Politics and Governance
Open Access Journal | ISSN: 2183-2463
Volume 7, Issue 3 (2019)

Rethinking Representation: Representative Claims in Global Perspective

Editors

Petra Guasti and Brigitte Geissel

COGITATIO

Politics and Governance, 2019, Volume 7, Issue 3
Rethinking Representation: Representative Claims in Global Perspective

Published by Cogitatio Press
Rua Fialho de Almeida 14, 2º Esq.,
1070-129 Lisbon
Portugal

Available online at: www.cogitatiopress.com/politicsandgovernance

Table of Contents

Rethinking Representation: Representative Claims in Global Perspective
Petra Guasti and Brigitte Geissel 93–97

Saward's Concept of the Representative Claim Revisited: An Empirical Perspective
Petra Guasti and Brigitte Geissel 98–111

The Redistribution of Representation through Participation: Participatory Budgeting in Chengdu and Delhi
Emilie Frenkiel and Stéphanie Tawa Lama-Rewal 112–123

Defining Women's Representation: Debates around Gender Quotas in India and France
Virginie Dutoya and Yves Sintomer 124–136

A New Approach to Map and Quantify Representative Claims and Measure Their Validation: A Case Study Analysis
Viola Joschko and Luis Glaser 137–151

Claims of Misrepresentation: A Comparison of Germany and Brazil
Petra Guasti and Debora Rezende de Almeida 152–164

The Radical Right versus the Media: from Media Critique to Claims of (Mis)Representation
Louise Knops and Benjamin De Cleen 165–178

Political Representation in the Discourse and Practices of the "Party of the Common Man" in India
Stéphanie Tawa Lama-Rewal 179–188

Anti-Corruption Movement: A Story of the Making of the Aam Admi Party and the Interplay of Political Representation in India
Aheli Chowdhury 189–198

On Authoritarian Political Representation in Contemporary China
Demin Duan 199–207

The Evolution of Representative Claim-Making by the Chinese Communist Party: From Mao to Xi (1949–2019)
Emilie Frenkiel and Anna Shpakovskaya 208–219

COGITATIO

Politics and Governance (ISSN: 2183–2463)
2019, Volume 7, Issue 3, Pages 93–97
DOI: 10.17645/pag.v7i3.2464

Editorial

Rethinking Representation: Representative Claims in Global Perspective

Petra Guasti * and Brigitte Geissel

Research Unit Democratic Innovations, Goethe University Frankfurt, 60323 Frankfurt, Germany;
E-mails: guasti@soz.uni-frankfurt.de (P.G.), geissel@soz.uni-frankfurt.de (B.G.)

* Corresponding author

Submitted: 16 September 2019 | Published: 24 September 2019

Abstract
The established notion of political representation is challenged on multiple accounts—theoretically, conceptually, and empirically. The contributions to this thematic issue explore the constructivist turn as the means for rethinking political representation today around the world. The articles included here seek to reconsider representation by theoretically and empirically reassessing how representation is conceptualized, claimed and performed—in Western and non-Western contexts. In recognition that democratic representation in Western countries is in a process of fundamental transformation and that non-Western countries no longer aim at replicating established Western models, we look for representation around the world—specifically in: Belgium, Brazil, France, Germany, China, and India. This enables us to advance the study of representative democracy from a global perspective. We show the limits and gaps in the constructivist literature and the benefits of theory-driven empirical research. Finally, we provide conceptual tools and frameworks for the (comparative) study of claims of representation.

Keywords
constructivist turn; democracy; representation; representative claim

Issue
This article is part of the issue "Rethinking Representation: Representative Claims in Global Perspective", edited by Petra Guasti (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany) and Brigitte Geissel (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany).

1. Introduction

Representation is at the core of the contemporary reconfiguration of the political landscape. Increasingly new actors assert their place in the political arena and the established notion of political representation is challenged on multiple accounts—theoretically, conceptually and empirically:

(1) Theoretically, since the 1990s, the constructivist turn critically assessed and rejected the underlying assumptions of the traditional 'mandate model' of representation. It brought to the fore symbolic and constitutive elements of political representation. The central tenants of the constructivist turn are the constitutive power of representation—political actors and identities are constituted in the process of representation—and the understanding of representation as a performative process (Castiglione & Pollak, 2019; Disch, van de Sande, & Urbinati, 2019; Urbinati, 2006);
(2) Conceptually, the Western-centric notion of elections as the core authorization mechanism in political representation is challenged on several accounts. Political action cannot be reduced to voting, and representation cannot be reduced to 'acting in the name of the people' (Sintomer, 2013; see also Manin, 1997). Constructivist scholars call for broadening of the notion of representation to include other (also non-Western) forms of representation; recasting the conceptualizations of the representative, the represented and the defining feature of the linkage between the two (cf. Guasti & Geissel, 2019; Montanaro, 2017);

(3) Empirically, constructivist scholars do not limit the study of representation to the traditional arenas and actors—parliaments and political parties. Instead, they focus on the multitude of actors—both elective and non-elective—generating a cacophony of representative claims. (Dryzek & Niemeyer, 2008; Kuyper, 2016; Montanaro, 2012, 2017; Severs, 2010, 2012; Vieira, 2017).

The contributions to this thematic issue explore the constructivist turn as the means for rethinking political representation today around the world. The articles seek to conceptually refine representation by theoretically and empirically reassessing what representation is and what it does in Western and non-Western contexts. The point of departure for this thematic issue is the critical appraisal of the central concept of the constructivist turn—the representative claim. Following Saward (2010, 2014) and Disch (2015), we define representation as a process of making, accepting, or rejecting representative claims.

The articles in this thematic issue provide crucial conceptual and empirical insights about representation and its role in a global perspective. The authors focus on how different political actors (political parties, civil society) within different institutional settings (representative, participative and deliberative bodies), contexts (democratic, authoritarian), legacies, across countries, and levels of governance conceptualize and perform representation. We also show the limits of and gaps in the constructivist literature and the benefits of theory-driven empirical research. Finally, we provide conceptual tools and frameworks for the (comparative) study of claim-making.

This thematic issue seeks to capture and compare the (new) claims on representation. In recognition that non-Western countries no longer aim at replicating established Western models of (democratic) representation, but redefine it, we look for representation around the world—specifically in: Belgium, Brazil, France, Germany, China, and India. This enables us to advance the study of representative democracy from a global perspective by highlighting critical developments in the contemporary reconfiguration of the political landscape.

2. Overview of Contributions

In their contribution, Guasti and Geissel (2019) revisit Saward's concept of representative claims from an empirical perspective (cf. Saward, 2010). The contribution of this article is three-fold. First, Guasti and Geissel (2019) show that different types of claims exist alongside each other and require different authorization mechanisms. Most crucially, the standard claim of representation, including the explicit statement 'I represent,' is very rare in real life. Thus, to study (non-explicit) representative claims Guasti and Geissel define (claimed) constituency and (claimed) linkage as essential features of representative claims. Using these two features, they distinguish four types of claims. Second, Guasti and Geissel (2019) provide a framework for examining the mechanisms of acceptance for the different claim types. Third, the authors apply both frameworks to a real-life case of representation of non-citizens on a municipal level. Their in-depth qualitative analysis of claim-making, acceptance, and rejection showcases the potential of systemizing current claims on representation and provides new insights into mechanisms of acceptance and rejection.

Based on their comparative study of participatory budgeting in Chengdu (China) and Delhi (India), Frenkiel and Tawa Lama-Rewal (2019) propose a redistributive relationship that challenges two existing relationships between representation and participation. The article demonstrates the transformative role of participatory budgeting, which through participation constitutes new representative roles. The comparison of participatory budgeting processes in Chengdu (China) and Delhi (India) underscores both their potentials and pitfalls. Participatory budgeting can transform political representation and redistribute power, but it can also be used to strengthen existing hierarchies. The authors see participatory budgeting as an arena, where political representation is redefined, the legitimacy of traditional representatives is challenged, and new representative claims emerge.

By investigating gender quota debates in India and France Dutoya and Sintomer (2019) generate novel insights into the nature of representation. Analyzing discourses and frames on women's representation in Western and non-Western contexts, they highlight both the transversal and country-specific conceptions of political representation of (gender) difference. In France, the proponents of gender quotas succeeded in reframing republican universalism in the 'parity' discourse by successfully reconciling essentialist, transcendental, and constructivist arguments on women's representation (Dutoya & Sintomer, 2019). In India, extending the concept of group representation to women proved divisive and met with strong resistance. The core of the Indian resistance to women's representation was the category of 'gender.' Unlike widely accepted and increasingly salient categories like caste or religion, proponents of women's representation in India were unable to resolve the internal challenge between the dualist nature of gender, which, as a crosscutting political category, is both universalistic and particularistic.

In their analysis of the parliamentary debates on the women's quota in German supervisory boards between 2013 and 2017, Joschko and Glaser (2019) take a different look at a similar issue. Using advanced methods of multiple correspondence analysis, natural language processing techniques, sentiment analysis, and logistic regression, Joschko and Glaser (2019) generate valuable insights on claims, their justification, and assessment (acceptance or rejection by the constituency). The starting point of their analysis was uncovering distinctive clusters of claim-making regarding women's representation

in parliamentary debates. Subsequently, social media analysis of contemporaneous Twitter debates allowed Joschko and Glaser to analyze similarities and differences in claim-making and the interaction between the members of parliament and Twitter users. Beyond sophisticated empirical analyses, the combination of methods enabled Joschko and Glaser (2019) to identify gaps in Saward's approach and to ask conceptually highly relevant questions. They argue that without an underlining agreement based on a societal consensus, the audience cannot be the ultimate judge of claims (Joschko & Glaser, 2019). Two critical questions ought to be answered to resolve the dilemma of non-electoral authorization of claims. First, under what conditions can a claim be accepted—what are (alternative) forms of authorization. Second, who defines the constituency, which is to perform this authorization and on what grounds.

In their article, Guasti and de Almeida (2019) identify another gap in Saward's approach—the lack of differentiation between (claims of) representation and misrepresentation. Guasti and de Almeida (2019) argue that as a multitude of (new) claim makers contest the authority of elected representatives as well as the functioning of the existing system of representative democracy by alleging misrepresentation, a distinction ought to be made between claims of representation and claims of misrepresentation. Claims of misrepresentation strategically employ persuasion and performance—presenting critiques of policies, politics, and polity, in order to demand changes, and (in some cases) highlight the broken linkage between elected representatives and the people, and potentially to establish themselves as the new representatives. Guasti and de Almeida (2019) compare claims of misrepresentation in Brazil made by civil society groups (before and during the presidential impeachment between 2014 and 2016) and in Germany (focusing on the parliamentarians of the Alternative for Germany in 2017). In both countries, claim makers present new demands, but also challenge existing policies, politics, and polity. Yet, the different actors and political contexts generate different emphases. In Germany, the primary focus of misrepresentation is policies, whereas in Brazil it is politics. In both cases, there is a strong appeal to the political crisis to convince the audience, but different ways to address the problems of misrepresentation.

Misrepresentation is also the key focus of the article by Knops and De Cleen (2019), who analyze criticism of the (mainstream) media by the Flemish radical right movement Schild & Vrienden (S&V). Knops and De Cleen (2019) show that the critique of the media is key to the constitution of the S&V movement's identity. It allows the S&V to clearly define the core populist Manichean distinction between the pure 'we'—those excluded from or 'silenced by' the mainstream media—, and the corrupt 'them'—mainstream politicians and issues covered by the media. In contrast to the 'lying' mainstream press, the S&V internal media are presented not only as a tool for the S&V to 'speak the truth' but as an instrument of representation of the 'silenced majority.' Without its opponents—the mainstream media and mainstream political actors—S&V cannot define itself and assert its political authority. As for other populist insurgents, a claim of misrepresentation is a necessary precursor to claim of representation.

Tawa Lama-Rewal (2019) focuses on the interplay between populism and representation for a successful populist insurgent in India—the Party of the Common Man. The author asks how the discourses and practices of a successful populist movement change once it reaches power. Tawa Lama-Rewal's (2019) article offers an intriguing answer: While misrepresentation and participatory radicalism—the juxtaposition of participation and representation—are vital to the insurgent discourse, once the populists are in power, they attempt and can partially succeed in reconciling representation and participation in their practices. Thus, in specific political contexts rather than endanger representative democracy, populist actors can reinvigorate it.

Also concentrating on India, Chowdhury (2019) focuses on the establishment and evolution of the India against Corruption movement (IAC). Chowdhury (2019) shows how mobilization against corruption and the Manichean distinction of the corrupt elite and 'pure' people enabled the IAC movement to appeal to the Indian middle class. The IAC movement juxtaposed representative democracy with people's democracy. The earlier was portrayed as inauthentic, distant, and tainted by corruption. The latter offered as a new, authentic way of representing the people and civil society—by unmediated direct action. Similarly, to Knops and De Cleen (2019), Chowdhury (2019) highlights the importance of the media as an arena of political contestation. Unlike in the Flemish press, Indian (mainstream) media were instrumental in the rise of the IAC by legitimizing the contestation of representative democracy. Chowdhury's article illustrates how: (1) A new Hindu nationalist identity emerged in the claims-making process; (2) contestation is an essential strategy of aspiring populists; and (3) studying representative claims and the process of claims-making over time provides inferences about the transformation of the political landscape.

In his article, Duan (2019) focuses on the transition from 'vanguard' to 'representation' in contemporary Chinese discourse on political representation. Over time, representation in China evolved from the ancient authoritarian representation in the 'Heaven-Ruler-People'; through the 'vanguard' representation in the Cultural Revolution-era; to the 'representative of the people' in the last two decades under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping (Duan, 2019). Today, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) no longer considers itself as the facilitator of the proletarian revolution, but as the authoritarian representative. By embodying the nation, the CCP tries to bridge inequalities and act as an arbiter in the resolution of societal conflicts. The constructivist approach enables Duan to overcome the distinction between demo-

cratic representation and representation in the authoritarian context (Duan, 2019). His focus is the evolution of the relationship between the party (CCP) and the people. It also enables him to pose a crucial question: If representation can exist in non-Western non-democratic context, what is the relationship between representation and democracy, and to what extent is the distance between the representative and the represented a necessary and constitutive element of democratic politics (cf. Ankersmit, 2002).

In another look on representation in China, Frenkiel and Shpakovskaya (2019) trace the evolution of the representative claim by the CCP over the last 70 years. The authors find both continuity and change: continuity in the preservation of the hegemony of the CCP over emerging (online) claim-makers; change in the ability of the CCP to transform and adjust its representative claim to fit the rapid socio-economic changes in the country. Frenkiel and Shpakovskaya (2019) show that CCP successfully shifted from the Leninist and Marxist ideals of representation of workers and peasants in the continuous class struggle to positioning itself as the representative of the interests of the Chinese people and the future of the nation. Over time, strategies and emphasis on different aspects of representation changed, and representation shifted from political-legal to symbolic and allegedly substantive. This article illustrates that in the Chinese official discourse, the CCP remains the sole representative, but its constituency evolved (Frenkiel & Shpakovskaya, 2019). Furthermore, the notion of representation gained importance over time, and so did the portrayal of the CCP as a performance-driven and responsive representative.

Acknowledgments

We thank the DFG and ANR for their kind funding of the research project "(New) Political Representative Claims: A Global View (France, Germany, Brazil, India, China)."

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

References

Ankersmit, F. (2002). *Political representation*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Castiglione, D., & Pollak, J. (Eds.). (2019). *Creating political presence: The new politics of democratic representation*. Chicago, IL, and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Chowdhury, A. (2019). Anti-corruption movement: A story of the making of the Aam Admi Party and the interplay of political representation in India. *Politics and Governance*, *7*(3), 189–198.

Disch, L. (2015). The "constructivist turn" in democratic representation: A normative dead-end? *Constellations*, *22*(4), 487–499.

Disch, L., van de Sande, J. J. M., & Urbinati, N. (Eds.). (2019). *The constructivist turn in political representation*. Edinburg: Edinburg University Press.

Dryzek, J. S., & Niemeyer, S. (2008). Discursive representation. *American Political Science Review*, *102*(4), 481–493.

Duan, D. (2019). On authoritarian political representation in contemporary China. *Politics and Governance*, *7*(3), 199–207.

Dutoya, V., & Sintomer, Y. (2019). Defining women's representation: Debates around gender quotas in India and France. *Politics and Governance*, *7*(3), 124–136.

Frenkiel, E., & Shpakovskaya, A. (2019). The evolution of representative claim-making by the Chinese Communist Party: From Mao to Xi (1949–2019). *Politics and Governance*, *7*(3), 208–219.

Frenkiel, E., & Tawa Lama-Rewal, S. (2019). The redistribution of representation through participation: Participatory budgeting in Chengdu and Delhi. *Politics and Governance*, *7*(3), 112–123.

Guasti, P., & de Almeida, D. R. (2019). Claims of misrepresentation: A comparison of Germany and Brazil. *Politics and Governance*, *7*(3), 152–164.

Guasti, P., & Geissel, B. (2019). Saward's concept of the representative claim revisited: An Empirical perspective. *Politics and Governance*, *7*(3), 98–111.

Joschko, V., & Glaser, L. (2019). A new approach to map and quantify representative claims and measure their validation: A case study analysis. *Politics and Governance*, *7*(3), 137–151.

Knops, L., & De Cleen, B. (2019). The radical right versus the media: From media critique to claims of (mis)representation. *Politics and Governance*, *7*(3), 165–178.

Kuyper, J. W. (2016). Systemic representation: Democracy, deliberation, and nonelectoral representatives. *American Political Science Review*, *110*(2), 308.

Manin, B. (1997). *The principles of representative government*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Montanaro, L. (2012). The democratic legitimacy of self-appointed representatives. *The Journal of Politics*, *74*(4), 1094–1107.

Montanaro, L. (2017). *Who elected Oxfam? A democratic defense of self-appointed representatives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Saward, M. (2010). *The representative claim*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Saward, M. (2014). Shape-shifting representation. *American Political Science Review*, *108*(4), 723–736.

Severs, E. (2010). Representation as claims-making. Quid responsiveness? *Representation*, *46*(4), 411–423.

Severs, E. (2012). Substantive representation through a claims-making lens: A strategy for the identification and analysis of substantive claims. *Representation*, *48*(2), 169–181.

Sintomer, Y. (2013). The meanings of political representation: Uses and misuses of a notion. *Raisons Politiques*, *2013*(2), 13–34.

Tawa Lama-Rewal, S. (2019). Political representation in the discourse and practices of the "Party of the Common Man" in India. *Politics and Governance*, *7*(3), 179–188.

Urbinati, N. (2006). *Representative democracy: Principles and genealogy*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Vieira, M. (Ed.). (2017). *Reclaiming representation: Contemporary advances in the theory of political representation*. New York, NY: Routledge.

