The Future of Representative Democracy poses important questions about representation, representative democracy and its future. Inspired by the last major investigation of the subject by Hanna Pitkin over four decades ago, this ambitious volume fills a major gap in the literature by examining the future of representative forms of democracy in terms of present-day trends and past theories of representative democracy. Aware of the pressing need for clarifying key concepts and institutional trends, the volume aims to break down barriers among disciplines and to establish an interdisciplinary dialogue among scholars. The contributors emphasise that representative democracy and its future is a subject of pressing scholarly concern and public importance. Paying close attention to the unfinished, two-century-old relationship between democracy and representation, this book offers a fresh perspective on current problems and dilemmas of representative democracy and the possible future development of new forms of democratic representation.

SONIA ALONSO is Senior Fellow at the Social Science Research Centre Berlin (WZB).

JOHN KEANE is Professor of Politics at the University of Sydney and Research Professor at the Social Science Research Centre Berlin (WZB).

WOLFGANG MERKEL is Director of the research unit ‘Democracy: Structures, Performance, Challenges’ at the Social Science Research Centre Berlin (WZB) and Professor of Political Science at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.
The Future of Representative Democracy

Edited by
Sonia Alonso, John Keane, Wolfgang Merkel
with the collaboration of Maria Fotou
## Contents

| List of figures | vii |
| List of tables | viii |
| Notes on contributors | ix |
| Acknowledgements | xiii |

Editors’ introduction: Rethinking the future of representative democracy  
SONIA ALONSO, JOHN KEANE AND WOLFGANG MERKEL  
1 Representative democracy and its critics  
NADIA URBINATI  
2 Representative democracy and the populist temptation  
KLAUS VON BEYME  
3 The wider canvas: representation and democracy in state and society  
MICHAEL SAWARD  
4 Performance and deficits of present-day representation  
BERNHARD WESSELS  
5 Do parliaments have a future?  
DAVID BEETHAM  
6 Engendering representative democracy  
DRUDE DAHLERUP  
7 Representative democracy and the multinational demos  
SONIA ALONSO  
8 Diagnosing and designing democracy in Europe  
PHILIPPE SCHMITTER
Contents

9 Monitory democracy?  
JOHN KEANE 212

10 Representing nature  
ROBYN ECKERSLEY 236

11 Democracy and representation beyond the nation state  
MICHAEL ZÜRN AND GREGOR WALTER-DROP 258

General bibliography 282
Index 302
Figures

3.1 Domains of representation  
4.1 Do elections ensure that the views of voters are represented? 102  
4.2 Feelings of being represented by a political party or/and a political leader 103  
4.3 The quality of elections and feelings of being represented by a party or a leader 106  
4.4 Electoral competition and constituency focus of representatives in Europe 112  
4.5 Party- vs. median-voter effect on policy representation 115  
4.6 Institutional effectiveness of elections and government, political corruption and the evaluation of elections 117  
6.1 Guaranteed seats and competition under different quota regimes 162  
9.1 Territorially bound representative democracy 217  
9.2 Monitory democracy 219
## Tables

| 4.1 | Party and leader representation in systems structured by different visions of representation | page 107 |
| 4.2 | Institutional efficacy, political representation and the evaluation of elections | 117 |
| 4.3 | Institutional effectiveness, political representation and satisfaction with the working of democracy | 119 |
| 6.1 | The top of the world rank order of percentage of women in parliament | 156 |
| 7.1 | National identities in Spain | 182 |
| 11.1 | Modes of representation | 273 |
Contributors

SONIA ALONSO was awarded her PhD by the Autonomous University of Madrid and the Juan March Institute. She is currently Senior Research Fellow at the Social Science Research Centre Berlin (WZB) and, before this, she has done research and teaching in various universities: University Carlos III of Madrid, St Antony’s College (Oxford University), Royal Holloway College, and University of Salamanca. Her main research interests involve the analysis of political devolution, party competition in decentralised states, minority nationalism and ethnic conflict. She is the author of a forthcoming volume with Oxford University Press: Challenging the State: Devolution and the Battle for Partisan Credibility.

