Theocharis and van Deth 2018).

The unpopularity, distrust, contempt and even disgust of electoral politics and representative institutions among parts of the populations¹ on the one hand, and the continued rise of new forms of engagement and non-state actors in many countries on the other, present serious challenges for liberal democracy and institutionalized representation. Do these developments imply a transformation ‘From Voters to

Participants' (Gundelach and Siune 1992) and is electoral participation *crowded out* by the evident appeal of new modes and actors in a 'Zero Sum Democracy' (Peters 2016)? Or do we observe a gradual replacement of 'duty-based participants' mainly involved in election-oriented politics by 'engaged participants' politically active beyond the electoral arena (Oser 2017)? Do such changes imply that the spread of new modes of participation are a kind of *compensation* for the problems of representative democracy (especially for declining turnout and party activities) and even enrich party-based representation?

Obviously, many forms of non-electoral participation are used to draw attention to the demands and interests of those citizens who apparently are not able to articulate their own wishes or who prefer policies beyond the mainstream alternatives offered by established parties (Vráblíková and Linek 2018; Schlozman et al. 2018). Acting as self-appointed agents, spokesmen/-women, or mouthpieces activists and movements can assure that such demands and interests are taken into consideration and so result in a more appropriate representation of the wishes amongst the total population. Next to input-oriented approaches focusing on crowding out and compensation, this effect of *balancing policy agendas* shows a third way to look at the meaning and relevance of non-electoral participation for the functioning of representative democracy. However, liberal democracy is based on the presumption that each citizen defines her interests herself and should be able to bring them into decision-making processes—and, vice versa, that non-involvement is irrelevant for policy agendas. By materializing these input presumptions liberal democracy's resulting policy agenda does not require further amendment and certainly does not need to be 'corrected' by activists performing as self-appointed agents. Therefore, the meaning and relevance of non-electoral participation for the functioning of liberal democracy and institutionalized representation should be primarily evaluated by looking at actual recruitment and participation.

Positive appraisals of the functioning of non-electoral participation usually are based on the claim that these activities provide a 'better' representation of the 'real' demands and interests of ordinary citizens than liberal democracy delivers. In fact, many such activities originate in concerns and complaints about the way representative democracy functions (or better: is perceived to function). Non-electoral participation is protest participation stressing the 'contentious' nature of politics (Tilly and Tarrow 2006) that could be masked by seemingly well-functioning institutions of representative democracy serving vested interests. Yet the claim of 'better' representation is strikingly at odds with the results of seven decades of empirical research (cf. Dalton 2017; Schlozman et al. 2012; Schlozman et al. 2018): political participation remains relatively modest among lower socio-economic groups (low education, low income, and low employment status typically accompanied by poor living conditions and ethnic discrimination). Men are still politically somewhat more engaged than women (with the dubious exception of political consumerism). Young people especially avoid electoral forms of participation. Not even the spread of social media has changed these continuous distortions of liberal democracy's ideal of equal voices, though transaction costs for digitally based participation are factually zero (cf. Nam 2012). Participation,

therefore, clearly is ‘...intimately related to political equality, because even if formal rights of participation are upheld for all, inequalities in political resources can make it much more difficult for lower-status individuals to exercise their democratic rights of participation’ (Diamond and Morlino 2005: xvi).

This chapter deals with the question of whether the spread of non-electoral modes of participation affects the functioning of liberal democracies and institutionalized representation by focusing on the biases in various modes of participation. First, the main developments in political participation in the last decades—the rising popularity of non-electoral forms and the continuous expansions of the repertoire of participation—are briefly depicted. Based on studies showing that every form of participation is biased against less privileged parts of the population, I then deal with the main aspects of unequal political participation in democratic societies. Are participants the better democrats when core democratic beliefs are reviewed? To answer this question a move from the usual actor-centred approaches to participation-centred approaches is required. The findings suggest that the rising levels and vastly expanding repertoires of non-electoral participation do not provide a cure for biased representation. Yet the politically active parts of the population consistently show much higher levels of support for core principles of representative democracy than found amongst citizens who only cast a vote or do not participate at all.

PARTICIPATION BEYOND VOTING

Political participation can be loosely defined as citizens’ activities affecting politics. The set of these activities—called the repertoire of participation—expanded rapidly in every democracy in the last few decades. By now, the list of specimens of political participation is virtually endless and includes activities such as voting, demonstrating, donating money, contacting a public official, or boycotting—but the repertoire also includes guerrilla gardening, volunteering, attending flash mobs, buying fair-trade products, public vomiting, and suicide protests. Usually, empirical analyses of political participation neither focus on whole repertoires nor are they restricted to specific activities such as party membership or boycotting certain products. Instead, many empirical analyses deal with modes of participation; that is, with subsets of political activities such as ‘unconventional participation’, ‘direct action’, ‘protest’ or ‘communal activities’ (cf. van Deth 2016; Gabriel and Völkl 2005: 530–7; Theocharis and van Deth 2018: 24–5).

After the Second World War the repertoire of political participation expanded continuously in many countries. Whereas in the 1950s and early 1960s political activities were mainly restricted to voting, campaigning, and further party- or election-related activities (Berelson et al. 1954), the late 1960s saw a rise of political participation in two directions. Due to the growing relevance of community politics, the election-related activities were expanded with direct contacts between citizens, public officials, and politicians (Verba and Nie 1972). More visible was the wave of

political protest and ‘unconventional modes of participation’, such as blocking traffic, demonstrating, or occupying buildings that seemed to sweep almost all democracies (Barnes, Kaase et al. 1979). New Social Movements, including women rights or pacifist groups, also belong to this wave or followed directly in the early 1980s (Dalton and Küchler 1990). With these expansions citizens had obtained a number of opportunities to be politically engaged beyond the election-related activities that establish the core of representative democracy. Yet the already disappearing borderline between political and non-political spheres dissolved further. In the 1990s, the revival of Tocquevillian and communitarian approaches led to an expansion of political participation with civil activities such as volunteering and social engagement in all kinds of voluntary associations (Putnam 1993). The most recent expansions of the repertoire of political participation include activities with a strong emphasis on the expression of moral and ethical standpoints, and which, in principle, can be applied by individuals alone (van Deth 2010). The main specimen is political consumerism: many citizens started to use their consumer power to achieve political goals with boycotts and buycotts (Micheletti 2003; Zorell 2019). The spread of Internet-based technologies initially mainly facilitated these individualized actions but especially the rise of social media provided opportunities for new forms of participation such as blogging (Theocharis 2015). Internet-enabled ‘connective action’ does not require some shared identity among the participants or substantial organizational resources (Bennett and Segerberg 2013). Political content now can be produced and distributed by citizens acting alone and typical political associations become increasingly superfluous. The costs of using these newer forms of participation are practically nil. Consequently, all kind of concerns and aims are mobilized that may not have been articulated before (Shirky 2008). By now almost every conceivable form of non-private activities can be depicted as a form of political participation. When political goals are manifest, volunteering in a local hospital or the purchase of certain sneakers are just as well a specimen of political participation as going to the polls or writing a blog about government policies (van Deth 2001; 2014).

Ever since the beginning of empirical research on voting behaviour and political participation in the late 1940s, its main finding has been corroborated over and over again: participation is unequally distributed and biased towards resources-rich societal groups and against marginalized and underprivileged groups (cf. Dalton 2017; Oser et al. 2013; Schlozman et al. 2012; Schlozman et al. 2018). It are clearly the more educated, higher income, and male strata who participate consistently more frequently than other parts of the population. For gender differences, a rapprochement or a balance is beginning to emerge: the traditional ‘gender gap’ has now almost disappeared in some countries and new forms of participation are used more equally by men and women (Acik 2013; Stolle and Hooghe 2010). Yet only for political consumerism do women usually show higher levels of participation than men. Evidently it is not the victims of modernization and globalization or marginalized and underprivileged groups in society who disproportionately participate politically in order to represent their interests and to draw attention to their disadvantaged or deprived position.

The constant expansion of the repertoire of political participation does not come with rising chances for hitherto less active groups to become involved—the constant expansion of the repertoire, then, also implies a constant and consistent reproduction of biases in participation and representation. Apparently, neither the rapidly expanding repertoire of the modes of political participation nor the spread of Internet-based technologies and the evaporation of opportunity costs have been able to counterbalance the continuous modest levels of political involvement and the violation of the democratic principle of political equality.

A PARTICIPATION-CENTRED PERSPECTIVE

Although sustained and consistent violations of the principle of political equality might jeopardize democracy in the long run, socio-demographic biases in participation are, as such, probably not conclusive for the functioning of liberal democracy as institutionalized representation. Much more relevant are possible differences in ideological stands and in expectations and demands supported by various subgroups. When politically active citizens support different ideas than do politically passive parts of the population, these differences will be emphasized in public debates and political decision-making processes (cf. Steenvoorden 2018: 740). In this way, incessant, relatively low but unequal participation leads to the enforcement of non-representative political interests. In order to deal with this issue, a change in perspective is required. In empirical research, the problems of unequal participation and representation are usually examined on the basis of the opportunities for participation among different groups (cf. Bolzendahl and Coffé 2013; Oser 2017; Teorell et al. 2007; Verba 2003; Verba et al. 1995). However, such actor-centred approaches—focusing on ‘determinants’ of political involvement—are not suitable for characterizing active and passive groups of citizens relying on different forms of participation. Instead, we need a participation-centred approach to examine profiles of various groups of citizens and to assess the exceptionality of the features of active subgroups as compared with the total population.

Probably the largest scientific endeavour based on a participation-oriented approach is the international collaborative research project ‘Caught in the act of protest: Contextualizing contestation’, usually referred to as the ‘Protest Survey’ or the ‘CCC project’.² Starting from the presumption that specific social and political contexts determine participation, the project selected more than sixty demonstrations in nine different countries and interviewed those who actually went out on the streets (van Stekelenburg et al. 2012). Because the researchers were mainly interested in this contextual variation, comparisons of the features of citizens involved in different types of demonstrations are restricted to these specific protest events. For instance, Saunders and her collaborators (2012) show that demonstrators can be distinguished in

‘novices, returners, repeaters and stalwarts’, which show rather similar emotional orientations. The detection of extremely low levels of political trust among participants in three demonstrations on social justice in Italy is another clear example of this approach (della Porta and Reiter 2012).

Interesting as such findings are for the study of contextual determinants of protesting, only comparisons between demonstrators and the total population can provide evidence to assess possible biases in representation.³ Two rare studies using data from the Protest Survey directly concentrate on the differences between demonstrators and the general population. Norris et al. conclude that ‘Demonstrators are not anti-state radicals who belong to socially marginal groups or who despise conventional forms of political participation. By contrast, they are more similar to the Belgian population as a whole than civic joiners and party members’ (Norris et al. 2005: 203).⁴ Hylmö and Wennerhag compared the objective and subjective class position of demonstrators with the distributions among the populations of several countries and concluded: ‘... the occupational class composition of demonstrations display a clear “upward shift,” making the working classes relatively under-represented. However, when it comes to class identity, demonstrators resemble the general population more closely’ (Hylmö and Wennerhag 2015: 104). This comparison evidently corroborates the socio-demographic biases reported in conventional actor-oriented approaches to political participation summarized in the previous section. Especially the discrepancy between the results for objective and subjective class positions reveals remarkable aspects of the self-perception of demonstrators.

Although demonstrating is an important form of political participation in many countries, at least since the late 1960s, it certainly is not the only way to articulate political demands or to defend specific interests. Some examples of other studies relying on a participation-oriented design mainly deal with petitioners (Durso et al. 2018) emphasizing the biased policy proposals of people signing petitions and the resulting ‘Postmaterialist Particularism’ (Hersh and Schaffner 2017). Here, too, the activists hardly seem to be aware of their exceptional position in comparison with the total population.

The emphasis on opportunities and determinants of participation in empirical research has resulted in a neglect of the profiles among active and passive citizens. As Steenvoorden (2018: 751) concludes: ‘The large literature on participation has focused predominantly on causes of participation’ and ‘... the similarities and differences between participants in different fields of society are understudied’. Although she restricts her own empirical tests to correlational analyses, Steenvoorden clearly demonstrates that people using various modes of participation also differ in their levels of ‘societal pessimism’ and social and political trust, with people involved in ‘non-institutional politics’ showing relatively high levels of ‘societal pessimism’ and high levels of trust in other people. Comparisons of socio-demographic features and issue preferences among ‘voters’, ‘sole-protesters’, and ‘passives’ are presented by Vráblíková and Linek (2018) but they stick to the usual analyses of determinants of these groups. Straightforward comparisons of groups defined according to their political engagement are presented by Amnå and Ekman (2014). Their research on Swedish young people

shows that the politically most active citizens are especially characterized by high levels of political efficacy as well as by stronger engagements in discussions with other people, in school activities, and on the Internet. Online participation is at the core of the analysis of US data, which confirm that ‘participation types’ differ in various ways and that especially ‘socioeconomic status inequalities’ are reinforced on the Internet (Oser et al. 2013). Most of the findings for these country-specific studies are corroborated in comparative analyses. Comparing the features of distinct groups of participants in cross-national data sets for European democracies, van Deth (2010, 2012, 2013) shows that citizens using several forms of participation are politically more efficacious, relatively higher educated and belong to higher socio-economic status groups than less active people. Moreover, activists in all countries show higher levels of support for core principles of democracy and norms of citizenship. As Schlozman and her colleagues conclude on the basis of US data: ‘We have found that those who speak less loudly through individual participation are distinctive in many ways that are germane to politics’ (Schlozman et al. 2018: 259).

Although relatively few studies are available for participation-centred approaches, and different definitions of groups of participants are used, they all reach the conclusion that these differences are substantive. Briefly speaking, the most active parts of the population usually also display the most positive attitudes towards democracy with their relatively high levels of political efficacy, political sophistication (education), and support for democratic principles and norms of citizenship.⁵ The flipside of the coin is, of course, that passive parts of the population are characterized by political attitudes and competences that are much less benign for democracy.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF UNEQUAL PARTICIPATION

Large cross-national studies of political participation have to rely on a limited number of activities to measure the level of actual political involvement among populations. The European Social Survey (Round 6; 2012)⁶ includes several questions on participation and, in addition, a number of unique questions about various aspects of democracy. This data source allows an exploration of possible differences in the support for democratic beliefs among citizens using distinct forms of participation in different combinations. In ESS-6, participation is covered by asking about ‘casting a vote in the last national elections’ as well as by a battery of seven other activities the respondent might have done in the last twelve months: (1) Contacted a politician or a government official; (2) Worked in a political party or an action group; (3) Worked in another organization or association; (4) Worn or displayed a campaign badge or sticker; (5) Signed a petition; (6) Boycotted certain products; and (7) Took part in a lawful public demonstration. To reduce and systematize the eight different forms of political

participation, a principal component analysis was carried out. For the pooled data of countries, this exploratory analysis actually led to a simple latent structure of political participation with three dimensions: *Voting*, *Conventional participation* (Contacted a politician, Worked for a party, Other organization, Badge or sticker), and *Protest* (Petitioning, Boycotting, Demonstrating).⁷ With 75 per cent of the respondents indicating that they cast a vote in the last elections, voting is by far the most frequently used form of participation. For the two other modes these shares are 24 and 29 per cent for conventional and protest participation, respectively.

Obviously, citizens willing to engage politically choose the most suitable opportunities available and combine, for example, casting a vote with a signature action, or contacting a politician with boycotting products. This willingness to be engaged in more than one form of participation is already indicated by the finding that all correlation coefficients among the eight distinct forms are positive.⁸ Accordingly, the correlation coefficients among the three modes of participation are also positive and statistically significant. These results suggest that political participation for many citizens is not restricted to a single form or mode: being involved in some way clearly increases the likelihood to be involved in other political activities too. Yet these positive correlations reveal tendencies only and cannot disclose which modes of participation are most frequently combined and how many citizens prefer such combinations. Based on the three modes of political participation we found amongst European citizens, eight types of participants can be distinguished with regard to possible combinations of participatory options. These eight types and their proportions in the pooled dataset are presented in the taxonomy in Figure 24.1. By far the largest group are citizens who

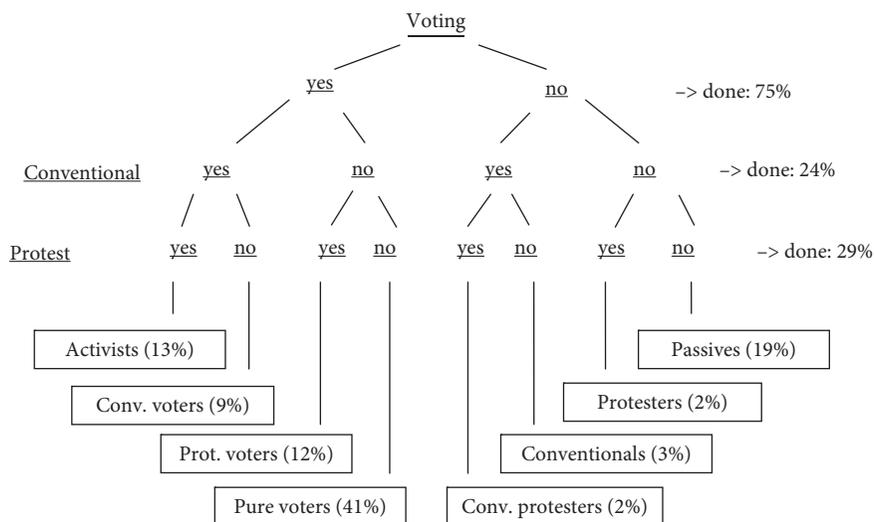


FIGURE 24.1 A Taxonomy of Political Activists

Notes: Post-stratification weights (PSPWGHGT) used; $N_{\text{wgt}} = 49,304$.

Source: ESS-6 (2012).

restrict their political activities to casting a vote (*pure voters*, 41 per cent), whereas almost one in five citizens stays away from any political activity (*passives*, 19 per cent). Very small proportions of the respondents limit themselves to protest (*protesters*, 2 per cent) or to conventional forms (*conventionals*, 3 per cent). A combination of these two modes is only done by a similar limited group of people (*conventional protesters*, 2 per cent). Citizens combining voter participation with conventional forms of political participation or with protest, evidently form larger groups (*conventional voters*, 9 per cent; *protest voters*, 12 per cent). Finally, we see that citizens involved in all three modes establish the second largest group of active people after the *pure voters* (*activists*, 13 per cent). Thus, there can be little talk of a generally low level of participation; if one is prepared to use as a criterion participation in at least one of the three main types of political participation, about four of every five European citizens has been actively engaged in politics.

The broad scope and diversity of political participation in its various combinations can be considered an important indicator of the vitality of democratic societies. At first sight, most people seem to find some appropriate opportunity for participation, although they have different views and interests: while some cast a vote, others prefer protest or some combination of available opportunities. Looking closer at specific groups of participants it becomes clear that, behind the pluralist veil of diverse, but equal, opportunities, important differences between the eight types can be discerned when it comes to democracy and democratic beliefs. A first hint of these distinctions is shown in Figure 24.2, which presents the respondents' assessment of the importance of

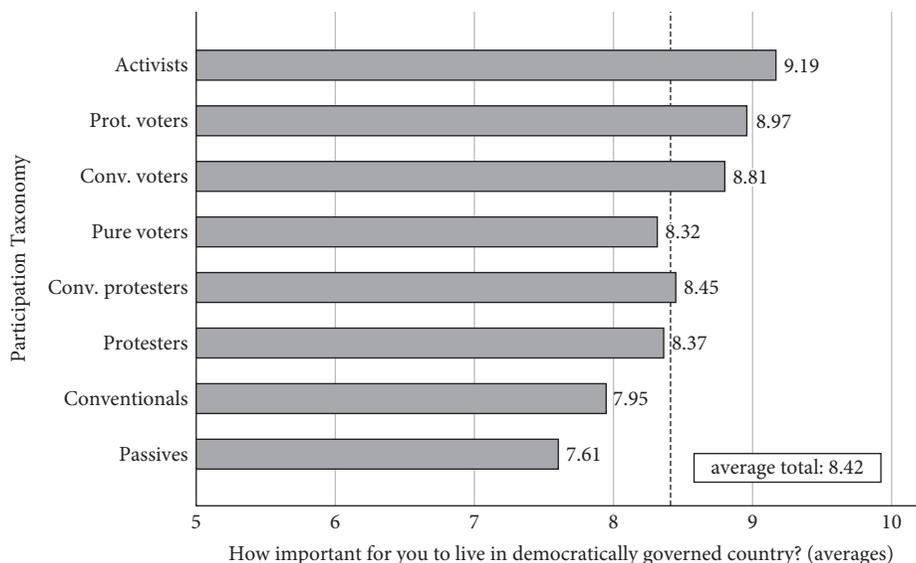


FIGURE 24.2 Importance of Living in a Democracy

Notes: Averages on scales 0–10; Post-stratification weights (PSPWGHT) used; $N_{wgt} = 49,304$; Differences between groups statistically significant (F-test; $p < .000$).

Source: ESS-6 (2012).

living in a democratically governed country on a scale running from ‘not at all important’ (0) to ‘extremely important’ (10). Apparently, living in a democracy is very important for many people (overall average 8.42; st. dev. 2.13). The divergences from this generally high level among distinct groups of participants are also evident: whereas citizens engaged in all three modes of participation consider living in a democracy as extremely important (average 9.19; st. dev. 1.55), those not involved in any political activity attribute much less importance to a democratic environment (average 7.61; st. dev. 2.46). Comparing voters and non-voters, we see that voters attach more importance to living in a democracy than people using other modes of participation—yet the crucial distinction seems to be that in all three groups of people who cast a vote AND were involved in some other form of participation (*activist, protest voters, conventional voters*; total average 9.01, st. dev. 1.69), the importance of living in a democracy is much higher than among people who only went to the ballot box (*pure voters*; average 8.32, st. dev. 2.12). For the saliency of democracy, therefore, casting a vote is a necessary but not a sufficient condition to reach very high levels.

In order to investigate possible over- or under-representations of specific characteristics among groups using different forms of participation, the difference is calculated between the mean value of some feature amongst each of the eight types of participants and the particular total average for the population. In this way, for each group a clear indicator of its exceptionality with respect to the position of the ‘average citizen’ is obtained. After standardizing these distances on the basis of the respective distributions,⁹ the deviations are directly comparable both between the characteristics and between the types of participation (van Deth 2010, 2012, 2013).

Table 24.1 summarizes the profiles of the eight types of participants with respect to their main socio-demographic features, political ideology, and satisfaction with democracy. The results in the first three rows clearly corroborate the well-known socio-demographic bias in participation (cf. Dalton 2017; Schlozman et al. 2012; Steenvoorden 2018). Male respondents are still being over-represented in any type of participation that includes conventional activities, but the gender differences are relatively modest. Much clearer are the differences in terms of age (with young people being strongly over-represented in non-electoral forms of participation), and for education (with higher educated people being clearly over-represented amongst participation types including protest). Whereas political activists are mainly characterized by their exceptional high level of education (cf. Bovens and Wille 2017; Stolle and Hooghe 2010), the passive citizens are both younger and much less educated than the ‘average citizen’. These over- and under-representations underline that participation especially enables higher educated and older citizens to be much more present in decision-making processes than other parts of the population. Because different socio-demographic groups might stress similar ideas and positions, such differences do not necessarily imply that political decisions are biased. As the results in Figure 24.2 already suggested, this optimistic expectation is not corroborated. Considering the major socio-demographic differences between the participation types, it is no surprise to see that people with left-wing orientations are over-represented among all participation

Table 24.1 Features of Various Groups of Participants

	Participation taxonomy							
	Activists	Protest voters	Conventional voters	Pure voters	Conv. protesters	Protesters	Conventionals	Passives
Gender	-.06	.04	-.16	.04	-.06	.02	-.08	.02
Age of respondent	.02	-.01	.22	.16	-.55	-.47	-.36	-.31
Years of full-time education completed	.51	.26	.14	-.16	.26	.11	.02	-.26
Satisfaction with democracy	.26	.16	.24	-.07	-.01	-.05	-.05	-.23
Placement on left-right scale	-.11	-.08	.16	.06	-.17	-.09	-.03	-.05

Notes: Cell entries are standardized differences between group average and total average: $(a_{v_{group}} - a_{v_{total}})/st.dev_{total}$. Post-stratification weights (PSPWGHT) used; $N_{wgt} > 45,132$; All differences between groups are statistically significant (F-test; $p < .000$).

Source: ESS-6 (2012).

types that include protest. Furthermore, the degree of satisfaction with democracy shows the same pattern as found for the assessment of the importance of democracy: all participants who combine voting with some other form of participation are clearly much more satisfied with democracy than other citizens. Active participation beyond casting a vote, therefore, does not come with dissatisfaction.¹⁰

Possible differences in the views of democracy supported by various subgroups are probably more relevant for the functioning of representative democracy than socio-demographic and ideological differences. The question, then, is to what extent differences in the support for democratic principles are accentuated by the different types of participation. ESS-6 contains a special module on ‘people’s beliefs and expectations about what a democracy should be’, specified in sixteen different statements ranging from ‘free and fair elections’ to ‘the courts treat everyone the same’, or ‘the government takes measures to reduce differences in income levels’ (see Figure 24.3).¹¹ For each of these aspects, the respondents are invited to indicate ‘how important it is for democracy in general’ on 10-point scales running from ‘not at all important’ (0) to ‘extremely important’ (10).

Do people who opt for different forms of political participation also differ in their beliefs about democracy? Figure 24.3 shows the results for the sixteen statements

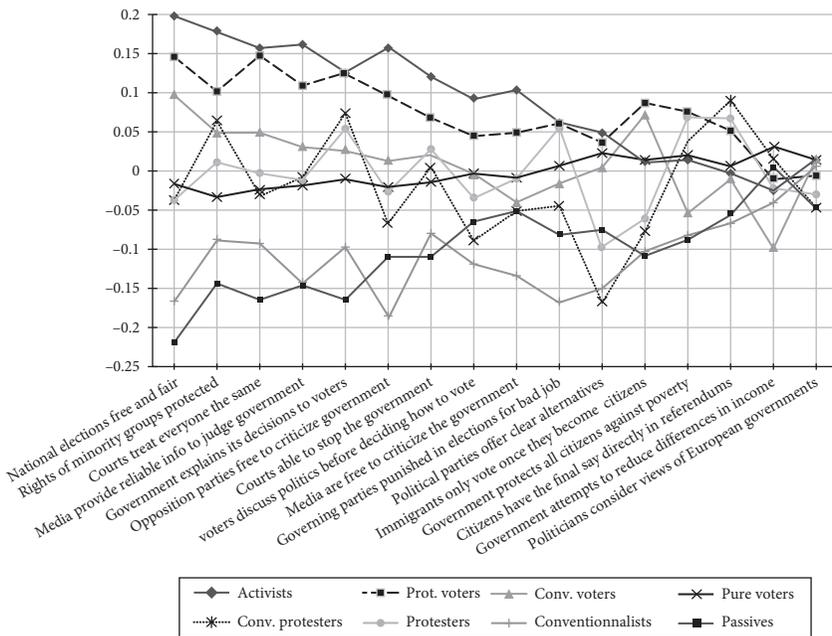


FIGURE 24.3 Support for Democratic Beliefs Among Different Groups of Participants

Notes: Depicted scores are standardized differences between group averages and total average: $(av_{group} - av_{total}) / st.dev._{total}$. Averages controlled for gender, age, and years of full-time education completed by the respondents. Post-stratification weights (PSPWGHT) used; $N_{wgt} > 44,756$; All differences between groups are statistically significant (F-test; $p < .000$).

Source: ESS-6 (2012).

included in ESS-6 in 2012. Because the eight types of participants clearly differ in their socio-demographic composition the scores for the importance of the various aspects of democracy are controlled for gender, age, and years of full-time education completed by the respondents. For some of these beliefs the opinions amongst the eight types of participants hardly differ from the total population: politicians considering the views of other European governments, reducing income levels, a say in referendums, or protection against poverty do not seem to be very relevant for characterizing various groups of participants. These differences, however, seem to be especially large for core aspects of liberal democracy and institutionalized representation such as free and fair elections, the protection of minority rights, criticism by the opposition, equal treatment by the courts, and reliable media information. Apparently, people engaged in different forms of participation also have different beliefs about democracy. This is immediately visible from the fact that the *activists'* marks for almost every aspect are much higher than found amongst the population, while the *passives* consistently score below that level. Only slightly smaller, but still consistently higher, are these deviations for the *protest voters* and the *conventionalists*. Among the remaining four groups—including the *pure voters*—the deviations are almost all small; that is, the democratic beliefs of people engaged in these activities hardly differ from the position of the 'average citizen'. The question whether participants are the better democrats, therefore, can be answered positively for *activists* and *protest voters*, first, because they actually participate, but, second, because they are also consistently much more supportive of democratic beliefs than other parts of the population. In reverse, it is also clear that those who are passive or hardly participate stay away from decision-making processes and show much lower levels of support for basic principles of democracy.

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The starting argument for this chapter was the idea that the rise of new forms of political participation could compensate the challenges for liberal democracy and institutionalized representation presented by declining involvement of many citizens in electoral politics. Although seventy years of empirical participation research has confirmed the biased nature of political involvement, without exception vital questions about participation and representation remain unanswered due to the dominant position of actor-oriented approaches and a lack of appropriate data. Whether the consequences of a decline in voting and other election-related activities are counteracted or even compensated by the proliferation of newer forms of participation can only be assessed on the basis of longitudinal studies. Whilst there is no lack of quasi-causal interpretations of cross-sectional results, adequate longitudinal analyses of the development of the repertoire of participation do not exist.¹² For that reason no empirically based conclusion on the compensation thesis can be presented. Moreover, actor-oriented approaches allow for assessments of the willingness of citizens to

become involved and on the consequential relative under- or over-representation of specific parts of the population only. The lack of participation-oriented approaches deftly obstructs the identification of special preferences and interests brought into the political arena by citizens relying on specific forms of participation. Especially a few studies based on the Protest Survey project show how worthwhile such an approach can be.

In spite of these rather frustrating practical limitations, two main substantive conclusions can nevertheless be drawn. First, the continuous expansion of the repertoire of participation hardly resulted in a more equal mobilization of distinct parts of the population. Decades of empirical research on political participation in many countries have consistently confirmed the over-representation of resources-rich groups of citizens (especially those with higher levels of education) in democratic decision-making processes. Not even the spread of individualized and network-based forms of participation, with almost zero opportunity costs, has changed this situation. Although these violations of the democratic principle of equal access are serious, as such they probably do not jeopardize liberal democracy and its institutionalized representation. Just in case of corresponding biases in political preferences, political decision-making processes will be biased and probably will produce biased outcomes; that is, outcomes that disproportionately favour those groups that are actively involved beyond voting. Whereas the few empirical studies available corroborate the existence of such biases in political preferences (cf. Schlozman et al. 2018) the few studies available hardly allow for reliable assessments of the nature and scope of biased outcomes.

A second conclusion deals with the support for core aspects of democracy amongst various groups of citizens using different modes of participation. Based on a taxonomy of three main modes of participation (voting, conventional participation, protest) eight distinct groups combining these modes differently have been defined here. Comparisons of the features of these eight groups confirm the usual socio-demographic biases amongst the more active citizens; especially the high level of education amongst the most active parts of the population. Besides, all participants who combine voting with some other form of participation are clearly more leftist and are much more satisfied with democracy than other citizens. Striking and very consistent differences are also evident for the support for a number of democratic beliefs, especially for core aspects of representative democracy (free and fair elections, the protection of minority rights, reliable media information, equal treatment by the courts, and criticism by the opposition). Citizens using all available opportunities for participation are much more supportive of these ideas than those staying away from any form of political involvement. The existing bias in participation, then, comes with a disproportional impact of citizens with favourable democratic attitudes.

For liberal democracy and institutionalized representation these substantive findings contain good and not-so-good news. The good news is, first of all, that the various groups of citizens using both institutionalized and protest modes of participation overlap: only two per cent of the population are pure protesters whereas much larger groups (*activists*, *conventional voters* and *protest voters*) use different forms of participation. Good news certainly is also the finding that the politically most active parts of

the population are also the strongest supporters of basic principles of representative democracy. Whilst dissatisfaction or annoyance could play a role in mobilizing these activists, they clearly do not participate because they reject major aspects of representative democracy. On the contrary: it is the passive parts of the population who consider democracy as not very important, who are dissatisfied with the way the system functions, and who show low levels of support for most principles of democracy. By occupying the political arena or visiting this place frequently, active citizens inevitably strengthen the democratic rules of the game. Whether this coincidence is a matter of moral justification (activists believe in democracy and therefore they are activists), of low opportunity costs (well-educated activists are used to dealing with abstract matters and have easy access to information), or of ideological masking of privileged societal positions (well-educated activists defend interests articulated by well-educated people) is unclear. Probably all three mechanisms are relevant and strengthen each other.

The not-so-good news for liberal democracy and institutionalized representation is that low levels of political engagement cannot simply be neglected by referring to Schumpeterian lines of argument. In such a view, citizens who do not participate in democratic decision-making processes are using their democratic rights just as well as politically active citizens. These arguments are supported by empirical findings showing that many people simply do not like politics, and that political cynicism, disenchantment, and disdain for politics are widely spread (cf. Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002). Several researchers stress that these findings should not be seen as indicators of democratic pathologies and that there is 'nothing wrong' with those who do not participate politically (Fiorina 1999: 415–16). The counterargument points to the consistent absence of underprivileged and marginalized societal groups in the political arena: only if political passivity would be more or less randomly distributed among the population could non-participation be seen as an expression of democratic rights. The dramatic character of the not-so-good news for democracy contained in this chapter becomes clear when attempts to mobilize politically passive groups are considered. Because less active citizens are less supportive of important democratic principles, successful mobilization of these groups would—*ceteris paribus*—paradoxically strengthen democracy by reducing support for its main principles. Pessimists about the future of liberal democracy and institutionalized representation would fear the destructive impact of missing support for the main rules of the democratic game when passive parts of the population are mobilized. Yet a more optimistic approach would stress the need for 'democratic learning' and effective democratic socialization of newly recruited groups: only exposure to the 'rough-and-tumble of democratic politics' (Peffley and Rohrschneider 2003) will result in more support for the principles of democracy. Passive citizens, then, should be mobilized exactly *because* they are less supportive of these principles.

Critically discussing the opportunities for a comprehensive understanding of participation and engagement Berger strongly argued for a broad approach: 'When we conceptualize political engagement only as periodic voting we miss the richness and

dynamic potential of democratic citizenship' (2011: 41). The same applies to the study of liberal democracy and institutionalized representation: a strict focus on voting and elections will miss the richness and dynamic potentials of democratic participation in its many expressions. But it will, more importantly, also miss the potential threats to representative democracy contained in the lacking support for democracy among the politically passive parts of the population.

NOTES

1. Whereas the levels of political support are generally low in most countries, a general *decline* in the last decades is much harder to document (Thomassen 2015).
2. See for detailed information: <http://www.protestsurvey.eu/index.php?page=index>.
3. See Traunmüller and Vráblíková (2015) for a very rare attempt to deal with the methodological and statistical complications in comparisons of the features of protesters with the total population.
4. The authors stress that even features of actual demonstrations (and not just 'demonstrating') are relevant: 'The social characteristics, systems support, motivational attitudes, and the political behavior of demonstrators varied by the type of event' (Norris et al. 2005: 203).
5. Such positive conclusions seem also valid for socially active people: 'An encouraging finding is that in many of the countries under study, those who are active in organisations tend to express more solidarity with those in need and higher levels of trust than others' (Badescu and Neller 2007: 185).
6. See www.europeansocialsurvey.org/ for all information on fieldwork, questionnaire, and data. The sixth round selected here includes: Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kosovo, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, and United Kingdom. Total number of respondents is 54,673.
7. The initial PCA solution based on Eigenvalues > 1.0 results in two dimensions with voting loading on the conventional dimension. By enforcing a three-dimensional space the items are located as mentioned ($N_{\text{wgt}} = 47,434$; $KMO = 0.784$; Expl. Variance = 55 per cent; Post-stratification weights used).
8. Pearson correlation coefficient and Kendall Tau-b; level of significance $p < .001$.
9. Standardized differences between the average position among the members of a group and the total average for the whole population are computed as: $(av_{\text{group}} - av_{\text{total}})/st.\text{dev.}_{\text{total}}$.
10. This result corroborates findings that democratic orientations are 'learned best when citizens are exposed to the rough-and-tumble of democratic politics' (Peffley and Rohrschneider 2003: 245). Quintelier and van Deth (2014) use panel data to show that political behaviour precedes the development of democratic orientations.
11. See: www.europeansocialsurvey.org/data/themes.html?t=udemocracy.
12. Available longitudinal studies on participation usually focus on population replacement (cohort vs. life-cycle effects) as the main mechanism behind rising new forms of participation (García-Albacete 2014; Hosch-Dayican 2010).

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CHAPTER 25

DYNAMIC REPRESENTATION

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DYNAMIC representation occurs when the policy actions of elected officials change in response to changes in public preferences. There can be representation in the policy agenda, roll call votes, and policy decisions. Of special interest are policy *outputs*, what governments actually implement. There would be dynamic policy representation if we observe that when the amount of policy the public wants increases, they get a larger amount. This representation is of obvious importance in all political systems, though particularly in representative democracies where there may be special reason to expect it, as politicians have an incentive to keep us happy. Not surprisingly, there is a considerable (and growing) body of research on dynamic representation. What we have learned from this research—and what we still have to learn—is the focus of this chapter.

DYNAMIC REPRESENTATION IN THEORY

To begin with, let us consider the general relationship between opinion and public policy. If there is representation, we would observe that policy is a function of the public's preferred level of policy, for example, the one preferred by the average person. Specifically, we would expect a positive relationship between the two. Evidence of such a relationship would not mean that the public actually gets what it wants. For instance, it could be that there is a correlation between the two but not congruence (Achen 1978). For there to be congruence between what the 'public' wants and gets, there needs to be a match between policy and the preference of the average person.

Of course, we may find a relationship between opinion and policy, not because the latter follows the former but where the public follows the actions of elected officials. To be sure, there is little gainsaying what Lasswell (1941: 15) called the 'open interplay of

opinion and policy', which Key (1961) developed in his classic statement on public opinion and American democracy. Political theorists have long contemplated the issue (see Pitkin 1967; Mansbridge 2003; Rehfeld 2006; Sabl 2015) and there is research of positive policy feedback on the formation and activation of constituencies (Campbell 2005; Disch 2011) and on preferences themselves (Soss and Schram 2007). Scholars of opinion representation have also recognized the issue, leading some to advocate dynamic approaches (Kuklinski and Segura 1995). As we will see, a good amount of research examines how policy responds to opinion over time; some of it also analyses how opinion responds to policy.

There is dynamic representation if changes in policy at a particular point in time are a positive function of changes in the public's preferred level of policy. This would not mean that changes in policy and preferences actually match, but we could infer from such a relationship that the direction of changes on average does, that is, when the public wants an increase or decrease, it tends to get one. Dynamic representation can occur in two familiar ways: (1) indirectly, through elections, where the public selects like-minded politicians who then deliver what it wants in policy; or (2) directly, in between elections, where sitting politicians adjust policy in accordance with changing public opinion. While most research focuses on the former pathway, as we saw in earlier chapters of this *Handbook* (for example, Chapters 14 and 19), the latter also is important, as public opinion can change after elections and policymakers can respond.

We can explicitly take into account the results of elections by incorporating the partisan control of government into our 'model', so that policy can be directly responsive to preferences and also indirectly responsive, through changes in partisan composition owing to elections.¹ Of course, the indirect linkage presupposes a connection between public opinion and party control of government.

Of primary interest may be the direct effect of preferences, which implies that officials respond to changing public opinion. Such a dynamic relationship might avert reverse causation, at least to some degree, but it would not mean that opinion actually causes policy. It could be, for example, that policymakers are reacting to something else, including the same things that determine public preferences.² Any association thus provides only very general evidence of *statistical* responsiveness of policy to opinion.

DYNAMIC REPRESENTATION IN PRACTICE

The foregoing discussion assumes that we can measure the public's preferred level of policy. This is not easy, as it is not clear that people commonly hold such preferences. Not surprisingly, survey organizations almost never attempt to register people's preferred levels of policy—their absolute preferences. Survey organizations frequently ask about support for particular policies, though notice this may not tell us what policy (or

policies) the public actually prefers, as we saw in the case of Obamacare.³ It also does not offer much insight into dynamic representation, which requires time series of both policy change and public preferences measured in the same way, that is, with the same question wording, over long stretches of time.

Research tends to rely on attitudinal measures to tap preferences or, more commonly, relative preferences, the public's preferences for 'more' policy. Questions typically ask about general policy domains, such as defense, welfare, health, and education, and often register support for spending. For instance, the General Social Survey (GSS) in the United States regularly asks:

I'm going to name some problems, and for each one I'd like you to tell me whether you think we're spending too much money on it, too little money, or about the right amount. First, are we spending too much, too little or about the right on [welfare]?

A variant of the question is asked in other countries as well, including Canada,⁴ the United Kingdom, and cross-national surveys, including the International Social Survey Program (ISSP) and the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES). When using a measure of relative preferences based on responses to these questions (or others like it), we are interested in whether *changes* in policy respond to *levels* of the public's relative preferences, which register support for policy change. Once again, there is representation if the relationship is positive, where policy change increases as the support for more policy increases. (Ignoring the difference between measures of relative and absolute preferences would substantially misspecify the relationship and produce erroneous results.) Of course, the representation of relative preferences could be either direct or indirect.

Although it is difficult to measure the public's preferred levels of policy in many—if not most—areas, measures of relative preferences for policy themselves may be informative. After all, these questions do ask people about the match between policy and their preferred levels, and so it may be that responses tell us something about opinion–policy congruence, as people who say 'about right' seemingly are happy with the status quo whereas those who say 'too little' or 'too much' appear to prefer policy change. This is the assumption underlying scholarship that uses the measures to assess the binary match between public preference and policy change (Monroe 1979). It also provides the basis for Bartels' (2015) assessment of the social welfare 'deficit' in various countries, in which he infers that the average person is underrepresented because s/he expresses support for more spending.⁵

Measures of relative preferences are not that informative about people's support for policy change, however. First, the labels of policy areas have been shown to matter in dramatic ways, for example, where asking people about 'welfare' produces a majority thinking that we are spending too much, and asking about 'the poor' generates a majority thinking that we are spending too little (Rasinski 1989).⁶ Second, the question taps unconstrained preferences, with no trade-offs, and Hansen (1998) has shown that taking these into account produces different spending preference distributions, most notably, greater support for the status quo.⁷ Third, relative preferences can indicate

congruence only if the public responds thermostatically to policy, adjusting its support for more policy downward (upward) in response to increases (decreases) in policy—the actual policy ‘temperature’. Of course, relative preferences can and often do change because the public’s absolute preference—the preferred policy temperature—changes (see Wlezien 1995, 1996; Wlezien and Soroka n.d.). If the public does not respond thermostatically, measured relative preferences would tell us nothing about the public’s satisfaction with the policy status quo, which is the case in some domains (also see Soroka and Wlezien 2010). For all of these reasons, we cannot determine from the survey responses whether the public is getting what it wants.⁸

We thus are often left having to assess the very general correspondence between preferences for policy change and policy change itself. After all, we can tell that when relative preferences increase, the public wants more spending in the area and we can see whether policymakers give more. This approach has guided much research on dynamic representation.

RESEARCH ON DYNAMIC REPRESENTATION

Although our discussion has concentrated on policy outputs, we often do not observe what governments actually do. We commonly observe policy *decisions* and legislative *votes*, as well as the *priorities* and *positions* of elected officials. These all are part of the chain linking—or not—the public and policy outputs (see introductory chapter), and all have been the subject of scholarly research. Though most of the work in all of these areas has not explicitly considered dynamics, some has, so let us trace the general patterns that have emerged, beginning with positions.

Positions

A substantial amount of research examines the correspondence between the positions held by the public and those of elected officials. Miller and Stokes’ (1963) pioneering study of ‘dyadic’ representation compared the expressed positions of members of the US House of Representatives from surveys with the views of their district constituencies using data from the American National Election Study. They found that the relationship between positions varies across policy domains, where representatives serve as effective ‘delegates’ in some domains but also operate independently, as ‘trustees’, in others. Their reliance on correlations engendered an important challenge and reanalysis (Achen 1978), which influenced Converse and Pierce’s (1986) parallel study of French Deputies. They discovered congruence in the *general* orientations of constituents and representatives but substantial mismatch on particular issues. In addition to assessing the positions of legislators, both studies examined their

voting behaviour, which increasingly has become the norm in research on dyadic representation, considered in what follows. Unfortunately, none of this work explicitly addresses dynamic representation—whether and how representatives change as district opinion changes. This is a worthy subject for future research.

Other work on positions considers ‘collective’ representation and focuses on the relationship between broader aggregates of public opinion—usually the average citizen—and political institutions, and here scholars have examined the relationship over time. Motivated in part by spatial models of voting (e.g. Adams and Merrill 2009) and the responsible party model of politics (Budge et al. 1987; Klingemann et al. 2006), many scholars examine political parties, important actors in all countries but especially those that allocate legislative seats using proportional representation. Here the interest is in whether parties represent public positions, especially those of the median voter and co-partisans (Dalton 1985; Wessels 1999; Blais and Bodet 2006; Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012).

There is a related literature on government positions, rooted in Weissberg’s (1978) research proposing the study of collective representation as an alternative to dyadic representation. Noting that concordance between the positions of district representatives and their constituencies is not a necessary (or sufficient) condition for policy representation, he examined the average American and the average US representative on various issues and found a high level of congruence.⁹ The comparative research tends to focus on governments, taking party positions and weighting them based on their proportion of the government (Powell 2000; Budge et al. 2001; also see McDonald et al. 2004).¹⁰ This is necessary because many countries are governed by coalitions.