About the Authors

Petra Guasti is an Interim Professor at the Institute of Political Science, Goethe University Frankfurt (Democratic Innovations Unit). She was AY 2018/2019 Democracy Visiting Fellow at the Ash Centre for Democratic Governance and Innovation, Harvard Kennedy School. Her main research focus is on democracy, more specifically, the growing tension within the system of representative democracy concerning its legitimacy. Her research appears among others in *Democratization, Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, *European Political Science* and *East European Politics and Societies and Cultures*.

Brigitte Geissel, Goethe University Frankfurt, is Professor of Political Science and Political Sociology and Head of Research Unit "Democratic Innovations." Her research interests include democratic innovations, new forms of governance, and political actors (new social movements, associations, civil society, parties, political elites, citizens). Recently published in *Political Studies Review*, *Representation*, *Political Studies* and *International Political Science Review*.

COGITATIO

Politics and Governance (ISSN: 2183–2463)
2019, Volume 7, Issue 3, Pages 98–111
DOI: 10.17645/pag.v7i3.2103

Article

Saward's Concept of the Representative Claim Revisited: An Empirical Perspective

Petra Guasti * and Brigitte Geissel

Research Unit Democratic Innovations, Goethe University Frankfurt, 60323 Frankfurt, Germany;
E-Mails: guasti@soz.uni-frankfurt.de (P.G.), geissel@soz.uni-frankfurt.de (B.G.)

* Corresponding author

Submitted: 22 March 2019 | Accepted: 22 July 2019 | Published: 24 September 2019

Abstract
Representation is a process of making, accepting, or rejecting representative claims (Disch, 2015; Saward, 2014). This groundbreaking insight challenged the standard assumption that representative democracy can be reduced to elections and activities of elected representatives (Pitkin, 1967). It broadened the scope of representative democracy to encompass representation activities beyond those authorized by elections, transformed our thinking and provided a new perspective, putting claims and their reception into the center. This paradigm shift erased the distinction between elected and non-elected representatives and disclosed the potential of non-elected actors' claims to represent (Andeweg, 2003; Kuyper, 2016; Rosanvallon & Goldhammer, 2008; Saward, 2006, 2009; Van Biezen & Saward, 2008). In spite of this lively debate, we identify an important gap in the literature: while this paradigmatic shift inspired many authors, conceptual *frameworks that can be applied for systematic empirical analysis of real-life cases* are missing. In this article, we fill this gap and propose frameworks for assessing and validating a variety of real-life claims. Our study provides empirical substance to the ongoing theoretical debates, helping to translate the mainly theoretical 'claim approach' into empirical research tools. It helps to transform the conventional wisdom about what representation can (not) be and shines a new light on the potential future of (claims on) representation.

Keywords
democracy; representation; representative claim; Saward; typology

Issue
This article is part of the issue "Rethinking Representation: Representative Claims in Global Perspective", edited by Petra Guasti (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany) and Brigitte Geissel (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany).

1. Introduction

Contemporary representative democracies are under considerable strain. Political parties and elected representatives are failing to keep their monopoly on (formal) representation, and allegations of misrepresentation are omnipresent. At the same time, a multitude of non-elective actors increasingly make claims of representation. In response, political actors, as well as political theory, have started to rethink and to transform political representation and representative democracy.

Saward's book on 'The Representative Claim' was the starting point for this transformation (Disch, 2015). Its insights challenged the core assumptions that democracy can be reduced to elections and activities of the elected representative.[1] It rejected the "idea that representation is first and foremost a given, factual product of elections" (Saward, 2006, p. 298). It doubts the standard no-

[1] Even Pitkin (2004) described in her more recent work that "representation has supplanted democracy instead of serving it. The representatives act not as agents of the people but simply instead of them" (p. 339). "The arrangements we call 'representative democracy' have become a substitute for popular self-government, not its enactment" (p. 340).

tion of representation—a given constituency has a given, stable set of interests, which an elected claim maker implements (Schaap, Thompson, Disch, Castiglione, & Saward, 2012). Accordingly, the idea that a political party is elected to push through these allegedly given interests is obsolete. Elections are no longer a guarantee of representation. It also broadened the scope of representation beyond elections and governing institutions (cf. Montanaro, 2017). This approach, which Disch (2015, p. 487) identified as one of the crucial "conceptual innovation[s] in the analysis of representative politics" of the last decades, considers representation as neither a characteristic of a political system nor as guaranteed by elections.

Instead, representation is considered a dynamic process "of making…accepting, or rejecting representative claims" (Disch, 2015; Saward, 2014, p. 726). Claims and their receptions—acceptance or rejection—are placed at the forefront of democratic theory of representation (in this article we do not refer to the debate whether a claimed constituency is constructed by the claim-maker or a priori existing; see Disch, 2015). Moving beyond formal authorization and accountability of elections also triggers a search for new ways and mechanisms to assess self-appointed representatives and their claims (de Wilde, 2019; Montanaro, 2017).

The paradigmatic change of the constructivist turn—pointed out by Dovi (2017) as "by far, one of the most important shifts in the literature on representation"—revealed the potential of claims by non-elected actors' to represent a wide range of constituencies. As a result, the multitude of claim-makers generates a cacophony of representative claims rejecting elected representatives (for example 'Not in my name'); on behalf of affected groups ('Mothers against gun violence'); or on behalf of abstract normative schemes ('Dignity, respect and justice for all!') (cf. Andeweg, 2003; Disch, van de Sande, & Urbinati, 2019; Kuyper, 2016; Montanaro, 2017; Rosanvallon & Goldhammer, 2008; Saward, 2006, 2009; Van Biezen & Saward, 2008).

The focus on claims "allows the analysis of non-elected representatives which do not show up on the radar in the traditional focus on elections" (de Wilde, 2013, p. 278) and encouraged scholars to reflect also on claims made by self-selected claim-makers (e.g., Kuyper, 2016; Montanaro, 2017; Urbinati & Warren, 2008; Warren, 2001). This emphasis enables us to see that "democracy is far from dead or over in the era of globalization" (de Wilde, 2019, p. 16). Representation is no longer contained in the formal representative arenas. The dynamic processes of claim making, as well as acceptance and rejection of claims is all around.

At a time of crisis for representative democracy, the constructivist turn changed the way we think about representation and representative democracy:

> Mansbridge teaches us that democratic representation should not be conceived as a monolithic concept. Democratic representation should no longer be treated as consisting simply in a relationship between elected officials and constituents within her voting district. We should refer to the multiple forms of democratic representation. (Dovi, 2017)

The constructivist literature allows us to take into account claims made by a variety of actors in different arenas, as well a variety of mechanisms of accepting claims (cf. Montanaro, 2017). It also enables us to focus on previously understudied dimensions of representation—such as the aesthetic representation approach of Ankersmit (2002) and Hamilton (2014) and to redefine representation as "a general heuristic for the understanding of political reality" (Näsström, 2006, p. 326; cf. Phillips, 1995; Mansbridge, 1999).

Although the constructivist turn in the study of representation inspired many authors (see Schaap et al., 2012), conceptual frameworks for the systematic empirical analysis of real-life cases are limited.[2] In this article, we address this need. When representation is claim-making, and elections are one, but not the only authorization mechanism, we need a new conceptual and analytical framework to grasp the cacophony of claims as well as their acceptance or rejection. It is crucial to develop conceptual and analytical tools to study claims of representation, because many self-selected representatives challenge elected representatives and the status-quo of representative democracy (see also de Wilde, 2019; Guasti & Almeida, 2019).

The primary objective of our article is the development of conceptual frameworks for identifying, conceptualizing, and categorizing the variety of real-life new claims on representation and reflecting on alternative mechanisms of acceptance. We aim at answering questions like: How can we conceptually grasp and empirically capture the multitude of claims of representation? How can we typologize claims in order to cover a variety of different claims in real-life cases? How can we examine the acceptance of claims of representation in empirical studies of real cases, if the standard mechanism—acceptance via elections—is challenged (see similar Castiglione, 2012, 2017)?

This article provides empirical substance to the ongoing theoretical debate, helping to translate the up to now mainly theoretical 'claim approach' into tools for empirical analysis and thus helping to understand political practice and current real-life developments. Three steps are required to achieve these goals: 1) the development of an empirically applicable typology of claims on representation; 2) the development of a framework that enables measurement of how different types of claims of representation can be accepted or rejected; and 3) a test of both conceptual tools on a real-life case.

[2] For main contribution see de Wilde (2013, 2019) and the special issue of the *Journal of European Public Policy*, *20*(2), 2013, on 'The representative turn in EU studies,' which partly alludes to representative claims.

Starting with Saward's approach and later analytical and conceptual refinements of the claims approach, we applied an iterative approach for this endeavor. Beginning deductively with the theoretical basis (Bäckstrand, Kuyper, Linnér, & Lövbrand, 2017; de Wilde, 2013; Disch, 2011; Disch, van de Sande, & Urbinati, 2019; Montanaro, 2012, 2017; Saward, 2006, 2010) we added an inductive procedure based on systematic empirical research. With this mixture of deductive and inductive processes, we were able to develop frameworks that can be applied to a variety of real-life cases, which differ with respect to: topic; time frame (different point in time and lengths); location (local, state and federal level); and actors (elected, delegated, self-appointed). We examined cases currently popular in the literature on new forms of democracy (participative budgeting procedures, councils for minorities and direct democratic procedures), as well as debates taking place in parliaments, where claims of representation are prominent (debates on quota rules for women, claims of representation by new, anti-establishment parties or voting rights for non-citizens).

In our case studies in Germany, we collected primary data made public by political institutions (protocols and documentation, online information, steno protocols of parliamentary debates) and print media (articles, interviews) as well as social media (Twitter). However, since our research is embedded in an international research project, covering similar cases in France, Brazil, India, and China, we sought to broaden the applicability of our framework beyond the German cases (see Joschko & Glaser, 2019). First results from Brazil indicate applicability in cross-national studies (see Guasti & Almeida, 2019). Our frameworks are applicable to all kinds of claims across the world.

Methodologically we build upon the Representative Claim Analysis, based on de Wilde (2013, 2019) as well as on former methodological considerations by Koopmans' and Statham's (1999), which we adapted for our study. Our analysis combines content and discourse analysis and makes use of exploratory approaches like text mining for quantification and validation of claims (for more on this approach see Joschko & Glaser, 2019).

The article proceeds as follows: in the first section we discuss current research gaps, in the second section we develop a typology of claims on representation, in the third section we outline a conceptual approach allowing us to examine the acceptance or rejection of different types of claims. In the fourth section we apply the typology and conceptual framework for assessing acceptance and rejection of claims to one of our cases.

Most authors speak about "representative claims" or "claims of representation." However, in our empirical research, we noticed that in most real-life cases actual claims of representation, in which a claim-maker explicitly claims to represent a certain constituency, e.g., "I represent women," are rare. More often a claim maker only implicitly insinuates to speak for a claimed constituency or does not even mention a claimed constituency and only makes a proclamation e.g., "park benches are needed." To cover all these different claims, we apply the term "claims on representation", which we see as better capturing the variety of claims.

2. Claims of Representation: Research Gaps

Several gaps in the literature can be detected, which motivated our study:

First, the proliferating reasoning of political theorists like Saward or Disch about claims on representation has remained abstract (Disch, 2015; Dryzek & Niemeyer, 2008; Montanaro, 2012, 2017; Mulieri, 2013; Näsström, 2011; Saward, 2006, 2010, 2016). It is mainly the theoretical contribution, which have been the focus of contemporary debates (Disch, 2008; Dutoya & Hayat, 2016; Kuyper, 2016; Thompson, 2012). Although it was acknowledged that "we need to look closely at how, and by whom 'representative claims' are made, received, and judged" (Saward, 2010, p. 1), the theoretical concepts are rarely applied empirically (cf. Kuyper, 2016; Montanaro, 2012, 2017; Saward, 2009).

A few authors—de Wilde (2013, 2019), Koopmans and Statham (1999, 2010), Kuyper (2016), Severs (2010, 2012), and most recently Heinisch and Werner (2019) started the systematic empirical analysis. The main empirical study that has developed a quantitative approach is the work by de Wilde and colleagues (de Wilde, 2013; de Wilde, Koopmans, & Zürn, 2014; and the most recent advanced by de Wilde, 2019), who developed the 'representative claims analysis'—a combination of Saward's theoretical notions with the method of content analysis (Koopmans & Statham, 1999, 2010). However, de Wilde's approach mainly limits itself to the analysis of claims by social movements and other collective actors in the media (Kleinnijenhuis & Rietberg, 1995; Kriesi & Trechsel, 2008).[3] In de Wilde's work, the focus is on claim makers, the justification of claims, and the quality of claims (de Wilde, 2013, 2019, p. 9). However, the types of claims are not differentiated.

Second, to empirically capture the cacophony of claims, we need both empirical and conceptual tools. So far, a typology that can structure the field is missing (see for ideal types Saward, 2008; Sintomer, 2013). Most studies focus on randomly selected examples to illustrate their abstract theoretical arguments. These 'custom tailored' examples, such as the overused claim of Bono representing Africans (Montanaro, 2012; Saward, 2006), neglect myriad real-life cases (Montanaro, 2012, 2017; Severs, 2010, 2012). However, without a typology of real-life claims, the applicability and inference of the claims approach will remain limited.

[3] The added value of the claims analysis method includes the capture of addressees, object actors and framing Addressees, according to Koopmans and Statham (1999), are political actors other than the claimants whom the claimant is calling upon to enact his or her claim. They are often executives or other authoritative collective actors with the formal capability to realize the demands voiced in claims.

Third, existing studies often conflate the two stages of a) claim-making and b) reception.[4] Constructivist scholars broadened the scope of representation to include both elected and self-selected representatives; and reject the notion of elections as a sole authorization mechanism. While the number of empirical studies on claim-making is growing (de Wilde, 2013, 2019; Heinisch & Werner, 2019; Severs, 2010, 2012), and significant conceptual progress was made to develop alternative authorization mechanisms (Kuyper, 2016; Montanaro, 2017), these two stages of claim-making and reception often got conflated. To conceptually disentangle the two stages, we need to conceptually grasp the variation of claims, and their reception.

3. Claims on Representation: A New Typology

This section develops a typology of claims on representation. We start with a discussion of the definition of claims on representation and then proceed to the elements we identified as helpful when identifying a claim.

Various *definitions* of claims on representation with different layers of complexity were put forward in the literature (e.g., Montanaro, 2017; Saward, 2010, p. 38). Most authors refer to Saward's general definition that a "representative claim" is "a claim to represent or to know what represents the interests of someone or something." (e.g., de Wilde, 2013, 2019; Montanaro, 2017). More detailed definitions, consisting of five dimensions, added a 'referent' and thus ended up with the following definition: "A claim-maker of representations puts forward a subject, which stands for an object that is related to a referent and is offered to an audience" (Saward, 2010). However, the debate did not stop here. Some authors suggested adding more elements and distinctions, such as "affected interests" (Montanaro, 2017) and "justification" (de Wilde, 2013, 2019), while eliminating some of Saward's original categories. For example, de Wilde (2013) rejected Saward's theoretical distinction between a 'maker' and a 'subject' as "not a fruitful distinction from an empirical inquiry point of view" (de Wilde, 2013, p. 284).

Our empirical research showed that the standard definitions put forward by political theorists require some adaption:

- Claims are often incomplete and do not include all elements outlined in the literature; claims of representation with explicit reference to a claimed constituency are very rare, most claim-makers only insinuate implicitly that they speak for someone. For example, in the participatory budgeting procedure, we found mainly proclamations e.g., "More bike lanes are needed in this city." In order to capture all kinds of claims, which refer to a *claimed constituency* or not, we differentiated between different types of constituency (see Tables 1 and 2).
- In some of our real-life cases, the claim-maker explicitly claimed a *linkage* between herself and the claimed constituency, e.g., "I am like you," "I know what you need because I live in the same town." In some cases, this link is only constructed implicitly: "Seniors like me need park benches." We decided to take claimed linkages (and their absence) into account. It makes a vast difference for the acceptance of claims, if the claimed linkage can be accepted by the claimed constituency or if a claim is made without a linkage.
- In real-life cases, claim makers often accuse elected representatives of not representing their constituency. i.e., of *misrepresentation*. In other word, claim makers referred to representatives, who would be expected to represent someone or something—but do not. Accordingly, in contrast to de Wilde's critique (2013), we utilize Saward's differentiation between 'claim maker' and 'subject,' (for more on claims of misrepresentation see Guasti & Almeida, 2019).
- Our empirical analysis showed that the claimed constituency is often not a 'subject,' but a normative scheme, e.g., justice, freedom. For example, in participatory budgeting procedures, many citizens made a claim in the name of the 'common good.' Even in parliamentary debates on topics like quota rules or voting rights for foreigners the claim-makers mostly referred to normative schemes (see Joschko & Glaser, 2019). Accordingly, we distinguish between two types of the claimed 'constituency'—human beings and normative schemes (cf. Mansbridge, 2011; Pitkin, 1967, 2004; Runciman, 2007). We recognize that claims to normative schemes appeal to an actual human constituency—i.e., to those sharing the values of justice and freedom. However, the reception of this claim will be different—in order to accept or reject a claim e.g., to 'justice' the member of the audience ought to first assess whether justice is grounds for accepting a claim (cf. Ankersmit, 2002; Montanaro, 2017 on affected interests; Näsström, 2006 on aesthetic aspects of representation).

Essential elements of claims on representation are depicted in Table 1.

3.1. The Typology

In the literature on representation, there is no lack of typologies (Mansbridge, 2003; Pitkin, 1967; Young, 1986, p. 357, 2002, pp. 125–127). However, this is not the case in the literature on claims on representation.

[4] Disch (2015) differentiates three stages, i.e., claim making, reception and normative reception. Kuyper (2016) applied a specific way of reception based on normative yardsticks requiring normative expert judgments. We do not follow this path but want to measure the receptions taking place in real life cases.

Table 1. Elements of claims on representation.

Element	Definition	Differentiation
Claim makers	who speaks	(i.) elected representatives, (ii.) delegated representatives and (iii.) non-elected representatives.
Claimed representative	who is expected to act on behalf of the claimed constituency	(i.) claim-maker identical with a claimed representative; (ii.) claim maker and claimed representative are different; (iii.) absent.
Claimed constituency	on whose behalf subject claims to speak	(i.) human being(s), interests; (ii.) normative scheme(s), values; (iii.) absent.
Claimed linkage	the claimed connection between the claim maker and the claimed constituency	(i.) referenced (either explicitly or implicitly); (ii.) denied; (iii.) absent.

Generally, typologies are useful in empirical research to serve "as conceptual tools to simplify and order complex social phenomena such as political systems" (Lehnert, 2007, p. 62). In order to achieve this goal types should ideally be "mutually exclusive and exhaustive" (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 238). In other words, every case should fall into one category, and one category only, and within-type variation should be small. We tried to develop a parsimonious typology that can be applied to various empirical contexts (Sartori, 1970).