DAVID BEETHAM is Professor Emeritus of Politics at the University of Leeds, a Fellow of the Human Rights Centre at the University of Essex and Associate Director of the UK Democratic Audit. He has travelled internationally in his capacity as consultant on democracy assessment, and is a leading contributor to the field of human rights. He is author of many books on democracy, including Democracy and Human Rights; Democracy: A Beginner’s Guide; Parliament and Democracy in the Twenty-first Century; and Assessing the Quality of Democracy: A Practical Guide.

KLAUS VON BEYME studied political science, history and sociology at the universities of Heidelberg, Munich, Paris and Moscow, and is now Professor of Political Science Emeritus at the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences of the University of Heidelberg and a member of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences. His major research fields are comparative politics and political theory and his latest publication is Die Faszination des Exotischen (2008).

DRUDE DAHLERUP is Professor of Political Science at the University of Stockholm. Vice-Chair of the Danish Government’s Council for European Politics from 1993 to 2000, she has also served in various
x Notes on contributors

research bodies in Denmark and Norway while leading a series of projects, such as the Quota Project in collaboration with International IDEA. Her main research focuses on women in politics, gender quotas and social movements, especially the women’s movement and feminist theory. She has recently edited the volume *Women, Quotas and Politics* (2006).

ROBYN ECKERSLEY, having previously been a public lawyer, is now Professor in the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Melbourne. Her work focuses on environmental politics, political theory and international relations theory and her 1992 book was one of the first to argue for an ecocentric political theory. She has recently co-edited (along with Andrew Dobson) the book *Political Theory and the Ecological Challenge* (2006).

MARIA FOTOU, educated in the fields of literature, politics and international relations in Athens and London, was until recently a Research Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Democracy (CSD) at the University of Westminster. She was the European Research Manager of *The Future of Representative Democracy* project. Currently a doctoral candidate at the London School of Economics and Political Science, her principal research interests include photography, cinema and the ethics and politics of hospitality.

JOHN KEANE, born in Australia and educated at the universities of Adelaide, Toronto and Cambridge, is Professor of Politics at the University of Sydney and Research Professor at the Social Science Research Centre Berlin (WZB). In 1989 he founded the Centre for the Study of Democracy (CSD) in London and was recently a Leverhulme Major Research Fellow. His current research interests include the future of global institutions, communications and media decadence, fear, violence and democracy, the origins and future of representative government and the philosophy and politics of Islam. His latest publication is *The Life and Death of Democracy* (2009).

WOLFGANG MERKEL is Professor of Political Science at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and member of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences, and is also the Director of the research unit ‘Democracy: Structures, Performance, Challenges’ at the Social Science Research Centre Berlin (WZB). His research focuses on political regimes, democracy and transformation, parties and party systems, comparative public policy, social justice and reform of the welfare state. He has recently edited (along with Sonja Grimm) *War and Democratization: Legality, Legitimacy and Effectiveness* (2009).
Notes on contributors

MICHAEL SAWARD is Professor of Politics at the Open University, and was Head of the Department of Politics and International Studies from 2004 to 2007. He has published widely in areas that are the focus of his research: the practical enactment of democratic values, rethinking the meaning of representation, re-engaging the study of political parties with democratic theory, and the terms and practices of citizenship. He plays a leading role in the EU Framework 7 funded programme ENACT (Enacting European Citizenship), and has recently edited the four-volume collection *Democracy: Key Concepts in Political Science* (2007).

PHILIPPE SCHMITTER is an Emeritus Professor at the European University Institute in Florence and also a Visiting Professor at the Central European University in Budapest. His current work focuses on the political characteristics of the emerging Euro-polity, on the consolidation of democracy in Southern and Eastern countries, and on the possibility of post-liberal democracy in Western Europe and North America. Member of many research committees and advisory boards, he has co-written (along with Alexander H. Trechsel) *The Future of Democracy in Europe: Trends, Analyses and Reforms* (2004).