Almost all of the work assesses the representation of general positions, between public left–right (L–R) self-placements from polls and broad party positions measured in various ways—public polls, expert surveys, and party manifestos (Dalton et al. 2011). That the research demonstrates a connection is important to be sure, though it is not entirely clear what this means for policy, given questions about the substantive meaning of the placements (Converse 1964; Ellis and Stimson 2012; Fortunato et al. 2016). The assumption is that it tells us something about people’s absolute policy preferences and, while there are real limitations to the measures, there is reason to suppose that L–R correspondence has some substantive meaning (Lesschaeve 2017).

By contrast with research on dyadic representation, some research on the collective representation of positions explicitly considers time, especially for political parties. Early work on the subject found that parties’ manifesto positions responded positively to shifts in L–R opinion, becoming more liberal when the average citizen moved in that direction (Adams et al. 2004). It also found that the tendency varied across parties, holding only for those in the mainstream and not the more ideologically oriented niche parties (also see Meguid 2005). Later research by Ezrow et al. (2011) revealed a similar pattern and also discovered that non-mainstream parties were responsive to their own partisans: when the average position of those who identify with a party changed, the party position tended to follow. Other characteristics of the parties may matter and various other factors as well (see Adams 2012; Fagerholm 2016).

More recent research moves beyond L–R placements to focus on specific issues, the findings of which support the earlier work but extend it in important ways. Some research reveals that where niche parties do follow their partisans, it is not in response to L–R orientations but to their positions on issues the parties ‘own’ (Giger and Lefkofridi 2014). More recent research considers whether and how being in the government or opposition matters for party responsiveness (Romeijn n.d.), and finds that parties in government are not responsive to average public opinion but are to their co-partisans. Opposition parties appear to be more motivated by the desire to gain votes than those in government.

While there is a lot of work on changes in party positions, there is comparatively little on government itself. In the US, Wood (2009) examines presidential issue statements and shows that presidents are not very responsive to the average voter over time, and primarily reflect party preferences. This comports with the analysis of party positions. Hakhverdian’s (2010) ambitious study assesses the responsiveness of policy statements in the United Kingdom, focusing on the influence of public L–R identification and the content of the annual Budget speech. The analysis demonstrates a linkage between the two over time, and also that the evident representation is both direct and indirect, as opinion influences budget statements in between elections and on Election Day itself.

That research finds a positive relationship between public attitudes over time and the positions of political actors is encouraging, at least for those of us who think such responsiveness is a good thing. But this responsiveness does not mean that the changes in the positions of parties and governments actually match the changes in those of the public; even to the extent they do, as we have discussed, it is not clear what the dynamic congruence between L–R positions means. Perhaps most importantly, positions are not the same things as policies, and the two often differ.

Priorities

A critical step in policymaking is agenda setting, and research here is a major growth industry in political science. Pioneered by Baumgartner and Jones (1993) in their analysis of the US, the Comparative Agendas Project now includes datasets in twenty countries from around the world along with the European Union and two US states.¹¹ Originally focused on distributions of policy change in order to test theories from punctuated equilibrium theory, there is a growing body of research relating agendas to public opinion. Here, the focus is on public priorities, usually measured with responses to the well-known question asking about the ‘most important problem’ (MIP) or ‘most important issue’ (MII) facing the nation.¹² The expectation is that government attention in different areas follows the percentages of MIP mentions. The policy agenda is measured in various ways, including speeches that explicitly set the executive agenda, for example, the State of the Union Address in the US, the Queen’s Speech in the UK. As before, if there is representation, we expect a positive relationship between the two.

This is clearly different to what we posited above, as it involves priorities, not preferences. Although there is reason to think that measured priorities and preferences are related, such that, when an issue becomes a problem, people tend to want more policy to solve it, research demonstrates a weak relationship between the two (Jennings and Wlezien 2015). Some scholars (Jones 1994) see priorities as influencing the responsiveness to preferences, though it is important to keep in mind that importance (I) and problem (P)—and their IP combination—are not the same things as MIP, as the latter forces a choice among different important problems and also to go down the list of problems even if there aren't any really important ones.¹³

The model in research on agendas also is conceptually different from that relating to positions and policy, as the focus is not on the average citizen. Scholars focus instead on the distribution of priorities in society—MIP mentions across issues and time—and its correspondence with the policy agenda. Using this approach, congruence takes the form of a match between percentages of MIP mentions on particular issues and the associated percentages of the policy agenda. There is reason to *not* expect an identity relation, however. That is, we might expect that issues with small MIP percentages will receive proportionately more attention, as the measure—and its reliance on 'most'—leads to dominant problems driving out mentions of others problems that are not as important (Wlezien 2005).¹⁴

Much like the literature on party positions, there is some research matching public and policy priorities at particular points in time (and across countries) but much focuses on dynamics (Bevan and Jennings 2019). Hobolt and Klemmensen (2005) examined parliamentary opening speeches in Denmark and the United Kingdom and found that the issues that were emphasized varied over time in correspondence with what the public says is important. Jennings and John (2009) further analysed the Queen's Speech delivered at the opening of parliament in the United Kingdom and demonstrated pervasive responsiveness to MIP mentions that varies across issues. Jones et al. (2009) considered a broader range of agenda measures in their analysis of the US, and found that responsiveness varied with the institutional 'friction', that is, the obstacles to taking action. Bevan and Jennings (2014) extend this research in their comparison of the US and UK, and find a similar structure to agenda responsiveness. The agenda responsiveness we do observe may be largely driven by the priorities of co-partisans, much like party positions (see Klüver and Spoon 2016; Klüver and Sagarzazu 2016).

The research strongly suggests that elected officials are responsive to shifting public priorities, but it is easier to pay lip service to issues than it is to actually make decisions and implement them, which is what we turn to next.

Legislative Votes

Legislatures are important policymaking actors in all representative democracies, and scholars have studied how the votes they take correspond with public opinion. As we

have seen, in countries with single member legislative districts, scholars have compared the opinions of district constituencies and the voting behaviour of the associated representatives. The study of dyadic representation in rollcall votes has produced a massive literature, one that may be waxing. The focus increasingly is on the congruence between constituent preferences and voting behaviour, some of which examines general L–R patterns (Bafumi and Herron 2010) and others of which examine specific issues (Broockman 2016). Ahler and Broockman (2018) provide a current review of research on the subject, which unfortunately includes nothing on dynamics, much as we have seen for positions. This, too, seems a promising subject for future research.

A small amount of work examines the responsiveness of the ‘collective’ votes of legislatures to opinion changes. This is a large part of what Erikson et al. (2002) do in their already classic book on *The Macropolity*. That research extends their article (Stimson et al. 1995) on ‘dynamic representation’, using roll-call votes to characterize the liberal–conservative drift of the separate national governing institutions in the US—the president, the House of Representatives, the Senate, and the Supreme Court. They find that public ‘mood’ (Stimson 1991) across issues affects the behaviour of each institution but that the processes differ. This path-breaking research stimulated an explosion of research on dynamic representation.

Policy decisions

Though votes are important, they may not be decisive. In presidential systems, the executive has an important role to play, so the votes of the legislature in these countries may not carry the day. Even in parliamentary systems with unicameral legislatures, the government can act independently. It thus is not surprising that scholars have paid special attention to policy decisions in the study of representation.

Some of the research focuses on the ‘correspondence’ between opinion and policy decisions, the correlation between expressed public preferences and policy across geographic areas, such as states or countries. Erikson et al.’s (1993) analysis of the American states is a classic in the area. Other scholars have examined correspondence across countries, the leading example of which is Brooks and Manza’s (2007) study of the welfare state. While this research demonstrates an association between opinion and policy, Lax and Phillips (2012) explicitly address the congruence between the public’s policy preferences and policy decisions. They directly compare support for specific policies in US states and the corresponding state policy decisions, and find a great deal of responsiveness but that congruence between adoption and majoritarian public support is evident in only about half of the cases. This is path-breaking work to be sure, and though largely static, is focused on levels of opinion and policy decisions.

Most other research on policy decisions focuses on change. Monroe (1979) concentrated on the ‘consistency’ between expressed public preferences on issues and subsequent decisions in the US. He found that policy change typically is in the direction of expressed public preferences, specifically, 63 per cent of the time. Scholars followed his lead, focusing on other countries (e.g. Brooks 1985; Brettschneider 1996; Petry 1999).

Other scholars go one step further and compare changes in policy with changes in opinion. Whereas consistency studies rely on opinion measured at a particular point in time, ‘covariation’ studies use opinion measured at two points in time. Page and Shapiro (1983) pioneered this approach in their examination of various policy areas in the United States. They found a high level (66 per cent) of covariational ‘congruence’, and that opinion change usually precedes policy change.

Where regular frequent readings of opinion and policy decisions are available, it is possible to analyse the time-serial relationship(s) between them—that is, with a sufficient number of cases, we can statistically assess truly ‘dynamic representation’. Most work in the area focuses on the United States. Erikson et al. (2002) and Stimson et al. (1995) found substantial representation of general public mood in the number of major US policy decisions. At the same time, Wlezien (1996, 2004) developed and tested a ‘thermostatic’ model of opinion and budgetary policy in the US, which revealed representation of relative preferences in policy change that varies across issues. In the years since, scholars have increasingly focused on other countries, with Soroka and Wlezien (2010) undertaking a comparative analysis of the US, Canada, and the UK.¹⁵ They find that representation not only varies across issues but also countries.

All of the research on dynamic representation in policy decisions is important, as it shows that public opinion matters for what government does, but it is not all that matters. Party control of government is important; while it does reflect public opinion, the relationship is imperfect (also see Bartle et al. 9). Even to the extent there is dynamic representation—both direct and indirect—in policy decisions, we do not know to what extent the public is getting what it wants.

Policy Outputs

Implementation always is important, even where it seems straightforward. Consider entitlement programmes, spending on which is often considered ‘automatic’, where people who are entitled get the money. People often have to apply for entitlements, and once applied for, government employees have to acknowledge the eligibility and then payment has to be made. Though there may not be a lot of bureaucratic discretion, entitlement spending is not automatic.¹⁶ In other areas, the executive branch exercises more discretion.

The translation of decisions into outputs may be least straightforward in regulatory policy areas. There is little research on the role of the public in regulation, however. Berkman and Plutzer’s (2005) study of school districts stands out, as it addresses what drives the behaviour of teachers in the classroom in the US, and finds that state-level policy decisions matter but district-level opinion does as well. Jennings (2009) also stands out, as it examines asylum applications and actual decisions, and does so in an explicitly dynamic way, revealing that public concern about immigration influences the number of applications the government allows.

There is research focusing on budgets, where it sometimes is possible to separate decisions (appropriations) from outputs (outlays). The differences between the two are often not great, but they sometimes are and the differences can matter (see Wlezien and Soroka 2003). This is important when studying representation using budgets, as politicians directly control appropriation decisions. It may be of special importance in countries where it is necessary to rely on measures of outlays, which is likely to reduce observed responsiveness to public opinion.

Issues

Representation is not evident in all policy areas. Kuklinski and Elling (1977) demonstrated that the public salience of issues is a determining factor in roll-call voting and McCrone and Kuklinski (1979) laid out conditions for representation on salient issues. Here, scholars' 'salience' refers to the *importance* of issues to citizens, which also has been found to influence dynamic representation at the national level in the US (Wlezien 2004) and other countries (Soroka and Wlezien 2010). Effective opinion representation is greater on important issues; it also tends to be more specific, a reflection of opinion in the particular areas, not just the general movement—across issues—of public opinion (Wlezien 2004; also see Druckman and Jacobs 2006).

Institutions

Representation is not equally evident in all contexts. Scholars have paid special attention to the role of political institutions, and electoral institutions have been the primary suspects, much of which is addressed in Chapter 19 in this *Handbook*. The work on dynamic representation implies that electoral systems may have very different effects on indirect representation—via elections—and direct representation—between elections. Wlezien and Soroka's (2012) comparative investigation of dynamic representation provides evidence that governments in countries with proportional systems are less responsive. Further diagnostic analyses reveals that this is especially true as the number of parties increases, implying that friction associated with coalition government may be the primary mechanism (Soroka and Wlezien 2015).

Government institutions also have received attention in analysis of dynamic representation. Strøm (2003) posits differences between parliamentary and presidential systems, and Hobolt and Klemmensen (2008) begin to explore them empirically, focusing on representation of priorities in Denmark and the US. Soroka and Wlezien (2010) theorize the impact of both horizontal and vertical divisions of power and begin to assess their effects on representation in spending change over time in Canada, the UK, and the US. Wlezien and Soroka (2012) extend this analysis to a larger number of countries and show that government spending responds to public preferences but that

government (and electoral) institutions matter. They find that responsiveness increases as the balance between the legislature and executive increases, as this makes it more difficult for the executive (or legislature) to act independently (see as well Fagan et al. 2017). They also find that responsiveness decreases as fiscal decentralization increases, which adds confusion about the source of spending and so makes public preferences less informed by policy at each level of government (also see Wlezien and Soroka 2011). This effect of federalism on representation is indirect, *through preferences*.

Other institutions matter, and there has been an explosion of research on the role of interest groups in political representation, including dynamics. Long considered important intermediaries between the public and policymakers, organized interests now commonly are seen to be competitors with the public (e.g. Gilens and Page 2014). Recent research reveals that those groups actually may serve in both capacities. One article showed that interest group positions in five countries commonly match those of the public, and so advocacy can advance the public interest (Flothe and Rasmussen 2019). Another article found that groups can impact responsiveness, as the number of voluntary associations in the US increases the responsiveness of priorities to public opinion (Bevan and Rasmussen 2020). Other research demonstrates that public opinion actually can enhance group advocacy access, particularly for those groups that are more representative (Rasmussen et al. 2017).

Inequality

Perhaps the cutting edge of research on representation addresses the question of who gets represented. It is important to keep in mind that, where people's policy opinions differ, inequality in policy representation really is inescapable, as only one position can win (Dahl 1956). It still is important who wins, whether the median person or some other, and the subject has received a lot of scholarly attention. For instance, Griffin and Newman (2005) examine the influence of voters and non-voters and McCarty et al. (2006) considers the consequences of growing differences between voters and non-voters.

Of special prominence is work on income differences, which has dominated research on inequality over the last decade. Bartels (2008) initiated the examination of representation across income groups and found that opinions of the rich mattered more than those of the poor for Congressional roll-call votes in the US. Giger et al. (2012) found a similar pattern for the positions of European political parties and governments. Soroka and Wlezien (2008) highlighted that unequal representation only matters when preferences differ and finds similarity in opinion across groups in the US, particularly between the rich and the middle. Gilens and Page (2014) assess the influence of rich and middle-income citizens as well as business and mass-based interest groups and conclude that US policymaking is dominated by economic elites. Enns (2015) challenged Gilens and Page by showing that policy decisions would change very little if

elected officials represented the middle instead of the rich. Branham et al. (2017) showed further that in cases where rich and middle opinions differ, which is about 10 per cent of the time, the rich only win the policies they want slightly more often than the middle (or poor). Rigby and Wright (2011) also found that the rich and the middle are about equally influential on state policies in the US. While they may do better than they seemingly should, the rich are hardly decisive for policy.

The foregoing work examines statics, but a dynamic analysis is well suited to the study of inequality in representation. Consider that the rich domination of the policymaking process actually imply the ebb and flow of rich opinion, it is only a handful of published studies that examine differential responsiveness to group opinion over time. Ura and Ellis (2008) examine general tendencies in US Congressional roll-call voting. They find that the House roll-call liberalism is very responsive to the opinions of all groups, not particularly those making high incomes, and that the Senate is not very responsive to public opinion at all. Wlezien and Soroka (2011) assess the responsiveness of government spending to preferences in various domains in the US and find that the influence of different income groups is surprisingly equal. Peters and Ensink (2015) examine social spending in 25 countries and find that where support for distribution differs across income groups, the rich have more influence than the poor and the middle are in between. Elkjaer and Iversen (2020) challenge this research and find that the middle dominate.

There are other sources of differences in society, of course. Race, ethnicity, and gender are particularly salient. Education may be as well. Party groupings may be most of all in modern representative democracies. These groups may exhibit much greater differences than those we see observe across income levels (Enns and Wlezien 2011). Whether, and the extent to which, they matter for dynamic representation remains to be seen.

Discussion: On the Importance of Public Responsiveness and Accountability

This chapter has focused on political representation, especially dynamic representation. We have seen that changing public opinion matters for the positions and votes politicians take, and the attention they pay to issues, policy decisions, and even outputs. The effect does not hold universally. Issues matter. Institutions do, too. Under the best of circumstances, the public is just one of many factors that matter, and oftentimes the people are not directive. This is clear from Branham et al.'s (2017) reanalysis of the Gilens and Page (2014) data, which shows that public opinion typically does not prevail on policy in the US, even when all (income) groups are in agreement. That the public matters nevertheless is important, even if it functions as 'dikes' bounding the flow of policy over time (Key 1961).¹⁷

Policy representation ultimately requires that the public notices and responds to what policymakers do. Without such responsiveness, policymakers would have little incentive to represent what the public wants in policy. Moreover, expressed relative

preferences, which feature in much research on dynamic representation, would be of little use even to those politicians motivated to represent the public for other reasons. Despite ongoing concerns about the ignorance of the average citizen, a body of recent work shows that the average citizen has basic information. Public preferences often react sensibly to real-world trends (see Page and Shapiro 1992), including policy itself; much like a thermostat, the public adjusts its preferences for ‘more’ or ‘less’ policy in response to policy change, favouring less (more) policy in the wake of policy increases (decreases), *ceteris paribus* (Wlezien 1995).

We expect variation across policy domains and institutions in both public responsiveness and policy representation and we observe it (Wlezien 2004; Soroka and Wlezien 2010; Wlezien and Soroka 2012). There is a striking symmetry between the two, where representation is most (least) pronounced precisely where public responsiveness is greatest (weakest). This is not meant to imply that an informed public is sufficient for effective representation, as policymakers do not always represent what the public wants. To the extent representative democracy ‘works’ to encourage representation, therefore, it does not work perfectly, although it still may work better than many of us might expect.

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NOTES

1. One could examine the mediating role of descriptive representation of other groups, and there is a large literature on the consequences of descriptive representation. See Wangnerud (2009) and Preuhs (2017) for reviews.
2. Including covariates can help isolate the real effect of opinion but omitted variables remains an issue in any observational study.
3. That is, minority support for the Affordable Care Act owed partly to the percentage who said they opposed it but favoured a larger government role in health care. See the series of CNN/ORC International polls between March 2010 and July 2014; for a summary, see <http://politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2014/07/23/cnn-poll-is-obamacare-working/>.
4. The GSS asks about various other categories, including defence, health, education, the environment, and crime, among others.
5. The assumption also is reflected in Ellis and Stimson’s (2012) characterization of ‘conservative conservatives’, who think of themselves as conservatives but appear to support liberal spending policies.
6. It also appears that the different questions tap similar things over time, as the correlation between the two is a healthy 0.83 (Wlezien 2017a).

7. Even though the unconstrained preference indicates support for more spending, the public may be getting the spending it wants given the budget constraints and choice.
8. Even if we do measure true preferences for more spending, say on welfare, we need to match up preferences with spending, which is not always obvious. Having done that, we could determine that the public wants more but we still could not tell how much more it wants.
9. Hurley (1982) identifies important limits to the approach.
10. A large portion of the research measures the public median by weighting party positions by election results (following Kim and Fording 1998); while readily calculable, this approach assumes that election results are primarily determined by ideology, which is questionable (see Warwick and Zakharova 2013).
11. See <https://www.comparativeagendas.net/>.
12. The specific wording of the MIP and MII questions varies to some degree across countries (and over time), but Jennings and Wlezien (2011) show that responses to MIP and MII questions are largely indistinguishable, implying that when asked about 'issues' people tend to answer in regards to 'problems'.
13. There are at least two reasons why policymakers might respond to important problem (IP) instead of relative preferences: (1) the public does not have meaningful policy preferences but does have a meaningful IP; and (2) the public has both clear preferences and priorities but the latter matter more to people's political judgements and votes. Of course, it may just be that policymakers respond to priorities because that is what they want to do.
14. A measure of IP thus would seem to work better in models of representation, though there is reason to think that the average MIP (or MII) responses calculated over long stretches of time can generally differentiate issue importance, as it averages out fluctuations in problem status (Soroka and Wlezien 2010). Ideally we would be able to separately measure importance, however (see Moniz and Wlezien n.d.).
15. Eichenberg and Stoll (2003) undertake a parallel analysis of defence spending in the US and various European countries.
16. Consider the variation in food stamp participation rates across states in the US, which averages 83 per cent and ranges between 59 and 100 per cent (see <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/ops/Reaching2015-Summary.pdf>).
17. Put another way, they may take policy as far as they can, given public opinion. See Wlezien (2017b).

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P A R T V I

CHALLENGES TO
REPRESENTATIVE
DEMOCRACY

DOMESTIC ORIGINS

CHAPTER 26

NON-MAJORITARIAN INSTITUTIONS AND REPRESENTATION

MARK BOVENS
AND THOMAS SCHILLEMANS

INTRODUCTION: 'WHATEVER IT TAKES'

ON 26 July 2012, in the midst of the financial crisis, Mario Draghi, the head of the European Central Bank, gave a speech in London on the future of the Euro.¹ In his speech he made a seemingly casual, but momentous remark: 'Within our mandate, the ECB is ready to do whatever it takes to preserve the euro. And believe me, it will be enough.' This remark was decisive in saving the euro. The financial markets calmed down immediately. As a follow up, in 2015, the ECB started an unprecedented programme of quantitative easing. The ECB has been buying government bonds and other assets from commercial banks as part of its non-standard monetary policy measures. The costs of this programme have run between 60 and 80 billion euro per month and the total expenditure has amounted to the mind-boggling sum of far over a trillion euro. Nobody really knows what its long-term consequences will be for the Eurozone. It is highly contested, because it provides a disincentive for southern European member states to balance their budget and has put the pension systems in the northern member states in jeopardy.

Mario Draghi has been the most powerful man in the European Union in the past decade—much more powerful than any treasurer or finance minister in any of the member states. Yet he is neither elected, nor accountable to any parliament, European or national. He is accountable to the Governing Council of the ECB, which consists of the members of the Executive Board, plus the governors of the national central banks of the nineteen euro area countries. However, these governors are not elected either. They are appointed, often for a fixed term, and cannot be removed by an elected body.

The ECB is a prime example of a very powerful ‘non-majoritarian’ institution (NMI). Its policies are of the utmost political importance and are sometimes very controversial. Yet, its governing members are not elected, nor are they appointed by elected bodies, and their policies are not subjected to approval by elected representatives (Majone 2014). Non-majoritarian institutions, such as powerful central banks, do not sit well with traditional, majoritarian, and electoral notions of democracy. We will discuss the variety and rise of these NMIs, their ‘counter-majoritarian difficulties’, and various strategies to enhance their representational nature. However, NMIs fit much better in more liberal, monitory notions of democracy. They can provide a series of checks and balances that prevent corruption and the abuse of power, and protect the rights of minorities. This monitoring perspective on NMIs will be discussed in the final paragraph of this chapter.

NON-MAJORITARIAN INSTITUTIONS

The concept of non-majoritarian institutions was first invoked by Majone in the context of regulatory agencies and it is also in this context that the concept is generally used. However, in line with Majone (1994: 2), we will refer more broadly to a range of public organizations for whom reconciling organizational and operational independence with democratic accountability is the central political problem. Non-majoritarian institutions come in a large variety: not only central banks, but also courts, regulatory and non-regulatory authorities, public service providers, quangos, bodies of oversight, and watchdogs such as courts of audit and ombudsmen qualify as non-majoritarian institutions. They have two things in common. On the one hand they exercise some form of public authority—they print money, they regulate or adjudicate, they make decisions on social benefits, licences, fines, subsidies, or permits, or they audit and control other public institutions. On the other hand they are not traditional ministries or municipal departments—they are neither headed by elected politicians, nor are they subject to direct control by elected representatives in parliaments or local councils.

A rather formal definition of non-majoritarian institutions is the one given by Mark Thatcher and Alec Stone Sweet (2002: 2): ‘those governmental entities that (a) possess and exercise some grant of specialized public authority, separate from that of other institutions, but (b) are neither directly elected by the people, nor directly managed by elected officials’. A more informal definition is provided by Frank Vibert (2007: 4–5): ‘bodies in society that exercise official authority but are not headed by elected politicians and have been deliberately set apart, or are only loosely tied to the more familiar elected institutions of democracy—the parliaments, presidents and prime ministers’. Instead of the technical term non-majoritarian institutions, he uses the more colloquial term *unelected bodies*. Other terms used in the literature are ‘quangos’ (quasi-autonomous non-governmental organizations), arm’s-length government bodies, non-departmental public bodies, or non-ministerial government departments.

A crucial element in any of these definitions is the fact that they are non-*majoritarian* in character. The legitimacy of their power is not based on a majority of the votes of the electorate, either directly or via a representative body. Instead, they derive their legitimacy from expert decision-making at arm's length of elected politicians. For the purpose of this chapter, we will define non-majoritarian institutions as *institutions that exercise public authority which are neither headed by elected politicians, nor are subject to direct control by elected representatives.*

Frank Vibert, in his seminal book *The Rise of the Unelected* (2007: 20–9) distinguishes five broad categories of non-majoritarian institutions, which we paraphrase as follows:

1. *Service providers*: these are public bodies that are set up to provide services to the general public, such as central banking, broadcasting, statistics, public transport, research funding, and weather forecasts. Examples are the BBC, the ESRC, and the Office of National Statistics in the UK; the Federal Reserve System, NASA, AMTRAK, and the National Science Foundation in the US; and the ECB, Deutsche Bundesbank, KNMI, and ESF in Europe.
2. *Risk assessors*: these are public bodies that are set up to monitor and manage risks, for example in the area of health, safety, food, water, and the environment. Examples are the Food Standards Agency, the Health and Safety Executive, and the Environment Agency in the UK; the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Transportation Safety Board, and the Food and Drug Administration in the US; and the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (Naturvårdsverket), the Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM), and the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (Bundesinstitut für Risikobewertung, BfR) in Germany.
3. *Regulatory authorities*: these are public bodies that regulate and oversee the protection of a series of public values, such as fair and free competition, privacy, non-discrimination, or consumer protection. Often they monitor the boundaries between private activities and public concerns. Examples are the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the Gambling Commission, and the Office of Communications in the UK; the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau in the US; the Competition Authority (Autorité de la Concurrence) in France, the Authority for Financial Markets (AFM) in The Netherlands, and the Federal Cartel Office in Germany.
4. *Auditors*: these are public bodies that monitor and control the spending of public money and the exercise of public powers. They are watchdog institutions that check, often on behalf of parliaments, whether public money is spent in compliance with financial regulations. Increasingly, they also evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of government programmes. Examples are the local, national, and European audit offices, such as the National Audit Office in the UK, the Government Accountability Office in the US, and the European Court of Auditors in

the EU. Other, more recently established, specialized auditors are the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in the UK, the US sentencing commission, or the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) in the EU.

5. *Appeals bodies*: these are public bodies that citizens can appeal to when they feel that public bodies have infringed upon their rights, or have misused their powers. They provide venues for complaints and dispute resolution in addition to the traditional judiciary venues. Prime examples are the local, national, and European ombudsmen. But one can also think of a series of more specialized appeals bodies, such as the Employment Appeal Tribunal, or the Independent Office for Police Conduct in the UK, the Merit Systems Protection Board and the Office of Special Counsel in the US, or the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner in Ireland and the Data Protection Authority (GBA/APD) in Belgium.

Vibert's typology of unelected institutions is one of the various typologies which have been developed both in the academic world as well as in different national jurisdictions. In most democratic systems there are several types of non-majoritarian institutions, based upon different legal, political, and institutional traditions (Verhoest et al. 2012). Those formal-legal categorizations also tend to shift over time. As a consequence, it is difficult to compare the rise of unelected institutions across countries. Several scholars therefore illustrate rather than measure the rise of 'the unelected' (Vibert 2007), 'monitory democracy' (Keane 2009), and unelected institutions of 'global governance' (Koppell 2010). With long, non-exhaustive lists of relatively new institutions, they convincingly convey the message that there are 'many' non-majoritarian institutions. More generally, it has been claimed that these organizations now 'employ far more staff and spend far more money' than central government, as 'most of the real work of government is carried on through agencies' (Pollitt et al. 2004: 3).

There are, however, several comparative or additive inventories available that try to take stock of the fragmented world of non-majoritarian governance. An important source is Verhoest et al. (2012), providing an overview of 'government agencies' in thirty countries. The lion's share of those countries is in the Western world, yet there is, for instance, also information on countries such as Pakistan and Tanzania. Their overview suggests that all of those countries feature non-majoritarian institutions—mostly service providers and regulatory authorities—ranging from some tens in some countries to several hundreds in others. In another inventory, Hanretty and Koop (2009) aimed to gauge the number of independent regulatory authorities. They focused on the regulation of seven salient policy sectors—competition, energy, environment, financial markets, food safety, pharmaceuticals, telecommunication—and compiled a list of almost 500 independent regulatory authorities in almost 100 countries. This list was not exhaustive, but suggests that these sectors are globally, more often than not, regulated by independent regulatory authorities, albeit with varying levels of independence (Hanretty and Koop 2013). And the OECD (2017a) made a comparative inventory of advisory bodies aiming to contribute to the quality of governance and decision-making. All participating countries feature permanent, independent advisory bodies, ranging from six in Peru, to fifty in Lithuania and Sweden (OECD 2017a: 33).

THE RISE OF THE NON-ELECTED

During the past decades these non-majoritarian institutions have gained prominence in many Western democracies. Particularly in the 1990s and 2000s, there were many analyses of the numerical growth of (quasi-)autonomous public sector service providers (Pollitt and Talbot 2004; Verhoest et al. 2012), regulatory agencies (Levi-Faur 2005), and audit bodies and auditing practices in the private and public sector (Power 1994; Hood et al. 1998). Hanretty and Koop (2009: 4) show that 85 per cent of the independent regulatory authorities in their sample were established in the 1990s or 2000s. Gilardi also shows that the rise of regulatory authorities is a relatively recent phenomenon, claiming that ‘while only a few such authorities existed in Europe in the early 1980s, by the end of the twentieth century they had spread impressively across countries and sectors’ (2005: 84). The same conclusion has been formulated for autonomous government agencies. Van Thiel (2012) studied for twenty-five common policy tasks in twenty-one countries whether they were performed by autonomous institutions, and when the autonomous institutions were created. It turned out that the great majority of those organizations had been created since 1990 and, again, most of those in the closing decade of the twentieth century. This testifies to how a radical shift in service provision from elected, majoritarian to unelected, non-majoritarian institutions occurred in the final decades of the twentieth century.

Since the turn of the century, the growth of the various non-majoritarian bodies has halted and has in some jurisdictions even reversed (O’Leary 2015; Van Thiel and Verheij 2017). However, unelected bodies are still prominent features of many democratic regimes. On the European continent, they have taken the place of neo-corporatist institutions, such as public industrial organizations, and departmental units that in the twentieth century performed a number of the functions nowadays performed by non-majoritarian institutions.

There are several driving forces behind this substitution. Neo-corporatist arrangements lost much of their legitimacy, due to depillarization and the decline of mass civil society organizations, such as unions and churches. Neo-corporatism as a blueprint for the institutional arrangement of society was displaced by New Public Management, the dominant public sector reform-theory from the end of the twentieth century. New Public Management emphasized privatization, marketization, and single-purpose organizations (Hood 1991). This led to the creation of numerous arm’s-length public service providers in many countries, expected to operate more closely to the market. Strong markets however need strong rules. Hence the rise of independent risk assessors, regulators, and market authorities. New Public Management has been most influential in Anglo-Saxon countries, such as the US, the UK, and New Zealand. However, many of its institutions have been introduced in other countries too (Thatcher and Stone Sweet 2002: 12).

In the literature (Thatcher and Stone Sweet 2002; Thatcher 2002; Gilardi 2007) a variety of rationales is offered for putting central banks, regulatory authorities, service

providers, and risk assessors at an arm's length or more of elected politicians. First, a major rationale has been the increasing technical and legal complexity of regulating many policy fields. Creating level playing fields in liberalized markets for energy, public transport, telecom, banking, and finance requires highly sophisticated, specific expertise regarding economic models, technical feasibility, and requirements of due process. Public regulators often face very powerful private parties for whom the stakes are high and who are able and willing to invest large amounts of time, money, and expertise to influence policies and to contest decisions. Elected politicians and many departmental civil servants are generalists who lack the required technical or legal knowledge. Non-departmental institutions can build up and maintain expertise over time, without being disrupted by cabinet reshuffles or a departmental overhaul after elections.

Second, by creating independent institutions that are not subject to the political cycle, politicians can make credible commitments towards investors and consumers. Delegation to independent regulators and bodies of oversight will enhance the consistency and credibility of policies over time. Investors are assured that their long-term investments will pay off, because the chances of short-term, politically motivated interventions in the sector are diminished. Consumers are assured that food quality, environmental safety, or financial stability are not jeopardized by partisan concerns, nepotism, or political whims.

Third, it can be a rational strategy for calculating political agents to commit future majorities, particularly in volatile political environments. Delegating policy implementation, regulation and oversight to independent bodies makes it more difficult for future majorities to change current policies overnight. This would require the relatively longer and cumbersome legislative trajectory of reforming the statutes and legal frameworks that provide the bases for their operations.

From the perspective of elected politicians, delegating to non-majoritarian institutions also can be attractive because it offers many opportunities for blame management. To begin with, it shields them from pressures to make exemptions regarding the provision of services or the granting of permits. Also, NMIs can create a buffer between unpopular decisions and elected politicians. For example, politicians can shift the blame for controversial decisions regarding interest rates, currency devaluation, or solvency requirements for financials, to central banks and regulators. In areas with a risk of highly visible incidents, such as public transport or food safety, independent risk assessors and regulators can function as lightning rods that can absorb much of the political health in case of accidents and casualties.

PROBLEMS OF REPRESENTATION

The European Central Bank's unprecedented programme of quantitative easing is a prime example of the enormous political powers that non-majoritarian institutions

may exercise. The ECB has been the most influential political actor in the Eurozone in the past decade, and yet its governing members are not elected, nor are they appointed by, or accountable to, elected bodies. The same has been true for many national central banks (Amttenbrink 1999) and for the bulk of the NMIs. As Levi-Faur (2005) boldly stated, we live in a second-level indirect representative democracy: citizens elect representatives who appoint non-majoritarian experts who regulate economies and societies.

The issue of independence from direct political control has been one of the major issues in the academic literature on NMIs and has inspired industrious academic work aiming to understand how independent and influential those NMIs really are. This has, however, so far not accumulated into a shared understanding. On the one hand scholars have shown that separating organizational units from central government diminishes political control and makes those organizations less responsive to their political principals (cf. Egeberg and Trondal 2009). Various measures for autonomy and independence have been developed with which scholars show that NMIs are indeed, albeit to varying degrees, independent. One of those measures for independence has been developed by a group of mostly European scholars investigating the relative independence of executive agencies (Verhoest et al. 2012). Another measure was developed by the OECD, ranking regulatory authorities on their relative autonomy (OECD 2017b).

Research on organizational autonomy invariably shows that autonomy is not an absolute and one-dimensional but a relative and multi-dimensional phenomenon. Part of the reason is that autonomy can relate to various dimensions of an institution's operations (Verhoest et al. 2004). An NMI may, for instance, be fully autonomous in taking key substantive policy or regulatory decisions, but may still be fully dependent on central government for finances and its legal framework. This curbs independence in practice. Furthermore, even when the organization is formally autonomous, the democratically elected government is often still the most important stakeholder for agencies. A survey in seven Western countries amongst chief executives of autonomous agencies found that they almost universally still consider central government to be its most important stakeholder, compared to many other potentially relevant stakeholders (Schillemans et al. 2019). The chief executives also generally accepted that they were accountable to the political centre. All in all, the empirical evidence sketches a mixed picture of independence and dependence for NMIs.

From a perspective of democratic representation, however, even constrained independence of bureaucratic organizations can be seen as problematic. First of all, there are general problems of democratic legitimacy. NMIs lack input legitimacy; they cannot legitimize their actions on the basis of electoral mandates, as can elected politicians. Their legitimacy relies in part on throughput legitimacy, on the impartiality, legality and technical soundness of their operations (Schmidt 2013). Most of all, they rely on output legitimacy, on the efficiency and effectiveness of their policies and operations. This is fine as long as they 'bring home the beef' and the economy is

flourishing and their policies are uncontested. However, it is a rather feeble basis for legitimacy in times of crises and uncertainty.

Second, political legitimacy can be particularly problematic if the policies of regulators and the decisions of service providers, risk assessors, and bodies of oversight are not in line with the preferences of present political majorities. This is a well known problem of judicial review by supreme courts. Alexander Bickel (1962) has called this the ‘counter-majoritarian difficulty’. He used the term to describe the argument that judicial review is illegitimate because it allows unelected judges to overrule the law making of elected representatives. A similar argument can be made against far-reaching decisions by other non-majoritarian institutions, such as central banks. The counterargument, as with the judiciary—compare Ely (1980), and Ackerman (1991)—is that NMIs are part of the institutional checks and balances that shape the democratic constitutional state (Vibert 2007; Keane 2009; Rosanvallon 2011). Delegation to NMIs creates new separations of powers that can help citizens and elected representatives to control the exercise of political power and to curb majoritarian tendencies. NMIs are independent information gatherers that provide informational checks and balances in an era gravitating towards fact-free politics and fake news.

A third cluster of representation problems has to do with the composition of many NMIs. NMIs are populated by highly educated technical experts—scientists, engineers, lawyers, and economists—and not at all representative of the general population. This, too, may jeopardize the legitimacy of their operations. This is particularly the case when NMIs have a role in regulating controversial political issues, such as commissions that set standards and adjudicate regarding issues of equal opportunity and racial discrimination. Education levels are not politically neutral nowadays (Bovens and Wille 2017). Strong educational gradients can be observed in political preferences relating to very salient cultural issues, such as the EU, immigration, taxation, and national identity. University graduates tend to accept social and cultural heterogeneity and favour, or at least condone, multiculturalism and EU unification. Citizens with medium or primary educational qualifications tend to be much more critical of the EU and multiculturalism and prefer a more homogeneous national culture. Given their one-sided composition, NMIs run the risk of being accused of contributing to biased political agendas. With regard to social cultural issues, policy incongruences may occur between these highly professionalized bodies and large parts of the electorate (Hakhverdian 2015).

A fourth cluster of problems relates to the political accountability of NMIs. Citizens cannot ‘vote the rascals out’, directly or indirectly, if they are dissatisfied with their policies and operations. Unlike ministerial departments and civil servants, NMIs are not part of the political chain of delegation and accountability. In many cases, their directors cannot be called to give an account in parliaments or councils. As we saw, this is part of the rationale for delegating to NMIs, but it does raise the question, how then are they to account for their exercise of public power and use of public funds?

NON-MAJORITARIAN POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

In response to these concerns about democratic representation and accountability, non-majoritarian bodies have developed several strategies to enhance their democratic legitimacy. NMIs are perhaps not representative in traditional terms, yet many NMIs actively seek to relate to their strategic environments. They can do so in a variety of ways.

Institutionally: First of all, NMIs can try to mimic traditional political institutions. They can enhance their own representativeness, for example by appointing or electing representatives from relevant stakeholders in boards or panels. This is a form of descriptive representation: they try to reflect the composition of their regulated sector in the composition of executive boards, supervisory committees, or advisory boards. A study of four major Dutch independent regulatory authorities shows that efforts have been made to make the governing boards descriptively representative of important stakeholder groups (Van Veen 2014: 172–4). Up to a third of the appointed board members had a background in the regulated domain. However, all of these came from corporations, producers, institutions, or providers—no board members came from consumer or patient organizations.

In addition, NMIs can enhance their representativeness by consulting stakeholders, such as corporations, producers and consumers, patients and practitioners, during the process of agenda setting, policy preparation, decision-making, and implementation. This to a large extent resembles parliamentary practices such as legislative hearings and consultations. In the study mentioned above, all four regulatory authorities included representatives of affected interests at various regulatory stages. However, here, too, end users such as consumers, customers, patients, and their interest groups were structurally under-represented (Van Veen 2014: 211–22). Some organizations tried to remedy this by performing surveys and installing consumer panels.

NMIs can also take steps to provide public scrutiny and political account-giving. Many NMIs have been found to create voluntary forms of accountability on their own (Koop 2014). Research on voluntary accountability suggests it can be quite effective, first and foremost as an appropriate practice or form of ‘good governance’ (Koop 2014) and also because it invokes learning processes (Schillemans 2011). Simultaneously, voluntary accountability has also been portrayed as a strategic response to reputational threats and as an attempt to boost organizational reputations in order to sustain independence (Busuioc and Lodge 2016).

An example of voluntary accountability is the monetary dialogues between the ECB president and the European Parliament (Bovens and Curtin 2016). The legal basis for the ECB’s accountability to the EP is Article 284(3) TFEU, which provides that the ECB will send the EP an annual report on the activities of the ECB and on the monetary

policy of both the previous and current year. Moreover, the President of the ECB is to present this report to the EP, which then may hold a general debate on the basis of this report. In addition, it is provided that the President of the ECB and other members of the Executive Board may be heard by the competent committees of the EP. This can be at the request of the EP, but also on their own initiative. In addition, the EP Rules of Procedure require the ECB President to appear before the ECON committee at least four times a year (Fasone 2014: 175). These appearances of the ECB President before the EP—in plenary and in the ECON committee—have become known as the Monetary Dialogues. They provide a good platform for an intensive debate with the President of the ECB. The Parliamentarians ask many questions of Draghi, and some forms of political debate have developed over the years. Some preliminary steps have been taken to also engage in a dialogue with national parliaments.

Substantively: the highly influential and widely cited theory of responsive regulation urges regulatory authorities to call on and listen to various relevant stakeholders (Ayres and Braithwaite 1995). Responsive regulation broadens the perspective from the dyadic relationship between regulator and regulatee to wider relevant stakeholders. A strategy of responsive regulation is flexible and is responsive to the specific signals received about regulated entities and the various social motivations present within regulated industries. Regulatory authorities can choose from various enforcement strategies. The theory intends to describe how regulators choose between different strategies of enforcement but also aims to make regulation more effective, efficient, and legitimate. It is the latter purpose of responsive regulation that is relevant for this chapter. Responsive regulation may enhance the legitimacy of the regulatory authority, often a NMI, in two ways. On the one hand, regulators are urged to focus on the different motivations for compliance that exist in an organization or business and to tailor their interventions to the specific setting. This should theoretically lead to more understanding and acceptance of the role and enforcement strategies of the regulator by the regulated businesses (Nielsen and Parker 2009). On the other hand, by consulting with important stakeholders, independent regulators become more transparent, open and accessible. This may in turn contribute to their legitimacy in the sector. It is then still not possible to ‘vote the rascals’ out, yet stakeholders may get to know them and may start understanding that they may not be rascals and may even find them legitimate and effective. Similar strategies of responsiveness and stakeholder-orientation have also been practised for other types of non-majoritarian institutions, such as courts of audit, quangos, and risk assessors. Also, critics have claimed that responsive regulation is often not really responsive in practice, which necessitates a strategy of *really* responsive regulation (Baldwin and Black 2008).

Discursively: NMIs can also try to enhance their representativeness and political legitimacy in a more indirect, discursive way. They can claim to act as representatives of the people, even when they are not elected (Saward 2006). Representation can be seen as a ‘two-way street’ (Saward 2006: 301). The represented people can elect a representative, which is the basic principle of most democracies. On the other hand, however, some agent or entity can make claims to represent a constituency and

the constituency can accept this claim. This second way opens up opportunities for non-majoritarian bodies to represent constituencies without being elected. Expert public bodies can, for instance, claim to represent, secure, or advance the interests of the general public; an ambition symbolized in the names of some non-majoritarian bodies, such as defending ‘human rights’ or ‘consumer interests’. This is not done through traditional political representation and partisan politics, but by virtue of their independent, non-partisan, non-majoritarian nature. Detached from specific interests and partisan concerns, they are better able to guard the general interest in volatile markets with high information asymmetries and uneven playing fields.

Van Veen (2014), in his study on Dutch independent regulatory authorities, shows how these representative claims are reflected both in the establishment laws of these authorities and in their public presentations. The legislature explicitly established them with the task to secure a series of public interests, such as universal service delivery, prevention of market power abuse, energy supply security, transparency of markets, and the protection of consumers. As a result, these regulators all promoted an image of being public- or consumer-interest representatives (Van Veen 2014: 219). In their public presentations they portray themselves as ‘agents’ or ‘guardian angels’ of the consumer.

Communicatively: in line with the discursive claim for representation, NMIs can also seek to increase their legitimacy via the media. Some non-majoritarian institutions feature prominently in the news and some of them invest substantial resources in media framing, communication, and campaigns (Schillemans 2016). The media attention is, in part, triggered by incidents or by the agendas of journalists, news outlets, or the unpredictable turmoil of social media. Simultaneously, however, some NMIs have active strategies to influence media attention, boost their reputation and picture themselves in specific frames in the news. NMIs mostly lack the personalized flavour and extravagance with which some elected politicians try to make it in the news and they are generally very reluctant to engage in the overt political contestations that are of interest to journalists and the people. But NMIs do have some qualities that may give them access to favourable news coverage. Many of these institutions ‘own’ the key facts and data about population statistics, meteorological developments, or economic growth, which still play a large role in public debate. As owners of those data, the NMIs may also seek favourable news coverage for themselves. Furthermore, regulatory authorities are often depicted as neutral and knowledgeable in news stories, which may serve their cause to represent specific interests. And some non-majoritarian institutions in complex policy fields invest considerable time in backgrounding journalists and explaining how the field operates. This may enable them to propagate a perspective on the field that is supportive of their position. The larger NMIs are found to be sensitive to reputational threats and to switch between responses (Rimkutė 2018). Sometimes they will position themselves as technical experts solving complex issues, which is one possible strategy of representation (‘We are here to solve your difficult problem’). And sometimes they, rather, choose to stress that they guard specific important values of interests, which is a second available strategy (‘We are here to protect this specific vulnerable issue’).