Typologies can be derived deductively or inductively (Lehnert, 2007, p. 67). Our typology is based on theoretical consideration but was developed inductively by examining a variety of case studies including three democratic innovations: Council for Foreigners (Kommunale Ausländervertretung- KAV). in Frankfurt, which focuses on representation of non-citizens; a referendum in Hamburg on school reform, which showed a clash between elected and self-selected representatives; and participative budgeting in the city of Münster; as well as three parliamentary debates: on quotas, on voting rights and on anti-establishment critique by the radical right Alternative for Germany (AfD) (for details see Appendix; for analysis of the quota debate see Joschko & Glaser, 2019; for the analysis of the parliamentary debate see Guasti & Almeida, 2019).

Referring to the elements of the claims discussed above enables us to identify key semantic features of claims on representation and to operationalize the distinctive semantic features of four types of claims (see Table 2).

Table 2. Types of claims.

Types of Claims	Constituency	Linkage	Example
CLAIM OF REPRESENTATION claim maker speaks for/on behalf of the claimed constituency and indicates a linkage between him/herself and claimed constituency	referenced	referenced	We [AfD] represent the German people.
CLAIM OF MISREPRESENTATION claim maker accuses another representative of not representing the claimed constituency and denies a linkage between other representative and claimed constituency	referenced	denied	SPD [Social democrats] no longer represent the workers.
CLAIM OF INTERESTS/VALUES claim maker speaks of interests and values, referring explicitly/implicitly to a claimed constituency without indicating any linkage to claimed constituency	referenced	absent	The reform is needed to improve children's education.
PROCLAMATION claim maker states a proposal without referring to a claimed constituency and without indicating any linkage to claimed constituency	absent	absent	More park benches are needed.

Source: The authors.

4. Acceptance or Rejection of Claim: Conceptual Framework for Empirical Analysis

Claims on representation only work if they are accepted ("acknowledged") (Lord & Pollak, 2013; Saward, 2010). "Without an audience, a representative claim cannot have an impact on politics and society and is therefore meaningless for democracy" (de Wilde, 2013, p. 284; also Montanaro, 2017; Rehfeld, 2006). Disch (2015) has already suggested:

> First is whether or not to accept the subject of the claim—the representative—as representing its object (i.e., itself) in the sense of acting and speaking on its behalf. Second is whether to accept the idea of the object that the claim puts forth, meaning that it must decide whether it recognizes itself as it is portrayed by the claim. (Disch, 2015, p. 494)

Since the standard mechanism for the acceptance of claims, i.e., elections, are not the sole authorization mechanism, the literature on representation and representative claims have started to discuss the issue in a more differentiated way (Disch, 2015; Dryzek & Niemeyer, 2008; Kuyper, 2016; Montanaro, 2012, 2017; Saward 2016; Severs, 2012). However, the state of the art is limited (for more critique see Joschko & Glaser, 2019). In order to demonstrate the problem and to provide a conceptual solution we 1) discuss definitions of acceptance, 2) introduce an empirically significant differentiation of the 'accepting actors', and 3) develop a framework, which takes into account that different types of claims require different mechanisms of acceptance.

The acceptance and rejection of claims is central to the constructivist literature (Disch, 2015; Montanaro, 2017; Saward, 2006). Classical literature uses the term authorization, which is reserved for elections and eligible actors, i.e., members of the government, members of parliament and president (Pitkin, 1967). After the constructivist turn had broadened the scope of representation beyond the monopoly of elected representatives, this limitation was broken, and other mechanisms are discussed (Montanaro, 2017). In the wake of this shift, a variety of different terms evolved, for example: acknowledgement, reception, perception, absorption, engagement, legitimacy, accountability, authenticity, legitimation, resonance, responsiveness, judgement, congruence, affectedness, resemblance, expertise, assessment, credibility, recognition, evaluation, inclusivity, or consequentiality (Disch, (2015); Dryzek & Niemeyer, 2008; Kuyper, 2016; Montanaro, 2012, 2017; Saward (2016); Severs, 2012). As Saward put it, "Representative claims only work, or even exist, if 'audiences' acknowledge them in some way, and are able to absorb or reject or accept them or otherwise engage with them" (Saward, 2008, p. 303).

We identify and address three gaps in the constructivist literature:

1) All of these terms are used but rarely operationalized, which makes the empirical application difficult. Two examples might illustrate this problem: the term legitimacy mostly refers to legitimacy as perceived by citizens, but it is also confused with input, throughput or output legitimacy. The term authenticity serves as an umbrella term for a variety of different aspects, such as non-coercion, generalizability (Kuyper, 2016) or honesty. For now, we go 'back to the roots' and focus on the acceptance or rejection of a claim (c.f. Disch, 2008).

2) Being interested in the acceptance or rejection of a claim, we have to raise the question of who is the accepting or rejecting actor. Kuyper (2016) suggested that experts decide on the validity of a claim, based on preset normative claims. Dovi (2017) states that "The represented should have an ultimate say in judging the claims of the representative. The task of the representative is to create claims that will resonate with appropriate audiences". Montanaro sees the identification of "affected interests" by the audience as a precursor to "public judgement and democratic justification" (2017, p. 13).

Saward (2010, p. 186) and Disch (2015, p. 494) also distinguish between different actors vis-à-vis acceptance and rejection of the claims. Saward (2010, p. 186) differentiated between the "claimed constituency" and the "effective audience" "with resources of influence," defined as actors who can make an effective contribution, for example, mass media, powerful advocacy groups, celebrities or experts. Disch (2015) also emphasized the need to differentiate: "[A] claim succeeds so long as it is assessed favorably by the audience; it is democratically legitimate, however, only when it is accepted or taken up by a constituency" (p. 494). She mentions "structural differences of power" between the claimed constituency and the "audience", with the "audience" enabling success (p. 495).

Thus, both the claimed constituency and a second entity, which plays a role and has some power ('effective audience' in Montanaro, 2017, or as we call it, 'decision-making authority'), need to be conceptually separated (for more debate on constituency and audience see Guasti & Almeida, 2019; for a quantitative approach to identification of audience and the assessment of acceptance and rejection see Joschko & Glaser, 2019).[5]

3) Empirically, the claimed constituency can be identified and operationalized, if (explicitly) referenced by the claim maker. For example, "I am speaking for the students at our university." In contrast, what Saward (2010) calls an "effective audience" is too vague and too complex to be taken into account in empirical research (de Wilde, 2013). It would be empirically challenging to detect and to examine all potentially "effective audiences" (for an innovative approach within the framework of substantive representation see Kroeber, 2018).

[5] de Wilde (2012, p. 284) rejected the distinction between audience and constituency as "needlessly complicated," and eliminates the audience from his empirical analysis. In contrast, we consider the differentiation between claimed constituency and another 'powerful' entity as crucial.

In our framework we distinguish between acceptance and rejection by the claimed constituency and by the relevant decision-making authority. Constituency can be referenced directly (i.e., to human beings) or indirectly (to normative schemes). A decision-making authority can be, for instance, a parliament, a mayor or in case of a referendum (such as the school referendum in Hamburg) the citizenry.

A framework of analysis taking into account the different types of claims and 'accepting actors' (claimed constituency, decision-making authority) is described in Table 3.

The empirical application of this framework is demanding. How can we find out whether the claimed constituency and the relevant authority accepts or rejects the respective type of claim? Which mechanism can be applied to 'accept' the different types? The following debate can only be exemplary (for a novel approach to authorization of claims by self-selected representatives see Montanaro, 2017).

Considering the claim of representation by an elected representative (for example in a plenary debate in parliament), the standard mechanism for acceptance are the subsequent elections (cf. Mansbridge, 2017; Pitkin, 1967, 2004). However, even elections are no ultimate proof for the acceptance of a claim of representation. During their electoral campaign, parliamentarians make multiple claims, and their re-election does not necessarily indicate that the voters accepted every claim the parliamentarian made.

Considering claims of representation by non-elected claim makers, the situation is even more complicated. For example, we do not exactly know whether the advocacy group claiming to represent German farmers, the German Farmer Association (GFA), is accepted by its claimed constituency. However, the relevant authority, i.e., the German government, accepts the GFA's claim to represent farmers and actively engages with it in all matters relevant to farmers and agriculture. At the same time, some German farmers reject the GFA's claim and seek to represent their views (for example on the need to a more sustainable farming) and their values (sustainability) themselves.

What about the acceptance of claims of misrepresentation? Contestations of existing representatives, as well as policies and politics are widespread among advocacy groups and emerging anti-establishment political forces. Parties (such as the AfD) or social movements (such as the Yellow Vests movement in France) reject the formal authorization (elections) of the elected representatives. Simultaneously, they are not willing to wait until the next elections, to vote their political opponents out of office, and use claims of misrepresentation to deny their role as representatives—in the parliament (AfD parliamentarians, see Guasti & Almeida, 2019), online (see Joschko & Glaser, 2019), and on the streets (the Yellow Vest protestors).

Many advocacy groups depart from the accusation that representatives or other advocacy groups do not represent the constituency they are supposed to represent. There is, for example, a variety of women's advocacy groups which accuse female representatives as well as other women's advocacy groups that they do not represent women, but "only businesswomen", "only mothers", or "only female workers." These claims of misrepresentation are challenging to evaluate, and up to now, there are no useful mechanisms for measuring the acceptance of claims of misrepresentation.

Furthermore, some claims of misrepresentation, for example by the German AfD, that 'governments betray the silent minority', can, hardly be tested. Others, for example, the claim that the Social Democrats (SPD) no longer represent German workers can be checked by examining, whether workers vote for the SPD, or alternatively, the extent to which SPD pursues worker-related policies (cf. Guasti & Almeida, 2019; cf. Kroeber, 2018).

Considering claims of interests/values, it is relatively difficult to assess whether the relevant constituency accepts the claim, but it is possible to detect whether the relevant authority accepts the claim. For example, a group of teachers can claim to know what is right for children. The children can hardly reject or accept this claim as a group. Whether the claimed constituency accepts the claim can only be examined via surveys. In the case of the claim by teachers, this would be a survey of preferences by pupils (and may be parents). But the city council, as a relevant authority, can accept this claim.

Considering the proclamation' there is no claimed constituency. The claim maker (merely) claims that for example park benches are needed. In the context of participative budgeting, a counter proclamation can be made that there are enough park benches. No constituency is mentioned in these proposals and the identification of affected audience is complex. Is it every in-

Table 3. Acceptance/rejection of different claims.

Type of claim	A. Acceptance/rejection by the claimed constituency	B. Acceptance/rejection by the relevant authority
CLAIM OF REPRESENTATION	yes (direct)	yes
CLAIM OF MISREPRESENTATION	yes (direct)	yes
CLAIM OF INTERESTS/VALUES	yes (indirect)	yes
PROCLAMATION	**no (not applicable)**	yes

Source: The authors.

habitant of the city, city visitors, people who occasionally sit on benches, or those who find benches important for others, or simply aesthetically pleasing? In the absence of linkage to constituency, the proclamation cannot be accepted by the relevant constituency. Again, it is relatively easy to examine whether the relevant authority accepts the respective claim. The relevant authority which decides can be, for example, the city council, but also the participants in participative budgeting, a citizens' jury, or (for something larger than park benches) the whole constituency in a referendum.

Finally, we want to point out the issue of the 'acceptance hierarchy of claims'. This issue deserves significant attention in future research, but we can only mention it here. In standard theories of representation, it is assumed that the acceptance of a claim maker by the respective constituency is the 'highest level': if the claim maker is accepted (i.e., elected or re-elected), all claims by this claim maker are expected to be accepted by the constituency. The reality, however, looks quite different. A claim maker can be accepted (she is elected), but her proposals as an elected claim-maker can be rejected within her constituency. Furthermore, an elected representative does not only represent her voters, but everybody in her district—those who accepted her claim-making and voted for her, and those who did not. Furthermore, a candidate can be rejected (not elected), but a survey might show that the majority of her electoral districts supports her claim. Our *analytical framework* enables empirical researchers to differentiate the acceptance of the different types of claims without falling into the trap of the 'acceptance hierarchy of claims.'

5. An Empirical Test

To empirically test our typology and our framework, we apply them to the claims raised by the Frankfurt Council of Foreigners—an example of the electoral representation of non-citizens. In this part, we proceed in three steps. First, we briefly introduce the case study and our methodology. Second, we apply our typology of claims on representation to show the variation of claims made—claims of representation, claims of misrepresentation, claims of interests/values, and proclamations. We also demonstrate the relevance of our distinction between human beings and normative schemes. Third, we apply our conceptual framework for empirical analysis of acceptance and rejections of claims made by this Council. We show that our typology and conceptual framework provide a useful tool to analyze and compare claims of representation and their acceptance.

5.1. Case Study Description and Methodology

We have tested the empirical validity of our typology by applying it to six German debates (for details on the six case studies see Appendix). The case study presented here is the KAV. KAV is a body for the local representation of foreigners in the city of Frankfurt (Germany). The Hesse law stipulates that the non-citizen residents elect KAV for a five-year term. KAV can, however, only make so-called 'requests' and 'questions' to the municipality (municipal government and municipal bureaucracy). We have analyzed both categories and they contain all four types of claims on representation.

What makes the case of KAV particularly interesting from the point of view of representation is the size and heterogeneity of the Frankfurt non-citizens population. 27.7% of Frankfurt residents are non-citizens. With more than 150 nationalities, this group is exceptionally heterogeneous[6]. For a significant part of the non-citizen population of Frankfurt, the non-EU citizens, KAV is the only way to participate politically (37% of the non-citizen population in 2014, i.e., 73,000 Frankfurt inhabitants).

We have analyzed 284 claims raised by KAV between 2006 and 2017. Combining elements of content and discourse analysis, we proceed in three steps to identify:

1. The claim makers; in the case of KAV, the rules stipulate that only KAV as a whole can be a claim maker vis-à-vis the municipal government and municipal bureaucracy;
2. The claimed constituency, using both, open coding and assigning the category of human being or normative schemes;
3. The claimed linkage between the subject (KAV) and the object (claimed constituency).

Based on the combination of the object (claimed constituency) and linkage, we subsequently applied our typology and identified the type of claim.

Two members of the research team codded all claims separately, using pre-agreed categories. Intercoder reliability test was performed regularly, including all coded claims (Cohen's kappa, K, where complete agreement $K = 1$). In all intercoder reliability tests, the value of Cohen's kappa was above 0.85. Those items, where coders did not reach an agreement, were subsequently discussed and recoded.

5.2. Application of the Typology of Representative Claims to the Case of KAV in Frankfurt

Over time, the number of claims remained relatively constant (mostly between 17 and 35 claims per year), but the types of claims fluctuate (Figure 1). Overall, the most frequently used type of claim is claim of interests/values (52%), and the least used category is claim of misrepresentation (11%).

Regarding the claimed constituency (Figure 2), we found that the majority of claims (58%) are related to human beings. Human beings as the claimed constituency

[6] The KAV elections struggled with the meager turnout, both absolutely and compared to other cities in Hesse. In 2015 only 6.2% eligible voters took part in the KAV elections.

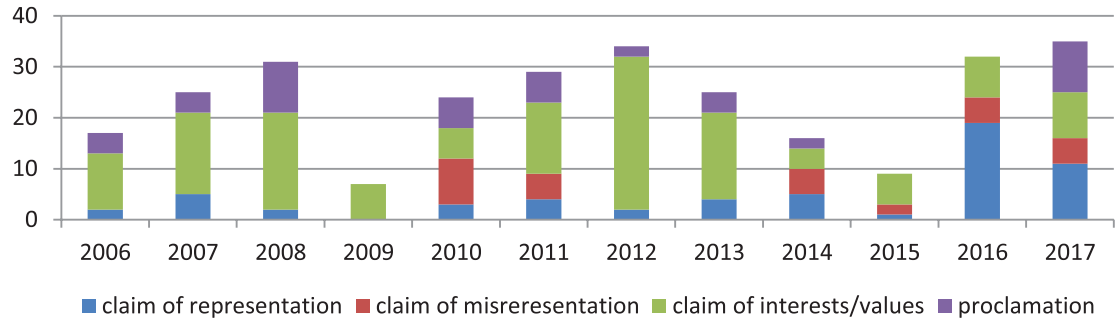


Figure 1. Types of claims by KAV Frankfurt (2006–2017). Note: N = 284. Source: The authors.

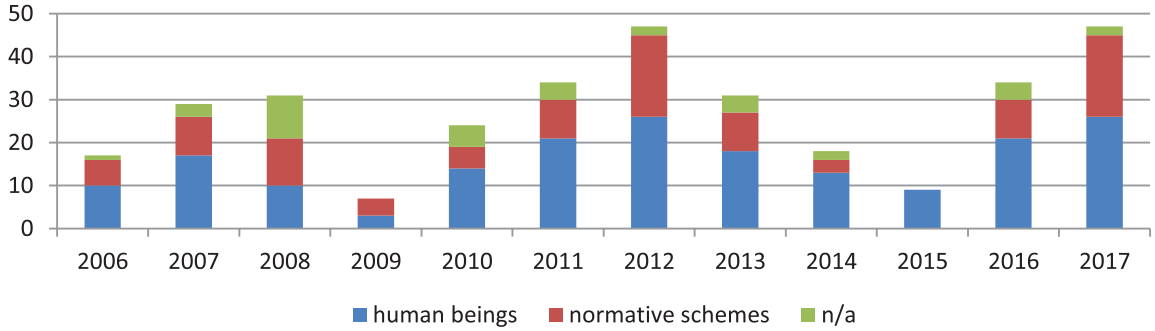


Figure 2. Claimed constituency by KAV (2006–2017). Note: N = 324 (some claims include more than one claimed constituency). Source: The authors.

are most often foreigners/migrants, non-German speakers, Muslims, asylum seekers, refugees, migrant children/youth, migrant associations, non-Christian patients in hospitals and KAV itself. Normative schemes (32%) are most often inclusiveness, diversity, integration, anti-discrimination, public safety, sustainability, multiculturalism, tolerance, equal treatment, public health and safety, and religious freedom (always vis-à-vis Islam).

A number of claims pertain to the competences of KAV. KAV raises a claim of representation, where it represents itself, in pushing the municipality to enlarge the scope of its competencies.

Conceptually, we see that the distinction of constituency between human being and normative schemes is essential. The use of the category normative schemes enables us to identify the constituency behind these normative schemes; such as here, in our example, where 'religious freedom' is a frame used to push for more accommodation for the Muslim population of Frankfurt.