NADIA URBINATI is Nell and Herbert M. Singer Professor of Contemporary Civilization and Professor of Political Theory at the Department of Political Science of Columbia University. Winner of the 2008–9 Lenfest/Columbia Distinguished Faculty Award, Nadia Urbinati specialises in modern and contemporary political thought and the democratic and anti-democratic traditions. She has recently published *Representative Democracy: Principles and Genealogy* (2006; paperback 2008) and co-edited an anthology of Giuseppe Mazzini’s essays on democracy, nation building and international relations.

GREGOR WALTER-DROP is an Assistant Professor at the Center for Transnational Relations, Foreign and Security Policy at the Otto Suhr Institut for Political Science at the Freie Universität Berlin. Before joining the Freie Universität in October 2006, he served as Head of Curriculum Development at the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin. His research focuses on globalisation and governance as well as foreign policy analysis. He has recently published *Internetkriminalität – Eine Schattenseite der Globalisierung* (2008).

BERNHARD WESSELS is Senior Research Fellow at the Social Science Research Centre Berlin (WZB), and deputy director of its research unit ‘Democracy’. He is a member of the planning committee of the *Comparative Study of Electoral Systems* (CSES), the steering
Notes on contributors

Committee of the EU 7th FP Project PIREDEU – Electoral Democracy in Europe, and co-director of the German Longitudinal Election Study 2009–2017. His main research fields are comparative studies on political representation and electoral behaviour. He is co-author of Policy Representation in Western Democracies (1999), and co-editor of The European Parliament, the National Parliaments, and European Integration (1999). He has recently co-edited Wahlen und Wähler (2005) and Die Bundestagswahl 2005 (2007).

Michael Zürn is a member of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences, and is the director of the department ‘Transnational Conflicts and International Institutions’ at the Social Science Research Centre Berlin (WZB). Before his move to the WZB and appointment as Dean of the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin, he was co-director of the DFG-Special Research Project, ‘State in Transformation’. His research focuses on themes related to globalisation, its regulation through international institutions and their normative foundations, and his publications include Law and Governance in Postnational Europe (2005).
These reflections on representative democracy and its future are a product of the first systematic research programme on the subject for several decades. Planned during 2006, the framework of The Future of Representative Democracy project was first discussed in detail at an international colloquium held in December 2007, at the Social Science Research Centre Berlin (WZB). Following months of intensive correspondence and exchange of materials, the contributors met for a second time, during October 2008, at the Lisbon headquarters of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. The Lisbon discussions proved vital in clarifying agreements and disagreements, and in re-shaping each contribution and the book as a whole. The end result we believe to be distinctive on four counts. First, this book is marked by a strong sense of the historicity of representative democracy, and of the general importance of the past for the present and future of democracy in representative form. Second, the book displays a strong awareness of the pressing need for clarifying key concepts such as representation, citizenship and democracy. Third, the contributors to the volume recognise the genuine advantages of breaking down barriers among research disciplines, as well as the utility of fostering a dialogue among scholars of political sociology and political theory, electoral studies and international relations, comparative political science and media and gender studies. Finally, the contributors to this volume are gripped by a strong sense that the subject of representative democracy and its future matters – that the neglected topic of democracy and representation is of worldwide scholarly and political importance.

The team efforts were assisted by many individuals and institutions. For generous financial and infrastructural support, we wish to thank the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation; the Centre for the Study of Democracy (CSD) at the University of Westminster; the European Science Foundation; the Major Research Fellowship scheme of the Leverhulme Trust (UK); and the Social Science Research Centre Berlin (WZB). For helpful advice about the project and incisive critical
running commentaries on our work in progress, we offer special thanks to Frank Ankersmit, Mark Warren and André Freire.

Our warmest gratitude is extended to the Programme Director of The Future of Representative Democracy project, Maria Fotou. Without her creative and tireless efforts this volume would certainly not have happened. Based at the Centre for the Study of Democracy, she worked during a three-year period to develop a strong communication network among editors and contributors. She also translated texts from various languages; provided comments and edited early drafts of a number of contributions; and helped prepare a website that contains additional scholarly materials for readers who are interested in pursuing the subject in further directions (see www.thefutureofrepresentativedemocracy.org). We thank her sincerely for her many intelligent contributions to the project – and her cheerful resilience during its most challenging moments.