NON-MAJORITARIAN INSTITUTIONS AS GUARDIANS OF LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

Non-majoritarian institutions are one of the more puzzling parts of contemporary democracies. They perform crucial functions, exist in various guises, and are integral to some of the most important policies, yet they do not sit well with normative theories of representative government. Most of the academic concerns about the increasing numbers of non-majoritarian institutions such as (quasi-)autonomous service providers, independent market regulators, and new audit and risk assessors were voiced around the 2000s. Since then, their numerical growth has halted somewhat. Yet, the issue of how these non-representative bodies fit in representative systems of government is more than likely to persist, as it has done for centuries. The first court of audit in Holland was, for instance, already installed in the fifteenth century and the first quango in 1575. This suggests that the issue of how unrepresentative, professional institutions relate to the more general democratic system, is likely to stay and invite reflection. This chapter has sought to identify some of the most pertinent topics in this respect.

So far, in line with much of the literature, we have treated non-majoritarian institutions as ‘problems’ in democracies on the grounds of their unelected nature. However, non-majoritarian institutions can also be understood as ‘solutions’, as guardians of representative democracies. Arend Lijphart (1999: 233), for example, has argued that giving central banks independent power is another way of dividing power. Independent central banks fit best within a consensus model of democracy, which, in the long run, provides ‘kinder, gentler’ forms of democracy (Lijphart 1999: 275). In his biography of the ‘life and death of democracy’, John Keane (2009) claims we are living in a post-Westminster democracy in which hundreds of independent bodies, including the five types identified by Vibert, but also civil society organizations, (social) media, and some businesses, have taken over the role of critical counterweights to government. In contemporary ‘monitory democracies’, Parliaments have lost some of their exclusive and acknowledged positions as representatives of the people and controllers of the executive to many other entities, including a host of NMIs. Some of the NMIs also explicitly guard and protect key democratic values and processes, such as the equal treatment of all citizens, fair and open elections, the rule of law, or principles of good governance and anti-corruption.

Furthermore, in situations where the elected rulers gravitate towards a tyranny of the majority or kleptocratic and autocratic rule, NMIs are often among the last to offer resistance and to protect the principles of liberal democracy. Somewhat paradoxically, then, unrepresentative and unelected NMIs can be crucial to foster and protect liberal democracies. This was already central to O’Donnell’s (1998) call for ‘horizontal accountability’: powerful unelected bodies designed to keep the elected powers in check, protect the rule of law, and prevent abuse of power. In a world in which stronger

and more autocratic leaders are gaining ground, this democracy-protecting quality of NMIs may be of great importance.

NOTE

1. Speech by Mario Draghi, President of the European Central Bank at the Global Investment Conference in London, 26 July 2012; <https://www.ecb.europa.eu/press/key/date/2012/html/sp120726.en.html>.

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CHAPTER 27

PRINT, ELECTRONIC, AND SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION

MARK PEFFLEY, ALEXANDER DENISON,
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FROM Thomas Jefferson to Jürgen Habermas, a free, active, and critical press has long been considered an essential prerequisite for a well-functioning democracy. Yet, as documented by Freedom House (2017), ‘press freedom declined to its lowest point in 13 years in 2016 amid unprecedented threats to journalists and media outlets in major democracies and new moves by authoritarian states to control the media...’ In democracies such as Poland and Hungary, populist leaders have seriously curtailed the free press, while President Trump in the US has declared the press an ‘enemy of the American people’, and social media, a popular source of political information today, has been a conduit for false and ‘fake news’ in US and European elections and referenda. A survey conducted in the summer of 2018 in the US found that only 17 per cent of the public expressed a ‘great deal of confidence’ in the press, with just 4 per cent of Republicans, 30 per cent of Democrats and 11 per cent of Independents indicating great confidence in the press (Ladd et al. 2018). By contrast, trust in the press is higher in Western European countries, presumably because no mainstream party leader in Western Europe has launched the kind of broad-based attacks on the news media that US leaders have, particularly President Trump. If ever there was a time to worry about the prospects for a free, accessible, and vigorous press in advanced democracies, it is now (Mitchell et al. 2018; *The Economist* 2018).

The focus of this chapter is on the current state of print, electronic, and social media in Western Europe and the US and how its evolution has influenced mass behaviour,

political representation, and democratic governance. We begin by surveying the dramatic changes that have taken place in the media environment—specifically, the shift in media technology from print to broadcast to cable and the Internet, and how these changes influence the information environment and thus, the behaviour of citizens and elites. As we argue below, the changes have been far more dramatic in the highly commercial and largely unregulated US news industry than in Western Europe, where publicly funded news is still a major part of the political information environment. We then turn to a closer examination of how various facets of the electronic media—that is, broadcast news, cable, partisan news, the Internet, and social media—influence political behaviour and representation.

How do transformations in the mass media in liberal democracies influence representation? According to Iyengar (2016), the media contribute to the democratic process in three fundamental ways. First, they provide a forum for candidates and parties to debate their qualifications for office before a national audience. Second, they can contribute to an informed citizenry by providing a variety of perspectives on the important issues of the day. And third, they can serve as a watchdog, scrutinizing the actions of public officials, thus helping to prevent corruption and incompetence in government. Quite literally, then, the great bulk of information the public needs to select representatives, monitor their actions and hold them accountable is provided, in one way or another, by the media. If the media falls short on any of its contributions to democracy, democracy and representation suffer.

Put another way, the media are a critical conduit for maintaining the ‘chain of representation’ that is the historical and normative foundation for liberal democracies (Chapter 1 in this *Handbook*). If the media grossly distort political reality by focusing only on entertainment versus hard news, the public is likely to be entertained but politically uninformed. If the media serve as aggressive cheerleaders for the established political parties, the public is likely to be misinformed, blindly accepting the partisan hyperbole of the candidates. And if the media serves as a lapdog instead of a watchdog to government, on those occasions when the opposition party is silent, the public will be kept in the dark about viable policy alternatives or, worse, potential government corruption, incompetence, and malfeasance. Finally, regardless of what specific role the media adopt, all agree they have largely supplanted the political parties as citizens’ major source of political information, thus weakening political parties and the role they play in representation (Dalton 2002).

As we detail below, despite a few exceptions, transformations in print, electronic, and social media in liberal democracies have tended to degrade the quality of representation in the last two decades, particularly in the US, where market forces are stronger and government regulations designed to buffer the market are weaker. Overall, on the print side, many high-quality local newspapers have disappeared, and along with them the small army of journalists monitoring local governments has been replaced with public relations specialists, well trained in the art of spinning the news and avoiding scrutiny. The electronic side of the media, which includes television and the Internet, has witnessed two equally dramatic changes. First, the ‘broadcast era’ in

television, where a few networks dominated the news that most people watched, has been replaced by the ‘post-broadcast era’ of highly fragmented and more entertaining television, allowing a much larger portion of the public to avoid the news altogether. In addition, with cable television and Internet access available to most citizens, there is a much greater tendency for people to selectively expose themselves to ideologically congenial and highly partisan news sources, which, in the US at least, has made for a much more contentious and politically polarized environment. Finally, the rise of social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, in the last decade, has further reduced the ability of professional journalists to evaluate the veracity of political information from Facebook ‘friends’ and politicians’ ‘tweets’ that all too often consist of serious distortions and false news.

PRINT MEDIA

As with most media trends, the decline of print journalism—that is, newspapers and magazines, has been far more dramatic in the US than in Europe. In the US, the circulation (and advertising revenues) of daily newspapers has been in long-term decline since the 1990s (Williams 2016), and since 2008 more people were reporting that they get their news online than by reading a newspaper. After a period in the 1990s when large media conglomerates like Gannett and Tribune acquired many local newspapers and downsized their news divisions, in 2014 they sold off their print properties because growth was not large enough to satisfy corporate investors (Graber and Dunaway 2018: 39; Williams 2016). Remarkably, between 2008 and 2017, the number of newspaper newsroom employees declined by nearly half (45 per cent). And while the news-gathering divisions of daily newspapers shrunk dramatically, there has been a corresponding *increase* in public relations jobs in politics, government, and corporations, which means a far smaller contingent of journalists is competing with consultants and ‘spin doctors’ trained in the art of controlling the news and evading any serious scrutiny of their wealthy clients.

Although major US newspapers (e.g. *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*) have made up for lost revenue with online digital subscriptions, attempts by local newspapers to establish a digital presence have not been able to close the gap. As more print newspapers go out of business, local news audiences are left without a professional source of local news coverage. Moreover, when citizens are forced to rely on national (online or broadcast) news outlets, they tend to become more polarized along party lines at the national level (Pew Research Center 2018).

In Europe, the picture for print media—newspapers in particular—is not nearly as bleak. Due to less reliance on advertising revenues and uneven broadband penetration, the decline in newspaper circulation in Europe is not nearly as steep as in the US. At the same time, however, as summarized in a recent international report on the state of print newspapers, ‘The view in most publications is not that they are immune to the

‘problems of American newspapers’, but rather that the American industry is ahead of them in navigating a dangerous curve’ (Barthelemy et al. 2011: 41).

As newspapers disappear and journalists are replaced with public relations specialists, the quality of political representation, especially in federal systems like the US and Germany, can be expected to suffer. Citizens are less likely to be informed about local issues and local governments receive far less scrutiny from professional journalists, who are vastly outnumbered by PR specialists whose job is to control the news and avoid serious criticism.

ELECTRONIC MEDIA

Changes in the electronic media, which includes broadcast television, cable TV and the Internet, also have far-reaching consequences for political behaviour and representation. As Markus Prior (2007) demonstrated in *Post-Broadcast Democracy*, the transition in the US from the ‘broadcast era’ in the 1950s to the 1980s when the broadcast news was dominated by three monopoly networks to ‘post-broadcast democracy’ in the 1990s and beyond, when cable TV and the Internet were introduced, had a profound impact on political behaviour—and by extension, political representation. By the beginning of the twenty-first century, the introduction of new technology (cable and the Internet) had transformed the behaviour of the electorate, but not in a good way—reducing overall political knowledge and turnout in elections and increasing political polarization. In the low-choice media environment of the broadcast era, viewers who preferred entertainment to news religiously tuned into one of the three broadcast networks to watch the news before watching entertainment shows on the same network. Even less-educated viewers without a strong interest in the news inadvertently gained enough political knowledge to see the benefits of voting.

In the high-choice media environment of the post-broadcast era, however, when people have endless opportunities to consume entertainment on Cable TV or the Internet, those who prefer entertainment to the news were easily able to avoid watching the news. News junkies, on the other hand, can consume political information 24/7. The result is that in the high-choice media environment, the level of political knowledge as well as voting turnout fell lower among people who preferred entertainment, regardless of their level of education or income. Moreover, the electorate became more polarized as the proportion of political moderates who preferred entertainment began to shrink and the proportion of partisan news junkies grew. Consistent with Prior’s argument, a recent survey found that Americans’ civic knowledge, such as the ability to name all three branches of the national government, had declined from 38 per cent in 2011 to just 25 per cent in 2016 (Annenberg Public Policy Center 2016).

As Prior (2007: 282–3) points out, an important difference between Western Europe and the United States is that the post-broadcast era in Europe and other countries has not been left entirely to market forces (Aalberg et al. 2013b). Deliberate public policy

decisions in many European countries slowed the introduction of cable TV stations and sought to balance 'free choice of content with a widely informed and participating public'. Although the effects of global economic forces have been felt across Europe, one institution that is very different in Europe versus the US is the much higher level of support for public broadcast stations where news programming is more extensive, offered during prime time and provides high quality and balanced news shows. The US, by contrast, devotes only a small fraction of the resources to public broadcasting, which helps to account for the fact that the audience share of public broadcasting in the US is miniscule (<5 per cent) compared to fourteen European countries with an average audience share of 35 per cent (Aalberg et al. 2010).

The European investment in public broadcasting appears to make a difference in political knowledge, especially knowledge of international news. Compared with ten other countries, the percentage of news the US devoted to international hard news was among the lowest, as was the US public's knowledge of such news (Aalberg et al. 2013a). In addition, studies find that because European countries offer several public broadcast news shows during prime time, there are more opportunities for inadvertent learning, which pays dividends in greater political knowledge (Shehata et al. 2015). Finally, in a cross-national analysis of the effects of self-reported exposure to news programmes in twenty-seven European countries, Fraile and Iyengar (2014) found that exposure to news aired by public channels resulted in greater knowledge gains than viewing commercial stations. In fact, the greater knowledge gains for public broadcast stations parallel the difference in political learning of reading more serious 'broadsheet' newspapers versus tabloid papers. Because the authors incorporate a matching analysis that eliminates self-selection effects, they conclude that their study demonstrates 'that news stories containing serious and in-depth information have the capacity to inform their audiences' (Fraile and Iyengar 2014: 289).

The larger investment in public broadcast news in Western Europe than the US is both a cause and a consequence of the greater trust and consumption of public news media in Europe. A 2017 Pew survey found that at least 90 per cent of the publics in eight Western European countries were aware of public broadcast news outlets, and their level of trust in the public news was far higher than private news media, with Italy and Spain being more equivocal (Mitchell et al. 2018). By contrast, in the US, where public media make up a small fraction of news consumption, trust in the news media has been falling for decades, reaching a nadir of 32 per cent in 2016, and rebounding to just 45 per cent in 2018 (Jones 2018).

Clearly, the quality of representation suffers when the public fails to trust the mainstream media in a country, whether public or private. People who distrust the media are less influenced by news messages they encounter and tend to fall back on their prior beliefs and predispositions to form current political perceptions, thus contributing to political polarization. In addition, people who distrust the media tend to select media outlets based on their partisanship, which also contributes to polarization (Ladd and Podkul 2018). As we argue in the next section, when citizens ignore or resist new information and selectively consume news that reinforces their

partisan and ideological proclivities, the quality of citizen inputs into the representation process suffers.

THE INTERNET: SELECTIVE EXPOSURE

The segmentation of the information environment that began in the post-broadcast era with cable news vastly accelerated with the introduction of the Internet. The Internet not only introduced a variety of new platforms for consuming the traditional news, such as mobile devices, tablets, and computers, it also introduced a variety of different information sources that compete with professional journalists as the gatekeepers and shapers of the news. People who produce the news for political blogs, citizen journalism sites and social networks like Facebook and Twitter rarely have training in journalism.

The most far-reaching change the Internet era introduced is the dramatic expansion of choice in the content of political information or entertainment that people can choose from. In this new and rapidly changing information environment, scholars are only just beginning to discern the changes it has wrought for mass political behaviour and political representation. But several trends seem readily apparent.

Perhaps the most important concern regarding the expansion of choice is that of selective exposure. The media are an essential conduit in gaining knowledge about the political environment and serve as a key element to the development of political attitudes and information processing. But how many citizens truly wish to engage with political news, especially when there are so many new and exciting options available both in broadcast and web form? In line with work on motivated reasoning (Taber and Lodge 2006), this concept of self-selection in the modern era of media is inherently centred on the motivation of a consumer to seek out political information as opposed to merely accepting the content provided by any given source. If citizens are deliberately avoiding political content, the impact on political knowledge and engagement is likely substantial.

Along with an increasing reliance on the Internet for information comes a concern that the increased choice provided by the web may lead to greater need for opinion reinforcement. Cass Sunstein's (2001) *Republic.com* reflects that the Internet readily allows, and perhaps even encourages, individuals to seek out information that already aligns with their worldview, as opposed to engaging in the discussion of alternative viewpoints. This again falls into line with the general argument behind motivated reasoning, or the tendency for people to evaluate arguments and evidence that supports their prior attitudes as stronger and more compelling than contrary arguments, via selective perception and selective exposure. As Sunstein argues, consumers will not only seek self-affirmation, but will also reject incongruent information. Just as greater attention is being paid to the average social media user's desperate need for 'likes' or 'subscribers', it is possible that the new age of Internet use will become an echo chamber not unlike the 'Ditto-heads' of talk radio, with all incongruent information

being discarded. Pariser (2011) similarly describes how common filtered web searches, generated by content previously searched by the user, can lead to an environment of isolation he calls a 'filter bubble'. Each search reveals more about the user and their preferences, and in return, search engines provide content likely to be in line with the user's interests. By maintaining this 'filter bubble' of self-affirming information, the consumer is not introduced to new or different content that could possibly challenge their own perceptions. And as we discuss below, motivated reasoning also fuels partisan news bubbles of increasingly polarized and hostile partisans (Iyengar and Hahn 2009; Levendusky 2013).

In addition to selective exposure's effects on polarization and true political competence, there is a concern that in an effort to maintain partisan narratives, many consumers are actually receiving and perpetuating misinformation. As Kuklinski et al. (2000) explain, while a lack of information certainly affects political behaviour and hurts knowledge (Prior 2007), the prevalence of misinformation has its own dangerous implications, particularly as individuals tend to double down and resist the introduction of corrective facts. The Internet provides perhaps the best opportunity for this. While certainly limited in scope, research on media dissemination of misinformation has shown a strong link between certain news sources' promotion of falsehoods and subsequent policy assessments by consumers (Feldman et al. 2012). The 2016 presidential election in the US also showed selective exposure's impact on the consumption of 'fake news', as users were disproportionately drawn to misleading websites that promoted their preferred candidate (Guess et al. 2018). And while consumption of politically charged sources like talk radio has been shown to lead to increases in information overall, it also leads to greater levels of *misinformation*, specifically in relation to ideologically controversial subjects (Hofstetter et al. 1999), such as climate change denial (Kahan 2013) or a belief that health care reform promotes 'death panels' (Meirick 2013).

It should be noted that, while many would suggest the media is expected to serve a civic duty to the people and provide an independent watchdog function, in many respects it is failing. The Internet's often comparatively lax approach to news allows for a great deal of innovation but also threatens to undermine many of the established norms of the profession intended to encourage accountability. If consumers are motivated to seek out political information, and motivated to seek out self-affirming political information, the role of journalism is somewhat moot.

This makes the presence and reliance on certain types of media in some ways cyclical. To the extent that individuals select media sources based on their congeniality with their prior views and ideologies, they open themselves up to manipulation and partisan propaganda. Gentzkow and Shapiro (2006, 2010), amongst others, show that there is an economic incentive for news organizations to cater to the preferences of their potential audiences, providing slanted information to encourage consumption. The result is a media environment that is essentially responsive to the public, for better or worse. This aligns with many of the arguments regarding the success of Fox News; in a broad media environment so often perceived to have a liberal bias, the potential for

profit in providing a non-liberal alternative is too enticing to pass up. It has worked, encouraged more partisan outlets on both sides, and seriously called the objectivity of the press into question.

PARTISAN NEWS

Another major development in the US and Europe has been the rise of partisan news outlets in print, radio and, most infamously, cable broadcast news, which occurred with increased deregulation and segmentation of the information environment. Partisan news abandons any pretence at balanced or objective news coverage in favour of a political point of view. Of course, a partisan press was ascendant in the US in much of the nineteenth century before giving way to a more commercial, independent and large-circulation press at the end of the 1800s. The difference with today's partisan news in the US is that the partisan press of the 1800s came closer to resembling short political magazines of today like the *National Review* or *American Prospect* than the much more widely viewed *Fox News* or *MSNBC* (Ladd 2011: 29).

Levendusky's (2013) study provides one of the more detailed investigations of the content of partisan cable news shows in the US and its impact in further polarizing an already politically divided public. In the US, the rise of partisan news is most apparent on cable television, with Fox News Channel (FNC) as the preferred outlet for Republicans and conservatives, while Democrats and liberals have a partisan-news home on MSNBC. Fox's audience share is 2 to 3 times that of MSNBC, according to a recent Pew Research Center study of Nielsen data (Holcomb 2014; see also, Dilliplane 2011), in large part because many liberals watch mainstream news as well as partisan news, while conservatives gravitate to a single outlet (Mitchell and Weisel 2014). In Great Britain, its highly partisan newspapers adopted clear Leave and Remain positions prior to the EU referendum in the UK, with the largest selling newspapers promoting a traditionally strong Eurosceptic view (Levy et al. 2016).

Levendusky's description of the content of *Fox* and *MSNBC* in the first Obama administration (2009–2013) is as pertinent at the time of this writing as it was then. The two networks offer a markedly one-sided view of the news, and devote disproportionate coverage to news that favours their side and that portrays the other side in consistently negative terms, with a clear denunciation of compromise and bipartisanship. This one-sided coverage is extended to elections, where opposition candidates are vilified; and when their candidates lose, major questions are raised about whether the election was fair.

Levendusky's experimental evidence on the effects of watching partisan news is one of the most compelling to date because his experiments eliminate selection effects (i.e. Fox viewers were more conservative to begin with) as a confounding explanation. Levendusky documented a wide range of harmful effects from watching partisan news shows, including a clear tendency to increase polarization by pushing partisan viewers

to even more extreme views, raising distrust and disdain for the opposition and the mainstream media, an unwillingness to compromise with the opposition, and a decline in the legitimacy of elections and governments controlled by the opposition. Levendusky (2013) also demonstrates that the increase in attitudinal extremity caused by exposure to partisan media can last for several days.

Although the proportion of the public who actually watches partisan news in the US is small, constituting only 10 to 15 per cent of the public (Prior 2013), the influence of partisan news shows spreads far beyond their actual viewers. As Druckman et al. (2018) showed, the venerable ‘two-step flow of communication’, first demonstrated by Lazarsfeld et al. (1948) with radio and print media, is alive and well in the world of partisan cable news. In a series of careful experiments, Druckman et al. (2018) showed that the effects of partisan news are not limited to those who actually watched it, but flow from initial viewers to discussant groups with no exposure to the news themselves, who also become more polarized in their views. Thus, in addition to more vocal and organized partisan viewers having an outsized influence in the political process, the impact of partisan news spreads like a virus far beyond those who actually watch it. Moreover, even late-night television shows in the US that lampoon and satirize politics and partisan news shows, when presented with a clear partisan twist, have been found to reduce tolerance toward the views of the ‘other’ party (Stroud and Muddiman 2013).

In a wide-ranging study of citizens in twenty-eight European nations, Lelkes (2016) provides one of the most comprehensive investigations of the potentially harmful effects of partisan media (what he terms, ‘political parallelism’). He finds that in countries where the news (i.e. print, broadcast, or both) is more partisan, there is a larger ‘legitimacy gap’ in institutional trust and level of satisfaction with democracy between supporters of ‘winning’ versus ‘losing’ parties, even after controlling for a variety of country (e.g. political institutions, corruption) and voter characteristics. Moreover, the legitimacy gap only exists for people who pay more attention to the news in those countries, which clearly points the finger at partisan media as the culprit. Finally, Lelkes (2016) also finds that the impact of partisan news on the legitimacy gap holds for both newspapers *and* television news. This is an important finding because while countries in Eastern Europe (e.g. Ukraine, Bulgaria) and Southern Europe (e.g. Greece, Spain, and France) tend to have high levels of partisan news on *both* mediums, Northern European countries’ newspapers tend to be moderately partisan, while television, which is consumed more widely, is far more neutral.¹ Thus, across many liberal democracies, research confirms that partisan media tend to serve as an ‘echo-chamber’ that not only insulates people from contrary information, but also fosters political extremism, polarization and depresses evaluations of democracy among the supporters of ‘losing’ parties (see also Ceron and Memoli 2015; Jamieson and Cappella 2008).

There is a kernel of good news in these developments. Consistent with Mutz’s (2006) observation that partisan forces tend to increase engagement and participation, while at the same time lowering trust and tolerance towards the opposition, studies find that exposure to partisan media mobilizes sympathetic partisans. Dilliplane (2011) uses

panel data to demonstrate that even though watching partisan news does not increase turnout, it does increase the likelihood voters make their candidate choice well in advance of election day, in addition to participating more in campaign activities and voting for the candidate promoted by the media outlet (Martin and Yurukoglu 2017). Overall, exposure to partisan news increases campaign activity, while exposure to cross-cutting news decreases participation (Dilliplane 2011).

Thus, the consequences of partisan news for democracy and representation are clearly mixed. As Levendusky and others have shown, watching partisan news often lowers political trust, tolerance, and legitimacy. On the other hand, Dilliplane, Mutz and others show that partisan news watching raises political participation among the partisan ‘team’, which must be considered a clear benefit for democracy. Moreover, consumers of partisan news likely develop more coherent political belief systems, especially if they correspond to those of the current party leader. The fact that partisans live in ‘separate worlds’ and hold vastly different factual beliefs about political reality may thus be less disconcerting to some.

More recent studies of partisan news have expanded their purview to hyper-partisan online sources whose popularity increased in the US during the 2016 presidential election and in Great Britain during the Brexit vote to leave the European Union. In the US, stories from hyper-partisan online outlets like *Breitbart* and *The Daily Caller*, on the right, and *Occupy Democrats* and *The Daily Kos*, on the left, were shared by Facebook users with increased frequency, with Breitbart challenging Fox News as the outlet of choice for strong Trump supporters in 2016 (Benkler et al. 2017). Aside from politicians, hyper-partisan news sources are the most popular source of misinformation on the Internet and in social media (Tucker et al. 2018).

SOCIAL MEDIA

No contemporary account of political media can afford to ignore social media as both a source and conduit of both political information and disinformation. In the US, about two-thirds of adults get news on social media sites that did not exist ten years ago, with Facebook (40 per cent), YouTube (20 per cent) and Twitter (12 per cent) being the most popular of the social media sites for news (Matsa and Shearer 2018). Worldwide, Facebook reported 2.27 billion active users, 278 million daily active users in Europe, and 185 million in the US and Canada (Rodriguez 2018). And while the attention to ‘fake news’ stories on social media in the US and elsewhere has made users more sceptical of the accuracy of the news posted on social media, it remains a convenient source of the news.

Tucker et al. (2017: 46–7) provide a dramatic summary of the chasm between the initial euphoria of the positive role of social media for democracies in 2010 and the stark reality of its performance just six years later in 2016. ‘In 2010, *Time* magazine chose Mark Zuckerberg, developer of *Facebook*, as its annual “Person of the Year” ...

Fast forward six years, and *Time's* Person of the Year was the sitting president of the United States, Donald J. Trump', whose skilful use of Twitter in spreading misinformation and degrading his opponents helped put him in the White House in 2016.

Given the sudden rise of social media use, systematic research documenting its effects on political behaviour and representation has only recently appeared in print. One useful review of scientific research—both published and in progress—is provided by Tucker et al. (2018), who focus on the ill-effects of social media for democracies, such as political polarization, political 'disinformation' (e.g. 'fake news', rumours, deliberately factually incorrect information) and 'hyperpartisan' news.

In terms of political polarization, several studies in the US find that affective polarization, where strong partisans express intense dislike and distrust of the opposition, increased markedly over the last decade. On the one hand, such polarization predated Facebook and has been traced to a variety of other sources, including partisan news, social and ideological sorting, and elite behaviour. On the other hand, social media reinforces and magnifies polarization. One of the most careful and detailed studies of the polarizing effects of Facebook is Settle's (2018) *Frenemies*. Controlling for partisanship and other characteristics of Facebook users, Settle finds that increased usage of the social media platform is strongly associated with a tendency for even less political users to seize on ambiguous posts and content to categorize Facebook 'friends' as either 'us' (co-partisans) or 'them' (opponents). Moreover, heavy Facebook users tend to view opponents with caricaturized stereotypes (e.g. Democrats as 'anti-religious atheists' and Republicans as 'right-wing religious nut-jobs') and prune their social network to limit their exposure to cross-cutting conversations with members of the out-group. Settle argues that political polarization is a product of social identity processes working hand-in-glove with the inherent features of Facebook. Facebook encourages users to regularly categorize people in their network as either co-partisans ('us') or out-partisans ('them') in order to evaluate (e.g. 'like') their posts and decide whether to retain them in their network of friends. Even among partisan leaners and weak partisans who tend to post political content on Facebook, the views of out-partisans are judged as being far less informed than in-partisans posting identical information (Settle 2018).

Social media, Facebook in particular, are also highly vulnerable to disinformation campaigns. As noted by Allcott et al. (2019), 'Content can be relayed among users with no significant third-party filtering, fact-checking, or editorial judgment. An individual user with no track record or reputation can in some cases reach as many readers as Fox News, CNN, or the New York Times.' Moreover, as Tucker et al. (2018, 36–7) observe, the business model of social media platforms is based on ad revenue which, in the absence of government regulations or professional news norms, invariably sacrifices veracity in favour of cash: 'For example, ahead of the 2016 US presidential elections, Twitter reportedly offered the Russian state-supported media network RT 15% of its advertising for \$3 million, and Facebook demonstrated little interest in screening advertisers on its platform, allowing ads to be paid for in Russian rubles.' To make

matters worse, the algorithms used by social media networks to decide what content people are exposed to are 'optimized for engagement (e.g. number of comments, shares, and likes), which helps spread disinformation packaged in emotional news stories with sensational headlines'. Thus, *Buzzfeed* found that in the last three months of the 2016 US presidential election, twenty top-performing fake news stories generated more shares, reactions, and comments than the twenty top-performing stories from reputable news outlets. Similarly, *Buzzfeed* found that, in the 2017 German parliamentary elections, seven out of ten of the most shared articles about Angela Merkel on Facebook were false (Schmehl and Lytvynenko 2017).

At the same time, however, the evidence on whether 'false' or 'fake news' stories played an important (let alone, pivotal) role in swaying voters in the 2016 presidential election, or the Brexit vote in the UK is mixed and uncertain, since analysts must estimate exposure and persuasion based on a variety of strong assumptions. For example, while the evidence suggests that false news stories favouring Trump over Clinton were widely shared in the 2016 US presidential election, they tended to be shared more among the most strongly committed partisans whose vote was likely decided early in the campaign (Allcott and Gentzkow 2017; but see also Jamieson 2018). Moreover, even though people share false news stories that portray the opposition candidate in a wholly negative light, average citizens do not find fake news stories all that credible (Allcott and Gentzkow 2017). And as Ridout and Fowler (2018) point out, at least in the US, because 'most people's confidence in the news is quite low', false stories disguised as real news stories may lack persuasive power. Nevertheless, beyond its electoral role, false news spread on social media doubtless contributes to polarization and political misperceptions and undermines the basic expectation in a democracy that the news is not false. Indeed, the use of the term, 'fake news', has been co-opted by politicians worldwide to discredit any mainstream news story that is not to their liking.

It is noteworthy that new studies of false news in the US find that the percentage of Americans who visited fake news websites dropped since the 2016 campaign and Facebook use is less closely linked to fake news exposure (Allcott et al. 2019; Guess et al. 2018). Nevertheless, the absolute number of false news stories on Facebook in the US remains high, despite evidence that Facebook's efforts to decrease deceptive content (e.g. updating its news feed algorithm) are having an effect.

The advantages of communicating via social media have not been lost on politicians. Twitter, for example, gives politicians complete control over messages tweeted to their followers, without the kind of media second-guessing that typically accompanies press releases or news conferences (Gainous and Wagner 2011). And political ads placed on Facebook are not only far less expensive than TV buys, they can be micro-targeted to any number of Facebook user characteristics and often do not appear on the radar of the mass media or political opponents until the ads have already accomplished their objectives. Such features of social media have enabled groups across the political spectrum to spread misinformation in the form of rumours, conspiracy theories, and extremist views (Benkler et al. 2018). Donald Trump's legendary tweeting skills, for

example, were finely honed before his presidential candidacy, when during the Obama administration he successfully spread rumours that President Obama was not born in the United States. British politician Nigel Farage used a similar strategy to promote his anti-immigrant propaganda in the Brexit campaign in Great Britain. As just one example, on the eve of the Brexit vote, Farage unveiled a huge anti-migrant poster that portrayed hordes of non-white Middle Eastern males streaming across England's pastures, with the slogan, 'Breaking point: The EU has failed us all'. The poster was reported to the authorities for being a 'blatant attempt to incite racial hatred' and 'a breach of UK race laws' (Stewart and Mason 2016). Several observers also noted an inadvertent but striking similarity to Nazi propaganda footage of migrants shown in a BBC documentary a decade earlier.

Mainstream media are also addicted to Twitter and other social media. Not only do journalists use social media to promote breaking news stories, social media also becomes a seemingly infinite source of news. Tweets by politicians and celebrities about the day's events, for example, provide journalists with a never-ending stream of news that fits with journalists' news values because it is timely, laden with conflict and often highly personal. During a televised address to Parliament, or a 'confidential' meeting of a party caucus, journalists are treated to a convenient source of 'reactions' in real-time. It thus becomes far easier to influence the news stream with outrageous claims that, by the time they are fact-checked by journalists, have already done their damage. In the age of Twitter, an important indicator of one's political influence is the number of Twitter followers one has instead of one's actual legislative or political accomplishments.

If, as studies suggest,² social media is skewed towards polarized, negative portrayals of the opposition, and a vast supply of misinformation, the quality of political representation is likely to suffer. Even if the polarized distortions and falsehoods of social media can whip up partisan followership amongst the mass public, if this increase in political mobilization comes at the cost of tolerance for the other side, the foundations of liberal democracy are likely to be, on balance, weakened.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, given the rapid changes in the media, nearly everyone—the political establishment, journalists, and political scientists—is left scrambling to make sense of the new landscape before the next major shift threatens everyone with obsolescence. One overriding trend seems abundantly clear, however. In the modern era, responsible citizens face a daunting task in separating fact from fiction in their attempts to use available information to make reasonably informed decisions.

NOTES

1. Great Britain's is an outlier, with highly partisan newspapers and much more neutral television news.
2. See, for example, the large-scale field experiment using Twitter in the US by Bail et al. (2018) as well as Settle's (2018) *Frenemies* study of political reactions on Facebook.

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P A R T V I I

**CHALLENGES TO
REPRESENTATIVE
DEMOCRACIES**

POPULISM

CHAPTER 28

THE POPULIST CHALLENGE TO LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES

PIPPA NORRIS

IN the past decade, the rise of populism has generated a proliferation of academic research and popular commentary. This trend accelerated following two watershed events: the outcome of Brexit in June 2016, with the UK voting to Leave the EU after a forty-three year marriage of convenience, followed by President Trump's Electoral College victory a few months later. But these events are only part of a much broader phenomenon; across Europe, support for populist parties in national parliamentary elections has more than doubled since the 1960s, from roughly 5.4 per cent to 12.4 per cent today (see Figure 28.1). During the same era, their share of seats has tripled, from 4.0 per cent to 12.2 per cent (Norris and Inglehart 2018). Populist parties have entered governments or governing coalitions in more than a dozen Western democracies, including in Austria, Italy, New Zealand, Hungary, Norway, and Switzerland (de Lange 2012; Akkerman, and Rooduijn 2014). Populists have advanced in some of the world's most affluent and egalitarian societies with long-established power-sharing democracies, such as Denmark and Sweden, as well as in less well-off European states plagued by mass unemployment and sluggish growth, such as Bulgaria and Greece (see Chapters 29 and 30 in this *Handbook*). Populist parties have gained in Eastern and Central European states, like Hungary and Poland, as well as in the Netherlands, Austria, and Germany. They have also won support in majoritarian democracies, like France and the UK, as well as in consensus democracies like Belgium and Switzerland. Elsewhere, populist leaders have risen to power in countries as diverse as India (Modi), the Philippines (Duterte), Venezuela (Chavez, Maduro)—as well as in Trump's America (de la Torre 2014).

To understand the consequences of these developments for political representation in liberal democracies, the first section outlines the core concept of populism,

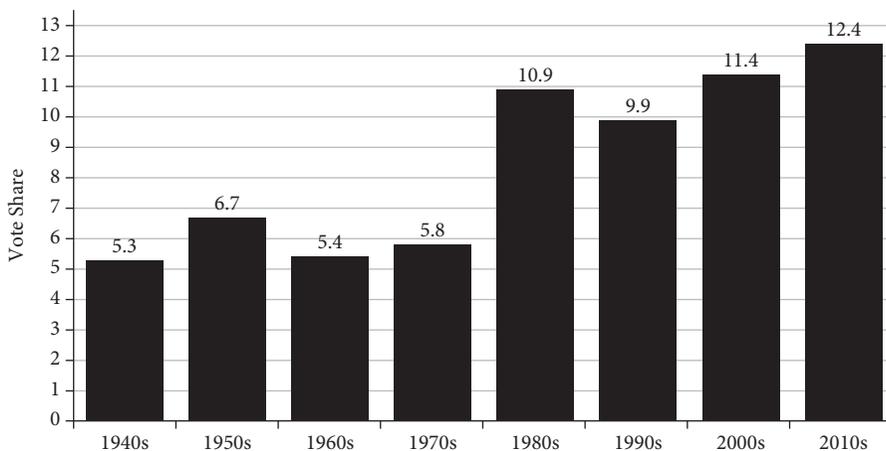


FIGURE 28.1 Vote Share for Populist Parties in Western Societies, 1946–2017

Notes: The mean vote share for populist parties in national elections for the lower (or single) house of parliament from 1945 to 2017 in 32 Western societies containing at least one such party.

For the classification of parties, see Norris and Inglehart (2018).

Sources: Holger Döring and Philip Manow. 2016. *Parliaments and governments database* (ParlGov): <http://www.parlgov.org/>; IFES Elections Guide. <http://www.electionguide.org/>

understood minimally as a rhetorical appeal to ‘the people’ against established sources of power, and the key differences between authoritarian and libertarian versions. The chapter then considers the challenge of populism for liberal-democratic regime institutions. The next section turns to the influence of populist parties on their signature issues on the public policy agenda, notably immigration and Europe. The conclusion summarizes the main findings and considers their broader implications for political representation.

I. THE CONCEPT OF POPULISM AND ITS VARIETIES

The concept of populism has been deployed so widely, to cover such disparate political phenomenon, that it is in danger of becoming meaningless. It helps to understand populism by distinguishing between rhetoric (as a form of communication) and ideology (as a logical set of values, ideas, and principles). More maximalist conceptualizations often conflate the two. Populism is defined here more minimally as essentially *a style of discourse reflecting first order principles about who should rule, claiming that legitimate power rests with ‘the people’ not the elites*. A rhetorical style denotes a strategic choice of language, recurring figures of speech and repetitive tropes, and vernacular usage designed to persuade. By ‘legitimate’, we mean claims about where moral and political authority is thought rightfully to reside. The chameleonic quality of

this ‘people power’ discourse can adapt to be used by multiple leaders, parties, and social movements. Populism remains silent about second order ideological principles or value statements, concerning *what* should be done, what policies should be followed, what decisions should be made (Norris and Inglehart 2018).

Populist rhetoric, in this understanding, makes two core claims about democratic representation and how societies should be governed.

First, *populism challenges the legitimate authority of the ‘establishment’*. It thereby embodies beliefs about the rightful location of power and authority in any state, including questioning the legitimacy of elected representatives in democratic regimes. In this regard, populist leaders depict themselves as insurgents willing to ride roughshod over long-standing conventions, disrupting mainstream politics-as-usual. Favourite targets include the mainstream media (‘fake news’), politicians (‘drain the swamp’), political parties (‘dysfunctional’), as well as the European Union (‘Brussels bureaucrats’).

Second, populist leaders claim that in lieu of representative elites, *legitimate political and moral authority rests with the ‘people’*. The voice of ordinary citizens (the ‘silent majority’, ‘the forgotten American’) is regarded as the only ‘genuine’ form of democratic governance even when at odds with the judgements of elected officials and political elites like judges, scientists, experts, journalists, and commentators. The collective will of ‘the people’ (‘Most people say...’) is regarded as unified, authentic, and unquestionably morally virtuous. In cases of conflict, for example if Westminster disagrees with the outcome of the Brexit referendum, to be democratic, the public’s decision is assumed to take automatic precedent. Elites (and their media allies) questioning the wisdom of the people, or resisting its sovereignty, even if elected parliamentary representatives, are accused of being corrupt, self-serving, arrogant know-it-alls who are ‘traitors declaring war on democracy’. There can be no turning back from the people’s decision: Brexit means Brexit.

Populism therefore poses a direct normative challenge to the legitimacy of representative democracy. What is important for fully understanding this phenomenon, however, is not just the polemical veneer of ‘people power’ but also which second order principles parties and leaders advocate—and thus which cultural values they endorse, what programmatic policies they advocate, and what governing practices they follow (Aslanidis 2015). By itself, populist discourse does not suggest a coherent blueprint for what policies the people’s revolution should advance, such as the appropriate way to steer the economy or conduct foreign affairs (Canovan 2002; Stanley 2008). Like varieties of democracy—such as liberal-democracy, deliberative-democracy, plebiscitary-democracy, and so on (Collier and Levitsky 1997)—many varieties of populism-with-adjectives exist. In this regard, populism has been depicted as a ‘thin’ ideology (Mudde 2004). Not surprisingly, therefore, beyond the common rhetorical style and vision of governance, populist leaders, such as Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders, diverge sharply in terms of their worldviews, the economic policies they advocate, and the types of programmes they promise to implement. Several varieties of populism can be identified based on the core values behind the rhetorical veneer. The core cleavage is less between ‘left’ and ‘right’ on the conventional economic

cleavage, but rather more on differences between adherence to authoritarian or libertarian values.

Authoritarian Populism

For many populist leaders, ranging from Donald Trump and France's Marine Le Pen, Hungary's Viktor Orban, Venezuela's Nicolás Maduro, and the Philippines' Rodrigo Duterte, behind the populist façade, a more disturbing set of *authoritarian values* and policies can be identified. Not all populists endorse authoritarianism, and authoritarian rulers do not necessarily adopt populist appeals, but the combination often occurs. Logical connections tie the two together: populism tends to undermine the legitimacy of liberal-democratic checks on executive powers, thereby opening the door for soft authoritarian leaders. Authoritarianism is also a complex concept, building on a long tradition in social psychology that arose amongst scholars seeking to explain the rise of European fascism and Bolshevism, and open to several related meanings and measures (see Stenner 2005). The classical work of Fromm (1941) and Adorno et al. (1950) saw authoritarianism as a basic personality trait that served as a defence mechanism against anxieties and insecurities. Adorno and his colleagues hypothesized that these traits stemmed from repressed anger and fear in response to punitive parenting practices and economic hardship. It can be understood best today as a cluster of learnt values prioritizing collective security for the tribe at the expense of individual autonomy (Norris and Inglehart 2018). This cluster contains three core components:

- (1) The importance of *security* against risks of instability and disorder (foreigners stealing our jobs, immigrants attacking our women, terrorists threatening our safety);
- (2) The value of *conformity* to preserve conventional traditions and guard our way of life (defending 'Us' against threats to 'European values'); and
- (3) The need for loyal *obedience* towards strong champions who protect the group and its customs ('I alone can fix it', 'Believe me', 'Are you on my team?').

The politics of fear drives the search for collective security for the tribe even if this means sacrificing personal freedoms. As epitomized by a Trump Tweet: 'A Blue Wave means Crime and Open Borders. A Red Wave means Safety and Strength!'¹ Authoritarian values blended with populist rhetoric can be regarded as a dangerous combination fuelling a cult of fear (Wodak 2015). Populist rhetoric directs tribal grievances 'upwards' towards elites, feeding mistrust of 'corrupt' politicians who will not/cannot defend you. And authoritarian values channel tribal grievances 'outwards' towards groups perceived as threatening the values and norms of the in-group, dividing 'Us' (the 'real people') against 'Them' ('Not Us'), stoking anxiety, corroding mutual tolerance and poisoning the reservoir of social trust towards humanity. If the world is seen

as full of gangs, criminals, and fanatics, if our country is vulnerable to rogue regimes, terrorist groups, and economic rivals, if representative democracy is broken, then logically we need high walls—and strong leaders—to protect us and our society. Representation is claimed to work through the leader defending the people’s will—and the values of his or her tribal base.

But Trump is far from alone in these claims. Using reasonable cut-off points, and Chapel Hill expert data about policy positions, over fifty European political parties can be classified as ‘authoritarian-populist’ (Norris and Inglehart 2018). In long-established democracies, some of the most electorally successful parties during recent decades include the Swiss People’s Party, the Norwegian Progress Party, the Freedom Party of Austria, the Danish People’s Party, the Party for Freedom in the Netherlands, and the Finns Party. Similarly in Central and Eastern Europe, the largest Authoritarian-Populist parties include Viktor Orban’s Fidesz in Hungary, Poland’s Law and Justice (PiS), and the Slovenian Democratic Party, the Bulgarian National Movement II, the Jobbik Movement for a Better Hungary, and others (also see Chapter 30 in this *Handbook*). Minor parties, potentially capable of influencing the policy agenda, even if less effective in winning seats, include the Flemish Vlaams Belang, the French National Rally, Lega Nord in Italy, Greece’s Golden Dawn, Flemish Interest in Belgium, the Alternative for Germany (AfD), and the Brexit Party in the UK, as well as many others. At the extreme fringe, there are also several White Supremacist and Alt-Right racist organizations, such as the British National Party in the UK, the Party of the Swedes, and the neo-Nazi German National Democratic Party, amongst others. In short, authoritarian populist parties and leaders are becoming ubiquitous. Moreover, authoritarian populist rhetoric has also spread to mainstream center-right parties, such as the British Conservative Party.²

Libertarian-populism

By contrast, libertarian-populist parties, leaders, and social movements typically use populist discourse railing against corruption, mainstream politicians, and capitalism but this language is blended with the endorsement of progressive and socially liberal attitudes, advocacy of economic policies designed to strengthen social justice, and the adoption of new participatory styles of engagement. While authoritarian-populism is commonly regarded as incompatible with liberal democracy, libertarian varieties of populism arguably pose more ambiguous risks (Huber and Schimpf 2017).