A claimed linkage was included in 20% of the claims (claims of representation), absent in 69% of the claims (claims of interests/values and proclamation) and denied in 11% of the claims (claim of misrepresentation). Figure 3 summarizes the application of our framework

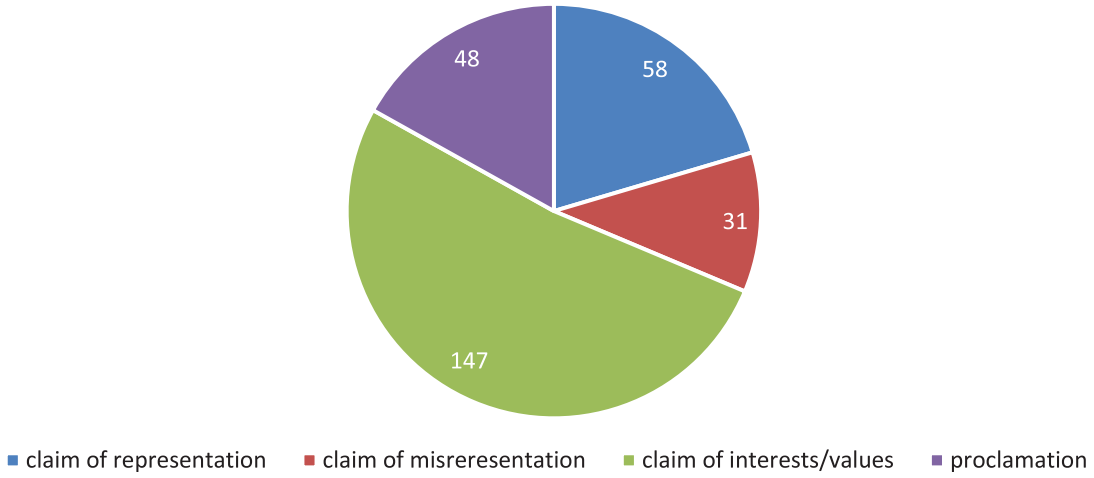


Figure 3. Typology of claims applied to KAV. Note: N = 284. Source: The authors.

to the case of the KAV in Frankfurt. Our typology enables us to better grasp the dynamics of real-life case, in which the claimants not only make assertions about who (and what) they represent, but also accuse others of misrepresentation, assert values and interest, and often make proclamations with little relevance to the notion of representation.

5.3. Acceptance of Claims

Regarding KAV authorization via elections (by its intended constituency—the Frankfurt non-citizen population), the KAV turnout has been steadily decreasing over time, reaching 6.2% in its most recent elections (2015). Given the high degree of reelection for the members of the conservative lists, it is possible to assume that the majority of voters (93.8%) do not support KAV (claims), only a minority does.

Given the limited competences of KAV, it is essential to analyze not only the claims KAV is making but also the ways to which the decision-making authority, the Frankfurt City Council (FCC), react to KAV's claims (Figure 4). In order to assess the level of acceptance of KAV claims, we traced each claim individually through the process. We found that the majority of KAV claims were processed by the city council (59%). A significant number of the proposals were rejected (31%), and a small number accepted (10%).

The majority of the accepted claims (N = 16) are general and reflect the desire of the FCC to seek an open and inclusive society. These included the introduction of intercultural competence and multilingual staff in the office for seniors to improve access for non-German speaking seniors and to adapt the congratulatory letter for reaching adulthood to include migrants and young adults with two citizenships (to foster integration). Upon KAV request, a bilingual Greek-German school program was not abolished, Neo-Nazi demonstrations banned, and a stricter approach was adopted in order to impede hate crime. Some general changes included, road adjustment, the location of public toilets in the city, and the improvement of the ambiance at the train station.

The majority of the rejected KAV claims (N = 50) tend to represent interests of separate (often conservative male-only) KAV groups opposed to integration and seeking to insulate their constituency from integration. Some rejected claims also define KAV as representative of Muslim residents (regardless of their citizenship status). The city council views KAV with growing suspicion (and contempt)—as a Trojan horse of Frankfurt Muslims. Partial interests, which clash with the KAV mission and the integration plan of the city, are rejected, and the perception of KAV as able to represent the interests of the Frankfurt non-citizens population continues to be undermined.

The most contentious rejected request in this term was the 2009 demand for the introduction of the representative (magistrate) for Islam to represent 80,000 Muslims in Frankfurt. A backlash in the media followed—the opponents of KAV called for its abolition, as it does not fulfill its role "to represent all non-citizen inhabitants of the city" (Guasti & Geissel, 2019).

The high proportion of rejected claims undermines the perception of KAV and its dominant group among the KAV constituency. But, perhaps more importantly, the KAV self-perception as representative of the Turkish minority paints the image of a minority unable to embrace the city's values of diversity and tolerance. In effect, KAV serves as a persuasive argument against the enfranchisement of non-citizens and undermines the potential for their inclusion into mainstream politics.

The application of our framework yields relevant inferences about the functioning of an innovative representative body, and a better understanding of the reasons, why KAV is failing. Our analysis highlights the tension between the roles of the KAV as it is defined in the Hesse Constitution and KAV's self-perception. The former defines KAV as an institution that fosters integration and identifies issues relevant to the non-German population of the city. The latter perceives itself as representatives of a specific religious group—the Muslim population. The overlap between the constituency intended by the Hesse law and the claimed constituency of KAV is getting narrower over time. Subsequently, the number of accepted claims decreases.

Our conceptual framework enables researchers to systematically study representative claims and their acceptance (see also Guasti & Almeida, 2019; and Joschko

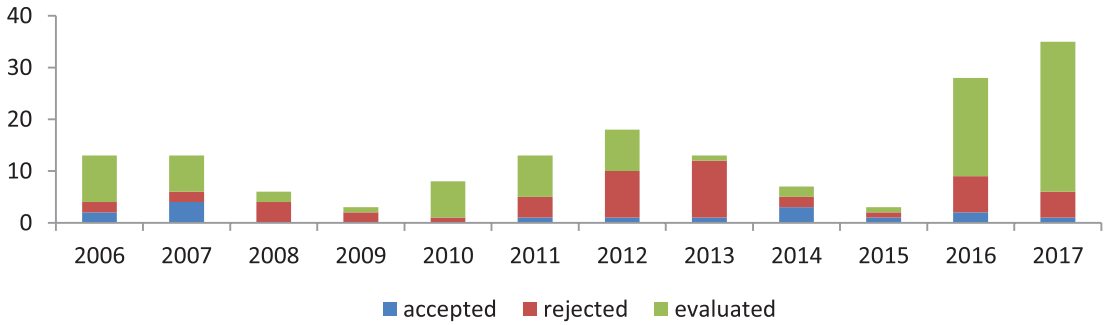


Figure 4. Acceptance of KAV Claims 2006–2017. Note: N = 160 (excluding questions from the sample and analyzing requests only). Source: The authors.

& Glaser, 2019). As the KAV case shows, it facilitates an in-depth qualitative analysis of claims over time, and their comparison along the different types and constituencies. With regard to acceptance (and rejection) of claims, we illustrate that the acceptance or rejection by the relevant constituency can and has to be taken into account. Furthermore, the effects of any claims depend on the assessment of the relevant authority. Finally, our case study hints to the problem of gaps between the representatives and the represented.

6. Conclusion

The constructivist turn in political representation challenged and changed our understanding of representative democracy (Disch, van de Sande, & Urbinati, 2019). The theoretical literature on claims expanded significantly beyond Saward, yet it remained highly abstract and often detached from the cacophony of real-life claims and their empirical research (Disch, 2008; Dryzek & Niemeyer, 2008; Kuyper, 2016; Montanaro, 2012, 2017; Severs, 2010, 2012).

In this article, we develop conceptually and empirically applicable frameworks to conceptualize and to analyze claims of representation. *We show that different types of claims exist and that different mechanisms are or can be applied to accept or reject these claims*.

Based on our analyses of several real-life cases of democratic innovations and parliamentary debates in Germany we, first, developed a comprehensive typology which allows for capturing the variety of real-life claims by elected as well as non-elected claim-makers. Analyzing a variety of real-life claims, we detected that explicit claims of representation ("I represent") are rather rare within real-world cases. Based on our empirical findings we distinguish four types of claims: the 'standard' claim of representation (with explicitly claimed constituency and claimed linkage); the claim of misrepresentation, the claim of interest (with implicitly claimed constituency without claimed linkage), and proclamation (neither claimed constituency nor linkage). These four types capture the cacophony of all claims on representations.

Second, we provided a framework for examining the mechanisms of acceptance for the different claim types. Analyzing different real case studies, it turned out that—as suggested by Saward and others—the differentiation between claimed constituency and decision-making authority is necessary.

Third, we discussed that the mechanism of acceptance of claims depends on the type of claimed constituency (human beings or normative scheme) as well as the claimed linkage (claimed, denied, absent). For example, claims by an animal advocacy group, claiming to represent "justice for farm animals" (normative schemes) cannot be accepted directly. First, the affected constituency has to identify itself within the audience—i.e., all those for whom "justice for farm animals" is important (for an excellent discussion of affected interests see Montanaro, 2017). At the same time, this claim can be accepted by a relevant decision-making authority (Ministry of Agriculture) who accepts the advocacy group's claim to represent "justice for farm animals" as valid and invites the group to submit a proposal on improving the well-being of farm animals.

Our frameworks enable better understanding of claims and their reception, but they also offer a new impulse for re-thinking the basic assumptions about representative democracy. Whereas representative democracy is based on the premise that only one mechanism of acceptance, namely, election is needed (Pitkin, 1967), the reality is more complicated. The public sphere is full of claim makers, elected and self-selected, making claims. Some of these claims have the potential to revitalize representative democracy. Others challenge not only the status quo, but as de Wilde (2019, p. 16) shows use highly sophisticated claims to challenge the liberal order as whole.

In contrast to other authors (Kuyper, 2016) we do not propose (normative) criteria for acceptance of a claim. On the contrary, we are interested in the mechanisms of acceptance and rejection by the respective constituency and the decision-making authorities in real-life cases. We see our study as a jigsaw piece in the current search for the transformation of representative democracy. We hope to enrich the debate by systemizing current claims on representation and by providing new insights into mechanisms of acceptance or rejection of the different types of claims. This is just the beginning of a broader research agenda. The next step for future research is the evaluation of different types of claims and an attempt at systematization of the mechanisms of acceptance.

Acknowledgments

We thank the DFG and ANR for their kind funding of the research project "(New) Political Representative Claims: A Global View (France, Germany, Brazil, India, China)". We also thank the three anonymous reviewers, and Stefan I. Lindberg for their comments and recommendations.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

References

Andeweg, R. B. (2003). Beyond representativeness? Trends in political representation. *European Review*, *11*(2), 147–161.

Ankersmit, F. R. (2002). *Political representation*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.

Bäckstrand, K., Kuyper, J. W., Linnér, B. O., & Lövbrand, E. (2017). Non-state actors in global climate governance: From Copenhagen to Paris and beyond. *Envi-*

ronmental Politics, *26*(4), 561–579.
Castiglione, D. (2012): Giving Pitkin her due: What the 'representative claim' gets right, and what it risks missing. *Contemporary Political Theory*, *11*(1), 118–122.
Castiglione, D. (2017). *Representative claim: A double ambiguity*. Paper presented at the ECPR Conference, Oslo.
de Wilde, P. (2013). Representative claims analysis: Theory meets method. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *20*(2), 278–294.
de Wilde, P. (2019). The quality of representative claims: Uncovering a weakness in the defense of the liberal world order. *Political Studies*, 1–22. https://doi.org/10.1177/0032321719845199
de Wilde, P., Koopmans, R., & Zürn, M. (2014). *The political sociology of cosmopolitanism and communitarianism: Representative claims analysis* (WZB Discussion Paper No. SP IV 2014-102). Berlin: WZB Berlin Social Science Center.
Disch, L. (2008). The people as 'presupposition' of representative democracy: An essay on the political theory of Pierre Rosanvallon. In *Redescriptions: Yearbook of political thought and conceptual history* (Vol. 12, pp. 47–72). Münster: LIT Verlag Münster.
Disch, L. (2011). Toward a mobilization conception of democratic representation. *American Political Science Review*, *105*(1), 100–114.
Disch, L. (2015). The 'constructivist turn' in democratic representation: A normative dead-end? *Constellations*, *22*(4), 487–499.
Disch, L., van de Sande, J. J. M., & Urbinati, N. (Eds.). (2019). *The constructivist turn in political representation*. Edinburg: Edinburg University Press.
Dovi, S. (2017). Political representation. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Retrieved from https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2017/entries/political-representation
Dryzek, J. S., & Niemeyer, S. (2008). Discursive representation. *American Political Science Review*, *102*(4), 481–493.
Dutoya, V., & Hayat, S. (2016). Prétendre représenter [Pretending to represent]. *Revue Française de Science Politique*, *66*(1), 7–25.
George, A. L., & Bennett, A. (2005). *Case studies and theory development in the social sciences*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
Guasti, P., & Almeida, D. (2019). Claims of misrepresentation: A comparison of Germany and Brazil. *Politics and Governance*, *7*(3), 152–164.
Guasti, P., & Geissel, B. (2019). *Do non-citizens represent non-citizens? A contingent 'no'*. Manuscript submitted for publication.
Hamilton, L. (2014). *Freedom is power: Liberty through political representation*. Cambridge, MA: University Press.
Heinisch, R., & Werner, A. (2019). Who do populist radical right parties stand for? Representative claims, claim acceptance and descriptive representation in the Austrian FPÖ and German AfD. *Representation*, 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/00344893.2019.1635196
Joschko, V., & Glaser, L. (2019). A new approach to map and quantify representative claims and measure their validation: A case study analysis. *Politics and Governance*, *7*(3), 137–151.
Kleinnijenhuis, J., & Rietberg, E. M. (1995). Parties, media, the public and the economy: Patterns of societal agenda-setting. *European Journal of Political Research*, *28*(1), 95–118.
Koopmans, R., & Statham, P. (1999). Political claims analysis: Integrating protest event and political discourse approaches. *Mobilization: An International Quarterly*, *4*(2), 203–221.
Koopmans, R., & Statham, P. (Eds.). (2010). *The making of a European public sphere: Media discourse and political contention*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Kriesi, H., & Trechsel, A. H. (2008) *The politics of Switzerland: Continuity and change in consensus democracy*. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press.
Kroeber, C. (2018). How to measure the substantive representation of traditionally excluded groups in comparative research: A literature review and new data. *Representation*, *54*(3), 241–259.
Kuyper, J. W. (2016). Systemic representation: Democracy, deliberation, and nonelectoral representatives. *American Political Science Review*, *110*(2), 308.
Lehnert, M. (2007). Typologies in social inquiry. In T. Gschwend & F. Schimmelfennig (Eds.), *Research design in political science* (pp. 62–82). New York, NY: Palgrave, MacMillan.
Lord, C., & Pollak, J. (2013). The pitfalls of representation as claims-making in the European Union. *Journal of European Integration*, *35*(5), 517–530.
Mansbridge, J. (1999). Should blacks represent blacks and women represent women? A contingent "yes." *The Journal of Politics*, *61*(3), 628–657.
Mansbridge, J. (2003). Rethinking representation. *American Political Science Review*, *97*(4), 515–528.
Mansbridge, J. (2011). Clarifying the concept of representation. *American Political Science Review*, *105*(3), 621–630.
Mansbridge, J. (2017). *Recursive representation in the representative system* (Working Paper No. RWP17-045). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Kennedy School. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3049294
Montanaro, L. (2012). The democratic legitimacy of self-appointed representatives. *The Journal of Politics*, *74*(4), 1094–1107.
Montanaro, L. (2017). *Who elected Oxfam? A democratic defense of self-appointed representatives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Mulieri, A. (2013). Beyond electoral democracy? A critical assessment of constructivist representation in the global arena. *Representation*, *49*(4), 515–527.

Näsström, S. (2006). Representative democracy as tautology: Ankersmit and Lefort on representation. *European Journal of Political Theory*, *5*(3), 321–342.
Näsström, S. (2011). Where is the representative turn going? *European Journal of Political Theory*, *10*(4), 501–510.
Phillips, A. (1995). *The politics of presence*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
Pitkin, H. F. (1967). *The concept of representation*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
Pitkin, H. F. (2004). Representation and democracy: Uneasy alliance. *Scandinavian Political Studies*, *27*(3), 335–342.
Rehfeld, A. (2006). Towards a general theory of political representation. *The Journal of Politics*, *68*(1), 1–21.
Rosanvallon, P., & Goldhammer, A. (2008). *Counter-democracy: Politics in an age of distrust*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Runciman, D. (2007). The paradox of political representation. *Journal of Political Philosophy*, *15*(1), 93–114.
Sartori, G. (1970). Concept misformation in comparative politics. *American Political Science Review*, *64*(4), 1033–1053.
Saward, M. (2006). The representative claim. *Contemporary Political Theory*, *5*(3), 297–318.
Saward, M. (2008). Representation and democracy: Revisions and possibilities. *Sociology Compass*, *2*(3), 1000–1013.
Saward, M. (2009). Authorisation and authenticity: Representation and the unelected. *Journal of Political Philosophy*, *17*(1), 1–22.
Saward, M. (2010). *The representative claim*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Saward, M. (2014). Shape-shifting representation. *American Political Science Review*, *108*(4), 723–736.
Saward, M. (2016). Fragments of equality in representative politics. *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, *19*(3), 245–262.
Schaap, A., Thompson, S., Disch, L., Castiglione, D., & Saward, M. (2012). Critical exchange on Michael Saward's 'The Representative Claim'. *Contemporary Political Theory*, *11*(1), 109–127.
Severs, E. (2010). Representation as claims-making. Quid responsiveness? *Representation*, *46*(4), 411–423.
Severs, E. (2012). Substantive representation through a claims-making lens: A strategy for the identification and analysis of substantive claims. *Representation*, *48*(2), 169–181.
Sintomer, Y. (2013). The meanings of political representation: Uses and misuses of a notion. *Raisons Politiques*, *2*(50), 13–34.
Thompson, S. (2012) Making representations: Comments on Michael Sawards 'The Representative Claim.' *Contemporary Political Theory*, *11*(1), 111–114.
Urbinati, N., & Warren, M. E. (2008). The concept of representation in contemporary democratic theory. *Annual Review of Political Science*, *11*, 387–412.
Van Biezen, I., & Saward, M. (2008). Democratic theorists and party scholars: Why they don't talk to each other, and why they should. *Perspectives on Politics*, *6*(1), 21–35.
Warren, M. E. (2001). *Democracy and association*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Young, I. M. (1986). The ideal of community and the politics of difference. *Social Theory and Practice*, *12*(1), 1–26.
Young, I. M. (2002). *Inclusion and Democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

About the Authors

Petra Guasti is an Interim Professor at the Institute of Political Science, Goethe University Frankfurt (Democratic Innovations Unit). She was AY 2018/2019 Democracy Visiting Fellow at the Ash Centre for Democratic Governance and Innovation, Harvard Kennedy School. Her main research focus is democracy, more specifically the growing tension within the system of representative democracy in respect to its legitimacy. Her research appears among others in *Democratization, Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, *European Political Science* and *East European Politics and Societies and Cultures*.

Brigitte Geissel, Goethe University Frankfurt, Professor of Political Science and Political Sociology, Head of Research Unit "Democratic Innovations". Her research interests include democratic innovations, new forms of governance and political actors (new social movements, associations, civil society, parties, political elites, citizens). Recently published in *Political Studies Review*, *Representation*, *Political Studies*, *International Political Science Review*.

Appendix

Case description			Interim findings	
CLAIMS type (based on CLAIMS proposal)	**Theme**	**Temporality**	**claim makers**	**claimed constituencies**
Critique of (descriptive) misrepresentation	gender quota in business	2003–2018	Feminists/NGOs/ academics Media/business/ parliamentarians/ party officials	women in general/with ambitions/ in business/equality/equal opportunity/justice/freedom/ Constitution
Critique of (substantive) misrepresentation	AfD	2013–2018 (first six months)	AfD leadership	the German people/the (people) left behind/the 'Nation'/German destiny/ historical calling German democracy
Democratic innovations: Reclaiming representation?	Voting rights for non-naturalized residents	1990–2017	Political parties/ Courts/Ministry of Interior/FOMR/ NGOs/Non-naturalized residents	German citizens in general/ non-naturalized citizens Constitution/citizenship/participation integration
Representation without elections: Participatory budgeting	PB Münster	2011	Citizens/Stakeholders	n/a only representation in claims: proposals for savings
Representation without citizenship: Council for foreigners in Frankfurt	KAV Frankfurt	2006–2017	KAV as a whole	foreigners/migrants/non-German speakers/Muslims/asylum seekers/ KAV/inclusiveness/integration/ anti-discrimination/religious freedom (vis-à-vis Islam).
Democratic innovations: Direct democracy	DD Hamburg	2008–2010	Citizens' initiatives/ teachers' associations/ Trade Unions/students' groups/Hamburg government/Political parties	all citizens/all children/all pupils/ 'entitled' pupils inclusive educational system

COGITATIO

Politics and Governance (ISSN: 2183–2463)
2019, Volume 7, Issue 3, Pages 112–123
DOI: 10.17645/pag.v7i3.2139

Article

The Redistribution of Representation through Participation: Participatory Budgeting in Chengdu and Delhi

Emilie Frenkiel [1,*] and Stéphanie Tawa Lama-Rewal [2]

[1] Université Paris-Est Créteil, LIPHA, 94000 Créteil, France; E-Mail: emilie.frenkiel@u-pec.fr
[2] Centre d'Etudes de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 75006 Paris, France; E-Mail: tawalama@ehess.fr

* Corresponding author

Submitted: 30 March 2019 | Accepted: 26 July 2019 | Published: 24 September 2019

Abstract
A strong contention of the "representative turn" is that representation is consubstantial with politics (Saward, 2010). One way to test the heuristic value of this vision is to look for representation in an institution that was historically built against representation, namely participatory budgeting (PB), a democratic innovation that has spread globally with exceptional rapidity. The literature on PB identifies two types of relationships between participation and representation: (i) participation "challenges" (Houtzager & Gurza Lavalle, 2009) existing forms and principles of representation (through "assumed representation" by civil society activists; or through "citizen agents"; Montambeault, 2016); or (ii) participation is "instrumentalised" (Fischer, 2012) by classic forms and actors of representation. On the basis of a comparative analysis of PB experiences in Chengdu (China) and Delhi (India), we argue in this article that a third type of relationship can be observed: participation—as implemented through PB—can also redistribute representation insofar as new, official representative roles are created. Moreover, looking at these new roles provides important clues about the principles of representation that are implemented and therefore about the transformative nature of PB.

Keywords
China; democracy; India; participation; participatory budgeting; representation

Issue
This article is part of the issue "Rethinking Representation: Representative Claims in Global Perspective", edited by Petra Guasti (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany) and Brigitte Geissel (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany).

1. Introduction

One strong contention of the "representative turn" in political science is that representation is consubstantial with politics (Saward, 2010); in other words, "representation is everywhere" (Näsström, 2011, p. 508). In order to test the heuristic value of this vision, it seems interesting to look for representation in an institution that was historically built *against* representation, namely participatory budgeting (PB). PB is a participatory device that is meant to provide a necessary answer, a corrective, to the democratic deficit of representative democracy (Baiocchi & Ganuza, 2014; Wampler, 2012a).

This democratic innovation was born in the Brazilian city of Porto Alegre in 1989. One finds "at its heart a relatively simple idea: citizens deciding over the priorities and projects that make up a public budget" (Baiocchi & Ganuza, 2014). Basically, citizens and social organisations are provided a platform to discuss the priority of different projects and vote on the expenditure plan, which gives local citizens a voice over and the ability to supervise the proposed budgetary expenditure of the government, thereby in theory made more transparent, inclusive and responsible (Chen, 2007; Shah, 2007; Wampler, 2000).

This innovative, grassroots and democratic budgetary decision-making process has spread globally with exceptional rapidity: first to hundreds of municipalities in Brazil and other South American countries, then to thousands of cities on all continents since the 1990s (Sintomer, Herzberg, & Allegretti, 2013), even though it

remains today less developed in Asia than elsewhere. In this circulation process PB has undergone many adaptations, which have been closely observed by scholars. The first wave of studies on PB tended to focus on successful cases, investigating outcomes and contextual variations, and developing a comparative framework (Avritzer, 2006; Baiocchi, 2005; Santos, 1998; Sintomer et al., 2013; Sintomer, Herzberg, & Röcke, 2008; Wampler, 2007). Later research tempered this enthusiasm by putting into perspective the dynamic implementation of PB in model cases like Porto Alegre with the weaker impact PB has had on some municipalities where it was peripheral to city administrations; its outcomes were technically overdetermined; and the decision-making of participants was far removed from any locus of local power (He, 2011; Sintomer et al., 2008). Indeed a question that runs through much of this literature regards what is left of the initial radicalism of the Porto Alegre experience in its later avatars (Baiocchi & Ganuza, 2014; Cabannes & Lipietz, 2018; Wampler, 2012b). To what extent does PB remain, as in Porto Alegre, a transformative, empowering institution attached to the project of democratizing democracy? How far has it become, on the contrary, a managerial, communication-centred device compatible with neo-liberalism?

The relationship of PB with political representation is an important indicator of the direction taken. Indeed, the literature on PB suggests two possible relationships between participation and representation. A first scenario is that participation "challenges" existing forms and principles of representation (Houtzager & Gurza Lavalle, 2009) through a new, "assumed representation" by civil society activists, but also by "citizen agents" (Montambeault, 2016). The second scenario is that participation is "instrumentalised" by classic actors of representation (Fischer, 2012, p. 18), starting with mayors and other local elected representatives; participatory devices such as PB then become political tools used by elected representatives to communicate about their action, and more generally to relegitimate themselves (Baiocchi & Ganuza, 2014; Bherer, Fernández-Martínez, Espín, & Sánchez, 2016). We argue in this article that a third type of relationship can exist. Indeed, our study of PB in Chengdu (China) and Delhi (India) leads us to observe that participation can also *redistribute* representation insofar as new, official representative roles are created; moreover, these new roles provide important clues about the principles of representation that are implemented in the PB process.

2. Methods and Data

The article offers a comparative analysis of two case studies conducted between 2014 and 2019 in Delhi and in Chengdu. In both cities we collected data about the local PB process in order to answer two main, open questions: (i) How is PB—a global democratic innovation—implemented/interpreted/adapted in the particular context under study? And (ii) what forms of political representation can one observe in this process?

With regard to these questions, Chengdu and Delhi appeared as potentially "instructive cases" (Eckstein, 2009, p. 139) for two main reasons. Firstly, as we said, they are among the rare examples of PB in Asia. Secondly, and more importantly, PB processes in Chengdu and Delhi can be *a priori* considered as "most contrasted" cases because they are embedded in very different political regimes: India and China have divergent theories and practices of political representation. Despite the illiberal turn taken with the coming to power of Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) since 2014, India has so far remained a democracy built on competitive elections, relatively free media, an independent judiciary and an active civil society. On the Chinese side, although communist rule underwent great evolutions over the last 70 years, in this one-party system based on the concept of the Leninist vanguard party, political representation has invariably been defined by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) as the capacity to represent the interest of the majority of the Chinese people (see Frenkiel & Shpakovskaya, 2019). This exclusive "representative claim" (Saward, 2006) has considerably constrained pluralism, rule of law, freedom of speech and demonstration. The fact that Chengdu appears, as we will later see, as a clear case of "managerial" PB, while Delhi looks like a more "transformative" case, was congruent with this major contrast between the two political systems.

However, the "intimacy of analysis" (Tarrow, 2010, p. 243) that characterises case studies enabled us to see that in both Chengdu and Delhi the *local* political context is marked, for different reasons, by a de-emphasis on representation (something that is much more recent in Delhi[1] than in Chengdu). To put it briefly, in Delhi PB was implemented by the AAP, a new party that was born from a strong critique of misrepresentation, and that placed the development of citizen's participation in decision-making at the centre of its political project. In Chengdu, like all over China, the CCP is still the sole representative claim maker and all other forms of representation are minimized or suppressed (Frenkiel & Shpakovskaya, 2019). But the Party comprises 90 million members and 10 million civil servants (they do not necessarily belong to the Party but above county level, all leading cadres must be Party members) and the central leaders cannot afford to be held responsible for the misdeeds of lower-level leaders[2]. Its current strategy is to simultaneously put them in check by grassroots participation (direct elec-

[1] For an analysis of the exercise of power by the Aam Aadmi Party [AAP, Party of the Common Man] in Delhi, see Stéphanie Tawa Lama-Rewal, 2019.

[2] To put it briefly, there are four administrative levels in China as provided in the Constitution: central, provincial, county/municipality and township/neighbourhood levels. The prefecture and the grassroots (village/community) levels are *de facto* but not *de jure* administrative divisions. Chengdu (prefecture) comprises 9 urban districts, 4 municipalities or county-level cities (*shi*), 6 counties (*xian*), 12 city divisions (*shiqu*), 317 townships and neighbourhoods (*xiangzhen* and *jiedao*) and 3432 villages and communities (*cun* and *shequ*).

tion of village committees supplemented by PB and village councils in some places, among a broad array of devices), self-rule and CCP disciplinary commissions at central and lower levels. Therefore, our cases are not as "contrasted" as could be expected at first.

In terms of data, the article is based on two qualitative surveys, conducted between 2014 and 2019 in Delhi, and between 2016 and 2018 in Chengdu. In both places the unit of analysis was the PB process set up by regional authorities (i.e., the government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi and the prefecture-level government in Chengdu). We were interested both in the discourses justifying the interest of PB and in implementation processes—with specific attention being paid to the meetings that brought together citizens and authorities, i.e., to situations, and even to the scenography (when observable) of PB meetings. While the literature on PB has discussed the important implications of having physical versus online interactions during the PB process, our study suggests that the fact that physical interactions happen in public or in closed meetings also matters a lot. Thus, we conducted a series of interviews with local officials (i.e., elected representatives and functionaries of local administrations) and other participants in PB, and we also tried to directly observe, as much as possible, local meetings.

In Delhi, 24 semi-directed interviews were done with cadres, elected representatives and volunteers of the AAP, as well as four interviews with NGO workers and four interviews with bureaucrats working for the city-state government. We could also directly observe two neighbourhood assemblies, and since such meetings are often video-recorded, we could analyse the video-records of another five meetings.

In Chengdu, 23 semi-directed interviews were conducted with cadres of the United Front department (in Pengzhou and Chongzhou), village party secretaries, village representatives and local scholars consulted in the process. We could directly observe two village councils and read the minutes of previous councils on the village register as well as on official Internet portals whenever available. Finally, we used official documentation and media reports on PB in both cities.

In spite of important asymmetries between the PB experiences conducted in Delhi and Chengdu (see Table 1), we will show that a comparative analysis of these two case studies can be theory-building (Tarrow, 2010, p. 245). Indeed, our argument will outline two paradoxes. One, although political representation is de-emphasized in both cases, the very implementation process of PB actually generates new representative roles, i.e., "neighborhood assembly coordinators" in Delhi and "village representatives" in Chengdu. Two, in the Chinese, "good governance" kind of PB, "village representatives" challenge, even if implicitly, the dominant theory of representation; while in the Indian, "transformative" kind of PB, neighborhood assembly coordinators are actually delegated representatives who implicitly re-affirm elections as the main source of democratic legitimacy. The article will show, therefore, that the forms and principles of representation observed in PB processes complicate their qualification along the radical/neo-liberal axis and constitute important criteria to assess the transformative nature of PB.

The first section of the article presents the main features of the two PB experiences under study. In the second section we argue that despite the clear asymmetry between Chengdu and Delhi, the two cases present important similarities regarding (i) the justification of PB, and (ii) the creation of new, official representative roles. The third section focuses on contrasts between the two experiences in terms of the place of procedures and symbols; it then argues that although processes and situations are different, they give way in both cases to a redistribution of political representation, and to some extent to its redefinition.

3. PB in Chengdu and Delhi: Two Significant but Asymmetric Experiments

Neither the Chengdu nor the Delhi PB are representative of a national tendency. In China, the Brazilian idea of PB was formally introduced in the context of campaigns to open budgets since the 1990s, at a time of budgetary reforms aimed at efficiency and accountability through central and social control (Ma, 2009). In 2005, it was practiced for the first time in Wenling, Zhejiang province. Different townships experimented differently. While PB was introduced in Xinhe as a reform to promote the role of the legislative branch in budgetary decision-making and encourage citizen participation in congress deliberations, in Zeguo, it took the form of deliberative polling. PB was primarily focused on empowering citizens, rather than the People's Congress, to make budgetary decisions on capital projects (Fewsmith, 2013; Fishkin, He, Luskin, & Siu, 2010; He, 2011; He & Thogersen, 2010; Li, 2005; Ma, 2009). The pioneering introduction of PB has significantly evolved and has considerably but unequally expanded since 2005. The experiences conducted there have remained exceptional even though they have been known and emulated all over the country. Only a few other experiments have led to stable practice, such as Wuxi, where, since 2006, resident representatives select and prioritize among capital budget programs planned by the government (Wu & Wang, 2011) and Chengdu, since 2009 (Ming, 2014).

In India, a few experiences with PB did take place before the Delhi *janta ka budget* (people's budget). The most ambitious one was the "People's Plan campaign", implemented from 1996 onwards in the rural areas of the southern state of Kerala (Heller & Isaac, 2003) by a coalition led by the Communist Party of India (Marxist)—which however much weakened after four years (Tharakan, 2005). In the southern city of Bangalore, a civil society organisation, Janaagraha, organised a micro local version of PB in a selection of municipal wards in

2001, but again the experience was short lived and could not be continued, let alone scaled up. Only the municipality of Pune, on the Western coast, managed to sustain an initiative put in place in 2006, but this experiment with PB has largely been limited to a collection of people's demands through the filling of forms.

The two cases under study are therefore neither unique nor representative, but they are significant in their respective national context, for different reasons. Chengdu's PB has proved to be durable and stabilized, while Delhi's experience, although short-lived, has been remarkable for its radicalism and visibility.

Indeed, the PB scheme taking place in Chengdu's village councils, (*yishihui*, literally, meetings where rural inhabitants discuss official business, including budget issues but not only), is an interesting case because of its scale, design standardization and institutionalization. The peculiarity of Chengdu's village governance also rests on some transfer of power from the elected village committee (*cunmin weiyuanhui*) to the elected village council, turned into a regular oversight and decision-making institution addressing significant issues such as how to use collective assets, allocate available financial resources, and set the boundaries of agricultural land on which households have use rights (village committees are elected and have executive power to handle village affairs. In places like Chengdu where the village council, also translated as "village representative assembly" is institutionalized and regularly convened, oversight and horizontal accountability of elected village leaders improve significantly).

These local meetings are organized to discuss village projects, which have been made transparent and open to deliberation within the framework of village councils gathering, once a month, local "representatives" (*daibiao*) elected for this purpose. These meetings were first sparsely organized for farmers to discuss land issues, after the reform in land rights triggered by the Property Law of 2007 and the severe and unsolvable conflicts it led to. Moreover, after the devastating 2008 Wenchuan earthquake, such deliberative platforms were all the more needed to discuss reconstruction. Their embryonic form originated in Mayan village, Qionglai county, where trusted residents, knowledgeable, skillful senior villagers, party members, former village and local leaders who still inhabited the villages, were invited to discuss and decide land rights issues.

In 2009, former Party secretary of Sichuan province Li Chuncheng decided to formally introduce PB in villages with the help of scholars like Li Ling (Sichuan Academy of Social Sciences). A regular platform was needed to discuss budgets and projects after the 2008 earthquake, as well as to alleviate citizen discontent with local officials, which slowed down policy implementation and led to *shangfang* (petition and complaints) and protests that spiked with the 2007 Property law[3]. To break down the dual economy (i.e., the gap between rural and urban development), Chengdu, which was designated "pilot city" in 2003, created a single regional plan for public services covering the entire Chengdu region. The plan prioritizes rural infrastructures and the equalization of public services between rural, peri-urban, and urban areas based on a public fiscal system providing enough financial resources, especially in rural Chengdu. What we call PB in this article therefore refers to the significant budget allocated since late 2008 by Chengdu prefecture for the improvement of village-level public services, called "Village Level Public Services and Social Administration Funding". The process is rarely referred to as PB (*canyushi yusuan*) in Chengdu. Chengdu's prefecture-level government directly shares revenue with villages, which in 2009 received at least 200,000 RMB (32,000 USD) (Ming, 2014)[4]. Since its implementation ten years ago, the funding has first doubled, then tripled. Besides, if local authorities (at township or higher level) plan and implement the majority of rural investment, 8 out of the 59 rural public services classified by the Chengdu government are delivered by local villages whose residents are required to participate directly in their local public decisions and services. Over the first three PB cycles, PB funded nearly 40,000 projects decided by local residents and implemented in over 2,300 villages. The per capita annual amount debated was around 22 USD, which ranks quite high in world comparisons and is probably equivalent or slightly higher nowadays.

Villages experimented in various ways with PB until the process was strictly stabilized and institutionalized under the "deliberation and social dialogue system" in Pengzhou, a 1.2 million-inhabitant municipality located north of Chengdu, where the recent urbanization and pluralisation of interests, the fast sale of collective rural land as well as polluting petrochemical industry triggered conflicts. Having the pioneer experiments in Wenling, which lacked institutional stability, in mind, local leaders and scholars decided to coordinate the process more strictly with the township level and the people's congress so as to write it into the local law. As this is highly uncommon, it drew the attention of senior leaders and scholars and was spread to the whole Chengdu region after the 18th central party congress (2013), which endorsed popular participation.