This category includes Spain’s Podemos party and the Indignados Movement, Greece’s Syriza, the Left party in Germany, the Socialist Party in the Netherlands, and Italy’s Five Star Movement. In several cases, libertarian-populists advocate plebiscites and other mechanisms of direct democracy where ‘the people’ decide (Altman 2002). Spain’s Podemos built substantial electoral success partly by utilizing social network channels for online debate. Its grass-roots organization was built around local

assemblies where people could meet, debate and vote in person or online (Castillo-Manzano et al. 2017).

II. THE CHALLENGE OF AUTHORITARIAN-POPULISM FOR LIBERAL-DEMOCRATIC REGIMES

What have been the consequences of these developments? Many scholars and liberal commentators have reacted with intense concern to the challenge of authoritarian-populism, with alarm sharply accelerating following the election of President Trump. It has been widely predicted that this development has the capacity to inflict severe damage to political representation through liberal-democratic institutions, to undermine the liberal world order in foreign policy and the domestic policy agenda on signature issues like immigration, and to corrode the civic culture. Yet in counterpoint, others suggest that, in fact, the influence of populist parties in liberal democracies is often limited by several mechanisms, liberal fears are unduly alarmist, and indeed this phenomenon may also prove a two-edged sword which complements rather than rivals representative democracy, since populists may reflect genuine concerns amongst previously marginalized voices, and viewpoints previously shut out by the liberal consensus (see Mudde and Kaltwasser 2012; Huber and Schimpf 2017; Huber and Ruth 2017). This ongoing debate can be examined by focusing upon the impact of authoritarian-populism at three levels: namely on (i) liberal-democratic institutions, (ii) the policy agenda, and (iii) public trust in liberal-democratic institutions.

Constitutional Arrangements and Informal Norms

The first issue concerns whether authoritarian-populism has contributed towards democratic backsliding and the resurgence of authoritarianism at the regime-level, by weakening both the formal constitutional constraints on the abuse of executive power and corroding the informal norms, such as the values of restraint, civility, and temperance, which buttress their workings.

Until recently, it was widely assumed that Western societies would be governed by moderate political parties, committed to representative democracy, open economies, and multilateral cooperation. The core values and norms underpinning representative democracy seemed sacrosanct. This includes the central role of independent parliaments and executives elected through free and fair contests, buttressed by competition amongst programmatic political parties to simplify voting choices, facilitate collective responsibility and strengthen joined-up governance. In turn, the classic formula

emphasized the division of powers, with courts functioning to interpret legislation and protect the constitutional rules of the game, while civil servants in public sector bodies were responsible for implementing policies, and democracy was also protected by lively civil societies and shared informal cultural norms, including respect for a overarching framework of human rights and civil liberties. During the third wave era, observers were usually sanguine about progressive developments since, despite some major challenges and notable setbacks, as the twenty-first century opened, it was generally assumed that the institutions and values of representative democracy and liberal markets would eventually spread to every corner of the world, even taking root in inhospitable territory, such as Afghanistan, Libya, and Iraq (Figure 28.2).

The rise of authoritarian-populism sparked a flurry of alarm about challenges to this consensus. A few years ago, Diamond and Plattner (2015) had speculated about ‘*Democracy in Decline?*’, while Kurlantzick (2013) depicted ‘*Democracy in Retreat*’. Most attention at the time focused on global developments in authoritarian transitions and electoral autocracies, like the failure of the Arab Spring to take root in Egypt, Bahrain, and Libya. Several hybrid regimes, like Turkey, Venezuela, and Hungary, were also seen as backsliding into strongman rule.

But a series of subsequent events—growing support for authoritarian-populist parties in Western Europe, the Brexit referendum, and then the election of President Trump—rapidly triggered far darker warnings about the future of democracy and the liberal world order in the West. This generated a flurry of books warning ‘*How Democracies Die*’ (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018), ‘*How Democracy Ends*’ (Runciman 2018), ‘*Can it Happen here? Authoritarianism in America*’ (Sunstein 2018), and ‘*Why Liberalism Failed*’ (Deneen 2018), amongst others. Scholars cautioned that authoritarian-populism can undermine representative democracy through gradually eroding liberal freedoms (Mounk 2018), undermining public faith in democracy

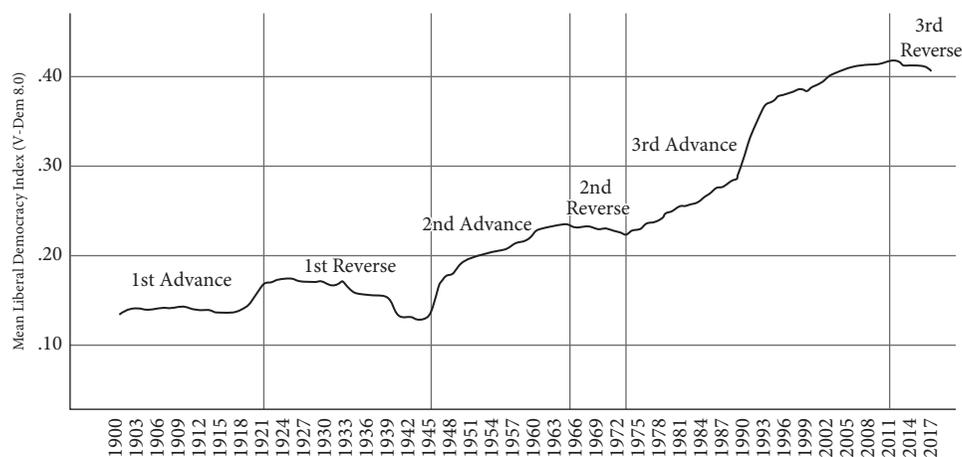


FIGURE 28.2 Trends in Democratization Worldwide, FH 1972–2017

Note: V-Dem’s 100-point mean Liberal Democracy score, 1900–2017.

Source: <https://www.v-dem.net/en/>

(Foa and Mounk (2016, 2017), social tolerance and respect for pluralistic diversity and minority rights (Galston 2018), and informal democratic norms and unwritten conventions surrounding rule of law, freedom of the press, judicial independence, open-mindedness towards legitimate political opposition, and liberal constitutionalism (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018).

Yet numerous complex factors can affect the chances of populist success, or the odds that populism undermines liberal-democratic regimes. In Eastern Europe, backsliding is most evident in regimes like Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic, as well as in Slovenia and Bulgaria—all states that partially liberalized through competitive multi-party elections in the late-1980s and early 1990s, but which subsequently slipped back into authoritarian rule, despite growing economies and EU membership (see Chapter 30 in this *Handbook*). In Hungary, Victor Orbán was able to form a one-party government in 2010 when the Fidesz party won just 52 per cent of the vote but swept up two-thirds of the seats in parliament. Similarly, in Poland, since Lech and Jarosław Kaczyński's Law and Justice Party came to power in December 2015, the government has undermined democracy and fought a rearguard culture war against socially liberal norms on everything from gay rights to women's equality. Finally, in the Czech Republic, Miloš Zeman was elected in 2013 in the first direct presidential vote held in the Czech Republic and he was re-elected in January 2018. Running on an anti-immigrant and Eurosceptic platform, Zeman was one of the first European leaders to advocate sealing national borders against refugees and for the Czech Republic to refuse EU quotas.

In Turkey, after a botched coup attempt in July 2016, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan imposed emergency rule and arrested nearly 40,000 civilians, imprisoned hundreds of army officers, opposition party officials, journalists, and academics, shuttered hundreds of media outlets and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and fired more than a hundred thousand civil servants (Esen and Gumuscu 2016). He also renewed the offensive against the Kurdish minority in Turkey and in neighbouring Syria. A flawed constitutional referendum centralized the power of the presidency, allowed arbitrary prosecutions of human rights activists, and replaced elected mayors with government appointees. As a result, Freedom House (2018) downgraded Turkey's rating from Partly to Not Free.

The challenges are also evident elsewhere around the world. In the Philippines, in June 2016 Rodrigo Duterte campaigned for the presidency, promising execution without trial of alleged drug carriers: 'Forget the laws on human rights. If I make it to the presidential palace, I will do just what I did as mayor. You drug pushers, hold-up men, and do-nothings, you better go out, because I'd kill you. I'll dump all of you into Manila Bay and fatten the fishes there.' Since then, Amnesty International reports that thousands have been murdered by police, killed without trial, in his controversial anti-drug campaign (Curato 2017; Teehankee 2016). In India, during his second term in office, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has imposed a stronger focus on Hindu nationalism, with less tolerance of Muslim minorities, such as through a new citizenship law.

There are many other Latin American cases where authoritarian-populist leaders have centralized power in the presidency, weakened opposition movements, and

undermined human rights. Latin America has a long legacy of Presidents who have followed populist strategies from Argentina's Juan and Eva Perón and Peru's Alberto Fujimori to Cristina Fernández in Argentina, Rafael Correa in Ecuador and Venezuela's Hugo Chávez and Nicolás Maduro (Edwards 2010; Conniff 1982). Venezuela, in particular, has seen a dramatic crackdown on dissent, brutality, and political persecution of opponents, with pro-democracy protests repressed by security forces, and a slide into 1 million per cent inflation (Vera 2015). On coming to power, Hugo Chávez promised wealth redistribution, land reform, and using state oil revenues to subsidize living standards, but the country experienced drastic economic decline (Brewer-Carías 2010; Hawkins 2010; Sylvia and Danopoulos 2003). Under his successor, President Nicolás Maduro, and faced with a sliding petro-dollar and a humanitarian crisis, the country slid into outright authoritarian rule in 2017, when the Supreme Court suspended the powers of the National Assembly, triggering massive protests, mass detentions, and a rising death toll. The general secretary of the Organization of American States condemned Maduro as a repressive dictator, guilty of widespread human rights violations that involved killings and hundreds of political prisoners, leading Venezuela to quit the organization.

These cases certainly provide the most plausible support illustrating the challenge of populism for representative democracy—but it still remains unclear how far we can extrapolate from these particular contexts to other countries, especially liberal democracies. Despite these developments, there are several reasons to challenge the conventional wisdom and to consider a more nuanced and less alarmist understanding of global developments. Considerable variations can be observed in the electoral strength of authoritarian-populism, even amongst neighbouring states, for example between the US and Canada, the UK and Eire, or Portugal and Spain. Several conditions may mediate the effects arising from this phenomenon, such that it is inappropriate to generalize from some of the most commonly cited and high-profile cases.

In particular, the type of executive and their constitutional powers may prove critical. Although there are several exceptions, such as Prime Minister Viktor Mihály Orbán, many of the examples in the literature focus mainly on populist leaders in presidential systems with strong executives and weak parliaments, exemplified by Donald Trump, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, and Hugo Chávez. The real culprit may be the pre-existing structural flaws in constitutional designs rather than populism per se. As Linz (1990) warned, compared with parliamentary systems, presidential executives often pose perilous risks for liberal democracy by exacerbating winner-take-all effects. These dangers are exacerbated where the constitutional rules (like the US Electoral College) allow candidates to win office with less than a majority of popular votes, where there are weak incentives for cross-party collaboration, and where there are few constraints on the powers of the executive from other branches. By contrast, in parliamentary systems with proportional representation electoral systems, authoritarian-populist parties, ministers, and even prime ministers usually face many more limits on their capacity to enact radical policy change beyond their signature issues (Mudde 2013).

The size of authoritarian-populist parties in the legislature, and the strategic response of mainstream parties, may also matter. In many countries, despite a rise in support, populist parties often remain ‘niche’ opposition parties at the fringes of power (see also Chapter 29 in this *Handbook*). Figure 28.1, based on the comparison of a broad range of fifty-six parties in twenty-seven European societies, suggests that the mean share of the vote for authoritarian-populist parties reached around 12 per cent during the last decade, the highest level they have ever achieved since the end of the Second World War (Norris and Inglehart 2018). Even in proportional electoral systems, niche parties often face formidable challenges in surmounting vote thresholds over successive elections and then translating popular votes into parliamentary seats and ministerial offices—as well as influencing the policy agenda across a wide range of issues. In many countries, such as Germany, a cordon sanitaire by the major parties systematically excludes them from gaining ministerial office in governing coalitions (Kaltwassera and Taggart 2016). Major centre-left and centre-right parties seek to avoid alliances with authoritarian-populist parties, and they often present a united front to defeat them (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018).

Self-correcting mechanisms in representative democracies may also limit populist power; populists can make gains as opposition protest parties mobilizing the disaffected through negative campaigns. But they often encounter less success as junior partners in governing coalitions, losing credibility to their status as ‘outsiders’ once they enter the corridors of power and become closely aligned with the establishment (Heinisch 2003). For example, popular support for the Austrian Freedom Party fell dramatically once they entered the ÖVP-led government, from 26.9 per cent in the 1999 legislative elections to 10 per cent in 2002. Governing may take a toll on populist support such that they can only maintain their support in opposition (Akkerman and De Lange 2012).

Many authoritarian-populist parties have also proved short-lived, with volatile electoral support, whether through lack of organizational resources, internal party splits and fractionalization, the sudden loss of their founding leader, shifts in the issue agenda, or failure to surmount voting thresholds. Where populist outsiders from sectors like the military or the corporate world are suddenly thrust into high government office, without the usual lengthy apprenticeship that comes from professional politicians climbing up the greasy ladder, lack of experience in how public sector agencies and legislatures work may also prove a major obstacle to effective governance. For example, insider reports about the Trump White House suggest that many of the administration’s core goals proved ineffective due to inadequate experience about how Washington works and a lack of awareness of the constraints on executive power (Woodward 2018).

Finally, as argued earlier, the impact of populist parties and leaders on liberal democracy is likely to depend upon whether they are authoritarian or libertarian in their ideological values, with the former likely to prove the most harmful for democratic norms and practices (Huber and Schimpf 2017).

Moreover, populism may also generate some positive consequences, potentially serving as a corrective to failures of representative democracy, rather than its enemy

(Mudde and Kaltwasser 2012; de la Torre 2014). For example, populist parties and leaders may strengthen voting turnout and activism by mobilizing previously excluded sectors of the electorate who were disillusioned with the policy choices offered by traditional mainstream political parties (Immerzeel and Pickup 2015; Huber and Ruth 2017). Populist parties may force governing elites to pay closer attention to genuine public concerns, such as those triggered by the refugee crisis in 2015, thereby widening the range of voices in the mainstream policy debate (Houle and Kenny 2016; Huber and Schimpf 2016). By expanding the agenda, for example by challenging the pro-EU consensus of mainstream centre-left and centre-right parties, or questioning the benefits of global markets and open borders, populists enlarge deliberation (Huber and Ruth 2017). Libertarian-populists also often advocate referenda and other opportunities for direct public participation (Ruth, Welp, and Whitehead 2017, while the anti-establishment rhetoric stokes pressures for reforms designed to clean the swamp of corrupt politicians and their cronies. Grass-roots populist movements have also mobilized street protests designed to challenge the forces of global capitalism, the power of multinational corporations, corrupt dictatorships, and deep-rooted social inequality. For all these reasons, Mudde (2013) cautions that, at least in long-established Western democracies, fears about the impact of this phenomenon may have been exaggerated in the past and the rise of the populist radical right may have had far less serious political consequences than many pessimistic prophecies have long predicted.

III. POPULIST CONTAGION IN POLICY AGENDAS?

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Beyond the regime institutions, what has been the impact of populism on the policy agenda? Several scholars suggest that authoritarian-populists heighten public concern about race relations, immigration policy, welfare reform, and law and order, thereby pulling moderate parties towards their agenda (Akkerman 2012, 2015). Thus, Bornschieer (2010) argues that where authoritarian-populist parties have succeeded in expanding their share of the popular vote, as in France and Switzerland, this has generated a new cultural cleavage in party politics, heightening the salience of issues such as immigration and the European Union. Where mainstream parties have been successful in preventing serious threats from such parties, by absorbing these issues, this has weakened support for minor parties (Bornschieer 2010). In France, for example, the centre-right parties, the RPR and UDF, adopted *National Front* anti-immigrant rhetoric after 1986, in an attempt to pre-empt Jean-Marie Le Pen's support. Along similar lines, Austria implemented more restrictive policies towards refugees after Jorg Haider's FPÖ entered coalition government with the centre-right ÖVP. In the October 2017 parliamentary elections, the ÖVP adopted far more hardline language against

immigrants and asylum-seekers, legitimizing tough xenophobic policies as mainstream, rising to first place in the polls under the leadership of Sebastian Kurz. During the spring 2017 campaign for parliamentary elections in the Netherlands, the Dutch Prime Minister from the centre-right People's Party for Freedom (VVD), Mark Rutte, adopted a tough line towards immigrants who failed to integrate, telling them to 'act normal or go away,' when faced with fierce political competition from Geert Wilders' Party for Freedom (PVV).

Can these types of shifts on the policy agenda be attributed to the rise of authoritarian-populist parties? It is conceivable that these policy developments might have occurred anyway, regardless of populist party competition, as European governments respond directly to growing public concern about the EU and immigration. Government needed to respond following Angela Merkel's decision to open Germany's borders, in September 2015, triggering a wave of Syrian, Turkish, and Afghan refugees and asylum seekers. In recent years, many EU countries have tightened immigration policies, even where populist parties remain weak (Roos 2013). Nevertheless, it seems likely that authoritarian-populist parties contributed towards this process, by challenging the liberal consensus among mainstream parties, expanding the boundaries of public debate, heightening the salience and polarization of the immigration issue on the legislative agenda, and legitimating policies founded on racism and intolerance that had previously been quarantined by the elite liberal consensus (Koopmans and Statham 2000). For example, a content analysis study of party manifestos in Norway and Denmark since the early-1970s by Harmel and Svasand (1997) found that the policy platforms of the moderate Conservative parties moved rightwards in response to the electoral challenge of authoritarian populist rivals on their extreme flank.

As noted earlier, electoral gains by minor authoritarian-populist parties remain limited but their popular support has been expanding. Given these developments, how do other parties respond strategically? If mainstream parties win a majority of parliamentary seats then they can form a one-party government excluding all rivals. If there is a minority government, however, falling short of an overall parliamentary majority, as is common under PR elections, then strategically the largest party can seek to form a coalition with other parties but exclude populists from negotiations, isolating them as pariahs, for example when the 2017 Rutte government in the Netherlands excluded the PVV. But where the populist party wins a substantial number of seats, this process can generate lengthy negotiations and a prolonged period of uncertainty, where populist parties have to be considered as partners (Akkerman and Matthijs Rooduijn 2014). Or the largest party can invite populists to join a coalition government. For example, in late 2017, Norwegian elections returned Prime Minister Erna Solberg in a Conservative-led coalition government in partnership with the Norwegian Progress party and two other right-wing partners. Contests in Austria produced the OVP-FPO coalition led by Sebastian Kurz, while New Zealand saw a Labour coalition government led by Jacinda Ardern in partnership with the Greens and New Zealand First. Elsewhere several authoritarian-populist parties have entered government coalitions,

including the Italian Northern League, the Five Star Movement, the Norwegian Progress Party, the Austrian FPÖ, the Slovak National Party, and the Swiss People's Party.

Even in countries with few authoritarian-populists in parliament, however, these parties can still exert 'blackmail' pressure on governments, public discourse, and the policy agenda (Minkenberg 2001; Akkerman and Rooduijn 2014). They need not gain many votes or seats to exert substantial influence, as illustrated the UK leaving the European Union. Though the UK Independence Party won only one constituency in the 2015 general election, its populist rhetoric fuelled rabid anti-European and anti-immigration sentiment in Britain, pressuring the Conservatives to call the Brexit referendum. It can be argued that Cameron's pledge to hold the Brexit referendum the following year would not have happened without UKIP's popularity in the opinion polls (Goodwin et al. 2017). After Cameron's resignation, successor Theresa May also accepted the Leave stance towards Brexit in the leadership contest for the Conservative party, both to reassure Eurosceptic backbenchers within her own party and also to attract UKIP voters. This strategy apparently worked in the 2017 local and general elections, causing UKIP to haemorrhage local councillors and votes, as former supporters switched (back) to the Tories (Goodwin and Ford 2017). UKIP was replaced in the 2019 general election by the Brexit Party. These parties' Eurosceptic policies and populist rhetoric was gradually absorbed into the Conservative party under Theresa May's leadership, becoming mainstream under Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

Populism and Public Trust in Representative Institutions and Elections

Did the rise of populist parties lead to a decline of trust in core representative institutions linking citizens and the state? There has long been concern about an erosion of trust in political parties, parliaments, the news media, and governments in Western societies (Pharr and Putnam 2000; Dalton 2004). This is also where populist rhetoric might be expected to have the strongest impact; for example, repeated rhetorical claims of 'Fake news' by President Trump and White House spokespersons have sought to construct an alternative reality portraying facts as fungible and journalists as the partisan tool of an arrogant elite (Waldrop 2017). This phrase has rapidly spread to many dictators when rejecting critical news reports, including Venezuela's Nicolás Maduro, Syrian president Bashar al-Assad, Myanmar government officials dismissing news about genocide, and by Russia's Foreign Ministry and the Chinese Community Party's *People's Daily*. The fake news narrative from Trump, combined with online misinformation campaigns, is widely believed to have eroded public trust in the news media (Waldrop 2017). The Knight Foundation (2018) reports that most Americans now say that it is hard to be well informed and to determine which

information is accurate, with social media ‘bubbles’ reinforcing partisan polarization amongst like-minded networks (see also Chapter 27 in this *Handbook*).

To examine the trends, we can turn to the Eurobarometer surveys, which have monitored institutional trust in the representative agencies of political parties, national parliaments, the news media, and national governments in EU member states from 2001 to 2017. These institutions are some of the core pillars of representative democracies, which are commonly attacked by populist leaders. Figure 28.3 shows the trends and suggests that in fact, rather than a steady slide in institutional confidence during these years, the trend is most closely suggestive of a period effect, with a fall following the onset of the economic recession in 2007 followed by a recovery of trust in subsequent years as the financial situation brightened. The trend data does not suggest a steady erosion of trust in representative agencies following the rise of populist forces during these years, as is often assumed. (On the resilience of democratic values, see also Chapter 3 in this *Handbook*.)

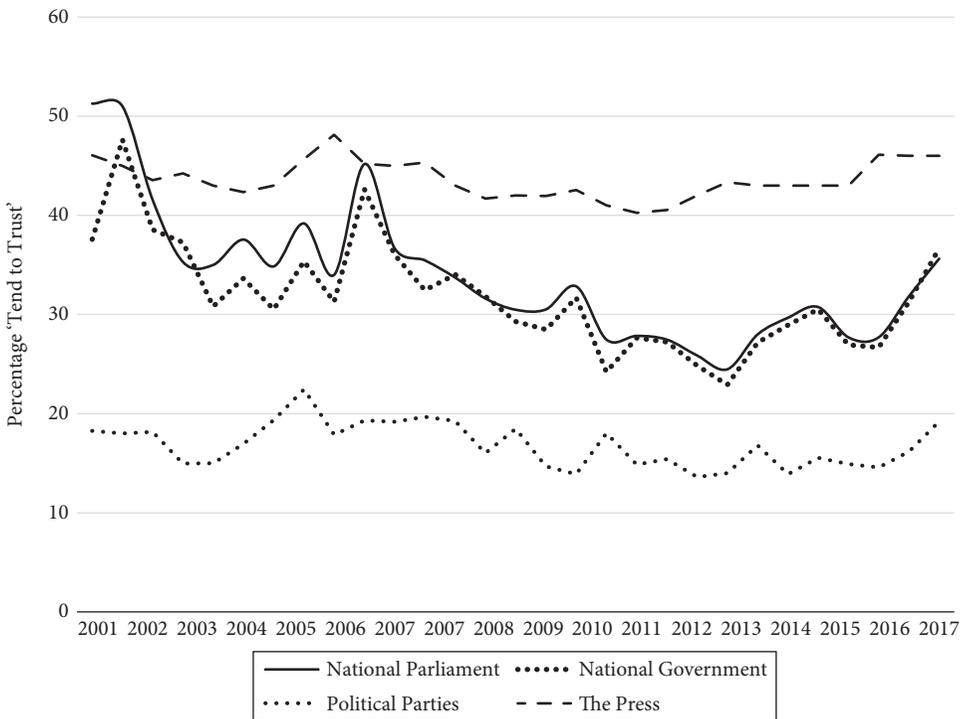


FIGURE 28.3 Trust in Representative Institutions, EU 2001–2017

Notes: Q‘I would like to ask you a question about how much trust you have in certain institutions. For each of the following institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it. The national government. The national Parliament. Political Parties. The Press.’ Proportion responding ‘Tend to trust’.

Source: Eurobarometer, EU member states <http://ec.europa.eu>

IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, there is widespread concern about the impact of authoritarian-populist forces on the health of democracy, with agencies like Human Right Watch and Freedom House reporting a significant erosion in liberal democracy and the rise of strongman leaders around the world. In established democracies there are also worrying signs—but how widespread are these problems and how far is the rise of authoritarian-populist leaders and parties to blame for these developments? The evidence examined in this chapter points to several conclusions.

First, there are debates about how to interpret worldwide trends in democratization. Both Freedom House and the Economist Intelligence Unit report a global erosion of democracy during the last decade, shrinking the number of democratic states. These developments are also attributed to the rise of populist leaders who appeal to anti-immigrant sentiments and fail to respect civil and political liberties. This global backsliding should not necessarily be blamed mainly on the rise of authoritarian populism, however, since multiple factors shape regime transitions, including economic conditions, the onset of military conflicts and civil wars, the diffusion effects of hegemonic powers, and so on. Indeed, rising support for authoritarian populist leaders may be regarded as one of the consequences of weakening democratic institutions and norms, as much as the cause. Nevertheless, several leading cases, such as Turkey, Venezuela, and Hungary, indicate that the rise of particular authoritarian-populist leaders has subsequently damaged checks and balances on executive powers and has led to a deterioration of human rights in some countries.

We also discussed the argument that the growing popularity of authoritarian populism in the electorate leads to a ‘contagion of the right’—where centre-right parties move rightwards on issues such as control of immigration and Euroscepticism, without necessarily taking up the more extreme xenophobia or nativism. It could be argued normatively that this should be regarded as a positive development for representative democracy, making elites more responsive to issues of genuine public concerns. From this perspective, the liberal consensus on the benefit of European Membership and open borders has stifled debate for eurosceptics and limited choices at the ballot box. On the other hand, by heightening party polarization over the complex and sensitive issue of immigration, authoritarian populist rhetoric can also stir up racial resentment and social intolerance. Again, there are several cases supporting the ‘contagion of the right’ thesis, such as in France, Switzerland, the Netherlands, France, and Britain.

Finally, the chapter examined whether the rise of authoritarian-populism should be understood as a cause—or a consequence—of an erosion of trust in liberal-democratic institutions. When populists attack the legitimacy of the core channels linking citizens and the state—mainstream political parties, parliaments, and the media—it can erode support for democracy—and the evidence suggests genuine reasons for concern about

the long-term effects of this phenomenon. Therefore, overall populist rhetoric is widely regarded as challenging the legitimacy of representative democracy and testing its limits. Several cases such as Hungary and Turkey certainly provide plausible support for these claims—but the broader effects of the rise of this phenomenon in long-established Western democracies continues to play out, testing the resilience of mainstream political parties, democratic institutions, and the civic culture.

NOTES

1. Donald Trump Tweet 21 August 2018. <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1031852996567748613>
2. For more details please see www.GlobalPartySurvey.org

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CHAPTER 29

THE RISE OF POPULISM IN MODERN DEMOCRACIES

THOMAS M. MEYER AND MARKUS WAGNER

INTRODUCTION: POPULISM AND ITS CHALLENGE FOR LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES

THIS chapter examines the causes of the rise of populism and its consequences for political representation in modern democracies: why have populist parties gained ground in so many liberal democracies? And how does their emergence and continuing success affect the way political representation works in these systems? We aim to provide answers to these questions by reviewing the extensive (and growing) literature on populism. Despite impressive progress in this field, we also shed light on some gaps and opportunities for future research.

The first challenge in this endeavour is to explain what exactly we mean by ‘populism’. Although many concepts in political science are latent and complex, it is hard to think of an example where the disputes about its core characteristics are as enduring and intense as for populism (e.g. Aslanidis 2016; Mudde 2004; Stanley 2008; Weyland 2001). There is a long-running debate about whether populism is an ideology (e.g. Mudde 2004), a style (e.g. Jagers and Walgrave 2007; Wodak 2015), a discourse (e.g. Laclau 2005) or a strategy (e.g. Weyland 2001). Researchers also disagree on whether the opposite of populism is political liberalism, elitism, or pluralism (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2013; Pappas 2013). In popular debates, populism has become a ‘fancy buzzword’ (Rooduijn 2019: 365) that is often confused with related concepts such as Euroscepticism and nativism. The definition researchers use naturally has repercussions for how populism is measured, studied, and assessed.

We make use of an increasingly widespread definition of populism as a phenomenon ‘that considers society to be ultimately separated in two homogenous and antagonistic groups, “the pure people” versus the “corrupt elite”, and which argues that politics

should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people' (Mudde 2004: 543). This definition is common to most current analyses of populist parties and voters (e.g. Rooduijn et al. 2017; Schumacher and Rooduijn 2013). Importantly, this definition of populism means that it is independent of other ideological stances: populism is thus a 'thin' ideology (Mudde 2004: 543). Hence, parties along the entire left–right spectrum can all employ populist rhetoric and embrace populist ideas. In practice, many populist parties are either on the right or left edges of party systems, but exceptions to this rule abound. Given its simplicity and popularity, in this chapter we use this definition of populism and mainly consider research based on it.

We begin our analysis on the rise of populism with an overview of the electoral successes of populist parties and politicians in modern democracies. While populism is not a new phenomenon, we aim to show that populist parties have indeed become more common and more successful in recent years. We then turn to the causes for the success of populism. We first provide a general portrait of populist party voters in terms of their attitudes, their ideological stances, and their socio-demographic characteristics. Next, while these 'demand-side' factors help us to get a better understanding of populism, they are not sufficient to explain the rise of populist parties in recent years. Rather, there have to be favourable context factors for the rise of populist parties rooted in the change of political conflict structure and short-term factors emerging from political and economic crises.

We then discuss consequences of populism for political representation: how do populist parties change the issue agenda and political communication? And how do populist parties fare as government parties? In so doing, we deliberately focus on the empirical consequences of the rise of populism and leave aside the more normative debate whether populism is a threat (cf. Kaltwasser 2012; Weyland 2013) or a corrective, if not an essential element, of democracy (Laclau and Mouffe 1985). We conclude by summarizing key conclusions that emerge from existing research.

POPULIST PARTIES IN MODERN DEMOCRACIES

Populism is not a new phenomenon. In fact, history is full of examples of populist politicians, parties, and movements (Taggart 2000). In the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, Latin American politics were particularly well known for successful populist leaders. Getulio Vargas and Juan Perón in Brazil and Argentina are examples from the middle of the twentieth century, with more recent exemplars being Hugo Chávez (Venezuela), Evo Morales (Bolivia) or Rafael Correa (Ecuador) (see Hawkins 2009; Panizza and Miorelli 2009).

More recently, a variety of European parties can be characterized as populist. Many of these are on the radical right, with the French Front National and the Austrian

Freedom Party as prime examples (Mudde 2007). The rise of these parties has attracted many researchers who study its causes and consequences (e.g. Arzheimer and Carter 2006; Golder 2003; Mudde 2007; Norris 2005). Other right-wing movements, such as Berlusconi's Forza Italia, were less extreme in their positioning (see the next section) but still employed populist rhetoric (Albertazzi 2009). Recently, radical-left parties have also been described as populist, such as Podemos in Spain or SYRIZA in Greece (Ramiro and Gomez 2017; Stavrakakis and Katsambekis 2014), with centrist populist parties like the Italian M5S completing the ideologically eclectic profile of populism in Europe.

These parties have also seen increasing electoral success over the past decades. To assess these parties' changing electoral fortunes, we first need to decide which parties count as populist. As researchers often disagree whether (and when) parties such as Fidesz in Hungary or PiS in Poland should be classified as 'populist', we reviewed comparative and single-country studies on populist parties in thirty-six advanced industrial democracies over more than forty years (e.g. Aalberg et al. 2017; Rooduijn

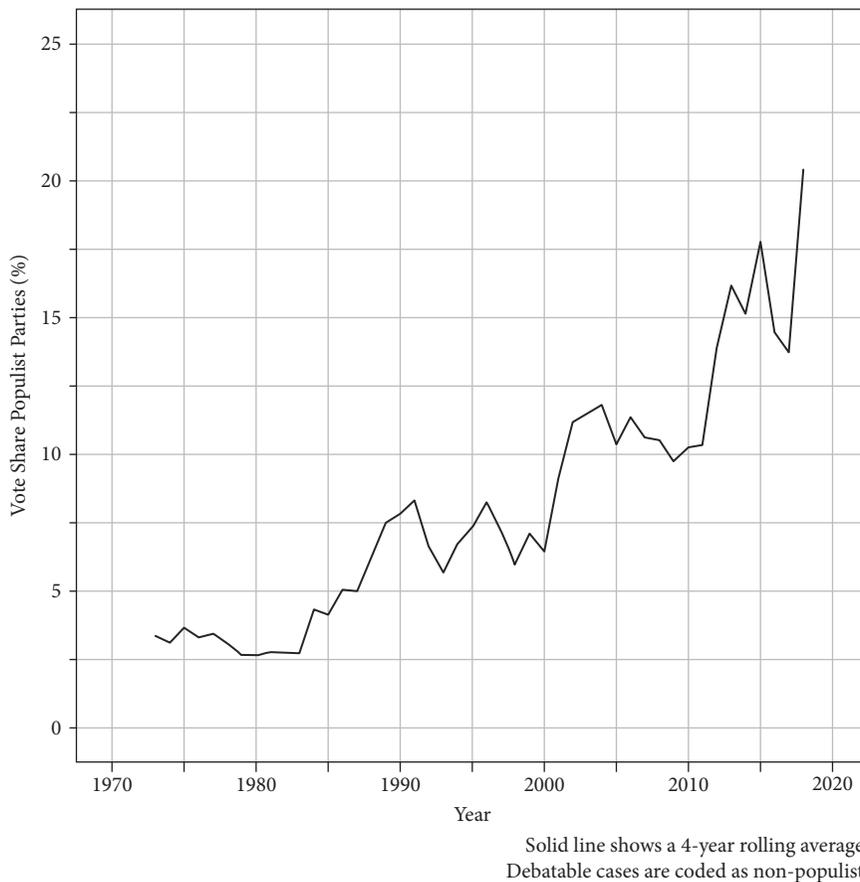


FIGURE 29.1 The Rise of Populism in Advanced Industrial Democracies

et al. 2019).¹ We coded as non-populist controversial cases such as the German NPD, where we found conflicting evidence (e.g. Decker 2006; Teney 2012). Since we are therefore likely to underestimate the vote share of populist parties, our analysis is a conservative estimate of populist party success. Data on election results comes from the ParlGov database (Döring and Manow 2018).

Figure 29.1 presents an overview of the electoral success of populist parties. The line indicates a rolling average of populist parties' vote shares over time. The general conclusion is clear: populist parties have become much more successful in legislative elections. The average vote share in elections has increased steadily from about 3 percentage points in the 1970s to about 20 percentage points in 2018. This astounding success underlines that understanding populist party success needs to be at the centre of any analysis of electoral politics in modern democracies.

WHO VOTES FOR POPULIST PARTIES? ATTITUDINAL AND SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CORRELATES OF POPULIST PARTY SUPPORT

As a first step, we aim to provide a general portrait of populist party voters, focusing on three key correlates of populist support: populist attitudes, ideological stances, and socio-demographic characteristics.

Populist Attitudes and Populist Voting

The key drivers of support for populist parties at the individual level are attitudinal. It is perhaps unsurprising that supporters of populists themselves hold populist attitudes, in that they think that a (corrupt) elite is unresponsive to the demands of the (pure) people. Voters with strong populist attitudes also have low support for liberal, elitist, and pluralist understandings of democracy (Akkerman et al. 2014).

In recent years, important advances have been made in trying to measure populist attitudes in different settings (Akkerman et al. 2014; Castanho Silva et al. 2019; Schulz et al. 2017; Spruyt et al. 2016). Moreover, there is evidence that these attitudes are shared by an important subset of citizens in countries as different as the Netherlands (Akkerman et al. 2014) and the United States (Oliver and Rahn 2016). Existing work in this developing field of research shows that these attitudes are generally closely linked to voting for populist parties, be they on the radical right or left (Akkerman et al. 2017).

Earlier work focused in particular on anti-elite, anti-party attitudes, one of the key components of populism. Often used as simpler proxies for populist attitudes (Akkerman et al. 2017; Castanho Silva et al. 2019), these are established drivers of

support for the radical right in particular (Aichholzer et al. 2014; Bélanger and Aarts 2006; Bergh 2004; Hooghe et al. 2011; Lubbers et al. 2002; Oesch 2008). However, anti-elite views also explain support for populist parties more generally (Akkerman et al. 2017; Hooghe and Oser 2016; Pauwels 2014; Ramiro 2016).

Some researchers also link populist attitudes to more deep-seated traits among individuals that exhibit over-time stability and systematically divide citizens. For example, Bakker et al. (2016) find that populist voters score low on agreeableness, one of the five core personality traits. A dislike of the elite can often merge into a propensity to believe in conspiracy theories (Castanho Silva et al. 2017; Oliver and Rahn 2016).

Ideological Stances and Populist Voting

While they resemble each other in their anti-elite, pro-people attitudes, populist party supporters on the right and left nevertheless differ in their attitudes in important ways. Indeed, the policy views that underlie party support are likely the key difference between these two types of populist voters (Akkerman et al. 2017; Kriesi 2014; Priester 2012; Schumacher and Rooduijn 2013; Rooduijn 2017; Rooduijn et al. 2017).

Populist radical-right supporters tend to define the ‘people’ in exclusive, national terms. Hence, national pride and identity are key drivers of support for radical-right parties, as are anti-immigration attitudes and authoritarianism (Aichholzer et al. 2014; Akkerman et al. 2017; Ivarsflaten 2008; McGann and Kitschelt 2005; Oesch 2008; Rooduijn et al. 2017). Of course, some of the opposition to immigration may be partly based on economic considerations. For example, voters with welfare chauvinist attitudes believe that social benefits should be restricted to nationals (Oesch 2008). Here, it is hard to disentangle economic and cultural drivers of immigration-based radical-right support.

On the populist left, the corrupt elite encompasses financial and economic actors, with the ‘people’ seen in class terms (Dunphy and Bale 2011). Social inequality is a major ideological driver of populist left support (Akkerman et al. 2017; Bowyer and Vail 2011; Rooduijn et al. 2017; Visser et al. 2014). In the United States, for example, support for Donald Trump was characterized by a strong national identity and a dislike for experts, while support for Bernie Sanders was characterized by feeling socially marginalized (Oliver and Rahn 2016). Hence, key drivers of populist left support are left-wing economic attitudes.

Socio-demographic Correlates

Moving beyond attitudinal drivers, the socio-demographic correlates of populist party success have been discussed extensively, with a particular focus on various economic

characteristics. However, evidence that economic grievance leads to populist party support is weak and inconsistent. On the one hand, support for populist parties is often particularly strong among working-class voters, though mostly on the radical right (Arzheimer and Carter 2006; Lubbers et al. 2002; McGann and Kitschelt 2005; Oesch 2008). Radical-right populist parties also receive disproportional support from small business owners (Oesch and Rennwald 2018). Class voting patterns are less clear on the radical left (Visser et al. 2014), despite the historical association between Communist parties and the working class (Ramiro 2016). Indeed, in some countries, such as Switzerland, the main class support for the radical left is among sociocultural and technical professionals (Oesch and Rennwald 2010).

Populist radical-right voters also tend to have lower levels of education (Arzheimer 2009; Lubbers et al. 2002), but this pattern is less present for the populist radical left (Pauwels 2014; Rooduijn 2017). In fact, radical-left voters may even be particularly highly educated (Ramiro 2016). Overall, while it has often been suggested that populist voters are ‘losers’ of modernization and globalization (Betz 1994; Kriesi et al. 2006), Rooduijn (2017) finds that this is not generally the case; at least in the sense that they are more likely to be unemployed, have lower incomes, or be less educated than other voters.

In sum, attitudinal and socio-demographic characteristics help us to identify supporters of populist parties. Yet, the characteristics of populist party supporters vary considerably across parties, especially among populist parties on the left and on the right. Moreover, focusing only on the ‘demand’ for populist parties is insufficient to understand the *rise* of populism, as many of these factors are relatively stable over time (and across countries). Hence, to get a better understanding for the rise of populist parties, we need to consider their competitive environment. This is to what we turn next.

EXPLAINING THE RISE OF POPULIST PARTIES

The success of populist parties does not just depend on a demand for their stances; these parties oftentimes gain momentum when the background conditions change in their favour. In this section, we discuss how the political context, in particular party competition and political and economic crises, can help explain the timing for the rise of populist parties.

Changing Structures of Political Conflict

A key contextual factor that explains the rise of populist parties is the changing political conflict structure in post-industrial democracies (Kitschelt and McGann 1995). The shift from industrial to post-industrial economies has altered the nature of

distributional conflicts between classes and reshuffled the size and nature of different employment sectors (Beramendi et al. 2015; Oesch and Rennwald 2018). In addition, globalization has increased the interdependence between countries and has incentivized parties to converge on economic policy (see Chapter 31 in this *Handbook*; Milner and Judkins 2004; Ward et al. 2015). Moreover, increasing prosperity, the educational revolution, and intergenerational change have led to an increasing share of ‘postmaterialists’ who prioritize self-expression and autonomy over economic and physical security (Inglehart 1977).

These changes have altered party competition. First, the new issue landscape has drastically changed the traditional electoral winning coalitions of mainstream parties (Oesch and Rennwald 2018). For example, while Social Democratic parties have always struggled to appeal simultaneously to their working-class and middle-class supporters, bridging this gap has become increasingly difficult. Social Democrats have faced difficult decisions about how far to move to the centre in economic terms and how far to embrace liberal social attitudes.

Second, party systems have fundamentally changed in terms of their actual issue content as the policy conflicts have gradually shifted from an economic divide towards sociocultural policies (e.g. Kitschelt and McGann 1995; Kriesi et al. 2008). This has been to the advantage of new competitors with strong stances on these issues, in particular for populist radical-right parties with their focus on nativism and authoritarianism. These changes are accelerated by events such as political and economic crises, addressed below.

Third, mainstream parties have likely lost votes to challengers by converging ideologically (Dalton 2018; Kitschelt and McGann 1995; Meguid 2008; Spoon and Klüver 2019; van der Brug et al. 2005). The rise of the populist left may especially be due to mainstream party convergence on economic issues. Similarly, the rise of the populist right could be attributed to the fact that mainstream parties fail to take stances sufficiently critical on immigration. In other words, the electoral success of populist parties has been argued to stem from the fact that mainstream parties are no longer able or willing to represent many voters (Mair 2008).²

Political and Economic Crises

Parties such as SYRIZA in Greece, ANO in the Czech Republic, and the Pim Fortuyn List in the Netherlands became very popular in short periods of time. Clearly, largely stable factors such as personality (Bakker et al. 2016), as well as slowly moving factors such as changes in the political conflict structure, cannot account for sudden increases in populist party success. To get a better understanding for such sudden changes, we also need to take the immediate political context factors into account.

Political and economic crises such as the Euro crisis or the so-called immigration crisis might serve as critical junctures that activate existing voter demands. The slow-

moving changes created by socio-demographic shifts and the transformation of political conflict may culminate in sudden party system change in the wake of sudden crises.

Turning first to economic crises, the economic challenges in some countries, for instance Spain, Italy, and Greece, may be particularly to blame for the current increase in populist party success (e.g. Kriesi and Pappas 2015). March and Rommerskirchen (2015) indeed find that the radical left does better during bad economic times, while Hernández and Kriesi (2016) show that populist right and left parties have benefited most from the post-2008 economic crisis in Europe. Despite these findings, an explanation for populist party success based on economic crises needs to be treated with some caution. For example, Oesch (2008) finds that economic determinants, such as wage pressure or competition over welfare benefits, help little in explaining workers' support for radical-right populist parties, while Rooduijn (2017) only finds mixed evidence for the 'losers of globalization' hypothesis. Levels of inequality as a contextual factor also fail to influence populist radical-left voting (Visser et al. 2014).

However, the Euro and immigration crises have also changed issue agendas, pushing topics to the fore that may in particular benefit populist parties. Many voters may reward Eurosceptic and anti-immigration stances. Issue agendas can change rapidly, as during the immigration crisis in 2015. In 2017, the focus on immigration arguably helped to propel the German populist radical-right AfD to parliament and the Austrian populist radical-right FPÖ into power. The gradual changes in the issue agenda over the past decades may have laid the groundwork for the profound impact created by recent crises.

More generally, some argue that we are witnessing a representational crisis: in this view, populist parties are successful because populist (anti-elite, pro-people) attitudes are becoming more prevalent. Using public opinion surveys, Foa and Mounk (2016: 5) thus argue that 'citizens around the world have become markedly less satisfied with their form of government and surprisingly open to nondemocratic alternatives' and that this is a core reason for the rise of populist parties and politicians. However, this finding has been questioned extensively by other researchers and should be treated with the appropriate caution (e.g. Alexander and Welzel 2017; Norris 2017; Voeten 2017; Zilinsky 2019).