In Delhi, PB was introduced for the first time in 2015, shortly after the AAP won regional elections with a historic score (67 seats out of a total of 70). PB occupied an important place in the discourse of the newly elected party. Organising assemblies (*sabhas*) open to everyone, at the truly local level of the neighborhood (*mohalla*), where priorities regarding local services and infrastructures could be collectively identified, and where the work done by local authorities could be monitored, was pre-

[3] The reform maintained state ownership over land but gave individual use rights the same level of protection as afforded state and collective rights.

[4] This amount has increased every year. It amounted to 47,500 USD in 2011 and 50,000 USD (with a maximum of 85,000 USD) in 2012 (Ming, 2014). More recently, allocated budgets have hovered between 400,000 RMB and 800,000 RMB (58,500 USD–115,000 USD).

sented as giving substance to a notion that was central in the party's discourse, namely "self-rule" (*Swaraj*). PB was meant to demonstrate the party's seriousness when it came to the two main ideas around which it was formed: (i) the need to fight political and bureaucratic corruption by developing transparency and accountability; (ii) the imperative to make democracy more participatory through decentralisation and the institutionalization of various devices making it possible for people to take part in decision-making. All this was expected to make governance at the same time more democratic and more efficient.

Therefore, when PB was implemented in the Spring of 2015, this was done with much fanfare, the mobilisation of all state resources and the strong involvement of the party's top leaders. However, it was decided that implementation would proceed in two phases: there would first be a pilot experiment on a sample of 11 constituencies (all of them having elected an AAP representative); and on the basis of that experiment, the "people's budget" would take place all over Delhi the following year.

We will here focus on neighbourhood assemblies (*mohalla sabhas*), which are the most visible and arguably the most significant moment of the PB process in terms of political representation. Some 400 such assemblies were organised in April–May 2015, most often in local schools. Typically, these assemblies would involve local residents, functionaries representing the various departments in charge of local services and infrastructures (water, public works, horticulture, etc.), the locally elected Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA), and two party volunteers nominated by him/her, and called "*mohalla sabha* coordinators".

In terms of budget, it was proposed in the pilot phase that each neighbourhood assembly would be entitled to deal with five million rupees every year. This amount appears rather modest, since altogether it makes up less than 1% of the overall budget of the city-state of Delhi[5]; yet this is a budget that makes it possible to construct or improve urban infrastructures on a scale that can have a real impact on the life of (poor) local residents, as for example when public toilets, street lighting or sport equipment are concerned.

In Delhi, the outcome of the "peoples' budget" was a mixed one. Participation in neighbourhood assemblies was much weaker than expected (the average number of participants was around 80 persons, out of about 4,500 local residents); and the selection of priority work was not prepared through prior discussions (Rao, 2016). Moreover, because Delhi's governance is especially complex (many types of works do not depend on the Delhi government), people often suggested works on which the Delhi government requires the cooperation of other local authorities, such as municipal bodies or the parastatal agencies depending on the Central government. Such cooperation however was not forthcoming, and it generated a loss of credibility both for elected representatives and for neighborhood assembly coordinators.

The party's response was to act on the weaknesses identified during the pilot experiment. From the Fall 2015 onwards, cadres organised the nomination and training of about 6,000 assembly coordinators as well as the mapping of infrastructures present in every neighbourhood. Simultaneously, they started preparing a mobile application that would allow coordinators to immediately identify the department and official in charge of such or such local amenity, in view of arming them for the second phase of PB.

However, the second phase never happened. The government of the city-state had always been a weak one; but by mid-2015, tensions between the Delhi government and the Central government (dominated by the BJP, a Hindu nationalist party) developed into a full-fledged institutional tussle that ultimately resulted in the paralysis of the former. As a result, the Swaraj Bill, a crucial piece of legislation meant to institutionalize neighbourhood assemblies and PB, was never notified, and the whole process was suspended indefinitely. The team of cadres in charge of PB then decided to refocus their energies on the education sector, and more precisely on School Management Committees' *mahasabhas* (super assemblies). Thus, organisational learning was deviated onto another participatory scheme, focusing on government schools[6].

The fact that the PB process was not repeated after the first year clearly makes Delhi a limit case if we consider the defining criteria of PB proposed by Sintomer, Herzberg and Allegretti (2013), namely that (i) discussions focus on financial/budgetary processes; (ii) the city level, or a (decentralized) district with an elected body and some power over administration and resources is involved; (iii) *the process is repeated over years*; (iv) some form of public deliberation is included within the framework of specific meetings/forums; and (v) some accountability is required so that the output reflects the public will (Sintomer et al., 2013, p. 11). Yet since the Delhi PB was meant to be repeated, and since it found a new expression around the school management committees, we will consider it as a real, if failed, case of PB.

As regards PB in Chengdu, all but criterion (ii) are met, which does not invalidate its classification as PB given the relative decentralization of the Chinese administration and autonomy of villages, the size of the affected populations (Chinese villages would demographically qualify

[5] In the Indian constitutional architecture Delhi has a specific status: since the adoption of the 69th Constitutional Amendment Act in 1991, Delhi has been a "quasi-state", officially called the National Capital Territory of Delhi (NCTD). Like the other 29 states of the Union, the NCTD has its own legislative assembly and government, but this government is weak because it has no control over three domains that, in this particular case, pertain to the Central government, namely land development, police, and law and order. Delhi is therefore a city-state, and its Chief minister is closer to a city-manager; yet the centrality of Delhi in India's political life confers disproportionate media attention to what its government says and does.

[6] In the typology of PB proposed by Cabannes and Lipietz (2018), SMC *mahasabhas* would arguably qualify as "thematic", "actor based" PB (as opposed to territorially based).

Table 1. Basic features of PB in Chengdu and Delhi.

	Chengdu	Delhi
Population	16 million	17 million
Urban/rural	70% urban	Mostly urban
Key institution for PB	*Yishihui* (village council and urban community council)	*Mohalla sabha* (neighbourhood assembly)
Participants	Residents elected for three years; village party secretary; sometimes bureaucrats	Voters of the neighbourhood; *mohalla sabha* coordinators; (sometimes) locally elected MLAs; bureaucrats from the concerned departments
Dates	2008–now	2015–2016
Eligible projects	Basic services and infrastructure; training; local management	Basic services and infrastructure (footpaths, sewers, parks, public lighting…)

as cities in many countries) and the financial significance of the allocated budget.

Table 1 highlights the many asymmetries between the two experiments under study: in their magnitude, degree of institutionalization, engineering, domains of intervention, and also in the interest they have evoked. One must note, among the many contrasts, the fact that PB meetings are closed in Chengdu (only the minutes are available), whereas they are public in Delhi. This fact will prove important regarding the type of representation generated by such meetings, as we shall see.

4. A Common Democratic and Managerial Promise

Despite the contrasts highlighted above, the two experiences conducted in Delhi and Chengdu also have a lot in common: they combine, like many cases of PB elsewhere, a "democratic promise" (Cabannes & Lipietz, 2018) with a managerial one—although in different proportions. Indeed, in both cases PB is presented, in the discourse of the organizing party, as a means to associate citizens to decisions that concern them, but also as a way to fight corruption. In other words, PB is supposed to make decision-making at the local level more democratic and more efficient at the same time.

The Chengdu experience highlights the place of democracy in Chinese political discourse. Electoral democracy's expansion has been blocked beyond grassroots level. Its most daring experimentation was located in Buyun township, also located in Sichuan province. In Chengdu, the *yishihui* is officially associated with "consultative democracy" (*xieshang minzhu*, also strategically but confusingly translated as deliberative democracy) and public participation (*gonggong canyu*). Consultative democracy is officially defined as a democratic pattern in which, led by the CCP, all sections of society are consulted on major issues before and during policy-making processes. This notion has been more abundantly resorted to since 2012 to justify the Party's claim to represent the whole of the Chinese people. In order to represent such a diverse and large population (and now officially recognized as such), the Party must not only organize consultation of the eight authorized non-communist parties (especially thanks to institutions such as the United Front[7]), diverse political, economic, academic elites[8] but also the common people. Consultation is more encouraged than previously in national and local congresses and in the political consultative conference system, but a new stress is especially put on consulting grassroots organizations and organizing debates at the grassroots level.

The monthly meetings organized in Chengdu are local interpretations of these central orientations. As one council representative explains, *yishihui* are "meetings representing the views of the masses because they serve as a bridge for the bottom and the top to communicate" (Interview with *yishihui* representative, Chengdu, July 2016). They offer a platform for village representatives to express their neighbours' views and get involved in the decision-making process. In both official and informal discourse, representation is de-emphasized. The *yishihui* participants are designated as *yishihui* representatives (*daibiao*), participants (*canyuzhe*) or members (*chengyuan*) but it is striking that representation is more often than not completely erased as participants are equalled with masses (*qunzhong*), residents (*cunmin*, *jumin*), peasants (*nongmin*) or common people (*laobaixing*) and more rarely with citizens (*gongmin*). Representation in this case seems to pertain to identity or embodiment representation ("acting as"), whereby the relation of representation is supposed to be based on an immediate community of interests, opinions, beliefs and often identity between the representative and

[7] The United Front work department is a CCP agency created during the civil war (1945–1949) and reestablished under Deng Xiaoping which is in charge of managing relations with the non-Communist Party elite (including the eight minor parties, individuals and organizations holding social, commercial, or academic influence, or who represent important interest groups, both inside and outside China). Its shrinking role is currently being redefined but there are still branches at all administrative levels to guarantee CCP oversight over groups that are not directly associated with the Party and government.

[8] Jiang Zemin's "Three Represents" theory, ratified at the 16th Party Congress in 2002 reflects the CCP's attempt to adapt to the new realities and represent new social groups such as entrepreneurs and intellectuals.

the represented, more than the expression of consent. (Sintomer, 2013). Identity representation appears to confer more legitimacy to *yishihui* representatives than the fact that they have been elected by villagers.

Yishihui meetings aim at reducing the tensions and conflicts rising at the most grassroots level ("nipping them in the bud") through empowering common citizens to have a say in local budgets and supervising official practice. They are designed to limit corruption and restore public trust in authorities through making local investments, supposed to further economic development and reduce inequalities (especially rural vs. urban), more transparent and collectively debated. With these meetings, common citizens are expected to "decide" (*jueding*, *shuo le suan*) and "solve their problems among themselves" while the role of elected village committee members and selected members of the party branch is reduced to convening and moderating the meetings as well as taking stock of the decisions and reporting them to higher authorities and higher cadres and bureaucrats, who attend only if and when invited by the councils. The real objective of institutionalizing these oversight assemblies is to reduce social instability and conflicts and therefore complaint and petitioning through boosting self-governing and autonomy at the village and community level, and compelling the village committee as well as local officials to be more transparent, efficient and accountable.

Since in China local congress representatives (*renda daibiao*) are often devoid of power, and local congresses are rubber stamp institutions representing the Party more than citizens, local cadres are powerful but disconnected from popular needs. The absence of electoral representation entices them to respond above all to higher authorities and promotional standards. Besides, it does not prevent corruption by personal, family, clanic, private interests. Village councils have the potential to give more clout to these local congresses especially regarding budget issues, forcing local officials to respond to the actual needs of the local population, and also give them arguments to reject extravagant (called "face projects") or disconnected projects imposed by their hierarchy.

Leaders (village committee members, village party secretary and indirectly county officials) undeniably lose a great part of their discretionary powers by "letting masses decide for themselves" but according to local scholars like Li Ling (personal communication, October, 2016), a broad consensus exists among officials at various administrative levels because PB in the form of the *yishihui* has proven to be an efficient governance instrument in all these respects, and it is also conceived as cultivating the competence of citizens, who are made to understand the complexity of policy-making and better comply with government decisions. The discourse on PB in Chengdu therefore invokes both democracy and good governance as PB appears as a managerial device aiming at efficient governance through popular participation and oversight.

In Delhi, like in Chengdu, corruption is a central theme that connects the democratic and the managerial promises of PB. Indeed, the AAP was born from the "India Against Corruption" movement that shook the country's large cities in 2011–2012 (see Chowdhury, 2019). Thus, PB is presented as a means to correct the misrepresentation of people's "true interests", misrepresentation being caused by the fact that decision-making happens in closed-door meetings, among people disconnected from ground realities and indulging in corruption. It is proposed that PB, i.e., the direct involvement of lay citizens in decisions concerning local affairs, will bring efficiency, as it will both decrease corruption and improve the adequacy of decisions to real needs.

But if the anti-corruption theme is a strong link between our two cases, the discourse justifying PB is very different in Delhi with regard to (i) the type of democracy envisioned and (ii) the political function of PB for the party. Indeed, in contrast with "consultative democracy" in China, "participatory democracy" in the AAP's discourse signals the party's radicalism in two senses: firstly, participation is presented as a major way to transform politics, to "change the rules", to "reverse the governance process" (Interview with AAP cadre, Delhi, 2017); secondly, it signals a will to return to the sources of Indian democracy, identified with Gandhi's political thought. The neighbourhood assemblies experimented with and theorized by the leaders of the AAP can indeed be seen as the contemporary version of the "little republics" celebrated by Gandhi in the 1930s (Tawa Lama-Rewal, 2018b).

An analysis of the discourse of the AAP—as observable through its manifestoes, leaders' public speeches but also interviews with cadres, elected representatives and volunteers—helps understanding how participation is conceived by the party. It reveals that the notion of participation encompasses several ideas—including communication, consultation, discussion and education—but that two aspects clearly dominate, namely action/decision-making and control/surveillance (of public authorities). On the whole there is little emphasis on discussion and debate, and no mention at all of deliberation. A formula often used by party leaders Arvind Kejriwal and Manish Sisodia while they were introducing the concept of PB in the first neighbourhood assemblies organized in May 2015 sums up this emphasis: "don't say/think 'our government'; say/think 'we, the government"' (*hamara sarkar nahi, ham sarkar*). This formula is typical of the de-emphasis (sometimes verging on the denial) of the role of representatives in the AAP's discourse (Tawa Lama-Rewal, 2019): we are told that "elected representatives will *implement* people's decision" (AAP, 2014); that people will *be* the government.

One can read this injunction as an expression of the fundamentals of the party, that reflect the trajectory of its leaders, from anti-corruption activists to movement organizers to party founders: if *mohalla sabhas* are meant, explicitly, to improve local governance by associ-

ating local people to decisions regarding their own neighbourhood, these are also, in a more implicit but equally important manner, a mode of mobilization that aims at putting constant pressure on local authorities. Thus, in Delhi, PB is far from evoking a consensus among government functionaries. In this respect, the few interviews we could conduct (since bureaucrats are most often very reluctant to give their opinion on policy issues) suggested that at least two visions co-exist. At first, a mildly positive one was expressed by top-level civil servants (possibly because these are more mindful of their duty to follow orders). This first vision emphasized the benefits of PB in terms of *educating* all stakeholders: PB, they said, made bureaucrats more aware of local needs, and people more aware of the intricacies of local governance. In this vision, PB was a good initiative because it made local governance more responsive to people's needs. But another, more negative vision was expressed by junior bureaucrats. They underlined the burden, for them, of having to work extra-hours to interact with people who have no idea of the complexities of Delhi's governance. And above all, they resented having to bear the brunt of people's anger, in a context where residents, being gathered as a collective, felt emboldened to criticize the administration's work. Indeed, neighbourhood assemblies did force them to face the people as representatives of the state; or at least of its administration.

Both our cases therefore seem to illustrate how the democratic dimension of PB can be mitigated by its instrumentalization for managerial purposes. PB nonetheless redefines and redistributes representation.

5. The Paradoxical Emergence of New Forms of Representation

Shifting the focus of investigation from discourses to practices reveals that the "democratic promise" of PB is realized in Chengdu mostly through strong procedures, and in Delhi (where procedures are weak) mostly through symbolism. Indeed, our close study of processes, and more precisely our interest in the political significance of the format of meetings in the two cities led us to observe (i) that PB processes favour the emergence of new, official types of representatives; and (ii) that these representatives implicitly convey ideas on political representation that are not necessarily congruent with the dominant discourse (i.e., that of the CCP in Chengdu; that of the AAP in Delhi).

Contrary to Delhi, not everyone participates in PB meetings in Chengdu, where a new layer of representatives is created: they are local residents, supposed to represent their neighbours, but they are expected to be endowed with special skills, which blends conceptions of representation as description and distinction (Sintomer, 2013). Representatives are also expected to express themselves well, understand both their neighbours and party cadres, and therefore to be proper mediators. Following very detailed instructions, village representatives are encouraged to consult their limited constituency of neighbours, concoct and propose projects they feel strongly about, and pass on information on new policies as well as the sense that the CCP cares for their needs and is responsive. The standardization of *yishihui*, where budget and other important issues are collectively discussed and supervised, therefore amounts to substantial change as these meetings beef up the role of village representatives (*yishihui* participants) while limiting that of village committee members—who, although elected by universal suffrage, do not meet very often, are quite weak, and often find it difficult to override or constrain the power of the appointed village party secretary. According to the communicating vessels principle, the regularly convened and tightly organized *yishihui* allows participants to finally gain some of the former power of the village party secretary (also called *yibashou*, "the number one guy") who tended to hold on to his/her traditional monopolistic power and make budget decisions in all discretion, and even alleviate some of their dependence on township authorities which many village committees could not overcome. However, these residents among residents are legitimized by their neighbours' votes, which give them the mandate to meet every month, make important decisions and substantially represent their interests. They constantly interact and respond to their constituents-neighbours which they embody (thus explaining why they are often called "residents"), and their role is conceived as a mere conveyance of views and projects—as skilled and selected mediators voicing their neighbours' grievances and expectations in an audible (understandable, articulate and "civilized") manner. Village representatives can therefore be said to be endowed with a triple legitimacy (identity, procedural and performance).

This is changing the traditional Leninist and Maoist pattern of representation where the avant-garde constituted by CCP cadres is indispensable to the expression of the masses' interests as the latter, even though sovereign, are not fully able to understand and express them themselves without the former. Chengdu *yishihui* guidelines however stipulate that there cannot be too many party members involved. We may therefore wonder if this Chengdu innovation is a small but decisive step in the gradual formation of capable citizens finally able to express themselves without the filter of the Party.

In Delhi, the new representatives officially created by and for the implementation PB in 2015 were the neighbourhood assembly coordinators. In order to organise meetings in each neighbourhood, two "*mohalla sabha* coordinators" were nominated by the locally elected representative, the MLA. Their role was, before the meeting of the *mohalla sabha*, to inform local people and encourage them to participate; during the meeting they had to moderate discussions between residents, but also between residents and bureaucrats representing the various concerned departments (in charge of water, horticulture, roads, etc.); and after the meeting they were

in charge of following up and making sure that departments were working as per the priorities identified by the *mohalla sabha*. These coordinators were always party volunteers; according to AAP cadres, the idea was to have one male and one female coordinator in each neighbourhood, but our investigations suggest that women coordinators were very few.