THE CONSEQUENCES OF POPULIST PARTY SUCCESS FOR POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

In this section, we turn to the consequences of the rise of populism: how did the emergence and success of populist parties change the way political representation works in modern societies? In particular, how did the emergence and success of populist parties affect issue agendas, political communication, and policy outputs?

Issue Competition

Populist parties on the left and right take up positions that are held by many voters, but that are often unrepresented by political parties, thus filling in ‘blind spots’ of political representation (Thomassen 2012). For instance, Eurosceptic and anti-immigration stances in the electorate have arguably only found proper representation since the radical-right populist parties have become successful. Anti-capitalist views similarly find representation by the populist radical left. Beyond questions of issue representation, it has been found that populist parties in opposition in Latin America have a positive impact on democratic quality (Huber and Schimpf 2016b), though government participation has a negative impact on this in both Latin America and Europe (Huber and Schimpf 2016a, 2016b). Of course, one may ask whether any positive impact on issue-based voter representation is weakened by the challenge that populist parties represent to liberal-democratic systems.

Beyond questions of representation, populist parties can have a systemic impact on politics by shifting the party system issue agenda, that is, the issue stances and emphases of other parties. Most existing research focuses on mainstream parties’ responses to populist parties of the radical right. Their electoral success had led to ‘contagion’ (Van Spanje 2010) as mainstream parties shift to the right on immigration-related issues (e.g. Abou-Chadi 2016; Abou-Chadi and Krause 2018; Han 2015). In Western Europe, parties have gradually shifted to the right on liberal-authoritarian issues, whilst these issues have also become more prominent on the parties’ issue agendas (Wagner and Meyer 2017). Yet, this does not mean that mainstream parties adopt all of the radical-right populist parties’ positions. For example, Rohrschneider and Whitefield (2016) note that mainstream parties have been fairly unresponsive to the Euroscepticism of extreme parties in the wake of the financial crisis.

Can mainstream parties push back populist parties by adopting to their issue stances? The answer to that question seems to depend on the *timing* of the response (cf. Mudde 2007: 241f). Competing with populist parties on ‘their’ issues might be easiest when they have not yet built a reputation for dealing with these issues (Abou-Chadi 2016; Meguid 2008: 37). In this case, the influence of populist parties on the party system agenda is mostly indirect: the threat by populist parties moves the issue agendas of mainstream parties. Once populist parties have had their first successes, adopting their issue stances might, however, do little more than legitimize their policy stances (Bale 2003). Thus, parties responding late are more likely to suffer from the shift towards the populist parties’ issue stances.

Populism in Political Discourse

Populist parties may not only affect the issue agenda, but also *how* politicians and the media communicate about politics (de Vreese et al. 2018; Engesser et al. 2017).

Has populist rhetoric, opposing ‘the people’ and ‘the (corrupt) elite’, diffused into the communication of other parties in the party system and the news media? And if so, can populism in political communication change citizens’ attitudes and behaviour?

Researchers have analysed the degree of populism in party communication based on content analyses of party broadcasts (Jagers and Walgrave 2007), election manifestos (Rooduijn and Akkerman 2017; Rooduijn et al. 2014; Rooduijn and Pauwels 2011), presidential speeches (Hawkins 2009), newspaper articles (Rooduijn 2014), and social media posts (Schmuck and Hameleers 2019; Zulianello et al. 2018). The key idea is to use content analyses to code whether the author(s) of the text refer to ‘the people’ and/or criticize ‘elites’ (e.g. in the political, economic, or media arena). These counts are usually aggregated to obtain populism scores for parties or politicians.

These analyses show relatively clear empirical patterns. First, the results provide some face validity to the other evaluations of political actors: parties and politicians classified as populists indeed appear to use an us-versus-them discourse where elites are juxtaposed with a ‘pure people’ (e.g. Hawkins 2009; Jagers and Walgrave 2007; Rooduijn and Akkerman 2017). Second, a more interesting finding is that there is no populist contagion in party systems, at least in Western European politics. That is, traditional mainstream parties have *not* become more likely to engage in a populist discourse, opposing ‘the people’ and ‘the (corrupt) elite’ (Rooduijn et al. 2014). In contrast, populist parties may even tone down their populist rhetoric when they are electorally successful (Rooduijn et al. 2014), to the extent that some such parties may no longer be properly considered populist. Podemos in Spain is one potential example of this. Third, the rise of populism correlates with a rise of populism in the news media (Rooduijn 2014). This seems to suggest a causal relationship from parties to the media, where parties’ populist messages are taken up in the news media. Yet, much more needs to be done to identify the causal relationships and the conditions under which populist messages make the news.

Whilst diffusion of populist language into the communication of other parties and the news media is important, its ultimate goal is to reach and to affect potential voters. There is some evidence from experimental studies (Hameleers et al. 2017; Sheets et al. 2016; Wirz 2018) showing how populism in news reports increases the citizens’ political cynicism, emotional reactions, and their populist attitudes. Yet, these effects are contingent on the readers’ political predispositions: for example, exposure to populist media reports increases populist attitudes amongst those with strong populist attitudes prior to the exposure, but decreases populist attitudes amongst those with prior anti-populist stances (Müller et al. 2017). This suggests a polarization in political attitudes, with the content of populist messages reinforcing prior beliefs and attitudes.

These are tentative findings in a small but growing research area. Systematic evidence on how populism in media reports affects citizens is still sketchy (e.g. Aalberg et al. 2017). For example, experimental studies often focus on news reports dealing with issues such as immigration (Sheets et al. 2016) and the EU (Hameleers et al. 2017) that are traditionally linked to radical-right parties. It is therefore difficult to differentiate the effect of populism in the political discourse from that of related

concepts such as nativism and Euroscepticism (Rooduijn 2019). Future research should therefore intensify the effort to explore the effects of populism in political communication and its effect on citizens' attitudes and behaviour.

Populist Parties in Government

Unlike in Latin America, where populist presidential candidates frequently enter office, European populist parties have so far been less successful at entering (coalition) governments. This is, in part, due to the fact that populist parties are often at the fringes of the party system, and extreme parties have a lower coalition potential than those at the centre of the policy space. Another factor is ostracism by mainstream parties, who frequently explicitly rule out coalition governments with (populist) radical parties (van Spanje and van der Brug 2007). Yet, especially in recent years, an increasing number of populist parties have entered (or supported) coalition governments in Europe; recent examples include the M5S and the League in Italy or the Freedom Party in Austria.

Their participation in government has raised the question of whether populist parties leave a policy footprint. Studies analysing how populist parties in government shape public policy suggest that they have left their trace on cultural, economic, and constitutional issues: they have shifted public policy on immigration to the right (e.g. Zaslove 2004), refrained from measures to retrench the welfare state (compared to other centre-right governments; Röth et al. 2018), and attacked liberal principles (e.g. protection of minority rights) for the sake of 'true' democracy (Albertazzi and Mueller 2013). Yet, these findings are based on a comparatively small number of cases.

A second question relates to the populist parties' electoral performance after entering government: are populists rewarded or punished by voters for their participation in government? Populist parties (in Europe exclusively those of the radical right) are no exception to the general rule that government parties tend to be punished in future elections (Akkerman and de Lange 2012). Yet, there is substantial variation in the electoral performance of populists in government. In the 2002 federal election, for example, the Austrian Freedom Party lost badly (−16.9 percentage points) after its first term in office. In contrast, the Northern League gained votes (+0.7 percentage points) after its participation in the Berlusconi cabinet from 2001 to 2006.

The variation in the electoral performance of populist radical-right parties has been attributed to three different factors (cf. Akkerman and de Lange 2012): a party's policy record, the performance of its cabinet members, and party cohesion. In Western Europe, populist radical-right parties have mostly governed with centre-right parties that favour liberal economic policies. Such demands are often at odds with demands of the populist radical right's voter base, so that these parties face a trade-off between office and votes (Afonso 2015). Giving in to their coalition partners' preferences for welfare retrenchment thus often results in electoral defeat in future elections. One way

to deal with this dilemma is to cut back on welfare provision for foreigners ('welfare chauvinism': van der Waal et al. 2010), as such cuts are also popular among the party base.

The performance of cabinet members is another factor to account for variation in populist parties' performance. While some populist parties have no difficulties in selecting and recruiting suitable candidates for public office, others struggle to nominate candidates with sufficient talent and expertise (Akkerman and de Lange 2012). Clumsy, incompetent, and inexperienced appointees were in part responsible for the Austrian Freedom Party's electoral dilemma in 2002 after the party had to replace several of its cabinet members (the first minister left the cabinet after twenty-five days) (Akkerman and de Lange 2012: 588).

The third factor is a lack of party cohesion. Perhaps due to internal tensions caused by policy decisions (Afonso 2015), some populist parties witness severe internal cracks and disputes. Again, the Austrian Freedom Party's record between 2000 and 2006 is a prime example of how intra-party dissent leads to electoral decline (Fallend and Heinisch 2016).

However, a big caveat to these analyses is that they are almost exclusively based on populist parties of the radical right. This makes it difficult to distinguish between the fate of radical-right and populist parties in government coalitions. We can only overcome this problem by including more cases in future governments (e.g. the Lega-M5S coalition government in Italy, SYRIZA in Greece) or by expanding the empirical scope to other regions.

CONCLUSION

Populist parties are commonly identified based on their consistent opposition to elites and their rhetorical support for the 'pure' people. In this chapter, we first discussed who votes for populist parties. Like the parties they support, populist party voters are often critical of the political and/or economic elites and want politics to follow what is seen as the general will of the people. They also share some socio-demographic characteristics, such as comparatively low social positions in terms of education and economic resources, but this varies a lot across parties. The other attitudes that characterize populist party voters greatly depend on whether one considers parties of the populist right or the populist left.

Populist parties have witnessed increasing popularity in Europe in the past decades. The causes for this success can be found in longer-term changes to political conflict in Europe as well as short-term political and economic crises. The resulting success of populist parties has fundamentally affected the content and style of political discourse, especially in the news media. However, the long-term substantive influence and electoral permanence of populist parties remains to be seen. We do not yet know what the rise of populism means for political representation: while some voters will be

happy about having a stronger voice in politics, it is clear that populist parties also pose a fundamental challenge to the principles that underlie liberal democracy.

Research on populist parties and their support bases is therefore vital, and luckily this field has made substantial and impressive advances in recent years. For example, the development of questions measuring populist attitudes amongst voters is proceeding quickly, and initial findings are encouraging (Akkerman et al. 2014; Akkerman et al. 2017; Spruyt et al. 2016; but see Castanho Silva et al. 2019). There is also a growing literature as well as a canon of research methods to analyse populist discourse, while the consequences of populist popularity have been studied using a synthesis of quantitative comparative analyses and qualitative and quantitative case studies. While much needs to be done (especially outside Western Europe), this is promising. Overall, this field has quickly achieved a high level of sophistication and complexity.

However, research on populism also shows some important weaknesses and thus opportunities for development. First, it is important to distinguish the impact of party-level populist ideology from other aspects of party programmes such as Euroscepticism, anti-immigration stances or left-wing economic views. Sometimes, it is very hard to single out the distinct effect of populism compared to other party characteristics (Rooduijn 2019). Concerning the radical right, for instance, some authors identify populism as a key characteristic of such parties (e.g. Mudde 2007), while others prefer to refer to radical right (e.g. Norris 2005) or anti-immigration parties (e.g. Van der Brug et al. 2005). Thus, it is not clear how much the adjective ‘populist’ adds to these theoretical accounts. If it carries additional meaning, we should be able to single out causes (and consequences) of populism that are independent to those of related concepts.³ Similarly, analyses of support for populist parties show that left and right populists may differ in more ways than they resemble each other. Second, we need to know more about the prevalence of populist discourse in politics and whether this has effects on voters. Here, promising first steps have been made, but additional, particularly comparative findings are needed. Finally, we still know little about voter-level populist attitudes, including how they should best be measured (Castanho Silva et al. 2019), but also what their antecedents and determinants are. The field of populism research is young but progressing quickly, and its development will be key to understanding changes to modern democracies.

NOTES

1. The countries are the EU-28 member states (including the UK), Australia, Canada, Iceland, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, and Switzerland.
2. Yet, evidence for this thesis is not unequivocal. For example, Norris (2005: 191–6) finds no support for the convergence hypothesis, while Ignazi (1992) argues that the increasing polarization in the party system has helped extreme parties to emerge.
3. A notable exception is the theoretical framework by Kitschelt and McGann (1995: chapter 1). They theorize that the electoral success of *populist* radical-right parties hinges on the convergence of mainstream competitors and strong party patronage in the respective system (e.g. Austria in the 1980s and 1990s).

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CHAPTER 30

POPULISTS IN POWER

Populism and Representation in Illiberal Democracies

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INTRODUCTION

POPULISM—whether conceived as ideology, organizational strategy, a form of mobilization, or discourse (cf. de la Torre 2019)—is typically analysed in the context of protest movements and parties that are disruptive of status quo politics and critical of existing institutions. The phenomenon of populist governments has so far received less attention outside of the Global South. This is understandable given that in advanced democracies populist parties have had limited access to government and have yet to consolidate a populist regime.

Populists in power often establish regimes that run elections but lack robust rule of law, checks and balances, or a level playing field (Urbinati 2014). Such political systems can be considered competitive authoritarian or illiberal democratic regimes (Mounk 2018; Levitsky and Way 2010), depending on where one draws the dividing line between democracy and non-democracy. If one defines illiberalism as hostility against checks and balances, separation of powers, press freedom, state neutrality, and cultural and political pluralism, and populism as a political discourse that speaks in the name of the people, demands majoritarian decision-making, and attacks the elites, then it follows that while the two are different phenomena, populism has an illiberal potential.

The actual threat that populists pose to liberal democracy depends on how extreme their majoritarianism is and how much power is concentrated in their hands. If they leave room—either because they are relatively moderate or because they lack the means to implement their preferences—for liberal institutions, such as independent judiciary,

pluralistic media and individual rights, then their anti-democratic impact can be minor or even non-existent. Because populist regimes do not need to abandon formally democratic competition as a mechanism for attaining, retaining, and legitimating their power, and neither do they necessarily fail to provide important mechanisms for representation, it is justified to assess their contribution to the quality of representative politics. This chapter focuses on cases in which populist parties hold and consolidate governing power with the aim of answering two fundamental questions: What kind of institutions do they build? What is the character of the political representation that they provide?¹

In Western Europe, populists, even those who have been parts of governments, have not yet been able to transform political institutions. The Italian and the Greek governments formed by populists were internally divided, and the latter had to focus almost exclusively on the management of the economic crisis. In other cases, populist parties were junior partners and their impact on the country's constitutional framework was very limited. In the United States, Donald Trump has (so far) been constrained by constitutional limitations and could only influence the composition of the Supreme Court. In the post-Communist region, however, one can find countries that have been governed by populist parties for long enough and with clear enough majorities to allow analysis of how populists behave in power.

Our central argument in the chapter is that populists in power in these countries undermine liberal democracy, but, simultaneously, provide large groups of citizens with the feeling of regained ownership over the state and a genuine representation of their preferences—though not necessarily their interests. The specificity of the analysed cases is that populists have transitioned from insurgents to consolidators in government.

At the same time, the post-Communist case offers what we think of as a potentially limiting condition to the chances of populist regimes emerging in advanced democracies. That is, while we note the rise of populist parties in Western Europe, we argue that there are much more significant constraints on these parties to transform the institutional environment. The forms of democracy and representation that populist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe offer, therefore, may depend on a set of conditions that are not present in consolidated democratic contexts. This does not mean, of course, that populists in liberal democracies may not succeed, but their path is more difficult and likely must take a different route.

The rest of the chapter proceeds as follows. We first consider the need to extend the literature beyond populism as insurgents to populists as institution builders. We then discuss how populism may achieve representation in power and the form of democracy that it offers. Following this, we offer a detailed description of the successes of populists in consolidating power and building populist institutions in Central and Eastern Europe in their governing style and in their ideology. We do so with a focus on Hungary and Poland, as these are the countries in which populists govern alone and implement many of their non-conventional ideas—in spite of their countries'

membership in the European Union. We then outline the conditional pathways that were and are present in post-Communist Europe that allowed populists the opportunity to build and consolidate a populist regime. Finally, we suggest ways in which the post-Communist case may suggest limits to what populists may achieve institutionally in consolidated democracies.

THE POPULIST PATH TO POWER IN HUNGARY AND POLAND

Populists are rarely seen as institution builders. Rather, populism is regarded as a symptom of the dysfunction of institutions. ‘Populism thrives where mainstream parties are in crisis, or at least where they exclude or ignore major currents of opinion that are denied institutionalized channel of expression’ (Roberts 2017: 287). In other words, populists are assumed to be the opposite of mainstream, never part of it. The often-expected positive impact of the appearance of populism, like the invigoration of sclerotic structures, the articulation of ignored demands, or the scrutiny of elite privileges, is also related to this assumed configuration.

None of these assumptions holds if established parties adopt a populist discourse and strategy, or if populists turn out to be effective institution-builders. Of course, for either of these options to materialize populist parties need to become influential enough to shape the political institutions of an entire nation. While populist parties increasingly enter governments, they are rarely ‘the’ government. The cases of Poland and Hungary in the 2010s demonstrate, however, that a populist takeover can be followed by the consolidation of populist rule, even of countries within the European Union.

Right after the post-Communist transition populists tended to play a peripheral role in Eastern Europe. In those countries that had a realistic hope of joining the EU few dared to question the Western liberal-democratic consensus. The democratization and the Europeanization processes were supported by the citizens, but these changes followed a distinctly elitist blueprint, leaving little room for bottom-up involvement (Stanley 2017: 142). Technocratic rule often triggers populist reactions even though the technocrats and the populists are similarly opposed to decision-making based on deliberation among political representatives (Schmidt 2006; Müller 2016).

Thus, after gaining membership, an anti-liberal and populist discourse arose in the region. This development was further exacerbated by the 2008 financial and the 2015 refugee crises, which without doubt greatly contributed to the loss of prestige of the market-liberal and social-democratic integration project. The legacy of the authoritarian past, coupled with the anxiety and disappointment created by the failure to catch up with the West, fostered the victories of populist-authoritarian forces. Whilst until about the mid-2000s the architecture of democratic institutions appeared to be robust and

improving,² in the second part of the decade the non-transparent deals between the various elite groups and between national and EU officials became targets of criticism. The idea of strong man rule became popular and the separation of powers was regarded more and more as a way for the elites to escape accountability (Krastev 2017). The rapid changes in the West on moral issues (LGBTQ, multiculturalism, euthanasia, animal rights, etc.), were perceived as signs of cultural decline by many Eastern Europeans (Pew Research Centre 2018).

Despite the growth of populism in the mid-2000s, the prospects of democracy were not considered to be under threat (Krastev 2017). The common understanding amongst both citizens and scholars was that the parameters of the regimes are set by globalization, international actors and market-forces, and all of them point towards the survival, and even the strengthening, of liberal democracy. The success of right-wing populists in Hungary and Poland, however, radically changed that understanding. The political and constitutional changes ensuing from the landslide electoral victory of Fidesz in 2010 revealed that after the financial crisis the region had entered a new era. The Fidesz government demonstrated that the liberal-technocratic establishment can be ousted, EU-backed policies can be reversed, and the tone of international communication can be turned confrontational. The spectacular ejection of IMF representatives in 2013 and the 2019 poster campaign against Jean-Claude Juncker, the President of the European Commission, are examples of a combative style that was inconceivable in the region earlier. Poland underwent similar, though somewhat less profound, processes. Change there was less radical, partly because the country was less hit hard by the global recession of 2008. However, the rapid economic growth that had occurred under the Civic Platform (PO) government benefited society unequally, allowing for the (second) victory of Law and Justice (PiS) in 2015.

The victory of the populist parties was followed in both countries by a dramatic decline in the quality of democracy.³ After a continuous drop in democracy scores, Freedom House changed the categorization of Hungary to partly free in 2019. The deterioration of Poland's scores started after PiS took over the government and, with each subsequent year, it became more drastic.⁴

What then has it meant in Hungary and Poland for authoritarian populists to hold power? How do they govern and what institutions do they build? What are their claims to representation and through what ideological frames do they operate? Whilst the two examined regimes differ in many regards, not the least their attitude to Russia (Hungary being more favourable), their domestic discourse and style of governing overlap to a considerable extent.

THE GOVERNING STYLE OF THE POPULIST ESTABLISHMENT

It is important to recognize that institutional and constitutional change is not per se an indicator of populism or indeed of illiberalism, since such reforms are not unheard of—if not common—in consolidated democracies. Indeed, there are numerous cases of ‘critical parties’ that call for institutional reform located across the political spectrum in Europe (Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2017). Moreover, institutional reforms are often pursued and sometimes implemented because actors have expectations of gaining partisan advantage (Benoit 2004). Populist institutional ‘reforms’ are specific, however, in terms of their pace (fundamental legal changes are pushed through the legislatures and public administration within days and sometimes within hours) and their targets. Next to structural targets, such as the autonomy of the media and the judiciary, the regimes often have personal targets. Compulsory retirements and bespoke demotions are used to undermine the influence of groups regarded as hostile to the ruling party, and often laws are modified in order to support or weaken a particular individual.

In both countries, populism brought a more confrontational and personalized politics. Independent agencies, such as central banks or broadcasting agencies, were put under party control. The opposition media came under attack and the government introduced restrictive regulations on NGOs. The appointment processes in the state bureaucracy were politicized, and the state apparatus was enlisted to participate in quasi-permanent political campaigning. State media was turned into a party propaganda machine (Balcer 2017; Bozóki and Hegedüs 2018; Krekó and Enyedi 2018).

In both countries the most consequential struggle is between the judiciary and the executive (Pech and Scheppele 2017; Scheppele 2013). Judges were labelled communists and replaced, courts were packed with loyalists, and the scope for political oversight of individual court cases was increased. Whilst during the first PiS-led government in 2006–2007, many of the Parliament’s decisions were found to be unconstitutional (e.g. the law to alter the media oversight body, Stanley 2017), after 2015 the single party PiS government focused on capturing the judicial system, beginning with the takeover of the Polish Constitutional Tribunal in December 2016. As opposed to Hungary, where the ruling party, thanks to its (by now decade-long) supermajority in the Parliament, can rule by simply adjusting the Constitution to its needs, the Polish government had to resort to unconstitutional interventions to clip the wings of the Constitutional Tribunal (Kelemen 2017). Sadurski (2018: 1) labels the Polish transformation ‘anti-constitutional populist backsliding’, considering the process ‘anti-constitutional’ because ‘it proceeds through statutory “amendments” and outright breaches of the Constitution; it is “populist” because the ruling elite is actively concerned to foment societal support and mobilisation, and it is “backsliding” because it should be seen against the baseline of high democratic standards already achieved in the recent past’.

Staffing also played a central role in Hungary. Fidesz placed, for example, the wife of one of the leading party officials at the helm of the National Judicial Office, and one of

its MPs to the leadership of the National Audit Office. The latter agency subsequently fined virtually all the opposition parties, exploiting the fact that there is no possibility for appeal against the Office's decisions. The Chief Prosecutor since 2010 is an erstwhile Fidesz electoral candidate, and the Constitutional Court was packed with government ministers, MPs and government advisers.

A related common feature of these regimes is the central role of conspiracy theories. Governments of established democracies around the world rarely actively encourage conspiracy theories, and when they do, this seldom goes beyond statements made by prominent individuals (though there is certainly a strong argument that Trump is pushing this boundary). In the case of Hungary, after 2015 a conspiracy theory was advanced that George Soros's hidden network is working on bringing millions of Asian and African immigrants to Europe and is manipulating the European Commission to open the borders to this invasion. This took the form of a 'public information campaign', financed by more than a billion dollars from the public budget. In the case of Poland, a conspiracy-theory was advanced according to which the airplane crash that led to the death of Lech Kaczyński and many other Polish leaders was orchestrated by Russians and other foreign powers and covered up by PO officials. While this did not receive the same coverage as did Soros, the theory clearly structured the way of thinking of many PiS politicians (Krastev 2015; Balcer 2017).

Contrary to many populist parties in the West, the Hungarian and Polish governments have a measured attitude vis-à-vis various forms of direct democracy. PiS has so far avoided turning directly to the people, while Fidesz initiated only one referendum in government. This referendum, similarly to the one initiated in opposition in 2008, was aimed at strengthening the party's position by focusing the political agenda on an issue where the party had an advantage.⁵ Neither referendum was meant to be a real test of how people think about a particular issue as, in both instances, the balance of opinion was known to be around 90:10 per cent. The second case (whether the EU should be allowed to impose refugee quotas on Hungary) is a particularly clear example of a plebiscite aimed at power projection. At the time, the government had an overwhelming majority in the legislature, had no difficulty turning any of its preferences into law and, when the referendum turned out to be invalid because of the low turnout, the government announced that the legal invalidity of the outcome was not relevant. Despite its frequent references to the popular will, in power Fidesz has systematically blocked all attempts by the opposition to organize a referendum (Enyedi 2015).

The democratic potential of populism, meaning the emancipation of marginalized groups—or at least the articulation of their demands—the mobilization of hitherto passive citizens, the breaking up of collusive party systems, etc. (Laclau 2005; Mouffe 2018; Rovira Kaltwasser and Taggart 2016), is hardly visible in populist-led Poland or Hungary. Fidesz even proposed to change the mandatory and automatic state registration of voters into a voluntary one—that would have practically disenfranchised a considerable section of the society, though the proposal was eventually withdrawn. To the extent that one considers the previous liberal consensus elitist, the politicization of new issues and the assault on the taboos of internationalism and globalism, or of the politically correct discourse about minorities, could be regarded as liberating. Radical

parties in both countries, however, have questioned these norms previously. The novelty of Fidesz and PiS was not so much the opening up of new debates but rather the imposition of new norms and new taboos on the society. The emblematic piece of legislation of this new approach was the 2018 Polish bill that outlawed blaming Poland for crimes related to the Holocaust. The immediate objective of the regulation of historical memory was not the politicization of the issue but rather the closure of discussion.

The appeal of the populists in terms of procedural politics shows more similarity to the well-known Latin American examples. The prioritization of ‘decision over deliberation’ (Urbinati 2014), whereby populists campaign as decisive actors who lose little time on seeking consensus and interest mediation, is a hallmark of the Polish and Hungarian regimes as well. It was probably one of the motivating factors behind the popular support given to the respective parties. A vote for Fidesz and PiS is a vote for less public debate, less blame-shifting, more leadership, and faster and more resolute reaction to challenges.

Since the time of Boulanger, Perón, and Poujade, populism is associated with strong leaders, and indeed both the Hungarian and the Polish are organized around undisputed leaders, Kaczyński and Orbán. But in the Hungarian case, the leader is much more the focus of governmental communication and electoral campaigns, making the political system resemble the ideal-typical *Führerdemokratie*, a model originally introduced by Max Weber and recently elaborated by András Körösenyi (2005: 361). By contrast, Kaczyński prefers the role of *éminence grise*, thereby questioning the assumption that all populist regimes require a media-savvy commander-in-chief.

None of these leaders is open to public scrutiny (e.g. they give interviews only to a few selected journalists), and yet their image has a strong ‘ordinariness’ component. Biographic details, like the fact that Kaczyński does not speak foreign languages and does not travel much abroad, or that Orbán was born in a small town to a modest family and that he thinks that women are unfit for politics, or his obsession with football, help to deliver the message ‘I am one of you’. Much of this, at least in the case of Orbán, is calculated PR since there was a time when he preferred to appear as a politically correct, highly educated technocrat. But actual personality characteristics and genuine life experiences also play a role. The message of the folksy patterns of behaviour is that, unlike the internationalized liberal elites, the local leaders belong to their country. As Krastev (2017) put it, the local elites ‘don’t promise to save the people but to stay with them’, partly because they have nowhere to go.

In this context, even vices can turn into virtues. The scholarly literature debates whether populists necessarily consider the people morally pure. In Poland and Hungary, just like in Latin America (Ostiguy 2017), moral purity is less emphasized than authenticity. The official discourse implies that ‘there may be politically correct standards that we, Hungarians or Poles, do not meet, but this is beside the point, we are ourselves’. Orbán and Kaczyński provide confirmation to the people that they do not have to feel embarrassed about their behaviour. At the same time, the officials of these regimes also use religion to boost their moral superiority and thereby to enhance their

entitlement for a leadership role. The much-advertised strong faith of the leaders complements the ‘one-of-us’ image with a ‘better-than-us’ aspect.

The social policies of the two regimes also demonstrate the priority of immediate preferences of the citizens over their long term interests. The distribution of subsidies to targeted groups—always accompanied by a ‘public information’ campaign emphasizing that these subsidies are dependent on the goodwill of the government—leave little room to the improvement of the infrastructure of health care, education or unemployment-support. But because the subsidies reach large enough sectors of the society, the rise of inequality is kept under control, contributing to social peace.

The discourse and the foreign policy of these regimes is related to their geostrategic position. Cooperation with the European Union is crucial for both countries for both financial reasons and because the voters are typically pro-EU. At the same time, the constant verbal war with the EU and with its mainstream media is equally central and constitutive for the identity of the ruling parties. EU membership curtails the degree of authoritarianism (Bozóki and Hegedüs 2018), but it ultimately helps the survival of the regimes because the constant criticism coming from the EU strengthens the impression that the principal issue at stake is national sovereignty. This is true if the EU interferes on how to use forests or how to organize the judiciary but even more when the question is the treatment of refugees or, as opponents of asylum put it, who should decide the constitution of the population living in the country? The EU serves as a useful irritant: an elitist institution that tries to impose norms on the countries from ‘above’. To such a challenge the logical response is nationalist populism.

Although a transnational version of populism that unites nations against elite actors of the international politics like the EU, World Bank, IMF, USA, etc. is not likely to emerge from the cooperation of exclusionary nationalist populists (de Cleen 2017), the post-Communist region—thanks primarily to Viktor Orbán—has recently experienced intensive collaboration between right-wing authoritarian-populist forces. A telling case: right after his 2018 inauguration speech in the Hungarian Parliament (in which he declared that the era of liberal democracies is over), he travelled to Slovenia to support a local right-wing party’s campaign. In his speech, he said: ‘we are in danger of losing our countries to foreigners’. He was on home terrain, whether at home or abroad.

THE IDEOLOGY OF THE POPULIST ESTABLISHMENT

The last point takes us to the issue of ideology. Labelling these regimes as populist is justified to the extent that their official discourse is structured around the antagonism between ordinary people and international elites and their local stooges. But populist ideology rarely exists in a pure form, ‘uncontaminated’ by other ideological elements. The most efficient way to establish the character of the populism in question is to ask, ‘who constitutes the people?’ All populists tend to exclude the mainstream elites, or at

least some of their factions, from the concept of people. As in the West, right-wing populists, as the ones described in this chapter, tend to exclude ethnic and racial minorities, immigrants, atheists, and 'deviant' social groups. Hungarians and Poles, wherever they live in the world, are presented as the 'people' threatened by the foreign or foreign-hearted elites, showing that in this case it is the ethnos and not the demos that matters for populists (Akkerman 2003). The principal opponents of these regimes are not elites in general but the cosmopolitan and leftist factions of the world elite. Elites are not simply out of touch with the people, they 'belong' to a different people. References to Jews and internationalist communists abound.

Within the larger category of right-wing populism, the Hungarian and Polish cases conform to the pattern of paternalist populism: citizens are considered to be in need of governmental guidance in moral, cultural, economic, and social spheres.

This is indicated also by the fact that when it comes to the definition of the 'people', the Polish and Hungarian populists tend to exclude civil society. The democratic legitimacy of NGOs is questioned because they are not elected. According to Kaczyński the idea of a 'civil society' was introduced in Poland with the aim of countering national awakening. Legitimate power must rest elsewhere: 'In a democracy, the only sovereign is the nation. The parliament and, in the Polish conditions, the President are its representatives. These two state organs are responsible for the creation of law. To these bodies belongs the control over our lives' (Balcer 2017: 42, 47). In a different context, Orbán proclaimed that migration policies should be shaped by 'legitimate political leaders' and not by 'people-smugglers, terrorist organizations, illegitimate power groups, NGOs, financial speculators and the media' (Orbán 2019). While the attack against financial speculators, illegitimate power groups and the media, comes from the standard populist rulebook, the adding of NGOs is an invention of twenty-first-century populism. And a very ironic addition indeed, given that one of the most beneficial functions of populist movements is exactly to 'remind us that legitimate political action is not limited to voting, or to professional politicians—it includes civil protests, gatherings, movements, self-organized groups, and communications in civil society by ordinary people and civil disobedience' (Arato and Cohen 2019: 98).

According to the logic of these regimes, the people's will manifests itself through elections and government-supported rallies and, in the Hungarian case, through the so-called 'national consultation' processes (Bátory 2016) organized by the government. The latter genre involves letters sent by the Prime Minister to each citizen, accompanied by a biased set of questions. This 'consultation' is then followed by well-publicized governmental or parliamentary decisions allegedly based on the submitted responses, responses that are seen only by the government itself. This peculiar, hierarchical, non-transparent but direct communication between the leader and the masses illustrates the dictum that 'Populists are not interested in participation per se; they rather privilege pseudo-participation while mobilizing their followers' (Diehl 2019: 137). NGOs that seek independently to mobilize citizens are considered a threat to be managed and controlled (Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights 2018). Organizations that receive donations from abroad are particularly illegitimate.⁶

Both regimes appear to be heavily influenced by the political philosophy of Carl Schmitt, whose populist-elitist cocktail includes constitutional commitments placed

beyond the reach of democratic amendment procedures, unconstrained leaders with special connection to the masses, the friend–enemy distinction, and the substantive identity of all members of the political community (Abts and Rummens 2007; Antal 2017). This provides an appropriate theoretical legitimization for paternalist populism (Enyedi 2015). Schmitt is not, of course, alien to populist discourse in the West but, as we have been arguing throughout, Western movements remain fundamentally opposed to the existing order. Their counterparts in Hungary and Poland, however, have shifted to institution-building around these principles. The ideologues of the respective regimes not only criticize rights-based constitutions, free markets, globalization, and the dominance of liberal social norms, but they also question the utility of the frequent alternations in power and warn against direct dependence on the short-sighted and materialistic masses (Enyedi 2016: 11).

As part of this paternalist orientation, both governments changed school curricula, increasing the weight of religious and patriotic components; invested considerable resources into the establishment of new research institutes of historical memory that were exempted from standard academic oversight; replaced monuments; and in general reshaped public places in line with the national mythologies (Charnysh and Finkel 2018). This orientation is in tension with the bottom-up vision of popular sovereignty, but as Brubaker noted, one of the important appeals of modern populism lies exactly in its protectionist character; economic (e.g. from foreign goods and labour competition), securitarian (e.g. from terrorism) and cultural (e.g. from foreign lifestyles) (Brubaker 2017).

Populism and ideological constraints are supposed to be at odds with each other (Wayland 2017) because populist leaders prefer to remain unconstrained. The Hungarian example partly substantiates this point as—the originally liberal—Orbán swung back and forth between pro- and anti-Russian attitudes or a pro- and anti-European integration orientation. Even more to the point, Fidesz refused to issue party programmes for the 2014 and 2018 elections. As opposed to making specific—responsible or irresponsible—promises, Orbán asked the electorate to reconfirm its diffuse trust in him and his government.

Nonetheless, the Party of Law and Justice is an example of a coherently conservative-traditionalist force and Fidesz, in spite of its policy zigzags, has also developed a well-defined and rather stable ideological profile. Both parties have a strong right-wing identity. Economically, they have complex and idiosyncratic platforms with some socialist elements, but culturally they are relatively well anchored and culture matters more for the identities of the respective movements. The gradual shift towards a quasi-religious rhetoric in the case of Hungary means that populists in the two countries converge around the ideal of Christian Democracy, understood as a democracy uncontaminated by the liberalism of the Second Vatican Council. But, instead of using theological or philosophical arguments, the principal justification of the concept is that the Poles and the Hungarians are, by nature, Christian. This means that an attribute of the people (albeit one that describes the past much better than the present) is elevated to an ideological level, thereby reconciling populism with nationalism and conservatism by turning the essentially supra-national identity of Christianity (mainly Catholicism) into a national trait.

WHY DO POPULISTS WIN AND CONSOLIDATE IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE? SCOPE LESSONS FOR POPULIST PROSPECTS IN CONSOLIDATED DEMOCRACIES

The policies presented above are illiberal on many dimensions but they do not entirely abjure democratic competition or abandon representation in substantive policies—especially in cultural terms but also, to some degree, in preferences for some welfare policies. Perhaps as important, populists in power in Hungary and Poland offer descriptive and symbolic representation, speaking as ‘one of us’ to their constituents. By articulating a critical view concerning the Western-dominated cultural and economic integration processes, and by halting some of these processes, the populists in power managed not only to give voice to those threatened by globalization, but also to re-establish faith in sovereign nations and nation-states.

But does the success of populists in power in these states speak to a broader way forward for populists in consolidated democracies?

Many Western populist forces contain a considerable amount of anti-liberal and, occasionally, anti-democratic component, but this does not mean that their ascendancy needs to result in similar outcomes. Bozóki and Hegedüs (2018: 1176) noted that the ‘illiberal, anti-pluralist, homogenizing populism’ was an ‘introductory feature of democratic derailment and hybridization’ in Hungary, but the presence of populist forces does not, in itself, lead to the collapse of democracy. ‘The sufficient condition is the kind of political power of illiberal actors that allows for the elimination of the institutional guarantees of liberal constitutionalism through a politically unilateral process of constitutional engineering, which has only materialized in Hungary so far, but is undoubtedly under construction in several other East-Central-European countries as well’ (2018: 1176).

Of course, Hungary and Poland are members of the European Union, are largely surrounded by liberal democracies, and have some of the most globalized economies in the world. Their fate is, therefore, relevant for forecasting developments in the developed world. Certainly, the possibility of consolidating authoritarian populism in the established democracies cannot be ruled out. However, we find a number of specific circumstances in the post-Communist region that derive from legacies of the pre-Communist and Communist past and from its post-Communist experience, which were powerful factors in allowing populism to build a strong base and which defined a path for populist institution-building.

Many of the legacies are obvious to scholars of the region. In these states, respect for state institutions, democracy and the rule of law were historically weakly rooted to begin with and civil society (including a free press) were often underdeveloped, so both conceptions and practices of liberal representative democracy, in which differentiated

and legitimated contending social forces competed for power via elections, were poorly established. Parties were organizationally weak and the leftist parties not rooted in the Communist elite were especially so. Politics was generally not organized around cross-cutting cleavages but rather, compared with Western Europe, along a single dimension in which economic and social liberalism with a strongly pro-EU slant frequently meant that economic hardship and cultural angst about loss of national sovereignty was left to an illiberal right (Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012).

The mainly top-down elitist approach to EU accession—by both the EU and local technocrats and politicians—provided fruitful grounds for populist politicians to gain support among a public whose experiences of both authoritarianism in the past and liberal politics since 1989 led to great disillusionment. To be sure, populist politicians needed to take advantage of this, but they have successfully done so through the institutions and policies that we described above.

The same factors that allowed the success of populist parties in Hungary and Poland, however, may mitigate against their success in the West. This is what we mean by the scope lessons of the cases we have discussed. Whilst small elite groups, parts of the media, and judges played a major role in fostering cultural changes (e.g. on gender issues), elsewhere, too, the process involved the participation of large segments of ordinary citizens and therefore the liberal consensus on such issues is less fragile. Power is more dispersed, civil society is much more developed and capable of mobilizing, and the practices and concepts of liberal democracy are much more established and ingrained. Party competition is more complex, parties are more fractionalized, and coalition-building for governments involves more actors so a populist majoritarianism is more difficult to achieve. Ethnic heterogeneity significantly increases potential sources of electoral opposition to populists' claims to speak on behalf of a homogeneous nation, the electoral opposition of which we have seen to be of considerable importance in diverse societies where populist parties have made strides (Rovny 2014).

Moreover, there is also a democratic-left critique of liberal economic policies that does not entail rejection of liberal political practices, so there is the reality of a voice for the economically excluded that does not also entail illiberalism. None of this, of course, should engender complacency about the possibilities of populist victories and the concomitant shrinking of the centrist forces, but even if populists should win in established democracies, we would anticipate that resistance to consolidating a populist regime would be intense.

CONCLUSIONS

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The lesson of our analysis of Central and Eastern Europe is that the combination of populism and governmental power can give rise to effective and relatively stable forms of governance. The Hungarian and Polish regimes have repressive elements, but they

do not imprison people, do not do away with freedom of speech or abolish the formal structures of liberal constitutionalism. Populism, on the other hand, lived up to its illiberal potential in the sense that checks and balances, separation of powers, press freedom, state neutrality, and cultural and political pluralism have been deliberately attacked by the government parties. These parties solidify their power by constantly changing the rules of politics and business and by redistributing resources so that the playing field between majority and opposition becomes radically uneven. As discussed above, many of their characteristics are not populist, but parties see themselves as fighting against the deep state ruled by hidden networks of communist and liberal elites, bankers and foreigners, and they use a Manichean discourse to rally the people against internal and external enemies and, whenever possible, weaken the mechanisms that could constrain the parliamentary majority—even if that majority is supported by a minority of the voters.

It is important to underline that the analysed populists, unlike their Western colleagues from Beppe Grillo to Donald Trump, are not amateurs or outsiders but professionals who come from the very centre of the political system. Most studies assume that populist government follows the victory of populist movements. The Eastern-Central European cases remind us that populism is an orientation that can develop in any situation, including in office.

In the region, we find little sign of the much-discussed corrective effects of populism (Taguieff 1995). The victory of the populists was followed not by inclusion and emancipation, but rather exclusion and the establishment of hierarchical relations. Whilst it is widely expected that populism ‘interrupts the closure of liberal democracy’ (Arditi 2007: 79), in fact, the closure of the systems increased and the channels through which people can influence decisions decreased. Having said that, citizens who feel threatened by the forces of globalization, political correctness, multiculturalism, or the rapid change of moral values in a liberal direction, discovered that a friendly state could slow down these processes or at least mitigate their side-effects.

Our analysis also shows, however, the capacities of populists in power to operate within and co-opt the language of democracy and representation within the institutions that they build. The often-presumed anti-institutional attitude of populism (Pasquino 2008; Taggart 2000) manifested itself only in the very personalistic ruling style of Kaczyński (who does not even occupy public office) and Orbán, but not in the lack of interest in institutional engineering. The legal-bureaucratic logic is clearly secondary to the political logic, but the political ideas of the ruling party are provided with elaborate legal and bureaucratic frames. Whilst the populist logic is often equated with the logic of—democratic—majoritarianism (Taggart 2000; Abts and Rummens 2007; Canovan 2002; Mouffe 2000, 2005; Rovira Kaltwasser 2012; Pappas 2012; Tännsjö 1992), populists in power seem to be selective in applying the majoritarian principle. They are aware of the fact that they represent a minority position on many issues, and their typical solution is to prevent the unfavourable issues from dominating competition and media discourse.

Moreover, the Hungarian and Polish cases show that, while indeed populism as ruling power is hostile to constitutional democracy and to the division of power, its

hostility towards party pluralism is less obvious. Certainly, there were quite a few instances when the populists in government claimed to be identical with the people. But more often they acknowledge that they exist in a legitimately fragmented political space. Fidesz and PiS won originally their power through fair party competition, and although subsequently they invested considerable energy into making this competition less fair, they are comfortable with the practices and rituals of electoral competition. The 'populist phobia of parties' (Urbinati 2019) only manifests itself in exclusionary rhetoric and practices, but the actual monopoly of parties on political representation or the representative nature of modern politics is not questioned (Krekó and Enyedi 2018).

Many of the radical changes implemented once in power were not deliberated about in the electoral campaign, and yet many citizens feel that the new governments represent the people adequately. This paradox cannot be simply explained away by the post-crisis economic boom. It is at least equally important that the followers see the leaders as participants in a battle for the nation. In this battle, the leaders must constantly innovate in order to surprise the enemy. Some of their moves may surprise their followers too, but the leaders can use the state channels of communication to provide a convincing explanation and thereby to recreate the congruence between the government and the represented. This top-down mechanism (discussed by Pitkin (1967) under the heading of fascist representation and by Körösiényi (2005) as representation in leader democracy) is seen as legitimate not only because of the permanent conflict situation but also because one needs an interventionist state in order to develop a home-grown social elite and in order to help the national community to find its way back to its original identity, uncorrupted by communism and foreign influence.

The analysed cases also allow us to reflect on the relationship of power and protest and to question the simple dichotomy of the two. PiS and Fidesz used to be mainstream parties that became populist protest forces and then transformed themselves into what we call the populist establishment, without losing the protest character. Because one can always protest against elites that act behind the scenes, the idea of a protest party in government is not an oxymoron. The techniques used by populists in power, and well described by Jan-Werner Müller (2017), such as the colonization of the state, mass clientelism, discriminatory legalism, and the repression of civil society, are available only to parties that have large initial social support. But these techniques also allow the populist parties to complement their relative social support with the formal and informal biases of competition.

Finally, the region also shows that polarization and the populist urge to concentrate power are closely related. Clearly, this has strong resonances in Western democracies where there have been significant populist surges, in particular in the United States. In a sharply polarized atmosphere, the victorious party is not expected to compromise. Once the people have spoken, the task is to turn the will of the people into governmental decisions and laws without any delay. Polarization is beneficial, also, because it makes it easier to maintain the narrative of crisis. The migration issue, which proved to be more detrimental for the liberal forces than the economic crisis or the increase of social inequality (Krastev 2017), was a major godsend for authoritarian-populist forces because it helped the regimes to project an atmosphere of permanent crisis.