Mohalla sabha coordinators (now called "MLA representatives" in the more recent context of School Management Committees *mahasabhas*), being nominated by the MLA, really are *delegated* representatives; as such they have no autonomy vis-à-vis the locally elected representative; they are therefore not in a position to alter power equations. In any case, since the "people's budget", as we saw, was stopped in its tracks after only one year by the Central government, these coordinators had no opportunity to build on their new status.

However short their existence, it is worth noting that the legitimacy of *mohalla sabha* coordinators as representatives derives, although indirectly, from the MLA's electoral legitimacy. Indeed, the whole modus operandi of PB in Delhi suggests that notwithstanding the AAP's de-emphasis on representation, the legitimacy offered by elections remains central for the party. Neighbourhood assemblies are organized around the local elected representative (whether s/he is present in person or through her/his nominees, the assembly coordinators), and several aspects of the procedure implicitly refer to the principles of representative democracy. For instance, in order to be allowed to participate in a neighbourhood assembly, one must prove that one is a voter registered in the local polling booth; therefore "local people" are in effect defined not as residents but as voters. Also, the notion of democratic decision-making is reduced to a very basic procedure of hand vote: the moderator of the assembly will read aloud all the suggestions put forth by participants, who are then invited to raise their hand whenever they support a suggestion; the prioritization of local works to be done is based on counting the raised hands. The pilot version of PB therefore manifests a rather simplistic vision of what makes for democratic, participatory decision-making[9].

Thus, the observation of PB processes in Delhi suggests two interesting contrasts with Chengdu. The first contrast is that the procedural dimension of participation is much less developed in the Indian capital city—indeed it is much less developed than for (electoral) representation. The concrete organisation of elections in India reflects the State's old and deep concern with issues of freedom, fairness, and representativeness (Bajpai, 2016; Jayal, 2016; Shani, 2018). By contrast, the organisation of participatory spaces is often shallow. *Mohalla sabhas* are one of the most ambitious experiences in participatory democracy in the country, and yet, as we saw, they did not have much to offer in terms of training participants or organising discussions.

But if *mohalla sabhas* are weak in terms of procedure, they are strong in terms of symbolism—this is a second contrast with Chengdu's *yishihui*. Interviews with AAP cadres involved in the organisation of PB reveal a strong awareness of the importance of symbols for citizenship building (Goetz & Jenkins, 2005; Nez, 2016; Tawa Lama-Rewal, 2018b), in a context where bureaucrats are not used to being accountable to ordinary citizens. These cadres explained that there is a "message" involved in the role played by the elected representative—or his/her nominees—in the assemblies: the presence, in person or by proxy, of the elected representative clearly signifies that the party in power at the state level (the AAP) is serious about this new process, which emboldens "the common man" to actually address these "big people".

Indeed, the fact that neighbourhood assemblies are *public* meetings—that is, meetings in which all locally registered voters can participate, but also meetings that can be observed by anyone, including the press—is significant regarding the question of political representation. Critics of the AAP have argued that these assemblies' main objective is actually to enable the party's elected representatives to put on a show, to play the role of the honest, devoted keepers of public interest *vis a vis* the administration. The impatience with which the newly elected government set up the "people's budget" certainly does suggest that one important concern was to make the party's commitment to decentralization and participation visible. But the importance of visibility is not necessarily limited to electoral calculations. The *mise en scene* specific to neighbourhood assemblies arguably makes not only the party, but also "the people" and "the state" visible to each other in a new manner. In other words, the public character of neighbourhood assemblies generates passive symbolic representation[10] in two ways: firstly, it forces onto participating bureaucrats the role of representative of not only their specific department, but more generally—and symbolically—the state. And secondly, it attributes to the few dozens of voters who happen to participate in each *mohalla sabha* the role of representing "the (local) people". Even though India's political life is replete with crowds who protest, demonstrate or sit in the public space, such crowds, through their spokespersons, usually address an absentee state. And even though administrative offices are open to the public, the public in these places usually is

[9] However, interviews with party cadres reveal that this hurried aspect of the experiment was later regretted, and that rethinking was going on regarding possible ways to organize a collective discussion before the assembly, so as to provide participants with enough information and time to produce better choices.

[10] Symbolic representation happens whenever the mere presence of one or several persons in a political context signifies that of a larger group, or of an abstract entity; it is a more or less implicit way of "standing for" someone or something beyond oneself. The scholarship on symbolic representation (for instance Hayat, Péneau, & Sintomer, 2018; Pitkin, 1967) mostly focuses on active symbolic representation (for instance, the representation of "women" by a female Minister, of "the nation" by the king, or of "the people" by a group of demonstrators), but it is important to note that symbolic representation can also be passive, as in the case of bureaucrats participating in neighbourhood assemblies in Delhi.

made up of individuals, or at most a few members of the same family. The staging of an exchange, in the public space, between "the people" and "the state" is on the whole a rarity. Thus, if neighbourhood assemblies offer AAP elected representatives an opportunity for a (theatrical) performance of "giving power back to the people", they also constitute a political performance with real didactic potential—on the condition, of course, that such assemblies are organised on a regular basis, and that they have concrete, visible outcomes.

In terms of political representation therefore, one can identify two main outcomes of Delhi's "people's budget". Firstly, the formal nomination of neighbourhood assembly coordinators by AAP elected representatives manifests the tentative institutionalization of a new, *delegated* type of representative. Secondly, the public character of neighbourhood assemblies, and their *mise en scene* inspired from the "public hearings" organised by civil society organisations (Tawa Lama-Rewal, 2018a), also favours a symbolic type of representation (Saward, 2010).

6. Conclusion

The selection of Chengdu and Delhi as cases studies of the relationship of PB with political representation contributes to documenting the recent implementation of this global democratic innovation in the Asian continent. More importantly, it provides a heuristic contrast between a "managerial" type of PB, strong on procedures but deprived of symbolism (Chengdu), and a "democratic" type, strong on symbolism but weak on procedures (Delhi). Contrary to expectations, we find that procedures in Chengdu actually challenge the locally dominant definition of political representation, and that for all its symbolism, PB in Delhi ultimately reaffirms a classic definition of political representation as based on elections.

More precisely, our analysis of PB in Chengdu and Delhi reveals that this participatory device, promoted in a political discourse that de-emphasises representation, actually generates new forms of representation; indeed, it redistributes representation and it redefines it at the same time.

In both our cases, PB redistributes representation: it leads to the emergence of new representatives, besides the usual, "official" ones (party secretaries and elected village committees in Chengdu, MLAs in Delhi): both village representatives and *mohalla sabha* coordinators do claim, more or less explicitly, to "speak for" local citizens and to "stand for" local interests, to paraphrase Hanna Pitkin (1967).

In this process, political representation is redefined. In Chengdu, village representatives are endowed with a triple legitimacy (procedural, identity and performance). They are legitimized by the mandate they receive from their neighbours to meet every month, make important decisions and substantially represent their interests. They are also legitimate as they act as villagers and embody residents when they make decisions regarding village investments but also land issues. In Delhi, the nomination of assembly coordinators (who will be called "MLA representatives" in the later participatory device of school management committees) by elected representatives (the MLAs) amounts to creating delegated representatives; while the *mise en scene* of meetings imposes a passive, symbolic type of representation onto bureaucrats and lay participants.

But does this challenge the larger political system? How far can such redistribution go, considering that PB is in both cases organised and controlled by the party in power (at least at the local level)? Are village representatives and *mohalla sabha* coordinators more than an extension of CCP cadres and AAP MLAs? More largely, what is the significance of our observations, beyond the somewhat limited perimeter of PB?

In Chengdu, the existence and action of village representatives *de facto* constitute a breach in the CCP's monopoly of political representation as it constrains the role of the village party branch and the influence of higher party cadres on it, as well as on the elected village committee. It also seems to signal a step forward in the training of capable citizens finally able to express themselves without the filter of the avant-garde Party. However, this has very limited consequences on the system of representation because these decisions are circumscribed to the village-level without any impact on the larger scale and more significant projects and policies. In Delhi, the significance of PB lies not so much in the (limited) role played by delegated representatives as in the public, confrontational dimension of interactions between those who claim to represent the people (i.e., the MLA and his/her nominees) and bureaucrats, cast in the new role of "representatives of the State". Our comparative analysis therefore suggests that the forms and principles of political representation observed in PB processes constitute relevant and significant criteria to assess the transformative nature of PB.

Acknowledgments

This research is part of a collective research project jointly funded by ANR and DFG, called CLAIMS (https://claims.hypotheses.org/68); it greatly benefited from discussions within the team. Special thanks are due to Yves Sintomer and Debora Rezende for their comments on an earlier version of this article. We also want to thank the two anonymous reviewers as well as Brigitte Geissel and Petra Guasti for their insightful critiques and suggestions.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

References

Aam Aadmi Party. (2014). Aam Aadmi Party: National manifesto 2014. *Aam Aadmi Party*. Retrieved

from https://aamaadmiparty.wordpress.com/2014/04/03/aam-aadmi-party-national-manifesto-2014

Avritzer, L. (2006). New public spheres in Brazil: Local democracy and deliberative politics. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *30*(3), 623–637.

Baiocchi, G. (2005). *Militants and citizens*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.

Baiocchi, G., & Ganuza, E. (2014). Participatory budgeting as if emancipation mattered. *Politics & Society*, *42*(1), 29–50. https://doi.org/10.1177/0032329213512978

Bajpai, R. (2016). *Debating difference: Group rights and liberal democracy in India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Bherer, L., Fernández-Martínez, J. L., Espín, P. G., & Sánchez, M. J. (2016). The promise for democratic deepening: The effects of participatory processes in the interaction between civil society and local governments. *Journal of Civil Society*, *12*(3), 344–363. https://doi.org/10.1080/17448689.2016.1215957

Cabannes, Y., & Lipietz, B. (2018). Revisiting the democratic promise of participatory budgeting in light of competing political, good governance and technocratic logics. *Environment and Urbanization*, *30*(1), 67–84. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956247817746279

Chen, J. (2007). Canyu shi yusuan de lilun yu shijian [Theory and practice of participatory budgeting]. *Jingji shehui tizhi bijiao*, *130*(20), 52–57.

Chowdhury, A. (2019). Anti-corruption movement: A story of the making of the Aam Admi Party and the interplay of political representation in India. *Politics and Governance*, *7*(3), 189–198.

Eckstein, H. (2009). Case study and theory in political science. In R. Gomm, M. Hammersley, & P. Foster (Eds.), *Case study method* (pp. 118–164). https://doi.org/10.4135/9780857024367.d11

Fewsmith, J. (2013). *The logic and limits of political reform in China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fischer, F. (2012). Participatory governance: From theory to practice. In D. Levi-Faur (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of governance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199560530.013.0032

Fishkin, J., He, B., Luskin, R., & Siu, A. (2010). Deliberative democracy in an unlikely place: Deliberative polling in China. *British Journal of Political Science*, *40*(2), 435–448.

Frenkiel, E., & Shpakovskaya, A. (2019). The evolution of representative claim-making by the Chinese Communist Party: From Mao to Xi (1949–2019). *Politics and Governance*, *7*(3), 208–219.

Goetz, A.-M., & Jenkins, R. (2005). *Reinventing accountability: Making democracy work for the poor*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hayat, S., Péneau, C., & Sintomer, Y. (2018). La représentation-incarnation. [Embodiment representation] *Raisons Politiques*, *72*(4), 5–19.

He, B. (2011). Civic engagement through participatory budgeting in China: Three different logics at work. *Public Administration And Development*, *31*(2), 122–133.

He, B., & Thogersen, S. (2010). Giving the people a voice? Experiments with consultative authoritarian institutions in China. *Journal of Contemporary China*, *16*(66), 675–692.

Heller, P., & Isaac, T. M. T. (2003). Democracy and development: Decentralized planning in Kerala. In A. Fung & E. O. Wright (Ed.), *Deepening democracy. Institutional innovations in empowered participatory governance* (pp. 77–110). London and New York, NY: Verso.

Houtzager, P. P., & Gurza Lavalle, A. (2009). Participatory governance and the challenge of assumed representation in Brazil. *IDS Working Papers*, *2009*(321), 1–32. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2040-0209.2009.00321_2.x

Jayal, N. (2016). *Representing India: ethnic diversity and the governance of public institutions* (1st ed.). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Li, F. (2005). Xinhe shiyan yu gonggong yusuan gaige yemian gongneng [The Xinhe experiment and a glimpse at public budget reform]. *Zhejiang Renda*, *12*(6).

Ma, J. (2009), The dilemma of developing financial accountability without election: A study of China's recent budget reforms. *The Australian Journal of Public Administration*, *68*(1), 62–72.

Ming, Z. (2014). Participatory budgeting, rural public services and pilot local democracy reform. *Field Actions Science Reports*, *2014*(11), 1–6.

Montambeault, F. (2016). Participatory citizenship in the making? The multiple citizenship trajectories of participatory budgeting participants in Brazil. *Journal of Civil Society*, *12*(3), 282–298. https://doi.org/10.1080/17448689.2016.1213508

Näsström, S. (2011). Where is the representative turn going? *European Journal of Political Theory*, *10*(4), 501–510. https://doi.org/10.1177/1474885111417783

Nez, H. (2016). Does participation mean reciprocal learning? The relationships between diverse stakeholders during participatory budgeting in Paris. *Journal of Civil Society*, *12*(3), 266–281. https://doi.org/10.1080/17448689.2016.1215371

Pitkin, H. F. (1967). *The concept of representation*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Rao, K. (2016). *Delhi's Mohalla Sabhas: Participation and party building (A study of the participatory self-governance process initiated by the Aam Aadmi Party)* (Doctoral dissertation). Centre for Urban Policy and Governance, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, India.

Santos, B. S. (1998). Participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre: Toward a redistributive democracy. *Politics & Society*, *26*(4), 461–510.

Saward, M. (2006). The representative claim. *Contempo-*

rary Political Theory, *5*(3), 297–318. https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.cpt.9300234
Saward, M. (2010). *The representative claim*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Shah, A. (Ed.). (2007). *Participatory budgeting*. Washington, DC: The World Bank Institute.
Shani, O. (2018). *How India became democratic: Citizenship and the making of the universal franchise*. New York, NY: Penguin Viking.
Sintomer, Y. (2013). The meaning of representation: Uses and misuses of a notion. *Raisons Politiques*, *2*(50), 13–34.
Sintomer, Y., Herzberg, C., & Röcke, A. (2008). *Les budgets participatifs en Europe* [Participatory budgeting in Europe]. Paris: La Découverte.
Sintomer, Y., Herzberg, C., & Allegretti, G. (2013). *Participatory budgeting worldwide: Updated version* (Study No. 25). Bonn: ENGAGEMENT GLOBAL.
Tarrow, S. (2010). The strategy of paired comparison: Toward a theory of practice. *Comparative Political Studies*, *43*(2), 230–259. https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414009350044
Tawa Lama-Rewal, S. (2018a). Public hearings as social performance: Addressing the courts, restoring citizenship. *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal*, *2018*(17). https://doi.org/10.4000/samaj.4413
Tawa Lama-Rewal, S. (2018b). *Les avatars de la participation : Formes et ambiguïtés de la démocratie participative en Inde* [Avatars of participation: Forms and ambiguities of participatory democracy in India]. Vulaines-sur-Seine: Editions du Croquant.
Tawa Lama-Rewal, S. (2019). Political representation in the discourse and practices of the "Party of the Common Man" in India. *Politics and Governance*, *7*(3), 179–188.
Tharakan, M. P. K. (2005). Historical hurdles in the course of the people's planning campaign in Kerala, India. In J. Harriss, K. Stokke, & O. Törnquist (Eds.), *Politicising democracy: The new local politics of democratisation* (pp. 107–126). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
Wampler, B. (2000). *A guide to participatory budgeting*. Washington, DC: International Budget Project. Retrieved from http://www.internationalbudget.org/resources/library/GPB.pdf
Wampler, B. (2007). *Participatory budgeting in Brazil: Contestation, cooperation, and accountability*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press.
Wampler, B. (2012a). Participation, representation, and social justice: Using participatory governance to transform representative democracy. *Polity*, *44*(4), 666–682. https://doi.org/10.1057/pol.2012.21
Wampler, B. (2012b). Participatory budgeting: Core principles and key impacts. *Journal of Public Deliberation*, *8*(2), 1–13. Retrieved from https://www.publicdeliberation.net/jpd/vol8/iss2/art12
Wu, Y., & Wang, W. (2011). The rationalization of public budgeting in China: A reflection on participatory budgeting in Wuxi. *Public Finance and Management*, *11*(3), 262–283.

About the Authors

Emilie Frenkiel is an Associate Professor in Political Science at Université Paris-Est Créteil, France. She is the author of *Conditional Democracy, The Intellectual Debate on Political Reform in China* (ECPR, 2015). Her research interests include political representation, deliberation, political reform and participatory innovations in China. She is a member of the editorial board of social science journals *La Vie des Idées* and *Books & Ideas*.

Stéphanie Tawa Lama-Rewal is a CNRS Research Fellow in Political Science who studies Indian democracy through three major themes: group (especially women's) representation; participatory experiments; and urban governance. Her recent publications include *Les Avatars de la Participation en Inde. Formes et Ambiguïtés de la Démocratie Participative* (Paris, Editions du Croquant, 2018) and (co-edited with Amélie Blom) *Emotions and Mobilisations in South Asian Politics* (Delhi, Routledge, 2019).

COGITATIO

Politics and Governance (ISSN: 2183–2463)
2019, Volume 7, Issue 3, Pages 124–136
DOI: 10.17645/pag.v7i3.2130

Article

Defining Women's Representation: Debates around Gender Quotas in India and France

Virginie Dutoya [1] and Yves Sintomer [2,3,4,*]

[1] Center for South Asian Studies, School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences/French National Center for Scientific Research, 75006 Paris, France; E-Mail: virginie.dutoya@ehess.fr
[2] Centre Marc Bloch, Humboldt University Berlin, 10117 Berlin, Germany; E-Mail: sy@cmb.hu-berlin.de
[3] Nuffield College, University of Oxford, Oxford, OX1 1NF, UK
[4] Department of Political Science, Paris 8 University, 93526 Saint-Denis, France

* Corresponding author

Submitted: 29 March 2019 | Accepted: 14 June 2019 | Published: 24 September 2019

Abstract
In 1999, after a heated debate on gender parity in political representation, the French constitution was amended to include the principle of "equal representation" of both sexes. This paved the way for the introduction of gender quotas. In the same period, a bill providing reservations for women at the national level provoked a political crisis in India. The objective of this article is to compare both debates, looking in particular at the way women's representation was framed. In France, the main argument against quotas was that republican representation should be unitary and transcend social differences, but at the end of the 1990s, women in mainstream politics were seen as one element of the dual nature of human kind, different from other categories such as class or race. In India, the specific representation of certain groups (Dalits, lower castes, tribal groups) had been the traditional framework for political representation since independence in 1947. But when the bill proposed to extend reservations to women, opponents of the project claimed that women did not constitute a category in themselves, and that sex should be intersected with caste and religion for the attribution of quotas. Looking at parliamentary debates, articles, and tribunes supporting or opposing quotas in both countries, we show that the arguments mobilized reveal different conceptions of the political representation of gender difference, which are partly transversal and partly specific to each country.