NOTES

1. We would like to thank Laurent Pech, and Robert Rohrschneider and Jacques Thomassen for the many helpful comments.
2. Different dynamics were present in the Western Balkans, where the abuse of power was ubiquitous during these decades, with the exception of Slovenia and with the partial exception of Croatia.
3. Even more dramatic than in Latin America (Huber and Schimpf 2016).
4. See <https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/nations-transit-2018>.
5. In the post-Communist region there was one case, Belarus in the 1990s, where the leader ruled through a sequence of referendums.
6. See <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jul/19/brussels-begins-legal-action-against-hungary-over-stop-soros-law>.

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P A R T V I I I

**CHALLENGES TO
REPRESENTATIVE
DEMOCRACY**

INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS

CHAPTER 31

GLOBALIZATION, ELECTORAL CHANGE, AND REPRESENTATION

TIMOTHY HELLWIG

INTRODUCTION

GLOBALIZATION matters for electoral politics in today's liberal democracies. As evidence, we have only to look at recent election outcomes in the United States, France, and Italy. In these campaigns the central themes dividing electorates were not the traditional concerns about the distribution of income or debates over the role of government. Rather, debates centred on how to engage with the world beyond national borders. And in the 2016 presidential campaign in the United States, both major political parties were taken by surprise—if not hijacked—by the candidacies of Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump, two upstarts who, despite being at odds on a range of policies, shared a negative view of the liberal economic order. In France, the panoply of candidates contesting the 2017 presidential election was reduced to a pair in the second round distinguished not so much by location along the left–right divide as by orientation towards the world economy: Marine Le Pen pressed for economic national policies while eventual winner Emmanuel Macron championed the liberal global order. And in the 2018 Italian election, party alliances on the centre-right and centre-left saw their support fall as voters opted for populist and far-right parties, yielding an eventual government of the upstart Five Star Movement and a rebooted version of the regionalist-now-nationalist (Northern) League.

As these and other contests show, the world economy has become a touchstone for political contestation within the world's electoral democracies. The virtues of the liberal world economic order, ushered in during the post-war era, have been challenged before. Never before, however, has conflict over what can be broadly summarized as 'globalization' rivalled that of traditional divides in so many democracies. In earlier

decades challenges to the global world order came from the periphery rather than the core. In the established democracies that constitute the subject of this *Handbook*, the anti-globalization movements of the latter part of the twentieth century struggled to gain traction. Notable examples include the sustainable appeals of new left and green parties in Europe in the 1970s and 1980s, the occasional protectionist candidate in US presidential contests (Pat Buchanan or H. Ross Perot, for example) during the 1990s, and the anti-WTO alter-mondialization movement associated with the French left at century's end. Movements such as these were viewed as sideshows which distracted from the key boundaries of political contestation: religion, language, and especially class.

Today things are different. No longer solely discussed among economists and policy analysts, debates about the appropriate degree of integration into the world economy have entered into popular political discourse throughout the West. Indeed, in each of the elections mentioned above, political choices were cast more sharply in terms of pro- and anti-globalization than as 'left' versus 'right.' In today's open economies, one's position vis-à-vis the international economy has become salient as a predictor of political behaviour (e.g. Rommel and Walter 2018). Once credited with strong and sustainable growth, the post-war economic order is under siege in many countries. The integrity of this order has been roundly discredited. Globalization is cited as the cause of financial volatility, diffused national identities, and weakened social welfare regimes. The answer, for many aspiring office holders, is to turn inward.

This chapter reviews the research on these developments, delves deeper into these trends, and examines the impact of globalization on political representation in the liberal democracies. The political consequences of market integration, on the one hand, and the workings of representation in liberal democracies, on the other, have each received a good deal of attention. But while the contours of debates within these two research traditions are well defined, the connections between them are not. An understanding of globalization's political effects requires that we draw on lessons from different literatures in order to address key questions. How does globalization influence electoral politics in the liberal democracies? Does the chain of representation, introduced in the introduction to this volume, work differently in globalized political economies? Research in political science has bumped up against these questions for some time. A large literature examines the globalization-welfare state nexus and specifies the consequences of economic integration for public policy. And thanks to more observational and experimental data coming online, we have also learned a good deal about how individuals think about and form preferences about free trade, foreign direct investment, and immigration. In comparison, our knowledge of larger questions of globalization and political representation remains limited.

With the objective of narrowing this gap, this chapter is organized as follows. With respect to the chain of representation, I begin at the end, with a consideration of the effect of globalization on policy outcomes. After all, extant work on world markets and national politics in advanced capitalist democracies treats the latter in terms of politics as policy, and chiefly in terms of social policy at that. Lessons from this literature carry implications for representation but tend to be implicit rather than explicit. I then, in the

next two sections, return to the beginning of the chain and take up the impact of globalization on public preferences and on perceptions of political control. Finally, I come full circle and complete the chain with a discussion of how political parties adapt to and employ globalization.

BEGINNING AT THE END OF THE CHAIN: MARKET INTEGRATION, THE WELFARE STATE, AND POLICY AUTONOMY

It is difficult to understand today's anti-globalization backlashes without reference to the growth of the modern welfare state. Within Western democracies, the development of comprehensive welfare states after the Second World War implied a degree of responsiveness not rivalled elsewhere: publics demanded social protections against injury, sickness, and unemployment, and popularly elected governments (more or less) responded in kind. This was made possible through credible international institutions put in place to manage the world economy (Ruggie 1982). However, responding to public interests proved costly, and by the end of the 1970s oil-induced price shocks fuelled downturns. As a result, many policymakers turned away from counter-cyclical models of demand management and towards neo-liberal models privileging price stability and deregulation over full employment and social protections. Attempts to lean against the prevailing neo-liberal policy winds met strong resistance by globally mobile markets. For instance, foreshadowing Greece's difficulties under SYRIZA in 2015, French President François Mitterrand's attempt at 'socialism in one country' in the 1980s resulted in capital flight and contributed to economic stagnation. But policy shifts did not translate into reduced expectations. Publics reacted to attempts to dismantle the welfare state with protest and disillusionment. The travails of the 1980s were a precursor to the 1990s, that decade in which economic globalization took off across the liberal democracies.

The twin trends of welfare retrenchment and economic integration fuelled a research agenda during the 1990s and 2000s. Many argued that the capacity of financial capital to flow unencumbered by national regulations would lead to a convergence onto a lowest common denominator tax policy across countries. This would put downward pressure on once-generous social protections. Whilst logically plausible, empirical support for this convergence hypothesis has been mixed. At best, evidence for the convergence thesis has been contingent on a subset of economic indicators (e.g. Garrett and Mitchell 2001), the type of social policy (Burgoon 2001), or the organization of domestic institutions (Swank 2002). Many argued instead that economic globalization widened, rather than narrowed, pre-existing differences amongst advanced capitalist political economies. Katzenstein (1985) argued that small open economies developed

forms of industrial organization and political institutions that privileged cooperation among social groups. In these societies, globalization is made politically possible because of, rather than in spite of, generous social protections. In the larger economies with more liberal welfare states, governments responded to increases in de facto globalization with cutting tax rates and increasing incentives for foreign investment, often against the interests of domestic constituencies. In this way, economic integration at the turn of the century predicts a divergence of policy regimes as political economies evolve along distinct paths (Steinmo 2010).

To the extent that the state has ultimate autonomy to act over a given territory (Weber 1919/2015), the convergence–divergence debate speaks to the capacity of the state to respond to its citizens. If globalization compels governments to enact policies without input from national electorates, then the implication for representation is negative. The divergence story, in contrast, leaves governments with room to manoeuvre and, in turn, the capacity for responsive policymaking. With respect to the chain of representation, the lion’s share of inquiry has been directed at understanding the tail end of the chain, on how governments, once formed, make policies. But if recent campaigns for elections and referenda are any indication, this focus on policy outcomes overlooks globalization’s influence on linkages along the way. Whilst such related topics as popular responses to international trade, European integration, and xenophobic parties have received sustained attention, there are few book-length discussions on globalization and electoral politics per se.¹ In an effort to construct some defining boundaries on this emerging research agenda, I identify three areas of inquiry about which research on globalization and mass politics has coalesced: social cleavages and policy preferences; responsibility attributions and retrospective voting; and the responses by political elites. For each, I begin with an overview of the state of scholarship and then offer an illustration. The objective of the latter is not to provide a definitive account of globalization and electoral change but to probe the plausibility of these connections and to serve as a launch pad for further inquiry.

GLOBALIZATION, SOCIAL CLEAVAGES, AND POLICY PREFERENCES

According to the chain of representation, parties-in-parliaments articulate the public interest. But what constitutes the public interest? What do voters prefer in the form of public policy, and how might these preferences differ in globalized economies from what they were during the post-war era?

To answer these questions, consider how globalization might redirect, upset, or otherwise alter social cleavages. Cleavages have long been held up as essential ingredients for creating the level of political stability. By the 1960s, Lipset and Rokkan (1967) argued that Western political systems had achieved considerable stability due to the

establishment of political parties anchored in more or less resilient social cleavages. The emergence of new parties in the 1970s and 1980s, however, required scholars to reconsider the general tendency towards stability. To make sense of the rise of new parties and the decline of others, researchers heralded short-term factors—issues and economics—as rivalling long-term social divisions their capacity to shape voter decisions (Dalton et al. 1984; Franklin et al. 1992). With generational change and cohort replacement came a rise of post-material values. Value change in tandem with an increasingly sophisticated public, the argument goes, produced more activist and less deferential electorates in Western democracies (Dalton et al. 1984; Franklin et al. 1992; Dalton 1984; Inglehart 1990). The structuring capacity of social cleavages had fallen out of favour.

Researchers have recently returned to cleavage-based understandings of political behaviour. Recent research shares with Lipset and Rokkan the notion that disruptive processes like revolutions or exogenous shocks are reflected in party-system change (see Hooghe and Marks 2017). However, the renewed focus on social structures understands cleavages to be more complex, less linear, and closer tied to positions in the labour market, on the one hand, and identity politics, on the other. Some trace the crystallization of a new political division orthogonal to the economic left–right dimension to growing education-based identities (Stubager 2010), while others examine the value change as a basis of political competition (Kriesi 2010; Dalton 2018). Some retain the socio-economic class orientation of cleavage politics but unpack them, not along a linear working/middle/upper-class continua, but as categorically distinct (Beramendi et al. 2015). Most relevant to this chapter, others connect cleavage change to the challenges posed by globalization (Kriesi et al. 2012). These challenges include deindustrialization and service sector expansion, the growth of part-time and temporary work, and changes to national labour markets spurred on by inflows of migrants, automation, and greying populations.

Each of these developments has made inroads into ‘normal’ politics, which were only hardened in the public’s mind following the Global Financial Crisis and the ensuing Great Recession of 2007–2010. What began as a financial crisis was transformed in many countries into a sovereign debt crisis that put several national economies into prolonged recessions, the depths of which had not been experienced in a generation. These shocks intensified the effects of many socio-economic changes taking place in these political economies. Economic change thus contributes to a globalization cleavage in Western societies. This cleavage rivals or exceeds the political salience of traditional divides in post-industrial societies. It pits low-skilled, nationalistic globalization ‘losers’ against the high-skilled, cosmopolitan winners (e.g. Kriesi et al. 2008; Walter 2010).

Over the past decade-plus, a growing body of scholarship has explored the mass political consequences of the globalization divide. At first, scholars focused on policy preferences and, within that, the policies most proximate to the world economy. Perhaps not surprisingly, research finds that public preferences for trade liberalization are related to the globalization cleavage. In line with Stolper-Samuelson models of

trade, owners of relatively abundant factors, such as capital in advanced economics, are found to be more in favour of liberalization while owners of more scarce factors tend to support protectionism (Scheve and Slaughter 2001; Mayda and Rodrik 2005). Consistent with Ruggie's (1982) embedded liberalism argument, Hays et al. (2005) demonstrate that government programmes designed to protect individuals harmed by imports reduce opposition to free trade.

Evidence shows that engagement with the international economy also matters for attitudes and behaviours beyond protectionism. Hellwig (2014a) finds that country exposure to trade pushes publics to demand less policy in the areas of unemployment benefits, income redistribution, and jobs. Walter's (2010) individual-level analyses of survey data, in contrast, show that globalization losers prefer welfare state expansion, owing to their greater sense of economic insecurity (also Walter 2017). Autor et al. (2016) report that areas of the United States hardest hit by trade are more likely to move to the far right or the far left politically, thereby positing a relationship between economic globalization and political polarization. Colantone and Stanig (2018) report similar findings from a sample of European democracies with respect to support for nationalist and radical right parties. Researchers also have extended the implications of the globalization divide through policy preferences to political support; Guriev et al. (2018), for instance, show that growth in skill-intensive exports increases approval of incumbent governments amongst skilled individuals (globalization winners), while growth in skill-intensive imports has the opposite effect.

The research on policy preferences and popular support follows a particular evolution. Earlier works focused on the material bases of economic interdependence and their effects on mass politics. More recently there has been a push away from material and towards more cultural conceptions of globalization. These studies emphasize the relative importance of cosmopolitan worldviews and in-group/out-group referents (Hainmueller and Hiscox 2006; Mutz and Kim 2017) over material costs and benefits (Fordham and Kleinberg 2012). According to this view, globalization depresses the salience of some issues, such as bread-and-butter economic concerns, and elevates that of others, such as those falling along the traditional values divide. In this way, it re-orientates the issue space and creates an opening for new social cleavages (Kriesi et al. 2008, 2012; Grossman and Sauger 2019).

As an illustration of this claim, consider the evolution of policy attitudes. Does globalization contribute to value change among Western publics? The European Social Survey (ESS) has asked publics whether they agree or disagree with a range of issue opinions. Two have been asked consistently since the survey's inception. One relates to the distribution of income and government involvement in markets: 'The government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels'; the other pertains to post-material lifestyle considerations: 'Gay men and lesbians should be free to live their own life as they wish'. Figure 31.1 displays country means on these 5-point scales—running from 1 for 'strongly disagree' to 5 for 'strongly agree'—from 2002 and 2016, the first and last years for which data are available.² The graph on the left shows that with respect to income redistribution, in some countries, like Germany, publics have

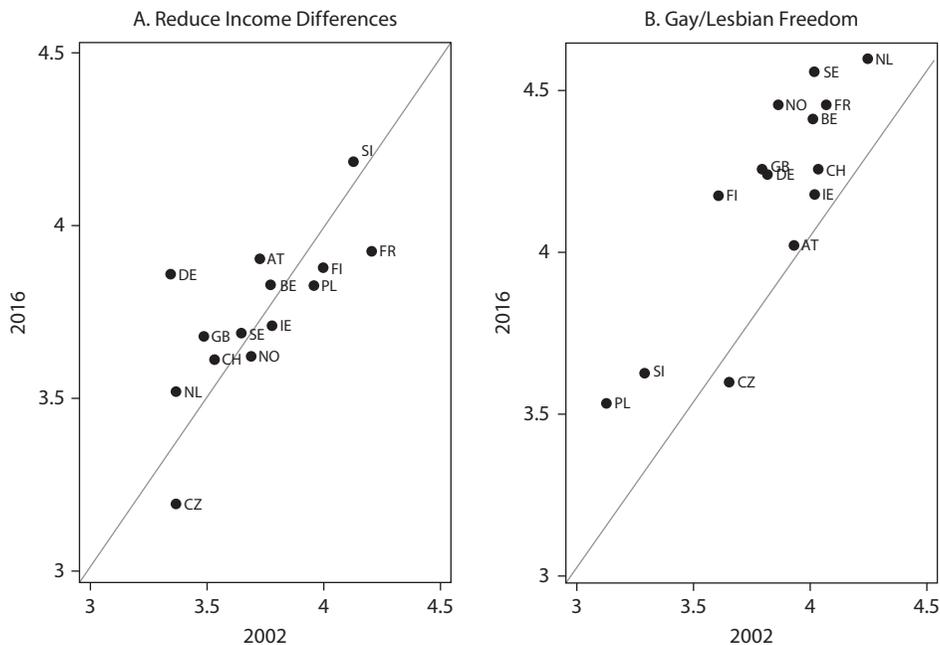


FIGURE 31.1 Issue Opinions on Income Redistribution and Homosexual Lifestyle in 14 Countries, 2002 and 2016

Note: Figures display mean values on 5 point scales such that 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree with “The government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels” (left-hand side) and “Gay men and lesbians should be free to live their own life as they wish” (right-hand side).

Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File (2018).

become more leftist whilst in others, like France, national electorates have tilted in a more market direction. On balance, however, collective opinion appears quite stable. In contrast, we see that, with but one exception (Czech Republic), aggregate opinion on the lifestyle issue of homosexuality has shifted in a more liberal direction.

Are these (non)changes related to globalization? To investigate, Figure 31.2 plots country means for all countries across surveys—conducted in 2002, 2016, and points in-between—against the KOF de facto economic globalization measure (Gygli et al. 2018).³ The plots suggest that higher levels of globalization are associated with more conservative views on income redistribution but with more liberal views on lifestyle considerations, as gauged by the homosexuality lifestyle.⁴

Whilst these plots cannot address differences between globalization winners and losers, their simplicity drives home a pair of important points about electorates in liberal democracies in the twenty-first century: first, despite significant levels of economic change and accompanying social change, issue opinions on material matters like income redistribution have been reasonably stable throughout the established democracies. Opinion change is rather more noticeable in the realm of cultural values, as proxied by views on lifestyle choices of gays and lesbians. Second, these changes can be traced, at least in part, to globalization.

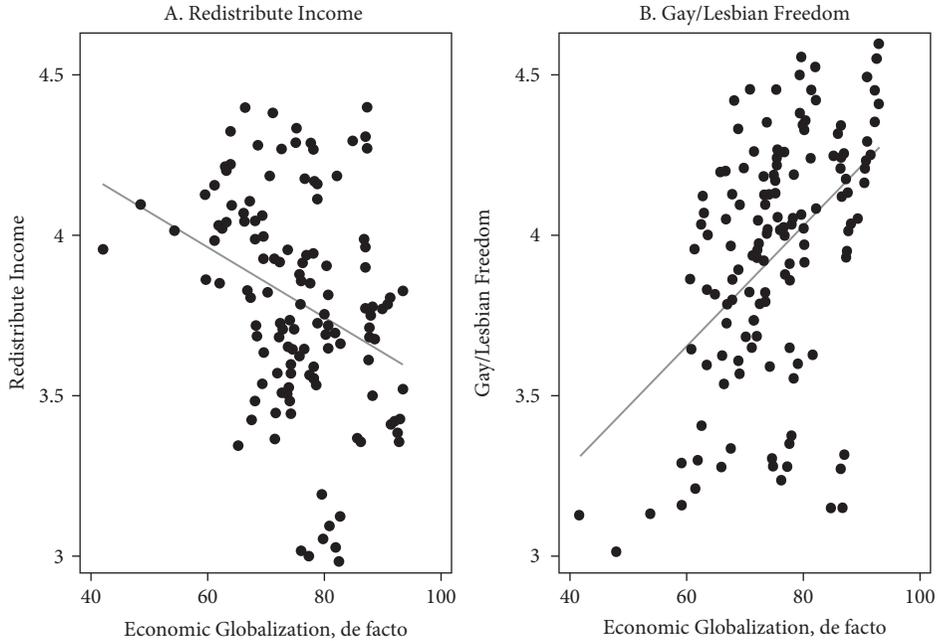


FIGURE 31.2 Issue Opinions and Economic Globalization in 18 Countries, 2002–2016

Note: Vertical axes display mean values on 5 point scales such that 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree with “The government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels” (graph A) and “Gay men and lesbians should be free to live their own life as they wish” (graph B). Horizontal axes display country-year Economic Globalization de facto scores from the KOF Globalization Survey. Lines are the fitted bivariate regression lines. Slopes are robust to removal of outliers.

Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File (2018); Gygli et al. 2018.

EVALUATING POLICYMAKERS: GLOBALIZATION, RESPONSIBILITY ATTRIBUTIONS, AND VOTING

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With respect to representation, a central concern of research on the globalization–welfare state nexus is policy responsibility. Indeed, the post-war social contract requires it. Elections give citizens the opportunity to weigh in on policy outcomes. This means that the voter’s job is twofold: first, evaluate observable outcomes with respect to economic conditions, health care, education, and so on; and second, determine whether to assign responsibility for these outcomes, be they deemed good or bad, to their elected representatives. Are voters up to these tasks? On this score, studies of public opinion are mixed. Some maintain that if armed with heuristics and a degree of sophistication, voters can link policy outcomes to the responsible party, be it among elected officials occupying different jurisdictions or between elected and non-elected actors. The weight of the evidence, however, implies that biases and information

deficits prevent individuals from accurately assigning credit and blame to responsible actors (Cutler 2008; Malhotra and Kuo 2008). These biases are more apparent when it comes to multilevel governance structures like the European Union. For instance, citizens' partisan and group-serving biases have been shown to register a large impact on attributions of responsibility in the EU, preventing individuals from linking them back to actual policy jurisdictions (Hobolt and Tilley 2014; León et al. 2018).

Analyses of 'who's responsible' reveal that the ability of citizens to perform a task fundamental to representative democracy—assessing the (in)actions of their elected representatives—is compromised in complex environments. In empirical work, complexity generally appears in the form of political institutions such as the separation of powers, federalism, or multilevel governance. But with globalization, transnationally mobile actors like multinational enterprises, banks, and international lending agencies contribute still more to this complexity. The 'global economy option' further diffuses responsibility attributions (Hellwig et al. 2008; Jensen et al. 2013). The European economic crisis highlights the problem of assigning blame to relevant actors. Observational and experimental evidence finds that blame attributions are particularly influenced by partisanship, with governing party supporters more likely to blame the European Union or commercial banks for the crisis rather than their elected policy-makers (Hellwig and Coffey 2011; Fernández-Albertos et al. 2013).

So even if their views are coloured by a partisan lens, many individuals perceive globalization as a constraint on government action. Further, and more importantly, these market-induced constraints matter for how voters hold policymakers to account. Whilst voter decisions are still driven by retrospective performance evaluations, the salience of *economic* evaluations is weaker in more globalized economies. The implication is that economic openness derails the economic voting prediction that national economic performance influences popular support for political incumbents. This prediction finds support in analyses of *de facto* and *de jure* forms of globalization (Hellwig 2010). Chiozza and Manzetti (2015) argue that since governments have reduced competency under globalization, citizens evaluate leaders on the basis of other, less discerning, parameters. The implication is that voters attach greater weight to performance considerations in non-economic issues like health care, education and, indeed, exports and import penetration when evaluating government performance (Hellwig 2014b).

A major path through which globalization impinges on politics within democracies, I argue, runs through responsibility attributions. To illustrate this claim, I pair macro-indicators of globalization with individual-level survey data from the International Social Survey Programme's 2016 Role of Government survey (ISSP 2018). Approximately half of respondents surveyed across twenty-six advanced democracies asserted that policies in their country depend more on who is in government than on what is happening in the world economy. Almost as many, however, maintained instead that the world economy matters more for policy outcomes than does the government of the day. In many countries, including France, Germany, Denmark, and Norway, majorities hold this view. Inasmuch as substantive representation requires governments to select policies reflecting public interest (Pitkin 1967), the share of those who grant greater authority to 'the world economy' than to the sitting government appears to be grounds

for concern. What explains why, for some individuals, developments in the world economy matter more for policy outcomes than do the actions of their national governments? To assess this question, I estimate a multivariate model. The dependent variable, *Room to Maneuver Constraint (RMC)*, is coded 1 for those saying that policies in their country depend more on what is happening in the world economy and 0 for those saying that policies depend more on who is in government. To gauge whether the forces of globalization influence RMC, I include a trio of variables. Exposure to the global economy may be assessed at two levels: across countries and across individuals. For the former, I include the de facto economic globalization measure described above. For the latter, I create variables indicating whether the respondent is employed in a tradable sector and whether his/her occupation has the potential to be moved abroad.⁵ Together, *Globalization*, *Tradable industry*, and *Offshorability* assess whether exposure to the world economy markets increases the likelihood of linking national policy outcomes to global economic forces.

I also examine whether exposure to the globalization context *conditions* the influence of occupation-based factors on public opinion. It may be that those in tradable sectors or working in occupations susceptible to offshoring are more apt to recognize policy constraints but only if their government's exposure to the world economy is large. Further, recognition of policy constraints may require a modicum of sophistication or simply be based on one's social class. Accordingly, I include a measure of education such that individuals with post-secondary degrees are coded 1 and others 0. To capture class effects, models include a measure of household income, scored 1 for individuals in the upper half of their nation's income distribution and 0 otherwise. Lastly, in recognition that policy constraint also may be shaped by politics, I include a variable scored 1 if the individual voted for the party of the sitting chief executive in the preceding national election.

Table 31.1 reports results from regressing *RMC* on these covariates.⁶ None of the objective globalization indicators yield statistically significant effects. On the other hand, *Voted for government party* returns a positive and precisely estimated coefficient, indicating that government supporters are more likely to assign policy responsibility to the world economy than to their government. This finding is consistent with research on the elite conditioning of public opinion to avoid blame. A full consideration of globalization's effects, however, requires us to see if they are contingent on the globalization divide within societies. Accordingly, I re-estimate the model by allowing *Globalization's* slope to vary according to *Tradable industry*, *Offshorability*, *Education*, and *Household income*. Models 2–5 show that each of these individual attributes increases the slope on *Globalization*. Figure 31.3 displays results in terms of the marginal effect. Graphs indicate that the influence of these attributes on perceptions of policy constraint is greater in more globalized economies, such as Switzerland or Denmark, than in those with larger domestic markets, like the United States or Japan. This 'globalization effect' is revealed not only by way of objective exposure owing to sector and occupation, but also through class (household income) and education/skills.⁷ So while political dispositions influence perceptions of policy capacity in world markets, objective levels of economic globalization also matter.

Table 31.1 Globalization, Exposure to World Markets, and Policy Constraints

Globalization	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Effect on intercept	0.599 (0.776)	0.490 (0.776)	0.492 (0.776)	0.036* (0.712)	0.409 (0.770)
<i>Tradable industry</i>	0.008 (0.031)	-0.347 (0.179)	0.006 (0.032)	0.036 (0.034)	0.011 (0.032)
<i>Offshorability</i>	-0.009 (0.037)	-0.013 (0.037)	-0.530** (0.186)	-0.041 (0.040)	-0.008 (0.037)
<i>Education</i>	0.15 (0.029)	0.015 (0.029)	0.016 (0.029)	-0.672** (0.191)	0.019 (0.029)
<i>Household income</i>	0.027 (0.042)	0.027 (0.042)	0.027 (0.042)	0.026 (0.043)	-0.847* (0.346)
<i>Voted government party</i>	0.180** (0.032)	-0.174** (0.026)	0.179** (0.032)	0.174** (0.032)	0.181** (0.032)
Effect on slope of <i>Globalization</i>					
<i>Tradable industry</i>		0.506** (0.248)			
<i>Offshorability</i>			0.736* (0.257)		
<i>Education</i>				0.977** (0.267)	
<i>Household income</i>					1.220** (0.468)
Intercept	-0.717 (0.555)	-0.641 (0.555)	-0.601 (0.555)	-0.337 (0.513)	-0.584 (0.549)
N observations	28,087	28,087	28,087	28,087	28,087
N countries	25	25	25	25	25
Wald chi sqr	97.16**	100.69**	105.25**	109.23**	104.24**

Notes: The dependent variable is scored 1 for those saying that policies in [COUNTRY] depend more on what is happening in the world economy and 0 for those saying that policies depend more on who is in government. Cells report coefficients from multilevel logit models with random intercepts and slopes. Standard errors are in parentheses.

** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$. Models contain controls for gender, age, and urban residence; results available from author.

Sources: ISSP 2018; Gygli et al. 2018.

COMING FULL CIRCLE: GLOBALIZATION, PARTY BEHAVIOUR, AND POLICY OUTCOMES

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With respect to representation’s principal–agent relationship, political elites occupy the other side of the coin from the public. According to the chain of representation, political parties aggregate and articulate the public interest, which, upon formation

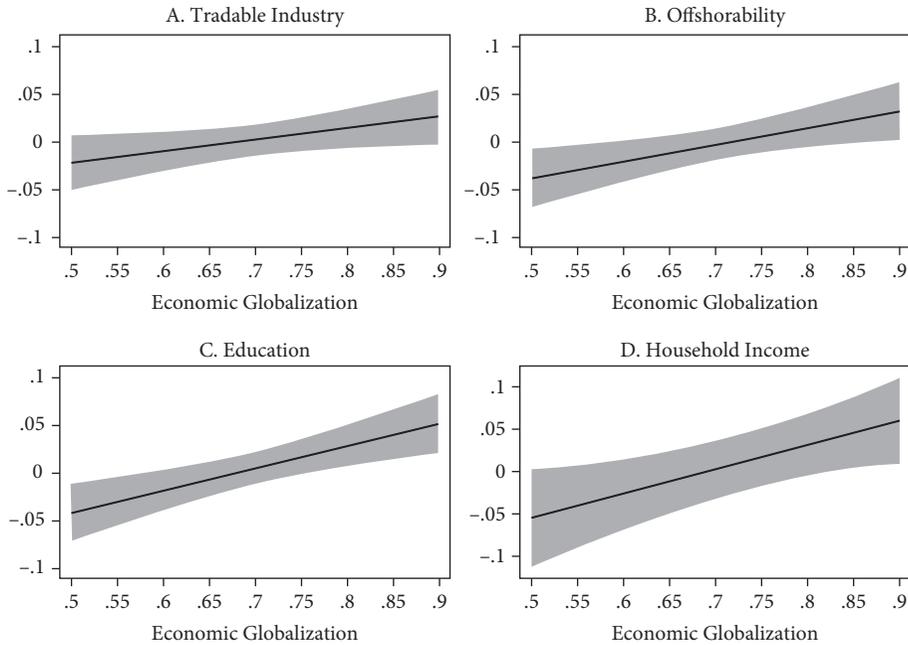


FIGURE 31.3 Marginal Effects of Individual Attributes on Policy Constraints across the Range of Economic Globalization

Note: Graphs display marginal effects as the difference in predicted probabilities for agreeing that that policies depend more on what is happening in the world economy

of governments, translates into policy outcomes. The requirement of being regularly subjected to elections is commonly assumed to incentivize parties, regardless of motivation, to respond to the preferences of the electorate. For office-seeking parties, gaining more votes improves the party's position for post-election coalition negotiations. For policy-seeking parties, electoral strength translates into more leverage to pull the governing coalition's policy in its preferred direction (Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012). Consistent with this reasoning, the weight of the evidence from industrialized democracies finds that elected representatives and the governments they form are responsive to the public's preferences. However, while normatively pleasing, recent advances in the study of party behaviour have uncovered several exceptions to this responsiveness rule. Research finds party responsiveness to public sentiment varies according to such structures as electoral systems, power-sharing arrangements, and federalism (Soroka and Wlezien 2010; Kang and Powell 2010). Responsiveness also has been shown to vary with party type: while mainstream parties on the centre-left and centre-right tend to react in kind to changes in public opinion, single issue or 'niche' parties—many of whom target (anti)globalization sentiment in the electorate—discount the views of the electorate and instead hew to their constituencies (Ezrow et al. 2011). Party incentives to react to party competitors (Adams and Somer-Topcu 2009) and to take cues from parties abroad (Böhmelet et al. 2016) also may stymie their

capacity to respond to public opinion, as may differences in party organization (Lehrer 2012; Schumacher et al. 2013).

To the list of structural factors shaping party behaviour we can add the impact of the world economy. Consistent with a policy constraint argument, Ward et al. (2015) show that increased economic integration is associated with increased party emphasis on non-economic issues during election campaigns. Adams et al. (2009) reason that parties on the left are unaffected by economic openness and instead are influenced by their core constituencies. Ward et al. (2011) argue that the influence of globalization on parties' policy positions is conditional on the position of the median voter: that parties will adopt more rightward positions due to globalization, but only when the median voter is to the left. Ezrow and Hellwig (2014) assess how globalization influences party responsiveness. Whilst parties are generally motivated to respond in kind to changes in public opinion, for the more policy-constrained governing parties, responsiveness is notably weaker as national economies become more globalized. In demonstrating less responsiveness amongst governing parties, these findings share features with the convergence hypothesis out of the earlier welfare state literature, bringing the study of the world economy and domestic politics full circle.

More recently, the fallout of the 2008 financial crisis has captured the attention of researchers on political parties. And, as with the globalization and parties research noted above, in this literature the themes of policy constraints and inattentive party behaviour are prevalent. Traber et al. (2018) evaluate how the recent economic crises have influenced party issue salience. They argue that, whilst voters care about the economy in times of crisis, parties charged with leading governments wish to downplay the issue—thus leading to a salience gap between political elites and voters (see also Pardos-Prado and Sagarzazu 2019). Clements et al. (2018) analyse the effect of the economic crisis on party competition and find that governing parties are less responsive to voters, preferring instead to cater to the preferences of market elites. And recent volumes by Hutter and Kriesi (2019) and Hellwig et al. (2020) examine how economic crises have reshaped European party systems and the connections between parties and electorates.

In sum, consistent with analyses of cleavage change, the rhetoric and reality of globalization in general, and the economic crisis more specifically, have led scholars to conclude that, parties have '[lost] their structural roots in society, their coherence and their representative function' (Hernández and Kriesi 2016: 207) and that they have turned 'from maximising competitors into risk averse colluders' (Blyth and Katz 2010: 40). The upshot is that parties' penchant to articulate the public interest and, in government, to advance policies informed by these interests is under stress.

By way of illustrating globalization's effects on the actions of political elites, I return to the 2016 ISSP survey. The survey provides respondents with a list and asks them to identify the people and organizations that have the most influence on their government's actions. Amongst the responses, a pair of options best approximate responsiveness: 'citizens in general' (responsiveness to the median voter) and 'people who vote for the party/the parties in government' (responsiveness to core supporters).

Individuals who select these actors thus possess a modicum of faith in how their country's democracy works. Alternatively, those who believe actors like 'business, banks, and industry' and 'international organizations' carry the most influence possess a less sanguine view of popular sovereignty. I use these response items to help investigate whether individuals who perceive governments to be constrained or who are exposed to international competition by way of their occupation are less likely to perceive governments to be influenced by the public—or, to put it succinctly—to be less responsive. I create four variables, each scoring 1 if the respondent identified that actor as having the 'most' or the 'second most' influence and 0 if the respondent selected a different actor instead. I regress these four perceptions of government policy influence on the variables introduced in the previous section: *RMC*, *Tradable industry*, *Offshorability*, *Voted for government*, and the demographic variables.

Table 31.2 reports multilevel logit estimates, and Figure 31.4 displays results in terms of marginal effects. Graphs report the effect of a marginal change in each covariate on the probability that the respondent deems the actor in question as influencing the

Table 31.2 Modelling Perceptions of Who Influences Government Policy

	Model 1 Citizens in General	Model 2 Voters for Government	Model 3 Business, Banks, and Industry	Model 4 International Organizations
<i>Room to Manoeuvre Constraint</i>	−0.147** (0.035)	−0.429** (0.032)	0.259** (0.028)	0.440** (0.032)
<i>Tradable industry</i>	−0.061 (0.041)	−0.068 (0.037)	0.108** (0.033)	−0.011 (0.039)
<i>Offshorability</i>	0.027 (0.048)	0.059 (0.042)	0.069 (0.038)	0.065 (0.045)
<i>Education</i>	−0.189** (0.037)	−0.009 (0.033)	0.332** (0.029)	0.069* (0.035)
<i>Household income</i>	0.057 (0.056)	0.104* (0.050)	0.126** (0.045)	−0.005 (0.053)
<i>Voted for government</i>	0.196** (0.040)	−0.010 (0.036)	−0.148** (0.033)	−0.044 (0.040)
Intercept	−1.370** (0.101)	−1.237** (0.090)	−0.148 (0.112)	−1.288** (0.113)
N obs	26,228	26,228	26,228	26,228
N countries	25	25	25	25
Wald chi sq	77.412	307.143	321.682	457.762

Notes: Dependent variable is scored 1 for those saying that the given actor has the most or second most influence on the actions of the [COUNTRY] government actions and 0 for those who identify other actors instead. Cells report coefficients from multilevel logit models with random intercepts. Standard errors are in parentheses.

** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

Models contain controls for gender, age, and urban residence; results available from author.

Sources: ISSP 2018.

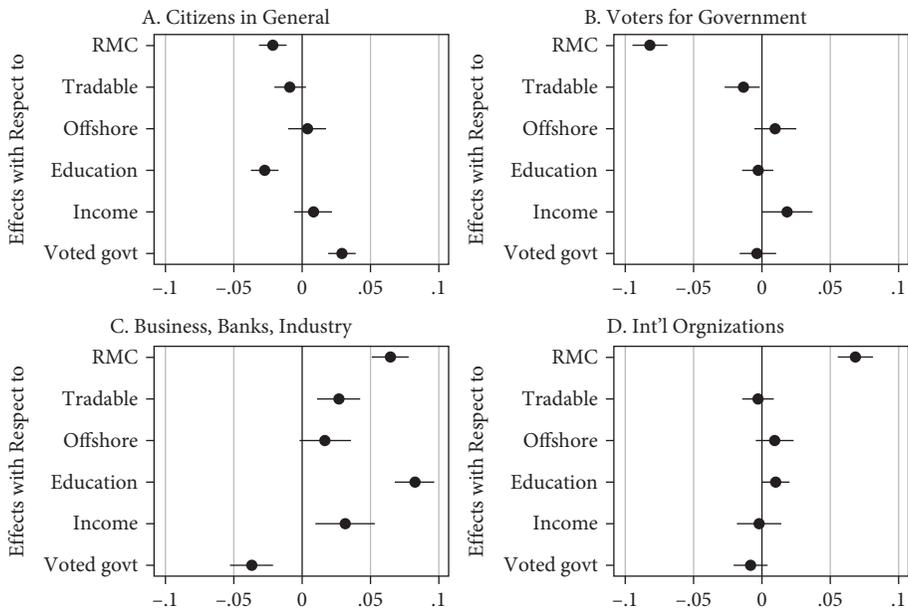


FIGURE 31.4 Marginal Effects of Individual Attributes on Who Influences Government Actions

Note: Graphs report the impact of a one-unit change in the independent variables on the change in the probability that the respondent identifies given actor as influencing their national government’s actions. Lines report 95% confidence intervals. Model estimates reported in Table 31.2.

actions of the national government. With respect to the globalization items, results show that those who see policy as depending more on the world economy are less likely to believe that citizens in general or, for that matter, the government’s voters, exert influence over the government’s actions. Rather, these individuals tend to assign influence to global market actors—businesses, banks, and industry—and to international organizations. These marginal effects are comparable in magnitude to those produced by demographic characteristics. Individual exposure to the world economy also matters. Most notably, those in tradable industries or subject to losing their job through offshoring are more likely to place influence on market actors. Note also that as a possible means of exoneration or partisan bias, governing party supporters are more likely to have a positive view of popular sovereignty and also are more likely to downplay the influence of unelected businesses, banks, and industries.

CONCLUSION

Surveying the scholarship on the politics of globalization, Kayser (2007: 341) concluded that ‘the sheer volume of literature has made it easy to overlook an important fact: Very little of it addresses the effect of economic globalization on actual politics, understood

more narrowly as electoral politics'. An objective of this chapter has been to reassess Kayser's claim a dozen years later by identifying and synthesizing a growing, yet still loosely connected, body of scholarship linking globalization, national electorates, and representation in the liberal democracies. The expanding research programme on globalization and citizen politics is informed by work on the globalization–welfare state nexus, on the sociology of cleavage politics, on the bases of policy preferences, on the political psychology of how individuals partition credit and blame, and on the behaviour of political parties. These literatures have traditionally occupied separate fields in political science and, as such, often talk past each other. It is essential that a more coherent research agenda emerges—one linking macro political economy work with micro behavioural research—if we are to advance our knowledge on the increasingly relevant topic.

A second goal has been to connect these insights to the chain of representation in liberal democracies. This chain posits a series of linkages, including citizens selecting party representatives, parties articulating the public interest and forming governments, and governments making policies, evaluated against the views of citizens. This model, while useful in fixing ideas, depicts a *closed* political system. In the present era of globalization this simplification is untenable. Further, the evidence presented here indicates that globalization has, on balance, an adverse influence on how representative democracy works within nation states. This is illustrated by its impact on policy preferences, on perceptions of government policy capacity, and on beliefs in who influences government decisions. Future work should explore new and more robust ways to test these relationships. Future investigations into a globalization–representation nexus should also range beyond the economic forms of globalization and explore its cultural and political forms. This research agenda will be advanced by specifying which facets of 'globalization' matter most for the attitudes, perceptions, and behaviours of national electorates.

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NOTES

1. Exceptions are Hellwig (2014b) and Vowles and Xezonakis (2016).
2. Data are from countries which received these questions in both years: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Finland, France, Ireland, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.
3. KOF stands for *Konjunkturforschungstelle*, or economic institute. The measure is KOF's de facto economic globalization scores. Data displayed in Figure 31.1 are from representative sample surveys in the countries listed in the previous footnote plus Denmark, Hungary, Portugal, and Spain.

4. Slopes on the bivariate regression lines are statistically significantly different from zero and are robust to inclusion in multivariate models, which correct for non-random errors associated with country and include period effects for year.
5. Individuals in tradable industries are those working in the private sector in for-profit organizations, but not in occupations that are predominantly domestic in orientation. *Offshorability* is produced by merging in Blinder's index to respondent occupation using the ISCO-08 codes included in the survey (Blinder 2009). Following previous work (Walter 2017, 2018), the measure is dichotomized such that those with values greater than zero are coded as 1 and all others are 0.
6. I include those countries that are either OECD or EU member states. This includes Australia, Belgium, Chile, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Japan, South Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, New Zealand, Norway, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United States. British survey respondents are dropped because the survey lacks information on party support. Results do not change when I include the United Kingdom and omit *Voted for government party* from the models. Models also control for gender, age, and the urban/rural divide.
7. *Vote for government party* has no effect on the slope on *Globalization*.

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CHAPTER 32

REPRESENTATION AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

SARA B. HOBOLT

INTRODUCTION

THE European Union (EU) is a hybrid organization: more closely integrated than an international organization comprised of sovereign national governments, but less unified than a nation-state democracy. This creates a tension when it comes to democratic representation in the EU. On the one hand, the EU rests on an intergovernmental model of representation centred on indirect representation by nationally elected executives in the European Council and the Council of the European Union, which are the core executive and legislative institutions. On the other hand, the EU has been developing a direct path of citizen representation more akin to national democracies with elections to the European Parliament. There are, however, anomalies in both pathways of representation. The indirect path of representation through the national governments in the Council is compromised by the lack of national vetoes on most legislative matters, which means that national governments may find themselves outvoted and unable to represent the interests of their national constituents. Equally, the direct path of representation has its flaws, as the European Parliament remains weaker than national parliaments with regard to executive appointments and legislative initiatives. Elections to the European Parliament have also been marred by low turnout and lack of citizen engagement with European policy issues. Furthermore, the European Union has unusually strong ‘non-majoritarian’ institutions: a European Commission, with dominant agenda-setting and enforcement powers and only limited claims to representative credentials, and a European Central Bank with greater autonomy from political accountability than other central banks.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the ‘democratic deficit’ of the European Union has been the subject of much scholarship and public debate for the past two decades. Indeed, the tension between two modes of representation has been at the heart of much

of this critique: the national mode of representation gradually weakened by the EU as powers have been transferred from national parliaments to the European level, but without recompense in the form of adequate mechanisms of representation at the European level (for an overview see Føllesdal and Hix 2006). As a consequence, the EU is seen to lack satisfactory mechanisms for representation of citizens. Yet, the EU is also an organization with an institutional and political setup that is always evolving. In recent decades, further deepening of European integration has been accompanied by greater legislative powers for the European Parliament with the aim of strengthening citizen representation in the EU (Hix et al. 2007; Rittberger 2005). Moreover, the European Parliament has sought to gain greater influence over the appointment of the European Commission president with the introduction of the *Spitzenkandidaten* process (Hobolt 2014).

In light of these developments, this chapter explores the nature and quality of representation in the European Union by examining the dual paths of legitimation available to European citizens: the indirect path of electing national parliamentarians, and in turn governments, who represent national interests in the Council; and the direct path of electing representatives to the European Parliament. Both paths matter if we want to understand democratic representation in the European Union. The chapter examines the extent to which each of these channels facilitates substantive policy representation at the EU level. We then turn to citizens' perceptions of democracy at both the national and the European level and finally conclude by discussing the dynamic nature of EU representation.

DUAL REPRESENTATION IN THE EU

Political representation is at the heart of liberal democracies, where power is delegated from citizens to their representatives in parliament and, either directly or indirectly, to the executive branch and head of government (Strøm 2000). When representation in the EU is discussed, we often use the nation-state as a model. Whilst the EU lacks many of the features of a nation-state, it is a multi-level political system with many institutional similarities to a federal system. Its core institutional structure is composed of a dual legislature (the Parliament and the Council) and a dual executive (the Commission and the European Council). Similar to federal states, the EU has two paths of representation: the constituent states and the citizens. In line with principal-agent theories of representative democracies, member states can be regarded as the 'principals' delegating powers to supranational institutions, or voters can be seen as 'principals' that delegate powers indirectly to the governing 'agents', or directly to their representatives in the legislature (Fearon 1999; Strøm 2000). The EU institutional framework reflects the interests of these two sets of 'principals'—the member states of the EU and the citizens of Europe—resulting in 'two channels of political influence, with two sets of delegates who may be mandated, and with two arenas in which politics

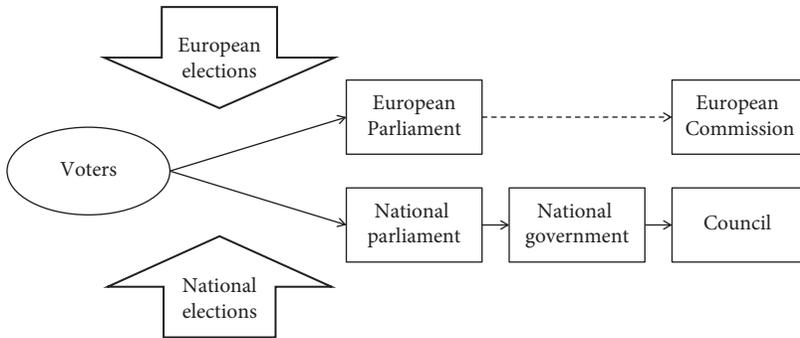


FIGURE 32.1 Paths of Representation in the European Union

might be played out' (Mair 2007: 8). In both of these channels, citizens are represented. This is illustrated in Figure 32.1.

As the figure shows, European citizens are represented directly via elections to the European Parliament that take place every five years. Successive treaty reforms have significantly enhanced the powers of the European Parliament in EU policymaking, establishing it as a co-legislator with the Council in most areas of policymaking (Hix et al. 2007). Indeed, the Union's primary response to the increase in the scope and level of European Union power has been to strengthen the European Parliament's legislative powers, with the aim of improving democracy and accountability in the EU (Rittberger 2005). European citizens are also represented indirectly in the policymaking process through their national government representatives in the Council. The Council of the EU, composed of national ministers, remains the key legislator in the policymaking process, and the European Council is the dominant executive body when it comes to setting the EU's general political direction and priorities.

The constitutional framework of the European Union thus provides clear mechanisms of representation. Elections at both the national and at the European level allow citizens—the principals—to control EU policymakers—the agents. There are two primary mechanisms by which elections can ensure that citizens' interests are represented: *selection* and *sanctioning* (see Fearon 1999). Selection is an *ex ante* mechanism that allows voters to choose good political representatives with competence and shared preferences (Duch and Stevenson 2008; Hobolt and Høyland 2011). This is also closely related to a 'mandate conception' of representation where voters use elections to choose the politicians who best represent their policy preferences and thereby provide a democratic mandate for a specific policy platform (e.g. Manin et al. 1999). In contrast, sanctioning is an *ex post* mechanism of democratic control in which voters reward or punish incumbents on the basis of past performance and thereby induce elected officials to be responsive to public preferences (Fiorina 1981; Key 1966; Manin 1997). On paper, both pathways of representation in the EU allow for selection and sanctioning of representatives. But in the ensuing sections, we will consider how well these mechanisms work in practice.

NATIONAL PATH OF REPRESENTATION

The origins of the EU were that of intergovernmental cooperation among member states, driven by common economic and security interests. From this international relations perspective, the original ‘principals’ were the member states, rather than citizens, and representation thus concerned the degree to which national interests were safeguarded at the European level. Much scholarship has focused on why member states agreed to transfer powers to the EU level. Rational choice approaches focus on delegation to supranational institutions, such as the European Commission, as a way of reducing the transaction costs that are associated with the adoption and implementation of policies at the EU level. In particular, supranational institutions (‘agents’) may solve problems resulting from incomplete information by providing decision makers with the technical information they need. EU institutions, such as the European Commission and the European Court of Justice, may also help to ensure the credibility of commitments adopted at the supranational level by monitoring member states’ compliance with joint decisions (Majone 1998; Moravcsik 1998; Pollack 2003). Delegation from national parliaments and governments to the EU level can thus serve national interests as it makes it easier to arrive at ‘Pareto efficient’ outcomes that maximize the collective gains of integration without making anyone worse off. However, such delegation focused on the efficiency of outputs can also come at the expense of representation. We focus on three sets of concerns.

First, there are the dangers of ‘agency’ drift, that is, the risk that supranational institutions may take advantage of their discretionary powers to pursue their own policy preferences and promote integration against the wishes of national governments (Pollack 2003). National governments’ have incentives to delegate powers to the Commission to shift blame, to improve the efficiency of decision-making and to rely on its technical expertise (Tallberg 2002). Yet, the question is whether the ‘principals’—that is, the member states in this context—are able to fully control the actions of the supranational ‘agents’. Or whether these agents are pursuing their own agenda, often a more pro-integration agenda, independently of the member states. Much of the scholarship has focused on the agenda-setting powers of the European Commission and the European Court of Justice, and the degree to which these institutions have acted as a ‘motor of integration’ in ways that go beyond the original intentions of member states. At one extreme, intergovernmentalist scholars such as Moravcsik have argued that supranational organizations have never generated outcomes that ‘alter the terms under which governments negotiate new bargains’ (Moravcsik 1998: 482–90; see also Tsebelis and Garrett 2001 Moravcsik 2002); while others have argued that there are conditions under which supranational institutions have considerable discretion to pursue an agenda that goes beyond the original intention of member states (e.g. Sandholtz and Stone Sweet 1998; Niemann and Ioannou 2015). In other words, delegation from member states to supranational institutions—in the name of efficiency—may weaken the ability of the member states to shape policy outcomes.

A second related concern speaks to the degree to which the interests of individual member states are represented in the EU policymaking process. National governments play a critical role in the decision-making institutions in the EU, both in the main legislative body of the Council of the EU, which comprises national ministers, and in the key executive body, the European Council, where heads of state and government set the medium-term agenda for the EU. However, there are important limitations to the extent to which the decisions taken in these important institutions can be said to always reflect the interests of individual member states and their parliaments. Most decisions in the Council of the EU are subject to the decision rules of Qualified Majority Voting rather than unanimity. While studies have shown that individual national governments are responsive to domestic public preferences in the Council (Hagemann et al. 2017; Schneider 2018), EU decisions do not necessarily reflect the positions of individual governments on all matters. The Council is known for its culture of consensus (Novak 2013) with a focus on Pareto-improving outcome and the avoidance of conflict where one or more member states find themselves in a permanent minority.

However, there are clear examples of redistributive conflicts within the Council, and in such situations some member states may find that their interests are not protected (Scharpf 2012). A stark example of this was the sovereign debt crisis that followed the global financial crisis. The impact of the crisis was highly asymmetric across member states, with the Southern countries and Ireland being the worst affected (Cramme and Hobolt 2014). The constraints imposed by the EU in response to the crisis—which included measures of fiscal oversight and a requirement that national budgets be assessed by the Commission—made it more difficult for national parliaments to control their executives. Such constraints primarily affected those countries in receipt of bailouts, often referred to as ‘debtor states’, and other states with excessive deficits. This meant that, in effect, the parliamentary sovereignty of such member states was constrained by the decisions of other member states in the Council. As a consequence, national electorates in debtor states, such as Portugal and Ireland, were less willing to sanction their national governments for a decision taken collectively by the Council (see Lobo and Lewis-Beck 2012; Magalhães 2014). Unsurprisingly, therefore, many of the sacrifices and rescue conditionalities agreed at the European level on member states were perceived by people as imposed from the outside with limited legitimacy. The new rules governing economic cooperation have also significantly limited the policy choices available to elected government in the Eurozone. Taxing and spending policies are the main issues in domestic electoral and party politics. Yet, these new mechanisms of Eurozone governance heavily constrained the policy promises that parties can make to electorates on these issues, and the room for manoeuvre of politicians once elected to office (Laffan 2014). In other words, the Euro crisis illustrates that the concentration of powers in the hands of national executives in crisis times in the EU does not necessarily imply that the interests of *all* member states are represented.

The final question about the national path of representation in the EU is whether the preferences of the ultimate ‘principals’, the voters, are adequately represented by the Council and the European Council. As shown in Figure 32.1, national electorates are

clearly indirectly represented in the EU decision-making process, through elections to national parliaments, and in turn executives, which then shape policymaking in the EU. The national path route thus provides voters with the opportunity to influence their national representatives, who, in turn, shape the course of integration in the Council of Ministers and the European Council. However, for interest to be adequately represented at this selection stage, it requires that voters—at least in part—select politicians who they feel will adequately represent them at the European level. To examine this, a growing body of work has been exploring the impact of European attitudes on voters' choices in national elections, a process coined 'EU issue voting' (De Vries 2007). There is now considerable evidence that EU issue voting does play an important role in some countries, at certain times (see for example De Vries 2007; De Vries and Tillman 2010; Evans 1998, 2002; Schoen 2008; Tillman 2004; De Vries and Hobolt 2012). Tillman (2004) finds evidence of EU issue voting in Austria, Finland, and Sweden at the time of accession, a period in which EU membership can be assumed to have been salient and at least somewhat divisive. Similarly, De Vries (2007) finds evidence of EU issue voting in Denmark and the United Kingdom, two countries characterized by high levels of party conflict and issue salience over Europe, yet fails to find such evidence in the Netherlands, for example, where party conflict and issue salience on European integration were at the time much more limited. Exploring differences between East and West in 2004, De Vries and Tillman (2010) demonstrate that EU issue voting is more prominent in East-Central Europe compared to more consolidated democracies in Western Europe. More recent evidence in the context of the Euro crisis has shown that the EU has played an increasingly important role in national elections and shaped voting decisions and the degree to which national governments are being held to account for their performance (Bellucci et al. 2012).

In sum, research shows that national elections can function as a mechanism for transmitting preferences on EU policymaking from citizens to national executives, who are represented in the Council. Yet, the degree to which Europe matters in national elections is sporadic and depends on the politicization of the issue. Europe remains very remote from the everyday concerns of most citizens. Moreover, even to the degree that EU policymaking matters in the *selection* of representatives in national elections, there is still a question of whether governments are held to account, or *sanctioned*, for their performance at the European level. While there is far greater transparency of Council deliberations today than previously, the EU is still an opaque institution to most citizens, and governments have incentives to shift blame to the EU rather than be sanctioned for unpopular policy outcomes (Hobolt and Tilley 2014). Also, voters do not use national elections primarily to hold national governments to account for the performance of the EU. Hence, incumbents' positions and performance in the EU generally only play a small role in national election campaigns and vote choices, although there are exceptions to this (see e.g. De Vries 2007).

Overall, while voter preferences are indirectly represented at the EU level, there are weaknesses when it comes to this path of representation. Next we turn to the European path of representation in the EU.

EUROPEAN PATH OF REPRESENTATION

The European Parliament is the only directly elected institution in the European Union and it has gained increasing legislative powers over the past decades. After successive treaty changes, the European Parliament is now a genuine co-legislature with the Council of the European Union. Its 705 Members of Parliament (MEPs) are organized into party political groups, just like national parliaments, rather than grouped by national delegation, and the Parliament has very significant powers to adopt and amend legislative proposals and to decide on the EU's budget. Moreover, since the Lisbon Treaty, the European Parliament has been given greater powers over the election of president of the EU's executive body, the European Commission. Whereas the president was previously chosen by a consensus of European leaders in the European Council which was approved by the European Parliament, the Lisbon Treaty stipulates that the European Council shall nominate a candidate 'taking into account the elections to the European Parliament', by qualified majority, and the parliament in turn must 'elect' the nominee with an absolute majority (Article 17 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU)). In the 2014 and 2019 elections, the European Parliament took advantage of this constitutional change by proposing rival candidates, the so-called *Spitzenkandidaten* (lead candidates), for the most powerful executive office in the EU—the Commission President—prior to the elections. This change was rooted in a modification of the procedure for choosing the Commission president. In conjunction with the introduction of *Spitzenkandidaten* by Euro-parties, this modified procedure ostensibly makes European elections similar to parliamentary elections in national democracies, where voters cast for a ballot for a party (or candidate) in the knowledge that this is also a vote for a specific prime ministerial candidate and government. Thus, in theory at least, the European Parliament elections now allow voters to give a mandate to a specific political platform for the EU's executive body, the Commission (Hobolt 2014). In response to decades of falling turnout and decline of trust in EU-level institutions, the hope was that the introduction of *Spitzenkandidaten* would strengthen the European element in the campaigns, personalize the distant Brussels bureaucracy, and thereby increase interest and participation in European democracy. Importantly for representation, it would create a direct link between the vote for parties as representatives and the vote for parties as governors.

This may, in the long-term, transform the nature of representation in European Parliament elections. However, in the 2014 European Parliament elections these institutional changes had only limited effect as most citizens remained unaware, and perhaps uninterested, in these new powers of the European Parliament (Schmitt et al. 2015). Following the 2019 European Parliament elections, the Council chose to nominate a candidate for the Commission Presidency, Ursula von der Leyen, who had not even been among the *Spitzenkandidaten*, thus calling into question viability of the process.

Historically, studies have shown that elections to the European parliament are low-key affairs, with campaigns that focus more on national than on European policy issues, turnout is low and parties that are in national government tend to perform worse than opposition parties (van der Eijk and Franklin 1996; de Vreese et al. 2006). The most common explanation of these phenomena is the ‘second-order national election’ thesis. At the heart of the theory of second-order national elections is the proposition that European Parliament elections, like local and regional elections, are of lesser importance than first-order elections for national office (Marsh 1998; Reif and Schmitt 1980; van der Eijk and Franklin 1996; van der Brug and van der Eijk 2007; Hix and Marsh 2007). Given the lower importance of European Parliament elections, parties devote fewer resources to these campaigns and there are generally lower incentives for people to vote and engage with the issues at stake. Hence, citizens are more likely to vote sincerely rather than strategically, and this in turn will tend to favour smaller parties. European Parliament elections also allow voters to express their dissatisfaction with governing parties. The extent to which governments are punished in European Parliament elections depends on at what point in the national electoral cycle the European Parliament election is held. This argument has roots in theories of mid-term elections in the US, where the president’s party tends to enjoy a comparative disadvantage (Campbell 1960). Mid-term losses can either reflect a natural ‘cycle of popularity’ for governing parties, which declines mid-term (Marsh 1998), or a negative retrospective judgement of economic performance (Fiorina 1981; Kousser 2004). Fundamentally, this view of European Parliament elections rests on a ‘sanctioning’ view of elections. It acknowledges that voters are unlikely to sanction representatives on the basis of their performance in the European Parliament and argues that voters instead use these second-order elections to punish national governments for their performance in the domestic arena. Studies have shown that the classic model of electoral accountability cannot be applied to European Parliament elections, since citizens are unable to identify which parties within Parliament are linked with specific policy decisions and outcomes, and thus do not hold Members of the European Parliament to account for poor performance (Hobolt and Tilley 2014). Despite the introduction of *Spitzenkandidaten*, the Parliament still lacks a clear government–opposition dynamic that enables voters to choose between clear alternatives, and the link between the European Parliament ballot and executive decisions in the EU remains tenuous (Hobolt 2014).

But even if sanctioning is flawed, how about European elections as a mechanism for selecting candidates that represent citizens’ views? In order for ‘mandate representation’ to function, voters need to use their vote to express preferences relevant to policymaking when choosing parties, and parties subsequently need to pursue the policies that they have proposed. Political parties play a key role in connecting the preferences of voters with policies of legislative institutions as they offer alternative programmes to voters, and by voting for the party that best represents their policy preferences, voters ensure that the composition and policies of parliament reflect their policy preferences (Mair and Thomassen 2010). However, Mair and Thomassen have

argued that elections to the European Parliament do not entail the kind of competition between alternative programmes that allow for proper representation ‘and in this sense it may be argued that European level elections are thereby failing as an instrument of democracy, i.e. they are failing to connect people’s policy preferences to the decision-making process in the European Parliament and European public policy’ (2010: 27). This argument is supported by several empirical studies that have shown that vote choices in European Parliament elections are based on domestic rather than European policy concerns (e.g. Reif and Schmitt 1980; Van der Eijk and Franklin 1996; Franklin 2001; Schmitt 2005; Føllesdal and Hix 2006; Hix and Marsh 2007). According to this classic view, the European Parliament does not fulfil its representative function because its elections ‘are fought primarily on the basis of national political concerns, rather than on problems relevant to the European arena’ (Franklin and Van der Eijk 1996: 7). More recent studies, however, have questioned this picture of European Parliament elections as primarily ‘second-order national elections’. Instead, they have shown that attitudes towards European integration have become a more important factor motivating voters in European Parliament elections (Hobolt et al. 2009; De Vries et al. 2011; Hobolt and Spoon 2012). Studies have shown that in recent European Parliament elections preferences about the EU did matter to some voters, especially in countries where the issue of European integration was polarizing party competition and media coverage (see De Vries et al. 2011; Hobolt et al. 2009; Hobolt and Spoon 2012). This runs counter to the expectation that EU preferences play no significant role in European Parliament elections.

In summary, the literature on European Parliament elections has revealed that, while the European path of representation is far from perfect, it also appears to be changing, as the increasing politicization of EU issues has made the elections less nationally focused, and as the Euro parties are strengthening and exerting greater control over the executive.

PERCEPTIONS OF DEMOCRACY

We have focused on the main pathways of representation in the European Union. But how do citizens view democracy in the EU? The debate on the democratic deficit in the European Union, as compared to an ‘ideal model’ of national representation, may give the impression that most citizens are feeling deprived of proper representation in the EU. Yet, if we simply ask people how satisfied they are with democracy in the European Union and in their own country, we find just under half (44 per cent in the period 1993–2018) say that they are either very or fairly satisfied with democracy in the EU, compared to around 41 per cent who are not very or not at all satisfied with democracy in the EU.

Interestingly, Figure 32.2 shows that satisfaction with democracy in the EU is, on average, slightly higher than satisfaction with national democracy (see Figure 32.2).

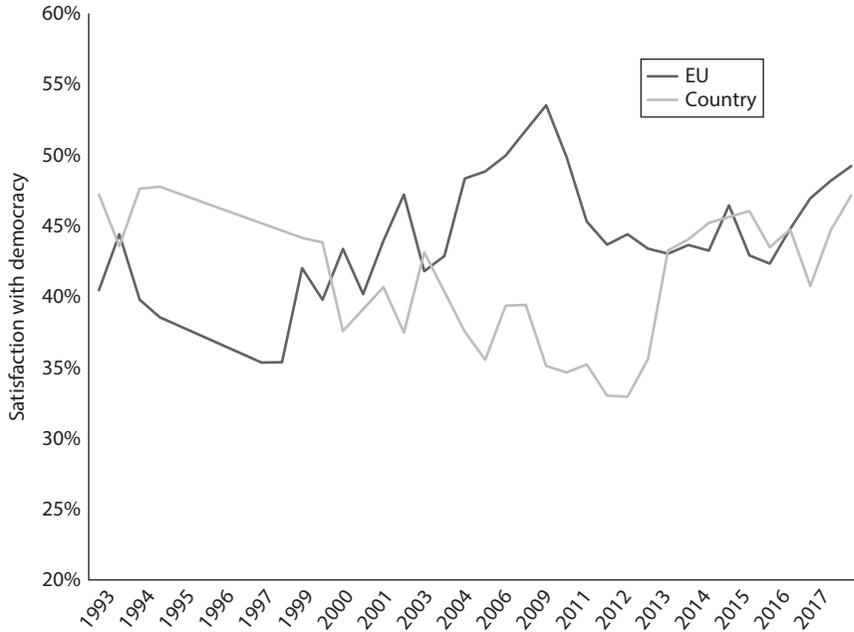


FIGURE 32.2 Satisfaction with Democracy in the EU and in Own Country

Source: Eurobarometer, 1993–2018

Indeed, in the period leading up to the financial crisis in the mid-2000s, most people were more satisfied with democracy in the EU than in their national government. Satisfaction with democracy declined during the Eurozone crisis, but has since recovered.

Of course, there is also considerable variation across countries in how satisfied citizens are with democracy at the European and national levels. Table 32.1 illustrates satisfaction with EU democracy and the differential between satisfaction at the EU level and at the national level. If we focus just on satisfaction with democracy in the EU, we can see high levels of satisfaction in a diverse set of countries: Ireland, Portugal, Latvia, and Denmark, and much lower levels of satisfaction in Greece, France, Spain, and the UK. More interesting, however, is the comparison between how people feel about democracy at the two levels. Some of the countries with the highest levels of satisfaction with democracy—Luxembourg, Denmark, Ireland, and Portugal—display even higher levels of satisfaction with democracy in their own country. And citizens in Greece, who have the lowest level of satisfaction with EU democracy, are even more dissatisfied with their national democracy. However, for most of the post-communist countries in Central and Eastern Europe, there is a clear pattern of higher levels of satisfaction with EU democracy than the national level, perhaps because the consolidation of national institutions, processes, and party systems is still taking place.

In line with existing research on attitudes towards the EU, this indicates that citizens' opinion of the EU is not formed in a vacuum independent of their views of national

Table 32.1 Satisfaction with Democracy in the EU by Country

	Satisfied with EU democracy (%)	Differential in satisfaction (EU-National)
Ireland	75%	−8%
Portugal	69%	−7%
Latvia	67%	13%
Denmark	67%	−23%
Luxembourg	66%	−23%
Lithuania	65%	31%
Poland	63%	4%
Belgium	62%	−8%
Finland	58%	−22%
Romania	58%	25%
Malta	57%	−2%
Estonia	54%	−4%
Hungary	54%	2%
Sweden	53%	−27%
Czech Republic	52%	−11%
Germany	52%	−21%
Bulgaria	51%	15%
Croatia	51%	16%
Slovakia	51%	12%
Netherlands	50%	−32%
European Union	49%	−7%
Austria	49%	−31%
Slovenia	49%	10%
Cyprus	48%	−3%
Italy	44%	5%
United Kingdom	42%	−18%
Spain	42%	5%
France	42%	−12%
Greece	30%	7%

Source: Eurobarometer, March 2018.

institutions, but rather that the nation-states provide an important benchmark for how the EU is viewed (Rohrschneider 2002; Hobolt 2012; De Vries 2018). Studies of support for European integration have come to divergent conclusions about this relationship, with some scholars arguing that citizens take cues from that national level when forming opinions about the EU (Anderson 1998) and others that there is a negative relationship between evaluations of institutions at the two levels (Sanchez-Cuenca 2000; Rohrschneider 2002). In the most comprehensive account of Euroscepticism to date, De Vries (2018) argues that support for the EU essentially boils down to a comparison between the benefits of the current status quo of membership and those of an alternative state, namely one's country being outside the EU. Satisfaction with democracy in the EU is naturally only one aspect of support for the EU, since citizens

may support the EU due to the outputs it delivers rather than their own input into its democratic processes; what Scharpf (1999) has labelled ‘output’ versus ‘input’ legitimacy. Nonetheless, perceptions of the quality of national institutions clearly function as a benchmark for public evaluations of EU institutions. In previous work, I have shown that this does not imply a negative relationship between citizen opinions of democracy at the two levels (Hobolt 2012). In contrast, positive evaluations of national institutions at the individual level spill over into greater satisfaction with EU democracy. Moreover, as citizens become more aware of the functioning of EU institutions, their evaluations of these carry greater weight as they form opinions on EU democracy (Hobolt 2012).

CONCLUSION

Empirical studies of representation in the European Union have focused primarily on how well citizens’ interests and preferences are represented in the European Parliament. When direct elections were introduced to the European Parliament in 1979, politicians had high hopes for the democratic mandate that these elections would provide the European Parliament and, by extension, the European Community (Veil 1979). Yet, subsequently, much has been written on the ‘second-order’ nature of European Parliament elections, which does not provide voters with the incentives to vote on the basis of their attitudes towards policy alternatives at the European level. Instead many voters choose on the basis of domestic concerns and they thus fail to provide a mandate to EU policymakers on the future developments of the EU. Moreover, as there is low clarity of responsibility and a tenuous link between the parliament and the executive this also means that European elections do not provide a vehicle for holding European politicians to account.

This chapter has argued that representation in the EU should not be examined by studying European Parliament elections in isolation. At least as important is the national path of representation, where citizens choose national representatives and executive that act on their behalf in the EU. After all, national ministers are key actors in EU decision-making through their roles in the European Council and Council of the EU. Traditionally, however, EU matters were not of great importance in national elections. However, as EU-wide issues such as Eurozone reform and immigration policies are increasingly salient and politicized domestically, this has also meant that the EU plays a bigger role in the selection and sanctioning of politicians in national elections.

Overall, this chapter has illustrated that there are several avenues of representation of citizens in the EU and that voters are given the opportunity to have their voices heard in both national and European elections, and thereby to shape policymaking in the EU. But it has also highlighted some of the challenges to democracy in the EU. For representation to function properly, we would need evidence that voter preferences are translated into actual policy outcomes and, in turn, that voters are able and willing to

sanction EU politicians on the basis of their performance. We know that the weak link between European Parliament elections and the election of the European Commission diminishes these accountability mechanisms in the European Union (see Hobolt and Tilley 2014). Moreover, at the national level, even to the extent that European integration is a salient issue in national elections, this indirect mechanism of accountability remains weak, since most decisions in the Council are taken by Qualified Majority Voting rather than unanimity. Hence, EU decisions do not necessarily reflect the positions of individual governments on all matters, and this means that national electorates cannot necessarily punish a national government for a decision taken collectively by the Council.

Yet, these challenges to the representative nature of the European Union cannot be dismissed simply as design failures of the European Union. Rather, they are a reflection of the delicate balance in a hybrid political system between the interests and sovereignty of individual member states, the representation of European citizens' preferences and the desire for efficient and effective policymaking. Simple majoritarian models do not provide the answer to the EU's democratic challenges, as they ignore that nation-states remain the primary arena of political identity and deliberation. Yet, it is also evident that the EU has moved far beyond the status of an ordinary international organization, as it has given its citizens a direct voice in the policymaking process, rather than one that is mediated by national governments. The EU's institutional and political setup is forever evolving, and this has consequences for representation, not only in the EU, but also in individual member states.

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CHAPTER 33

DOES ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL INTEGRATION UNDERMINE REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY?

*Lessons from the 2008 Economic
Crisis in the European Union*

JORGE M. FERNANDES AND
PEDRO C. MAGALHÃES

THE Great Recession initiated in 2008, and the ensuing Eurozone debt crisis, is often treated as a sort of paroxysmal manifestation of one of the greater threats to representation in contemporary democracies: the deepening of economic and political interdependence. Facing insurmountable external pressures, parties that voters put in government recurrently failed to translate their policy platforms onto policy outputs. Rather than abiding to their core ideological identities, reflecting the preferences of their constituents, elected officials adopted instead policies at the behest of financial market agents, lending institutions, and unelected, unrepresentative, and unaccountable supranational bodies: ‘a corruption of representative democracy through the overlapping of economic and political power’ (della Porta 2017: 15).

Even to the limited extent that governments had a choice, they seemingly chose ‘responsibility’ over ‘responsiveness’, the demands of governance over the demands of representation (Mair 2013). To be sure, this is not supposed to have started in 2008. The link between public opinion and policy was arguably already under threat. New and numerous issues have gained increased relevance for political choice and competition, complicating citizen demands and rendering them unreadable, and governments’

discretion was already being constrained by a rising number of exogenous agencies and forces. Both trends were a result of ‘globalization in general and Europeanization in particular’ (Mair 2013: 161). However, the crisis has arguably exacerbated these trends and constraints, particularly in the most harshly hit economies. The economic and financial crises ultimately morphed into a crisis of democratic representation: ‘if a change in government cannot translate into different policies, democracy is incapacitated’ (Schäfer and Streeck 2013: 1).

What is the evidence of the extent to which this incapacitation has indeed occurred? Several works have focused on declining levels of satisfaction with democracy and trust in institutions on the part of citizens (Armingeon and Guthmann 2014; Ruiz-Rufino and Alonso 2018). This has been an extremely valuable avenue of inquiry. However, here, we take a different perspective. Rather than focusing on how citizens have perceived failures in democratic representation, we examine the existing evidence about how economic and political interdependence and the Eurozone crisis have directly impinged on the basic mechanisms of democratic representation itself. By democratic representation, we mean particularly *policy representation*, the conversion of preferences of the public into public policies, the basic mechanism that is argued to have been weakened by the trends and events described above.

POLICY REPRESENTATION

If, as many before us, we think of officeholders as agents of voters, we quickly realize that such delegation may bring efficiency gains but is also fraught with perils. Agents may fail to share the preferences of their principals and may also behave opportunistically. This is where elections are supposed to come to the rescue. Elections should allow voters to select agents with the appropriate preferences over policies, and their regularity should keep agents accountable and responsive. Because political actors want to be re-elected and voters can fire them, ‘ambitious politicians operating with some sort of electoral accountability mechanism’ (Stimson 2007: 856) have incentives to respond to changes in the preferences of the electorate. In this way, an ‘anticipatory’ view of democratic representation (Mansbridge 2003) can be fulfilled, from which both voters and politicians benefit. The former get ‘the continued responsiveness of the government to the preferences of the people’ (Dahl 1971: 1), whilst the latter can heighten their re-election prospects.

The million-dollar question, of course, is whether we have evidence that such mechanisms are in place and produce the desired outcomes in contemporary democracies. What made *The Macro Polity* (Erikson et al. 2002) such a remarkable landmark in the study of how democracy works was its ability to summon long time-series data on voters’ preferences, choices, electoral outcomes, policies, and economic and societal outcomes in order to test, dynamically, the different mechanisms through which voters influence policies (and are, in turn, influenced by them). Overall, Erikson and colleagues found that changes in the preferences of voters in a more liberal (conservative)

direction increased the electoral fortunes of parties that are likely to pursue liberal (conservative) policies. Furthermore, even in the absence of a replacement in government personnel, re-election incentives lead officeholders to respond to liberal (conservative) shifts in public opinion with liberal (conservative) movements in policy. In spite of ‘complicated and contingent effects’ (Erikson et al. 2002: 386), in general, policy representation, either indirectly—through electoral choices and their consequences, or directly—‘politicians who are in office literally respond to what the public wants’ (Soroka and Wlezien 2010: 36), does seem to occur in the United States.

The extent to which these mechanisms apply beyond the US context has been difficult to establish. For one, data demands have made it difficult to extend it to a broad set of democratic regimes, not to mention examining whether globalization, Europeanization, or the 2008 economic crisis has modified policy representation in any relevant way. Furthermore, if we focus on the democracies of the European Union, the analytical complexity increases, as a result of the EU multilevel governance system, whereby national governments reallocate power to supranational authorities (Hooghe and Marks 2001).

For all these difficulties, it is not impossible to find research that, at least, examines separately the different links in the causal chain of events that leads to policy representation. Let us recall what those links are. First, ‘the electorate votes to a significant degree based on its ideological proximity to parties’. Second, ‘party fortunes help to determine the ideological direction of national policy’. And finally, ‘elected leaders (...) respond to shifts in public opinion, moving leftward when liberal demands increase and rightward when conservative demands increase’ (Erikson et al. 2006: 80). What evidence do we have that each of these links has been in place, particularly in European democracies? What do we know about how the political and economic interdependence brought about by globalization and European integration has affected each of them? Finally, has the economic and financial crisis amplified (or mitigated) the consequences of such interdependence?

ELECTIONS, CHOICES, AND POLICIES

Before the Crisis

To what extent have elections served to select and deselect parties on the basis of the policies they stand for? The canonical answer to this question among political scientists has been positive. Voters have long been shown to engage in some comparison between the utilities they derive from the different policies proposed by parties (Adams et al. 2005). There are contingencies, concerning both voters and contexts (see, among many, Pardos-Prado and Dinas 2010; Lachat 2011). However, the overall picture that has emerged from studies combining voter preferences, how they were translated into office holders’ preferences, and the behaviour of the latter, reflected a relatively

successful linkage (perhaps even more in Europe—McDonald and Budge 2005, than in the United States—Monroe 1998).

And yet, there have been two main sources of scepticism about this general proposition. First, the use of new sources of data, particularly experiments and panel surveys, generated increasing evidence that any correspondence between voters' policy views and their voting behaviour may result more from voters adjusting their preferences to their partisan allegiances than from choosing parties on the basis of policy (Lenz 2012). To be sure, there is nothing new or necessarily disruptive for democratic representation in the notion that the correspondence in views between parties and voters results from the latter (particularly partisans) taking cues from party positions (Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012: 28). However, the fact that rank-and-file voters seem oblivious to any changes in the concrete policy pronouncements of parties (Adams et al. 2011) suggests the possibility that 'whatever it is that partisan loyalties represent, it is mostly *not* ideology or issue congruence' (Achen and Bartels 2017: 301), but rather a group-based identity devoid of ideological content. Consequently, it becomes unclear how exactly elections can contribute to select and deselect incumbents based on policy or even to incentivize governments to adjust policy outputs to public preferences.

A different sort of scepticism results not so much from contesting the idea that voting contains any policy signal, but rather from extending previous treatments of the contextual sources of variation in policy voting to encompass real-world developments in modern democracies. Economic globalization and supranational governance is one of those developments. And European integration, captured as the European Union's level of competencies in economic affairs, adds a specific effect of supranational influence in national politics.

The broad message seems to be that economic and political interdependence has certainly not enhanced, and is likely to have diminished, 'electoral decidability', understood as the 'ability of voters to differentiate between what is being offered' (Bartolini 2002: 95). It has affected both political demand and supply, leading voters to discount 'the economy' as a policy issue and to a diminishing differentiation in the partisan proposals (see Hellwig 2015 and Chapter 31 in this *Handbook* for a detailed discussion). While parties have obscured their economic programmatic platform (Lacewell 2017), and politicized new issue dimensions, including non-economic ones, economic and political interdependence has brought an increase in the complexity of the calculations of voters 'confronted by an increasingly disparate set of messages from parties' (Ward et al. 2015: 1251). If relevant issues are not constrained by the basic left–right dimension, either in the domestic supply or in the electoral demand, a 'blind corner of representation' emerges (Thomassen 2012).

Crisis and its Consequences

Turning to the consequences of the 2008 crisis and its aftermath, what do we find? Interestingly, most evidence available from the most recent literature suggests that the

crisis may have contributed to *reverse*, rather than deepen, some of the aforementioned trends. Bremer (2018) looks at party positions as presented in the mass media during thirty-one electoral campaigns in eleven Western and Southern European countries, using the last election before 2008 as a baseline with which to compare subsequent developments. He finds that the salience of economic issues—welfare policies, deregulation, and privatization, and budgetary policy—has *increased* in all these countries and for all party families, particularly (but not only) in those countries most hit by the economic crisis. Furthermore, when focusing on issue positions rather than issue salience, Bremer shows that the Great Recession shifted social democratic parties leftward on most economic policy issues, whilst centre-right parties moved to the right. In other words, when looking at the salience and positions of European parties on the economy, ‘the crisis halted a previous trend that saw mainstream parties appeal to cultural issues’ and ‘led to a divergence between mainstream parties and, thereby, partly reversed the neo-liberal convergence (...) that had occurred prior to the crisis’ (Bremer 2018: 31).

Other recent studies show similar results. Savage (2019), using party manifesto data, observes that, ‘in a majority of countries, the salience of [economic] Left-Right issues increased’ (2019: 129). Traber et al. (2018), using both survey and manifesto data, also show that the salience of economic left-right issues increased recently both for voters and parties, although more for the former than the latter. To be sure, the worse the economic conditions were, the less parties were able or willing to keep up with this trend amongst the electorate. However, in general, ‘in actually dire economic times, both voters and parties do *not* emphasize identity and anti-immigration policies more, but rather economic policies (...) [P]arties do not shirk the issue or divert attention to cultural policies (...) [E]conomically tough times seem to revive the economic dimension of party politics in a way that reflects the demands of voters’ (Traber et al. 2018: 1117–18). In sum, available evidence about the consequences of the economic crisis in Europe on the supply side of politics points to a revived salience of, and partisan differentiation around, ‘traditional’ economic policy positions.

On the demand side of politics, the evidence about the consequences of the crisis is less clear. Country-case studies focusing on some of the countries most affected by the economic crisis (Magalhães 2014; Bellucci 2014; Marsh and Mikhaylov 2014), suggest that economic policy considerations were weakly related to voting choices in the earliest elections that took place during the economic crisis period. However, already by the time of the Greek 2012 elections, the economy as a positional issue—including both an economic interventionism dimension (taxation, privatization, unemployment benefits, and pay cuts) and a pro-/anti-bailout dimension—had recovered importance for voting choices (Nezi and Katsanidou 2014). More generally, after looking at several waves of European Election Studies from 2004 to 2014, Talving argues that ‘economic policy choices have emerged as one of the key predictors of political preference next to traditional indicators’, but only in the post-crisis period, a reaction to the consequences of fiscal retrenchment and their politicization (Talving 2017: 574).

It remains to be explained why voters who were regularly bombarded with messages corroborating the idea that economic policy is out of the hands of

national governments—often by those national governments themselves, seeking to shift blame for undesired policies and negative outcomes (Hellwig and Coffey, 2011; Fernández-Albertos et al. 2013)—would not rationally discount the proposed economic policy positions entirely when making decisions. However, we can think of at least two potential counter-arguments. First, it is possible that contexts where the rising salience of economic issues is unavoidable but responsibilities are diffuse do not necessarily lead to voters shifting their attention to the non-economic policy issues over which governments have greater control. Instead, as Jurado and colleagues (2018) propose, those situations may allow government parties to focus voters' attention on their *effort* or *input* to obtain a particular policy outcome, rather than on whether the *outcome* was achieved itself. The second line of argument is even simpler. What if the constraints posed by globalization, supranational governance, and even by the economic and financial crises are actually weaker than often assumed, and still allow considerable leeway for different parties, with different policy profiles, to make some difference for policy outputs? We next examine that possibility.

PARTIES, IDEOLOGY, AND POLICY OUTPUTS

Before the Crisis

The second link in the causal chain of policy representation focuses on how changes in control of government lead to changes in the direction of policies (Erikson et al. 2006: 80). There has been a sort of ebb and flow in the examination of this phenomenon. Following Hibbs's seminal work (1977), many studies have shown that left-wing governments generate higher levels of social benefits and expenditure (Hicks and Swank 1992) or higher tax rates (Beramendi and Rueda 2007), not to mention outcomes such as lower unemployment and higher inflation (Alesina and Roubini 1992). To be sure, as with what happened regarding the literature on policy voting, several contingencies were uncovered as research progressed (Smith and Urpelainen 2016), but the general message was simple: who gets into power makes a difference for policy outputs.

However, studies employing data from the 1990s onwards began to question this received wisdom. On the one hand, this was, again, partially a result of increasing concern with causal leverage. The use of regression discontinuity designs at the sub-national level generated a rather mixed picture. Findings about the effects of the partisan or ideological make-up of incumbents on policy outputs ranged from large (Pettersson-Lidbom 2008), to modest (Caughey et al. 2017) and even null (Gerber and Hopkins 2011). On the other hand, even more conventional approaches suggested something had changed. As Potrafke (2017) summarizes, after examining more than 100 studies using OECD data, analyses conducted using data from the 1990s onwards showed that partisan or ideological government composition effects on all sorts of

public expenditure variables or taxation policies became much harder to establish than in the past.

Soon enough, a ‘decline of partisanship’ theory emerged, evoking Pierson’s (1996) argument about the consequences of declining growth and the political stickiness of social expenditures and the rising constraints on national governments posed by capital mobility, open markets, and competition for foreign investment, as well as by the transfer of competences from national governments to the EU in what concerns trade, competition, and, increasingly, budgetary policy (Busemeyer 2009). In the same way that, as we saw in the previous section, economic and political interdependence was supposed to have constrained the supply and demand of alternative policy options, it was also argued to be constraining policy outputs themselves.

Reassessment

The problem is that solid evidence that any of this has led to declining relevance of the partisan and ideological make-up of governments has been remarkably hard to come by. Potrafke (2009) showed that, in the OECD countries from 1980 to 2003, even as globalization was proceeding rapidly, leftist governments were still associated with higher growth rates of social expenditures than rightist governments. Kwon and Pontusson (2010), looking at the 1980–2002 period, showed that increased globalization was insufficient to account for the weakening of the relationship between a cabinet’s ‘centre of gravity’ (in terms of left–right position) and social spending growth. Recent studies, using cabinets rather than country-years as the unit of analysis, provide an even stronger rebuttal of both the declining effects of partisanship and of the suppressing effects of either globalization or economic integration. Schmitt (2016) looks at the dynamics of social expenditure as a percentage of GDP in 21 OECD countries from 1980 to 2009, finding that ‘the higher the share of leftist parties in government, the more social expenditure levels have increased during the cabinet period’. Furthermore, ‘the effect of left governments neither decreases over time nor with rising levels of globalization’ (Schmitt 2016: 1453–4).

Recently, Schmitt and Zohlnhöfer (2019) looked at corporate taxation, social expenditure, product market regulation, and subsidies in twenty-one OECD democracies between 1980 and 2015. They find that right-wing parties in government were predictably characterized by lower social expenditure, greater cuts in corporate income taxes, and stronger product market deregulation, while left-wing parties were less likely to deregulate markets and reduce corporate taxes. Furthermore, they find more ‘evidence for the argument that partisan differences become *stronger* as globalization increases’ than for the opposite, and that ‘partisan effects are (...) comparable in EU member countries and non-EU members’ (Schmitt and Zohlnhöfer 2019: 985). Finally, Savage (2019) explicitly modelled the consequences of the Great Recession in twenty-three OECD economies, showing that the re-emphasis of the economic issue in party

manifestos, larger budget deficits, and rising unemployment levels, all served to *increase* the effect of partisan control of government in social spending: ‘in the years following the onset of the Great Recession, mainstream parties of the Left and Right have responded by reemphasizing partisan differences between one another’ (Savage 2019: 139), not only in terms of policy positions but also actual policy outputs. In sum, the weight of the evidence so far is that the increased economic and political interdependence, or even the recent economic and financial crises, have not suppressed that second fundamental link in policy representation. The partisan and ideological make-up of governments is even argued to have affected the way governments responded to the crisis, at least in terms of the fundamental axes of economic and social policy.

GOVERNMENTS’ RESPONSIVENESS TO PUBLIC OPINION

National Governments

The third basic link in the policy representation chain consists of governments responding to changes in public preferences between elections, adjusting policy accordingly. Outside the United States (Page and Shapiro 1992; Erikson et al. 2002), examinations of this process are rare. Indeed, its investigation is extremely demanding, in terms of the necessary time-series data about public preferences and policy positions and outputs, as it requires a *dynamic* approach. What do we know about it outside of the US, and particularly in Europe?

First, there is considerable evidence that parties, governments, and legislatures are quite good at *signalling* their responsiveness to changes in public opinion, by means of policy pronouncements (e.g. party manifestos), speeches, or even the thematic priorities of legislative production. An important strand of the literature has suggested that economic globalization has constrained parties’ ability to remain responsive, even if in a mostly rhetorical way (see Hellwig 2015 and Chapter 31 for arguments and evidence). Still, others remain optimistic. Spoon and Klüver (2014) and Klüver and Spoon (2016) show that—albeit with contextual variations in terms of institutions and electoral contexts—European parties have adjusted their rhetorical priorities and/or positions to changes in the public’s priorities and/or positions. Second, legislative agendas also seem to change in accordance with the issues that most concern the public (Bevan and Jennings 2014; Bernardi 2020). Finally, the general tenor of policy pronouncements as expressed in the left–right content of executive speeches has also been shown to change between elections in response to changes in public preferences (Hakhverdian 2012).

However, when we move to actual policy *outputs*, rather than just policy positions, results about policy responsiveness become more mixed. At the domestic level, Hobolt and Klemmensen (2008) show that trends in expenditure in a variety of policy areas—

health, social services, and defence (for the UK and the US) and in health and education (for Denmark)—seem to respond to the importance that citizens assign to those domains. However, such responsiveness of public spending to changing public priorities was not found in other studies (Bevan and Jennings 2014; Jennings and Wlezien 2015). A related but substantively different approach consists of focusing on public *preferences*, rather than priorities. Indeed, budgetary policy has been shown to be responsive to those. Famously, Wlezien (1995 and Chapter 25 in this *Handbook*) equates policy responsiveness processes with a thermostat, in which heat (i.e. preferences) can be adjusted, with voters signalling their preferences in response to what governments do and governments responding by formulating public policies in line with the updated preferences of the principals. Soroka and Wlezien (2005 and 2010) show evidence not only for the United States, but also for the United Kingdom, roughly from the 1980s until 2005. Later studies showed this type of responsiveness to be contingent upon the public salience of each specific policy domain, institutional checks and balances, or the horizontal or vertical dispersion of power (Wlezien and Soroka 2012; Soroka and Wlezien 2015), but still generally prevalent in several other democracies other than that of North America.

However, a crucial aspect of these ‘predictably’ contingent effects remains elusive. Bernardi (2020) finds no evidence supporting the fundamental expectation that responsiveness should increase with the proximity of elections or the electoral vulnerability of incumbents. Furthermore, looking at the British case from 1945 to 2015, using data on non-military government expenditures and a generic economic left–right public ‘policy mood’ measure, Bartle and colleagues (2019) find that changes in policy mood do affect electoral outcomes. Policy representation has worked through this indirect channel in the UK, by ‘turning over power from “one side” to the “other”’ (2019: 258), with incumbent parties pursuing expenditure policies consistent with their left–right ideology. However, they do not find budgetary policy responding to changes in public mood between elections. While the indirect channel of policy representation works, the direct one seems weaker. Similarly, Hooghe et al. (2019), looking at how changes in the left–right position of citizens affect changes in social spending in twenty-one European countries, find that, while the electoral channel for representation seems to work, direct responsiveness to citizens’ preferences seems absent.

Finally, it is unclear whether policy outputs in non-economic issues are uniformly responsive to changes in what the public wants in these domains. Looking, for example, at British penal policy, Jennings and colleagues (2020) find that shifts in public mood on crime have tended to precede increases in incarceration rates, signalling policy responsiveness in this particular non-economic domain. However, looking at immigration policy in the UK, Ford et al. (2015) document how, even within the same country, policy change in response to public preferences seems to have slowed considerably in recent years, rather than increased. In sum, in what concerns policy responsiveness at the domestic level, different data, different (and very few) cases, different variables, and different methods render a general assessment very difficult to make.

European Policymaking

Considering the increasing policy prerogatives that European Union institutions have acquired, others have begun looking at the responsiveness of policies to public opinion at the European level. At first glance, it is hard to imagine why one would find it at all (Wrátil 2018). Most voters are ill informed about whatever happens in Brussels: issues and decision-making processes have a high level of complexity and, often, low salience, and media coverage is limited. Furthermore, as Follesdal and Hix (2006) argue, it is the EU's institutional design itself that makes it unresponsive to citizens, insofar as 'the EU adopts policies that are not supported by a majority of citizens in many or even most of the member states' (2006: 537), and lacks 'institutions that reliably ensure that policies are responsive to [citizens'] preferences, rather than matching by happy coincidence' (2006: 556).

The Euro crisis has been used to show an extreme manifestation of this phenomenon. Armingeon and Baccaro (2012) examine the extent to which political parties and even interest groups—both potentially channelling citizens' preferences—played a role in determining the policy response to the Euro crisis. They argue, citing the Portuguese and Greek cases, that national actors lost most of their discretion in defining their preferences. In both countries, European authorities insisted on negotiating the bailout terms with all parties that could join the government, regardless of their policy positions. In the policy response to the sovereign debt crisis, 'there is no real choice either for country governments or for their citizens' (2012: 256), as 'domestic institutions and politics, either party- or interest group-based, have ostensibly played a minor role' (Armingeon and Baccaro 2012: 264).

And yet, there are several reasons to believe that this picture of absence of choice and complete disconnection of EU policymaking from public preferences may be excessively pessimistic. To be sure, like what happened at the domestic governance level, it is easier to find linkages in terms of issue priorities and policy signals than in terms of citizens' actual preferences and policy outputs themselves. Alexandrova et al. (2016) show that there is a moderate positive correlation between the issues discussed in the Council and the issues European publics most care about. The authors obtain some tentative evidence that there is even some amount of dynamic co-evolution of the European public's policy priorities and the Council's attention over time. Hagemann et al. (2017) explore how national governments make a strategic use of opposition in the European Council, adapting their position to accommodate the preferences of national electorates. In particular, 'when the domestic electorate is negatively disposed toward the EU, governments are more likely to oppose proposals that aim to extend the powers of the EU further' (2017: 869). Looking at the relationship between the different governments' initial negotiation positions towards legislative proposals and their domestic public opinions, Wrátil (2018) shows that, at least for economic left–right issues, such relationship is generally consistent, and it seems to exist for pro-anti integration issues, although only for highly salient ones. 'Legislative negotiations in

the Council are subject to a systematic connection to public sentiment' (Wratil 2015: 35). And Schneider (2018) shows that, as national elections approach, governments become less likely to compromise on their initial bargaining position, signalling responsiveness domestically.

Focusing on the policymaking process in the context of the Euro crisis, it is not clear that domestic preferences have become completely irrelevant. Lehner and Wasserfallen (2019), examining the positions of all EU member states and EU institutions on forty-seven contested issues of EMU reform that were discussed during the Eurozone crisis from 2010 to 2015, show that those positions do not seem entirely determined by domestic economic conditions. In a continuum from fiscal transfer to fiscal discipline, although the divide between creditor and debtor countries was clearly visible, it was not completely dominant either, as exemplified by the fact that France—not Greece, Portugal, or Spain—was the country with the most extreme positions on the fiscal transfer side. Similarly, when looking at the positions taken by national governments in Council negotiations on issues directly related to the Euro crisis, Armingeon and Cranmer (2018) compare the effect of the preferences of voters regarding austerity policies and of structural economic indicators like the current account deficit. Because of its arguably influential position in shaping the politics of Eurocrisis, German positions are used as the benchmark. Although findings do show that economic fundamentals in each country were the key determinants of a country's support for bailouts and the creation of the fiscal compact, public support for austerity 'is a reliable predictor of support for the German position' (Armingeon and Cranmer 2018: 559), although much less so when they only consider 'clear' position-taking.

These different examples of 'signalling responsiveness' are telling of the constraints that EU decision-making imposes on the representation of preferences. Indeed, national governments know that the certainty of changing the status quo by opposing a specific policy is very low. Thus, they turn to signalling responsiveness to the public as the second-best alternative to let their principals know that they are not shirking from their preferences. But, as it happens, this seems to have domestic consequences. Hagemann et al. (2017) find a significant relationship between domestic media coverage and national public opinion and the way national governments vote on legislative proposals in the Council. Schneider (2018) employs an experimental study to show that voters react to the congruence between their own positions and those of their national governments' positions in the Council when determining whether to support the government, and actually tend to care more about the position itself than about the outcome of the negotiation. This resonates with Jurado et al.'s (2018) previously discussed hypothesis of 'input-voting' in the context of bailed-out countries—in a world of enormous constraints upon policymaking, voters' still care about governments signalling their policy preferences, even when outputs and outcomes may fall far from those preferences.

Missing in this picture, of course, are more studies that focus on actual *outputs* of EU policymaking, which might take us beyond the notion that the opinion-policy link goes beyond 'signalling responsiveness'. An exception is the groundbreaking study by

Wrátil (2019). He suggests that, when looking at policymaking at the EU level, the ‘standard model’ of responsiveness—through which policies change in reaction to changes in polity-wide (EU) preferences—is inadequate. Instead, under a system of territorial representation where different units (states) have different bargaining power and salience among national public opinions, responsiveness means that policy should change in response to ‘salience- and power-weighted opinion across states’ (Wrátil 2019). Indeed, looking at concrete policy issues in the EU’s agenda from 2004 to 2011, actual policy changes, and public support for such changes, Wrátil finds that the salience-weighted mean of opinion across EU member states is a reasonably good predictor of policy change. In other words, EU policymaking responds to an aggregation of domestic public opinions in Europe, but one that reflects the differences in issue salience across countries. Perhaps even more importantly, it reveals that a view of EU policy outputs as fundamentally unresponsive to public opinion may be inadequate, and requires us instead to consider the varying salience of issues and intensity of preferences across countries, as studies looking at domestic policy responsiveness had suggested all along (Soroka and Wlezién 2010).

CONCLUSION

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How has the economic and financial crisis in Europe affected voters’ ability to select and deselect parties on the basis of the policies they stand for? Has it caused the identity of those in power to make less of a difference for policy? Has governance in Europe become less responsive to changes in public preferences? The answers we can provide are preliminary at best, based on studies and empirical results that are only now, at the time of this writing, beginning to emerge. Clearly, the jury is still out. However, what we know suggests some of the diagnostics about the economic and financial crisis, having resulted in a full-fledged crisis of democratic representation in Europe, perhaps need to be, at least somewhat, qualified.

In the last two decades, we have seen many indications that increased economic and political integration in Europe resulted in a blurring of ideological differences between parties and an increasingly intractable and complex issue space. Yet, ironically, almost everything we found out so far about the consequences of the 2008 crisis and its aftermath suggests that it may have contributed—even if just temporarily—to reverse some of those trends. Fundamental economic policy issues have become more (rather than less) salient for voters and parties, and party positions around those issues have become more (rather than less) distinct from each other.

Democratic representation is about something more than parties sending rhetorical signals to their constituents and voters supporting parties on the basis of potentially immaterial differences or impossible promises. It is undeniable that, in several of the countries that were most affected by the Great Recession, particularly those that were financially bailed out, some early crisis elections seemed to fit this

disparaging picture. But it would not be the first time that scholars rushed to conclusions in this regard. The ‘decline of partisanship’ argument in the political economy portrayed a trend of unavoidable policy convergence, reinforced in Europe by governments having their mandates constrained by Brussels or, worse, the City of London or Frankfurt. And, yet again, the latest evidence suggests that who is in power in the governments of Europe still makes a difference, at least in matters such as taxation, expenditure priorities, and market regulation, under deeper or shallower economic integration, inside or outside the EU, before or during the crisis. Even in those countries most affected by the crisis and where governments were most constrained by forces beyond their control, the design and implementation of austerity policies have varied significantly, for reasons related not only to underlying institutional and economic conditions but also, arguably, to societal preferences (Perez and Matsaganis 2018).

Having said this, many blind spots remain. First, except for some well-researched cases, even the ‘before the crisis’ picture in Europe remains vastly incomplete in terms of systematic country coverage. The data demands for a dynamic analysis are such that most countries have not been systematically examined, and much less so in the context of the crisis. Second, even in the best-known cases, the primary emphasis has been in relating measures of policy outputs at the national level with measures of central tendencies of opinion. However, if there is something that the European crisis has made clear, it is that this line of research deserves to be enriched by adding both upper and lower layers of complexity.

On the one hand, with the amount of policy prerogatives that the European Union has acquired since Maastricht—made particularly evident in the response to the Eurozone crisis—any examination of the opinion–policy nexus must attempt to introduce EU policymaking and European-wide opinion. As we described above, some pioneering works have begun to do just that (Wrátil 2019), with findings that, although not as discouraging as one might expect, are asking for extension and replication. On the other hand, the lower layer of complexity should be provided by tackling the question of inequality in policy representation within countries (see Chapter 25 in this *Handbook* for a detailed discussion). The picture that comes out of the American research, even the most optimistic one, is that, even in issues of high public salience, the views of the wealthiest segments of society can exert a disproportionate influence on the extent to which policy responds to public demands (Erikson 2015). Initial efforts in uncovering similar phenomena in Europe, relating policy preferences of different social groups with either expenditure measures (Peters and Ensink 2015) or even concrete government decisions (Elsässer et al. 2017), suggest a picture of under-representation of lower-income groups. Considering the distributive consequences of the adjustment policies adopted in the context of the crisis, not only between but also *within* countries (Copelovitch et al. 2016), the investigation of how this inequality plays out in policy formation should probably be a major concern in future work.

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CHAPTER 34

GLOBALIZATION AND REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY

Normative Challenges

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WITHIN the contemporary world the basic unit of representative democracy remains the territorial state. As a result, individuals obtain political representation on the basis of a right to citizenship of, although not necessarily current residence within, a particular territorial constituency that coincides with the borders of the state (Moore 2015). They thereby gain a say in the policies, laws and the resulting bundles of rights provided within that state and are represented as members of it in international negotiations and when travelling and working abroad. However, this territorial, state-based model of political representation has come under increasing criticism on both empirical and related normative grounds. The prime—if not the sole—sources of such criticisms have been respectively the alleged empirical insufficiency of a state-based system of political representation in an increasingly globalized and interconnected world (Held 1995), where many issues require international coordination, and the supposed normative inadequacy of the available justifications for either excluding individuals from citizenship—and hence representation—within a given state, or limiting political representation to such a system (Pogge 1992). Indeed, both empirical and normative critics point to the proliferation of international organizations, particularly the EU, and the growth of international law, to contend that these developments are already taking political representation beyond the state and, in some instances, even the territorial model, and necessarily and rightly so (Archibugi et al. 2012).

This chapter will briefly outline four main challenges that globalization poses to political representation, discuss the normative criteria we might employ to assess any response to them, and then explore three solutions that have been put forward to meet them: scaling up to a supra-national regional or even a global democracy for certain

issues (Archibugi 2008; Cabrera 2018); creating a trans-national network of democratic bodies that address different issues and functions (Pogge 1992; Bohman 2007); or having inter-national associations of representative states under the equal control of their elected representatives (Christiano 2015; Bellamy 2019). I shall argue that the first and second solutions create problems of both representation surpluses and deficits—some groups get over-represented and other groups under-represented (Bellamy and Kröger 2013). By contrast, I shall contend that the third proposed solution can avoid both these difficulties and that it addresses the challenges more directly. Nevertheless, it requires all state governments to be representative of their peoples by virtue of being elected through an effective form of representative democracy—a requirement many states currently fail to meet. Whilst sometimes criticized for offering an apologia for an unjust status quo, a fairer criticism of this solution might be to acknowledge that in this and some other respects it proves as utopian as the other two. All the same, I shall suggest it offers a more realistic utopia (Rawls 1999: 6), and on these grounds is to be preferred.

FOUR CHALLENGES TO STATE-BASED REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY

Globalization challenges the state-based model of territorial representation in three fairly straightforward ways, whilst raising a fourth set of challenges for any solution to the problems it raises.

The first challenge arises from the ways the democratic decisions of one state can frame and even undermine the democratic decisions of another state within an interconnected world. This challenge involves a clash between the different territorial constituencies of representation. For example, if the citizens of state A elect representatives with a mandate to increase carbon taxes and raise corporate taxation, those policies may both lead to, and be undermined by, the representatives of state B wooing voters with promises of reduced taxes by seeking to free ride on the one and gain a competitive advantage with the other by lowering both. In this case, the policy choices of the citizens in state A produce positive externalities for state B that increase the attractiveness to state B's citizens of a set of diametrically opposed policies—perhaps increasing the electoral chances of more neo-liberal parties that otherwise would have been unlikely to be so successful. Meanwhile, these policies produce in their turn negative externalities for the citizens of state A that undermine the expected benefits of their original policy choice. As a result, many citizens in each of these states may feel that their interests ought to have been represented in the other state's decisions. Let's call this the challenge of democratic 'externalities'.

The second, and related, challenge stems from the global processes and actors operating transnationally, across states, that cannot be controlled by any individual

state, although they may have a considerable impact on domestic social and economic well-being and political decision-making. Global environmental forces, financial markets, migration and trade flows; multinational corporations; and international crime and terrorist groups can only be adequately regulated, and the global pathologies—such as global warming—to which they give rise can only be tackled, through international agreements and organizations. A dual challenge results from this circumstance associated with the power and influence of processes and organizations that are trans-territorial, and so cross territorial constituencies, on the one hand, and that give rise to organizations that are extra- or supra-territorial, on the other hand. The concern here is that both elements—global processes and actors, and international agreements and organizations—may lead to representatives of particular state-based constituencies responding to pressures or constituencies that lie outside the territory of the state rather than to the views and preferences of those who elected them, the overwhelming majority of whom are resident within the state. For example, they may feel bound to satisfy global markets or make concessions to the governments of other states in international negotiations, and so adopt policies that lack a mandate from their voters—or even contradict their electoral mandate. They may portray such decisions as responsible and in the best interests of those they have been elected to serve, but they may be perceived nonetheless as undermining democratic responsiveness towards those they represent. Let's call this the trans- and supra-national challenge.

These first two challenges relate to the issues of who is appropriately included or excluded from representation within a given democratic or other decisional process, and the difficulties posed by globalization of encompassing the appropriate group within a system of political representation based on the territory of a given state. On the one hand, the decisions of representatives responding to those within a given state may have oppressive or dominating effects for those outside its territory who are excluded from representation in the appropriate decision-making. On the other hand, if these same representatives include the preferences of these or other excluded parties in their decisions or are influenced by them in other ways, then their electorate may feel under-represented in their turn and likewise subject to domination or oppression. Of course, sometimes it may be right to exclude certain persons or preferences from the collective decision-making process. All existing democratic systems have age limits excluding young children from the electorate and most distinguish certain purely local from national decisions. Similarly, many have formal constitutional rules that render it unlawful even to advocate certain kinds of discriminatory policies. Nonetheless, globalization increases the scope of who and what ought to be considered in even state-based decision-making, and the difficulties confronting purely state-based determinations of who and what these should be. Meanwhile different criteria for inclusion—such as the all-affected principle, on the one hand, or the all subject to coercion principle, on the other—will produce different views on the justification of excluding some or even any individuals (Bauböck 2018).

Both these practical challenges can be seen as reflecting a third challenge stemming from a more general, normative, cosmopolitan critique of state-based political

representation. From a cosmopolitan perspective, all individuals—regardless of the state into which they are born or happen to reside—should be treated as moral equals. Some cosmopolitans contend that we should regard citizenship of a wealthy and well-ordered state as an arbitrary privilege, one that often results from a history of oppression and domination of other states, not least through colonization (Carens 1987). As a result, they advocate a policy of open—or at least more open—borders, a proposal with potentially major implications for citizenship policies in a period of almost unprecedented global migration. Other cosmopolitans go further and argue for a global form of democracy in which the territories of the entire globe are represented on an equal basis (Archibugi 2008). Let's call this the cosmopolitan challenge.

The three challenges explored so far lead in their turn to the fourth challenge, which concerns how far, and in what ways, a political arrangement able to meet these three challenges can represent citizens in a sufficiently meaningful way that can avoid the prospect of oppression or domination. For example, if we conclude that global problems require a form of global democratic decision-making, then how adequate can the representation of such a diverse and vast number of people be, supposing that an effective representative assembly could only be so big (Miller 2010)? Will the representative mechanisms we associate with state-based systems of representative democracy be plausible? For instance, will suitable transnational political parties be able to develop (Christiano 2011)? A key issue here concerns the linked problems of a representation surplus and a representation deficit. On the one hand, global democracy risks over-representing groups with only a marginal stake in certain decisions. On the other hand, it may make majority tyranny more likely by increasing the possibility of certain minorities—be they dispersed or territorially concentrated—getting under-represented. Let's call this the global representation challenge. The next section explores the criteria we might employ to assess whether this challenge has been met.

THE CRITERIA FOR DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION

A number of different criteria can be used to assess any system of political representation. Broadly speaking, these criteria may be divided into output and input considerations (Scharpf 1999: 6–13). Output criteria assess a political system by its likelihood to promote certain kinds of decisions, such as those likely to be in the public interest or promotive of a given conception of social justice. However, given that people hold differing understandings of these outputs, such criteria are hard to operationalize. Indeed, though democracy may possess some epistemic qualities, it is generally seen as a fair mechanism for deciding between different reasonable views of the public interest and social justice rather than as a means for reaching the 'best' or the 'right' view. By contrast, input criteria concern the attributes of the process of decision-making itself,

such as the fairness of the way power is distributed and the degree to which those subject to it can be regarded as free from domination. In what follows, I shall mainly be concerned with these input considerations, or what has been termed ‘political justice’ (Macdonald and Ronzoni 2012).

Democracy has been defended in such input terms as offering a ‘content independent’ form of legitimacy (Christiano 2015: 983). That is, in circumstances of reasonable disagreement about which collective policy a group of people should pursue (Rawls 1993: 54–8), then a democratic system of one person one vote and majority rule provides a fair process that (1) treats all equally, regardless of their status; (2) is impartial between the views they hold, treating them all the same; and (3) is neutral as to the eventual outcome, having no bias to any particular view other than it is the option those concerned most favour (May 1952). Most democratic systems treat some outputs from even fair democratic processes as inconsistent with political justice—for example, decisions that removed basic civil and political rights from certain groups of citizens on arbitrary discriminatory grounds, such as gender or skin colour. However, such constitutional side constraints apart, within the domain for which democratic decision-making is deemed appropriate the complex democratic systems employed by existing democratic states seek to preserve the three above-mentioned features, adapting them to the problem of addressing a huge number of decisions amongst a vast number of people by introducing some form of representation.

In theory, such a majoritarian system can be regarded as offering the fairest system for collective decision-making, offering each person the best chance of living under decisions they agree with. In reality, though, that will only be the case so long as the political community is not divided in ways that create consistent majorities and minorities. If there are segmental divisions based on socio-economic interests and/or culture, most commonly reflecting ethnicity, religion, or language, then a significant minority may find itself regularly on the losing side. In such circumstances, democracy may no longer appeal to such groups as a fair way for settling disagreements (Dahl 1989: 160ff). To avoid this possibility, many state-based democratic systems depart in various ways from strict majority rule. These departures typically involve special representation rights, such as a proportional say in the executive, to guarantee that minorities have at least some influence in collective decisions; self-government rights, involving a considerable devolution of powers to territorial units in which the national minority is a majority; and special rights, protecting certain liberties for specific minority groups, such as language rights (Kymlicka 1995; Lijphart 1977). Meanwhile, even when these minority-protecting measures are in place, there may be demands—as in Catalonia, Quebec, and Scotland—for secession and the formation of a distinct political community on the part of the minority.

Democracy is only likely to prove legitimate for all concerned, therefore, when there is a sufficient degree of convergence on interests and culture for there to be cross-cutting rather than segmental cleavages amongst the demos. Given that these conditions prove hard to meet within many existing state-based democratic systems, one can imagine that they will prove even harder to achieve within a global representative

system. In particular, they have an impact on two criteria that we might wish to employ for such a system—first the criteria for inclusion in such a process, and second the criteria regarding how those included are represented. I shall explore each in turn.

With regard to democratic inclusion, three criteria figure prominently in the literature: the all-affected principle (Goodin 2007); the all subjected to coercion principle (Stilz 2011); and the stakeholder principle (Bauböck 2018). The first principle suggests that anyone who is affected by a decision, such as the citizens in state A who are affected by the negative externalities of the decisions of the citizens of state B in the example given above, should be included in the initial decision-making process. The second principle has a more limited application. It suggests that the morally relevant feature for inclusion is being coercively subjected to obeying democratic decisions. That would suggest that only citizens of state B in this example should be included. However, it could justify inclusion within supranational decision-making if the rules of such bodies could be coercively imposed on citizens of the states subjected to them, as is the case with the EU (see Chapters 32 and 33 in this *Handbook*). Finally, the third principle suggests that those included should have an equal stake in the totality of collective decisions over time, if not every single one, with their rights and liberties inherently linked to the decisions and functioning of the polity. This principle has been seen as favouring the territorial state model, given that the prime feature supporting this model consists in its offering a suitable context for applying common rules and policies that can provide equal freedoms and opportunities to all individuals, regardless of who they may be, simply on the grounds that they live in geographical proximity to each other and are engaged in a scheme of social cooperation on which the well-being of each, to some significant degree, depends.

Two aspects of the stakeholder account could be said to favour it over the others, at least from a democratic point of view (Bauböck 2018). One aspect is that the first and second principles are both concerned with the impact of outputs, while the third is concerned primarily with the input dimension. Arguably, a discussion of who is entitled to make a decision in the first place has a logical priority over a consideration of the effects of these decisions. That does not mean that the impact of outputs should not be considered, but an appropriate consideration may not be to give all those affected or coerced by a decision a say in its formulation. For example, it may suffice and be more suitable to offer non-citizens who are affected or subjected to certain decisions similar protections for their rights to citizens and a comparable means of redress or contestation through domestic or international courts. I shall return to this issue below.

The second aspect favouring the stakeholder account is that the all-affected and the all-subjected principles risk being too inclusive. The all-affected principle suggests that in a globally interconnected world all individuals worldwide might need to be involved in collective decision-making to ensure all those potentially affected were included (Goodin 2007). The all-subjected to coercion principle seems narrower. However, it suggests that anyone on the territory of a coercive political authority, including tourists or short-term residents—are entitled to the same rights as citizens of the polity in

question (Stilz 2011). Both these views risk undermining part of the basic case for deciding collective policies by a democratic vote: namely, that if we accept that no individual's well-being is more important than that of another individual, and that individuals are the best judges of their self-interest, then amongst a group of individuals whose well-being is equally tied up in a range of collective decisions, each of these individuals should have an equal say to ensure their well-being is taken equally into account. However, if—as the all-affected and the all-subjected principles allow—individuals with less than an equal stake in the short- and long-term implications of any collective decision gain an equal say, then that would be unfair. It would lead ineluctably to a problem of the tyranny of the majority by over-representing those with less than an equal stake in many decisions (Christiano 2006). Most domestic systems recognize this second aspect by devolving certain decisions to a more local level. The needs of rural and urban areas may diverge in some respects, for example, making it appropriate for certain services to be organized locally and placed under the equal influence and control of those who use them regularly. Likewise, a global democratic system would require considerable devolution of democratic authority, in all likelihood to something like the level of current states and their regions.

So far I have only considered the need for the members of a demos to have an equal stake in a shared set of collective decisions. However, I also noted that a shared culture can be as important (Miller 2009). For example, a shared language and media facilitates the ability of a demos to deliberate effectively together on matters of common concern. Otherwise, a danger exists that different perspectives may develop along linguistic lines. Likewise, certain shared values—not least of toleration—facilitate the ability to compromise and avoid stigmatizing certain beliefs. For example, differences may exist regarding the acceptability of the state supporting particular religious attitudes and practices. As I remarked, these considerations can also lead to demands for devolving power and effectively creating multiple demoi within a polity. Of course, local government is usually framed by central government, but in many societies with deep socio-economic and/or cultural divisions the degree of devolution can be very considerable. That suggests that any global system of democracy would face a problem of deciding (a) which decisions could be justifiably decided at the global level, giving all individuals an equal say—these may turn out to be minimal, and (b) how to avoid a tyranny of the majority. As we shall see in the next section below, the solution to both may be to have decisions made by a consociation of states—making global democracy more like international democracy.

These points lead to the second set of criteria to be discussed—those determining who is represented and how. Most accounts settle on the need for representatives to be able to credibly 'stand for' those they represent, with some relating this to the degree to which they can also 'stand as' them (Pitkin 1967). With regard to the first criterion, for a system of representation to be democratically justified it must preserve a rough equality of influence and control amongst those citizens who possess an equal stake in the relevant decisions. One way this is achieved is through an appropriate mechanism of authorization and accountability between representatives and those they

represent, which seeks to ensure that representatives 'stand for' the represented in the sense of adequately reflecting their interests as they themselves see them. Such a mechanism allows for representatives to act in part as delegates, possessing a mandate from their voters, and in part as trustees, able to act for the interests of their voters even without explicit directions, yet subject to sanction should they fail to do one or the other—at least in the eyes of those they represent.

How well these mechanisms operate in domestic democracies has been a matter of some dispute. The issue I wish to raise here, though, is that these problems will be compounded within any form of global democracy. The reason is simple—size matters (Dahl and Tufte 1973). The larger the number of people being represented, the weaker this representation will be. Yet how many representatives could a global parliament include and still be manageable? Assuming a world population of around 7 billion, then a global parliament of 1000 representatives would mean each would represent around 7 million people—more than the entire populations of many existing states. If the earlier challenge of any form of global democracy was that of over-inclusiveness and a representative surplus, this issue poses the challenge of a representation deficit due to global constituencies being too large. The interests of 7 million people will be fairly diverse—how could any representative coherently and consistently 'stand for' them all?

Matters become worse once one factors in the increasing demand that representatives not merely 'stand for' but also can 'stand as' those they represent—that they share certain common qualities of class, ethnicity, or gender with the represented, or that these qualities are at least present within the parliament as a whole. Cosmopolitan democrats tend to be somewhat dismissive of the validity of this criterion. They regard it as potentially arbitrary and discriminatory and involving a failure to treat individuals as equals. However, others contend that if all interests are to be given an adequate hearing—especially those of groups that have been traditionally ignored or discriminated against—then they need to be present in the representative body (Phillips 1998 and Chapter 8 in this *Handbook*). A degree of identification between the represented and their representatives can also strengthen the legitimacy of the latter in the eyes of the former. It is important that citizens feel that politicians share the same social and political concerns as they do, and are similarly impacted by their decisions. If the political class are all white wealthy males from the developed world, then—even if all are conscientious and well motivated—the worry will be that they are partial to their own experiences and interests, perhaps without realizing it, and neglect, or fail to appreciate fully, the concerns of women, individuals of colour, and the peoples of the developing world.

This section has raised four problems confronting any global political system: first, the need to avoid over-inclusion when tackling exclusion from decisions, and the importance of decision makers having an equal stake in collective issues and a shared political culture; second, the related need to avoid both a representation deficit and a representation surplus; third, the constraints posed by size on the degree to which representatives can 'stand for' the represented; and fourth, the problems posed by diversity on how far they can 'stand as' those they represent. Taken together these four problems create a global representation challenge to the prospects for a global democratic order.

One can summarize the argument so far as follows: a representative democracy must operate as a system of public equality to be legitimate (Christiano 2008). Those involved must have a roughly equal share in the public matters to be decided and they must conceive of themselves as a public, among whom collective decisions can be appropriately made. Part of such a conception depends on their sharing sufficient common interests and political values for their disagreements to be cross-cutting. That is, there will not be significant groups that are consistently in a minority through having different interests and/or values to the majority within the society. Citizens may disagree as to the best way to promote some of their common interests, which partly reflect their different ideological, cultural, or ethical perspectives, but they will feel that whatever their differences they will be roughly equally impacted by the totality of the collective decisions they take, and that they more or less agree on how decisions should be taken and what kinds of collective decisions might be impermissible. In cases where regional economic differences and/or culture—be it language, religion, or nationality, lead groups to believe they do not share either common interests or values or both, so that there will be consistent disagreements between these groups, then the four problems noted above will arise. The standard response to these problems has been for the different groups to demand greater representation and protection of group interests and values either through self-government rights and the devolution of ever more collective decisions to the group level or/and special representation rights that give them a secure say in collective decisions. Where these prove, or are perceived as being, insufficient, then—as with the independence movements in Quebec, Scotland, and Catalonia—some groups will seek to secede and form a political community in their own right. In other words, even within state-based representative democracies, the four problems can promote a demand to shift democratic authority downwards. Of course, in the process the first three challenges posed by globalization to representative democracy are likely to be exacerbated. However, it also creates a dilemma, given that shifts of democratic authority upwards are likely to exacerbate in their turn the problems associated with the fourth, global representation, challenge.

MEETING THE FOUR CHALLENGES: THREE MODELS OF REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY BEYOND THE STATE

This section explores supra-, trans- and inter-national models of democracy beyond the state. As we shall see, the first two fare reasonably well with regard to the externality, the trans- and supra-national, and the cosmopolitan challenges, but—for the reasons hinted at above—have difficulties in adequately responding to the global representation challenge (for an overview, see Table 34.1).

Table 34.1 Dimensions of Global Representation

<i>Type of Global Challenge</i>	<i>Type of Global Representation</i>		
Democratic Externalities	Supra-national Meets this well, through inclusiveness	Trans-national Meets some but may create others	Inter-national Meets well through mutual agreements between states
Supra- and Trans- national	Addresses supra- and trans-	Addresses only trans-	Can grasp elements of both through formation of comprehensive international organizations such as the EU
Cosmopolitan	Prima facie, although may have difficulties treating all individuals equally	Prima facie, although may have difficulties treating all individuals equally	Compatible with setting up bodies such as ECHR to secure basic human rights
Global Representation	Risks representation deficit and surplus	Risks representation deficit and surplus	Can represent the peoples of representative/democratic states

Supranational Democracy

By supranational democracy, I mean a form of democratic representation that operates in an analogous way to a domestic state-based system of representative democracy, but includes representatives from more than one state in a shared legislature that makes common laws over a circumscribed range of global issues that cover all the participating states. This model assumes some form of world government, with existing states nested within a global federal structure (Held 1995; Archibugi 2008; Cabrera 2018). The constituencies of such a supranational body need not coincide with those of the borders of states, and might encompass more than one state. However, many schemes for supranational democracy base constituencies around states, at least to some degree.

Supranational democracy offers a fairly straightforward way of tackling the problems of exclusion that arise from the democratic externalities and trans- and supra-national challenges. Scaling-up ultimate democratic decision-making to the global level renders representation in decision-making more inclusive in the sense of including all those affected by decisions worldwide. Moreover, most advocates of such a scheme do so by explicitly embracing cosmopolitan principles, thereby aspiring to address that challenge. The key issue, therefore, is whether it can meet these three challenges while satisfying the global representation challenge. To achieve the latter, it must avoid producing either a representation surplus or deficit at the same time as managing to provide adequate mechanisms to ensure representatives can credibly stand both for and as those they putatively represent.

The most common examples of such a scheme take the UN as their starting point, being the nearest we have to an organization involving representatives from all the world's states. However, cosmopolitans seek to shift political representation from states to individuals. For example, Archibugi and Held (1995) propose that a new assembly that is directly elected by a global demos should sit alongside the current general assembly of state representatives and provide a means for overriding state-based negotiations. However, there are numerous practical difficulties with this proposal (Miller 2010). First, not all states are democracies, so it can be doubted that free and fair elections to a global assembly would be possible in all countries. If representatives from non-democracies were included, then their credentials to stand for, or as, those they represented could be questioned. If they were excluded, however, that would infringe the cosmopolitan challenge and create a representation deficit.

Second, there is the aforementioned constituency problem. Assuming, as per the previous section, that a global assembly of a workable size of a 1000 representatives would mean roughly one representative per 7 million people, that would leave many existing national peoples, such as the Norwegians, Icelanders, or New Zealanders, without a representative. Meanwhile, large current state peoples, such as the Chinese or citizens of the United States, would be represented by a comparatively large number of delegates (roughly 194 and 46 respectively). I remarked above how the application of a strict cosmopolitan principle might thereby produce a representation deficit, increasing the likelihood of intense and isolated consistent minorities. Some global democrats address this problem by adopting a similar solution to that employed for the EU's European Parliament (EP). They recommend a system that guarantees all existing states at least one delegate combined with something like the EP scheme of degressive proportionality. Yet, this solution not only may not be sufficient to avoid the problem of the tyranny of the majority, given that large states might still be able to outvote smaller states—unless they adopted something like the EU practice of Qualified Majority Vote as well—but also falls short of addressing the cosmopolitan challenge. Moreover, there will be the problem of a representative surplus on issues where individuals in different parts of the globe may not have equal stakes.

Third, this leads to the question of which issues such a global assembly could justifiably address. As I observed above, democracy assumes common interests and a shared political culture, including language—an issue that is generally supposed to be overcome with the global spread of English. Habermas (2006: 143) has suggested that a global consensus might be found on preventing wars of aggression and crimes against humanity. Yet, if these are the only issues for a global democracy to consider, then it suggests there would not be so much to deliberate about—especially if, as I suggested, such an assembly could only be truly global once all peoples had embraced democracy and, hence, some respect for basic rights. Indeed, one might consider a consensus on such issues as morally obligated, and democracy as a collective decision-process, inappropriate.

However, once one moves to areas where reasonable disagreement might be expected and acceptable, the legitimacy of such an assembly becomes decidedly weaker.

Not only will it be hard to ensure all those involved share a public interest and public sphere, but also it is doubtful their diverse interests and identities can attain adequate representation. Even if they did, to what extent could an individual voter claim to be influencing any collective decision? That is not simply an issue of the immense size of the electorate. Even in national elections, the weight of any single vote is vanishingly small. However, within a democratic context structured around a limited number of different perspectives on common interests, the choices facing the electorate will be relatively clear. For example, they can choose to vote for a party of the right or the left, or for the Protestant or the Catholic party, and so on. But within a global democracy, there may be little overlap between how each constituency sees the world. Even if similar cleavages operate in different constituencies, which may be true of some but not all, they are unlikely to all be moving in the same direction at the same time. In addition, there are almost no global transnational social movements, let alone political parties. If, as occurs in European Parliament elections (Hix and Marsh 2011), individuals therefore simply vote on the basis of domestic allegiances and issues, these may have no relevance at all for how they might meaningfully vote at the global level. Moreover, shifts of opinion in any given constituency are unlikely to reflect or influence shifts of opinion globally. The most probable outcome will be some form of global grand coalition of parties that remains relatively stable over time, with elections having minimal effects on its composition. The result is likely to be a general disaffection with democracy and in all probability a very low turnout.

Transnational Democracy

Schemes for transnational democracy seek to democratize the particular organizations that exist, or might come to exist, to regulate processes that operate across the borders of existing states (Bohman 2007; Pogge 1992). As a result, they lack the global scope and inclusiveness of supranational schemes. Instead, they adopt a more piecemeal approach, although the proponents of such schemes differ as to whether they supplement or are destined to supplant existing national and supranational forms of democracy. Advocates of this approach have offered a variety of normative accounts of democracy: deliberative, republican, and liberal. However, they all share the shortcomings criticized below.

The transnational organizations focused on by this approach are fairly heterogeneous in character, ranging from transnational regulatory bodies operating in specific functional areas, be they state-sponsored bodies such as the Universal Postal Union or non-state organizations such as FIFA, the international federation of football associations; to charities that operate on a global basis, such as Oxfam; to transnational civil society groups such as Human Rights Watch or Green Peace; and social movements, such as Occupy (Hurrell 2007, chapter 4). I will treat state-sponsored international agreements and organizations, which are sometimes included under this heading, as a

separate category and discuss them in the subsection that follows. Most of these non-state organizations do not produce legally binding and enforceable rules, but through lobbying and the exertion of moral pressure can nonetheless incentivize agreement amongst relevant parties concerning matters such as the use of child labour, global poverty, or environmental policies to protect endangered species. As such, this scheme involves global governance rather than global government. The claim is that such transnational organizations and movements reflect a transformation of the nature of political community away from the state-based model of a single sovereign authority operating over a given territory towards a post-sovereign model of multiple transnational demoi that cut across current state boundaries and can exercise democratic control over specific functions and processes. The assumption is that any given individual is likely to belong to a number of these demoi, depending on the activities in which they are engaged.

The transnational approach sees transnational organizations as potentially an alternative to supranational and international ways of handling the complex patterns of global interdependence, which many regard as eroding national forms of state-based representative democracy over time. Supporters of this view regard such transnational arrangements as a way of overcoming the challenge of democratic externalities in ways consistent with cosmopolitan norms while meeting the transnational and supranational challenge in ways that avoid the global representation challenge by remaining close enough to the relevant demoi with a stake in a particular organization for representation of their interests and values to be justified and effective. Yet, it is unclear that they can satisfactorily address the problem of over inclusiveness which we have seen bedevils supranational schemes without becoming in their turn over exclusive, thereby replacing a representation surplus with a representative deficit. Their dispersal of sovereign authority is also liable to generate its own version of the challenge of democratic externalities. However, attempts to address these issues end up moving towards a supranational approach, with all the attendant problems analysed above.

Following Grant and Keohane (2005), I shall draw a distinction between internal and external accountability. Internal accountability refers to the accountability of those running these organizations to the sponsors, members, and volunteers who sustain these various transnational bodies. External accountability relates to the accountability of these organizations to those affected by, or with a stake in, their decisions. By contrast to democratic systems within states, these two groups are unlikely to coincide either in membership or their priorities. As a result, the organization may have to be accountable to two distinct demoi. Moreover, there may be difficulties in identifying either of them, and of appropriately weighting the influence of both of these demoi relative to each other and of the different individuals within each of them.

Very few transnational civil society organizations have formal mechanisms of internal accountability. Exit and loyalty rather than voice tend to be the main channels of influence. Moreover, these channels operate in rather uneven ways, with a single large donor often having considerably more influence than even a large number of volunteers or small donors. Of course, that might be appropriate—the interest of small

donors, say, may be marginal and passing. However, it remains unclear how, and under which principle, such a diverse group of supporters could be coherently represented.

The same difficulties apply to external accountability. By and large, transnational organizations have made representative claims on behalf of those they seek to serve, occasionally backed by various forms of consultation. How such mechanisms of influence and control could be formalized proves problematic. If we adopt the all-affected principle, then that potentially includes everyone and so slides towards supranationalism. Terry Macdonald (2008) has attempted to counter such a slippage by distinguishing primary from secondary stakeholders in a decision, with only the first, whose 'autonomy-constraining interests' are at stake, being entitled to a right to participate in decision-making. Yet, again this can be quite a widespread group, and how to weigh its components and to involve them is unclear. For example, it could include both those directly affected by a decision to support cause A, and those indirectly affected because, as a result, support was not given to causes B, C, and D. Meanwhile, there is a general problem of the externalities of any decision. If all decisions are treated as discreet, then the democratic externalities challenge risks becoming greater under this scheme than with state-based democracy. Potentially, something like the World Social Forum provides a venue where organizations could collectively consider such mutual knock-on effects. But once again this proposal starts to shade into some form of supranational democracy.

These criticisms do not deny that such organizations can and do play an important supplementary role in giving voice to otherwise marginalized groups. However, they do illustrate how at some point a formal and more comprehensive set of representative channels is needed if different interests and views are to be treated equitably. In this regard, the transnational scheme fares worse in meeting all four challenges than the international scheme it seeks to supplant.

International Democracy

Proponents of supra- and trans-national democracy have a tendency to stigmatize state-based forms of international democracy as anachronistic hangovers from a 'Westphalian' era of sovereign states that has lost its relevance in a globalizing world (Held 1995; Buchanan 2000). However, one can see the very arrangements they favour, such as the supranational mechanisms of the UN and the EU, or more partial, transnational organizations such as the WTO, as the responses states have made to the global challenges. Rather than considering these mechanisms as transitions to super-state or post-state and sovereignty forms of global democracy and governance, they may be more appropriately viewed as devices that sovereign states have adopted to retain their relevance and democratic capacity in an interconnected world (Christiano 2012; Bellamy 2019).

From this perspective, supra- and trans-national organizations are essentially voluntary associations of states, that derive their legitimacy from state consent and their democratic credentials through being subject to a two-level game that I have called

elsewhere a form of ‘republican intergovernmentalism’ (Bellamy 2019). According to this arrangement, democratic legitimacy is provided by two levels of representation: First, at the domestic level, the states themselves must have working systems of democratic representation in place, which puts governments under the equal influence and control of those they represent; Second, when making collective decisions at the international level, governments must show each other equal concern and respect as representatives of their respective peoples, and acknowledge that their decisions must be mutually acceptable to them (Bellamy and Weale 2015).

Five objections might be raised to this account. First, it might be objected that this arrangement does not meet the cosmopolitan challenge because state peoples rather than individuals are represented in international agreements. However, any system of democratic representation works through constituencies. As we saw, supra-national and trans-national schemes find it difficult to define constituencies with sufficient coherence for representatives to either stand for their interests, or credibly stand as them, through identifying with their experiences and attitudes. By contrast, international democracy operates through established constituencies and forms of representation. Moreover, individuals are equally represented within them, so at the constituency level the cosmopolitan norm is satisfied.

Second, though, it might still be maintained that governments tend to be allowed a high degree of discretion in foreign affairs, which rarely figure prominently in domestic elections and where parliamentary oversight can be limited. Admittedly, that has been true in the past. However, such issues have gained in electoral salience as the awareness of citizens of the global challenges to domestic representative systems has grown. Issues such as the Iraq war and the impact of the financial crisis have led citizens to take a greater interest in their government’s international policy and enhanced the oversight exercised by legislatures—witness the increasingly vocal opposition to the lack of transparency of the negotiations leading to the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and the difficulties in getting it ratified by either all twenty-seven EU parliaments or both houses of Congress in the USA.

Third, it could be countered that supranational parliaments and forms of democratic representation are already developing, most notably the European Parliament, and that these offer a more coherent way of meeting the supra- and trans-national challenges. However, many commentators have remarked how the EP suffers from the very drawbacks with such schemes that were discussed above. Despite the EP’s powers having steadily grown over the past thirty years, that same period has seen a steady decline in voter turnout and support. The exception to increased apathy on the part of the European electorate has been the sharp increase in support for Eurosceptical parties opposed to further political integration and demanding the repatriation of important state powers. By contrast, post the Lisbon Treaty, there has been ever more involvement of national parliaments in EU decision-making, and cooperation between them (Bellamy 2019: chapter 4). All EU states have set up EU parliamentary committees and employ them to influence and control the positions of government ministers in EU negotiations. They also exercise a check on how far EU policies meet the

proportionality and subsidiarity requirements, while interparliamentary bodies have some oversight responsibilities with regard to the EU's foreign and financial policies. Indeed, other international bodies exist where control is exercised not by a supra-national parliament or even only by governments but also by an assembly of national parliaments—notably, the Council of Europe and its most powerful organ the European Court of Human Rights.

Fourth, a worry might be raised that wealthier and more powerful states will be able to dominate small states, and that the normative ideal of the two-level game will, in reality, be at best a fiction that serves to justify the hegemony of the key international players. As a result, the challenge of democratic externalities will not be met. I concede there may be some truth in this objection. However, normative ideals can have an impact on the reality by providing criteria that can be used to criticize current practice and motivate its reform. Moreover, small states have become increasingly adept at cooperating and within multilateral international forums can collectively have an impact that moves international negotiations in the direction of republican intergovernmentalism.

Finally, this arrangement might be thought to allow too much scope for states to block cooperative arrangements they regard as potentially damaging their interests. Again, this may mean that the challenge of democratic externalities might go unaddressed and that global public goods and bads, such as climate change, are not adequately tackled. That would be true if the only solution compatible with a two-level game involved consensus among the parties on each and every issue. However, given that states are likely to be repeat players in multiple agreements, incentives exist on their part to seek agreements over a broad package of issues, promoting compromise and a degree of give and take. Moreover, part of such a compromise could and should be to allow certain states to opt out of certain agreements. After all, given the socio-economic and cultural heterogeneity of states across the globe, it would be both inefficient and inequitable to take a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to all global issues. Even the comparatively homogeneous EU allows for a degree of differentiation as to the timing and form of common policies its members adopt, and even permits complete opt-outs in certain areas (Bellamy 2019: chapter 6). Indeed, given that not all states will have an equal stake in every global decision, such opt-outs will often be democratically legitimate and even necessary to avoid what above I called a representation surplus. Meanwhile, the need for even the most powerful states to ally or cooperate with other states for defence and trade makes them sensitive to moral and economic pressures to adopt and abide by commonly accepted *jus cogens* norms and to address, to some degree, pressing global issues such as poverty and climate change.

CONCLUSION

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Within an interconnected world, state-based democratic representation risks being undermined by externalities stemming from the decisions made by other states, on the

one side, and being unable to adequately control transnational processes and organizations or tackle global problems, on the other. To many scholars and practitioners, the most direct way of dealing with these global challenges has seemed to be either to scale up democratic authority to the supranational level or to disperse this authority transnationally across current state borders. However, these proposed solutions create in their turn representation surpluses and deficits, and fail to offer appropriate ways for representatives to either stand for, or as, those they represent, or to be influenced by, or held accountable to, the represented. By contrast, I have suggested that, through state-based international arrangements, democratic states have managed to address many of these challenges in ways that can satisfy cosmopolitan norms. While much can be done to improve and extend such arrangements, they have the advantage of building on the already existing and comparatively effective and equitable systems of state-based democratic representation. To address the global challenges these face by greatly diminishing their importance, or even doing away with them altogether, risks throwing the baby away with the bathwater.

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