Keywords
France; gender difference; India; parity; political representation; universalism; women quotas

Issue
This article is part of the issue "Rethinking Representation: Representative Claims in Global Perspective", edited by Petra Guasti (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany) and Brigitte Geissel (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany).

1. Introduction

In the 1970s, women represented 1.6% of the Assemblée Nationale, or the lower house of the French Parliament (1973) and 3.5% of the representatives elected to the Lok Sabha in India (1977). Although French women seemed to be in a better position than Indian women (if one compares indicators such as level of education, workforce participation or sexual and reproductive rights), their political representation was very low, and even lower than in India. There was little progress in this area until 1999 when, after a heated debate on parity, the French constitution was amended to include the principle of "equal representation" of both sexes, which paved the way to the introduction of a system of gender quotas at all levels of government. During the same period, in 1996, the Women's reservation bill was introduced in the lower house of the Indian Parliament to "reserve" 33% of the legislative constituencies for women (i.e., men would not be allowed to stand in those constituencies). Although

officially supported by parties across the political spectrum, this bill was never adopted (it was passed in the upper house in 2010, but not by the lower house). Three decades later, the situation has changed dramatically in France, where the 2018 legislature includes 39.7% of women, but less impressively in India, where the share of female MPs rose to a record 14% after the 2019 elections. This result is intriguing, because quotas were completely absent from French political culture, whereas they had a long history in India and had been introduced for women at the local level without much controversy in 1992 (Ghosh & Tawa Lama-Rewal, 2005). One could argue that the greater inclusion of women in the French representative system reflects their overall better position in this society, but this was already the case in the 1970s, and comparative numbers at the global level show that there is no systematic connection between women's emancipation in society and their presence in parliaments (Achin, 2005).

The objective of this article is not to provide an encompassing response as to why the policy of equal representation was adopted in France and rejected in India. To answer this question, one would need not only to examine the debates on the subject, but also the sociology of the different stakeholders, as well as their interactions in the political field (Achin, 2005; Dutoya, 2014). Similarly, we will not enter into a detailed analysis of the implementation of quotas or their outcomes in terms of public policies, which have been studied quite extensively in both countries (Achin & Lévêque, 2014; Bereni, 2015; Bhavnani, 2009; Chattopadhyay & Duflo, 2004). In this article, we will underline a more specific factor: the ideological frames that contributed to this story, focusing on the 1990s. Indeed, in spite of striking differences, the debates in each country focused on whether what Hannah Pitkin (1967) has called "descriptive representation" should apply to women, and whether what Anne Phillips (1995) has named "politics of presence" should enable an increase in women's voices and concerns. While this issue has been addressed both for France and India (Dudley Jenkins, 1999; John, 2000; Lépinard, 2007), this article aims to bring together and compare the debates in these two countries.

As such, India and France may seem to be two disparate cases in a wide "quota wave" that went from Latin America to Asia and Europe (Krook, 2009). While this is not the first time we find such a comparison, previous attempts have been largely restricted to descriptions, focusing on the mechanisms of institutional innovation rather than on their framing (Krook, 2005); or relayed on the basis of a superficial understanding, to support one of the case studies (Menon, 2004, pp. 182–194). But comparing these two countries is particularly interesting for our study, which focuses on the ideological frames of women quotas. First, France and India constructed their representative systems in opposition to the two most widespread types of regime that existed prior to representative government, the Old Regime in the case of the French Republic, the colonial system in the case of the Indian Union. Due to the political significance of both countries, their frames can be viewed as two of the most important for the Global North and the Global South respectively. France and India also illustrate the two major systems for introducing gender quotas at the world level: these are the "candidate quota system", which requires parties to present a certain percentage of female candidates in elections, dominant in Europe, America, East- and South-East Asia and some African countries, and the "reserved seat system", which sets aside a certain number of seats for female representatives, more common in Africa, the Middle-East and South Asia (Hinojosa & Piscopo, 2013). In both countries, the projected reform was adopted as a constitutional amendment that encouraged a specific and sophisticated form of argumentation, in which positions were formulated in relation to the fundamental values of the Republic in France, and the Union in India. Thus, in both countries, the debate on quotas revealed underlying conceptions of citizenry, political representation, and gender difference. Comparing these two cases helps us understand how these conceptions contributed to the acceptability of quotas for women, but also the specific shape they took in each country. Lastly, India and France are interesting cases to show both the global connections established around quotas, as well as the local ruptures. Indeed, the debates about quotas in France and India contribute to the construction of a global rationale for women's quotas that has involved conflicting definitions of political representation and produced one of the most impressive series of institutional political innovations in the world. In this regard, connected history (Subrahmanyam, 1997) helps us cut "across chronological and institutional divides shaped by Eurocentrism" (Douki & Minard, 2007). Connecting the French and Indian cases disturbs the "Grand Narrative of Modernization" (Subrahmanyam, 1997, p. 145) that generally centres democratic innovation in Europe and the North, and illustrates the transfers that have been crucial at the transnational level to explain the gender quota wave.

In order to understand the differences and similarities between the French and Indian framing of the political representation of gender difference, we will first localize the emergence of women's quotas in these two countries within the global movement towards quotas for women, paying attention to the specificities of the type of quotas adopted in each country. In the second part, we will stress the fact that both India and France had developed strong so-called "universalistic" conceptions of political representation, which were challenged when the representative claim (Saward, 2006) to increase the women's share in parliaments gained legitimacy. We will carry out a detailed study of the different reinterpretations of these "universalistic" frames, when confronted with gender difference, and their impact on the fate of women's quotas. To do this, we combine and reassess two independent studies. One looks at the de-

bates about reservations in India, while the other analyses the issue of parity in France. Both surveys relied on the discursive analysis of parliamentary debates (which were systematically analysed and coded), and a study of the local press, on which the present article will focus. The surveys also include interviews (about 40 in India and 25 in France) with stakeholders involved in the debate (MPs, party office bearers and feminists) and, in France, participant observation in feminist debates (see the Methodological Appendix).

2. The Connected Histories of Indian and French Quotas

2.1. A Global Shift towards Quotas

The need for a global understanding of women's quotas has been convincingly defended by numerous authors (Waylen, 2015), including in the cases of France and India (Dutoya, 2016; Krook, 2009; Lépinard, 2007; Murray, 2012; Scott, 2005). Although it is not within the scope of this article to reiterate this argument, it is important to briefly highlight its main features. The global discussion on women's political representation began during the United Nations Decade for women, launched after the first World Conference on Women in Mexico, in 1975. It took place at different forums, for instance with the discussions around the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW; United Nations, 1979). Adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly, the CEDAW encouraged measures to ensure women's political participation (Art. 3), including "temporary special measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality between men and women" (Art. 4). However, the real shift occurred when the Fourth World Women's Conference in Beijing (1995) recommended the introduction of a minimum quota of 30% of women in parliaments. In the decade prior to the Beijing Conference, only ten countries had introduced a women's quota, starting with Argentina in 1991 (Hinojosa & Piscopo, 2013). Ten years later, more than 100 countries had adopted this policy. At the European level, a rationale for "equality of results" or "substantive equality" was developed to replace the traditional liberal and republican "equality of opportunities" and "formal equality". The Council of Europe, a looser but geographically broader institution than the European Union, played a major role in promoting women's representation after 1989, adopting the keyword parity and making it a part of the public debate by organizing numerous conferences and publishing reports (among others Inter-Parliamentary Union, 1997, 1999). These global discussions had a local impact. They contributed to the emergence of substantive equality as the dominant paradigm and the legitimation of quotas to ensure women's political representation. Experiments travelled and countries could draw from achievements elsewhere. Global arenas were also sites of learning, socialization and networking for feminists, who used them to strengthen their local legitimacy (Lépinard, 2007, pp. 35–76).

France and India are good examples of the local impact of global discourses. Although transfers did not occur directly between these two countries, indirect connections played a certain role, through the actions of transnational actors and during the World Women's conferences. In India, the discussion around quotas began during the preparations for the 1975 Mexico conference when the Indian government nominated a special committee to examine the issue. The Committee on the Status of Women in India (CSWI) concluded that, while the 1950 Constitution gave women equal status as citizens, this formal equality had not translated into substantive equality (CSWI, 1974). Though the report rejected quotas, it re-ignited the debate within the women's movement, as it showed the failure of the strategy of formal equality. The government also took up the issue and, in 1992, two constitutional amendments granted women 33% reservations in local level institutions. In France, although the idea of quotas for women can also be traced back to the 1970s (Bereni, 2015, p. 37), the campaign for parity only started in the early 1990s, and became part of the mainstream even later, in the mid-1990s. One of its starting points was the common declaration adopted in Athens in 1992 in the context of a conference organized by the European Commission, calling for an egalitarian distribution of political power between men and women (Lépinard, 2007, p. 46). In 1999, a constitutional amendment introduced the objective of equality between men and women in political representation. In the following years, various laws made it mandatory to present an equal number of men and women for elections under the proportional system (European, regional and municipal), and reduced public funding for political parties participating in legislative elections that do not present the same number of male and female candidates under the majority rule system (the presidential election was not affected). In fact, as the international literature on quotas predicted (Hinojosa & Piscopo, 2013), this has worked quite well for the former but far less for the latter, and other laws, together with the evolution of mentalities, have been necessary to move towards a more balanced parliament, 18 years after the constitutional amendment.

2.2. Women's Representation as a Marker of Modernity and Modernization

The way the debates unfolded in India and France shows that in the 1990s, women's representation became a global marker of political modernity or of the modernization of political life. Nevertheless, it was embedded in different kinds of rhetoric. In India, this connection was particularly explicit during the discussions about the Women's reservation bill in Parliament. Many MPs insisted that women's reservations would bring about a historical change and create the "India of tomorrow" in the "world of the 21st century" (Lok Sabha Secretariate,

1996). The modernity that India was supposed to achieve through women's representation was also understood in terms of the nation's position in the international arena. Just as the "women's question" was one of the sites of the colonial encounter in the 19th and early 20th centuries (Mani, 1987), it is now a global issue (Cîrstocea, Lacombe, & Marteu, 2018). In this context, those in support of women's quotas made numerous references to international standards in the press (Bhagat, 1997; Times of India, 2009) and in Parliament. For instance, a Communist MP argued that "the developmental degree of a nation is judged by the status of women. If that is the principle by which we are going to judge India, then we are far behind" (A. K. Premajan, as cited in Lok Sabha Secretariate, 2000, p. 706).

In France as well, those who defended quotas insisted on the fact that the "land of human rights" could not further delay increasing the presence of women in politics (Bereni, 2015). But while in India, because of the (post)colonial context, the country's position in international rankings was seen as critical, this was less so in France where the main argument centered on the internal necessity to modernize the political system. After the consecutive defeats of both the Socialist and Right-wing governments in 1993 and 1997, all parties were weakened and faced a deep crisis of legitimacy. Opinion polls showed the French citizens' growing distrust in political life and political leadership. The corruption scandals that affected both the Left and the Right were the most visible symptom of the gap between ordinary people and the political "class". In this context, both the Right and Left became advocates of a "modernization of political life" that was supposed to reduce this gap. As the word parity had been popularized at the European level, many politicians suddenly saw it as a necessary part of the modernization process (Bereni, 2015), illustrating a more general potential relationship between democratic crises and the potential for engendering politics (Waylen, 2015). A further advantage in a time of economic recession was that it involved no financial cost.

2.3. The "Vernacularization" of Quotas

In both cases, the call for democratic modernity, or the modernization of political life, was made in reference to global arenas. Nevertheless, the need to increase women's representation was also re-inscribed in local histories, particularly the nationalist struggle in India, and republicanism in France. This phenomenon can be read as a sort of "vernacularization", to use the Indian notion that designates not only the process of translation but also the appropriation and re-signification of a general concept or idea in local cognitive contexts. Interestingly, in both countries, the universalist conception of representation, based on individuals rather than groups, was not framed as liberal, as in the majority of international literature, but as republican in the French case and as the guarantee of national unity in India (Bajpai, 2016). In both countries, the term "quota", which was the most widespread at the international level, was conspicuously absent and replaced by "reservations" (or *aarakshan* in Hindi) in India and "parity" (*parité*) in France. In India, the global discussion on quotas reactivated an older debate, as women's representation had been discussed from the 1920s onwards (Forbes, 1979). Moreover, political reservations to ensure the representation of scheduled castes (also known as *Dalits* and "untouchables") and tribes existed since independence, and had been later extended to lower castes (Jaffrelot, 2003). Thus, the discussions around women's reservations that began in the 1970s, and unfolded in the following decades, referred not only to global debates on women's representation, but also to the local history of quota and group representation.

In France, there was no pre-existing instrument that could accommodate the demand for women's representation. On the contrary, the French republican tradition was averse to the specific representation of social groups. The 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (which has Constitutional value) states:

> As all citizens are equal in the eye of the law, positions of high rank, public office and employment are open to all on an equal basis according to ability and without any distinction other than that based on their merit or skill. (National Assembly of France, 1789)

Moreover, article three of the Constitution of the Fifth Republic (Government of the French Republic, 1958) adds that "no group (*section*) of people, nor any individual, may lay claim to the exercise" of National Sovereignty. In 1982, the National Assembly almost unanimously passed a bill stating that no party list in municipal elections shall consist of more than 75% of candidates of the same sex, but the French equivalent of the Supreme Court (*Conseil Constitutionnel*) over-ruled the law as unconstitutional.

When the Council of Europe popularized the term parity, it tended to present it as a 50% quota, more radical than the 30% quotas defended at the international level after the Beijing conference. Europe had to be at the forefront of the path for gender equality. When the word parity was adopted in France, however, its meaning was defined quite differently to suit the republican narrative. It was defended as the sign of a "national exception" (Lépinard, 2007, p. 129) regarding the gender order. Parity was presented by mainstream politicians and a large group of intellectuals and feminists as very different from "quotas", which were seen as belonging to the North American tradition. While quotas were defined as a tool for "group" or "minority" representation parity claimed to be "universal in nature", or related to the universal and natural division of mankind between men and women (Bereni, 2015, p. 189). On the contrary, in India, women's quotas had to be adjusted within a reservation system that already recognized groups on the basis of caste and tribal status.

3. Two Forms of Universalistic Representation and Their Challenges

3.1. Only Paradoxes to Offer

Joan Scott (1996) has coined the dilemma and paradoxes faced by French women—especially feminists—in the so-called universalistic republican frame. French republicanism has imposed its universalistic frame on groups that have legally or de facto been excluded from political representation. Therefore, members of these groups have faced a paradox. They have often contested their exclusion and demanded to be represented as a group—but this is nearly impossible because the republican frame and the very notion of universal rights seem inhospitable to the idea of group representation. But when opting to claim recognition only as individuals, most have remained powerless in this universalistic structure, which has de facto deprived them of representation precisely as members of a subaltern group. Women had been excluded or marginalized in political representation because of their sexual difference, which was supposed to establish them in the realm of nature (vs. politics), of the private (vs. the public), of feelings and emotions (vs. reason)—all of which are opposed to the universal, disembedded, rational and autonomous citizen. Hence they either had to vindicate themselves as women, as sexually different, relying on a category constructed specifically to exclude them; or they had to try to gain full citizenship by identifying themselves with the other side of the dichotomy, the unencumbered, rational and autonomous citizen, i.e., with a figure constructed for men as distinct from women.

At first glance, the political field may seem more conducive to women's group representation in India, as femininity was recognized early on as a political resource; be it symbolically or practically. Not only did the national struggle draw heavily on the imagination of the motherland, Hinduism (the religion of about 80% of Indians) offers a vast array of powerful goddesses, which contradict the idea of a passive and helpless femininity (Basu, 1996). In particular, women were crucial actors in the nationalist struggles (Thapar-Björkert, 2006). Then, the Government of India Act of 1935, a *de facto* constitution, provided for reserved seats for women, long before the 1990s, which makes India the first country in which such a measure was implemented. Third, other groups (religious minorities and so-called "depressed" or "backward" castes) were also granted reservations, and in some cases separate electorates. Thus, group representation does not constitute the same taboo in India as in France.

However, Indian women also had to face a paradox. Although group representation seemed available and women could use cultural and historical resources to impose themselves in politics, they chose not to do so. Given their origins, reservations were associated with the colonial strategy of "divide and rule". And they indeed divided India. In the 1930s, the Congress Party, led by a majority of upper caste and class Hindus, wanted to break with separate electorates and reservations and rely solely on the principle of "one person, one vote". Minority groups, especially those deemed particularly vulnerable or having distinctive interests (notably "backward castes" and religious minorities), claimed the perpetuation of separate electorates or at least reservations. This was a classical dilemma in the former British colonies (Mamdani, 2012) and it contributed to the partition between India and Pakistan. Among Indian nationalists, the debate was also tense. Some, like B. R. Ambedkar, Chairman of the Constitutional Committee and the main porte-parole of the Dalits (around 15% of Indian population), wanted the abolition of castes but believed in affirmative action and therefore proposed separate elections for the different castes during a transitory period. Others, like Gandhi, opposed this perspective and defended a position similar to the French traditional Republicans. In this context, women became the champion of a universalist definition of citizenship, refusing a division of women along communal lines, and defending adult franchise without privileges (Forbes, 1979). According to Mrilani Sinha (2007), the major all-India women's organizations of the 1930s proposed women as the model for the "universal citizen" of independent India. Though this position had not prevented the division of the women's movement (and of the subcontinent), the women in the Constituent Assembly maintained it. They refused any form of quota, arguing that they trusted that "all women who are equally capable…as men will be considered irrespective of sex" (Renuka Ray, as cited in Lok Sabha Secretariate, 1947, p. 668). Thus, while the representatives of scheduled tribes and castes put forth their difference and the need for special political rights, the women's representatives (who claimed this status and were recognized as such) refused such distinctions. For the leadership of the ruling party, it was considered:

> A matter for congratulation that women have come forward to say that they do not want any special treatment. But at the same time, it is a matter of regret that men have not yet come up to that standard." (Vallabhbhai Patel as cited in Lok Sabha Secretariate, 1947, p. 674)

In this regard, while the Indian conception of representation accepted the idea of quotas, women chose to reject them, preferring to be recognized as equal by the party leadership and the elite to which they belonged.

3.2. Political Representation and the Debate on Parity

In France, the mapping of the debate in the second half of the 1990s shows a peculiar configuration (Sintomer, 2007). The existing literature has rightly shown that the dual concept of gender has played a role (Lépinard, 2007;

Murray, 2012), but it has overlooked the fact that this duality was not universally defended and the meaning of gender difference was interpreted from quite different perspectives. Three groups fought against the parity reform (see Table 1). The first consisted of the *classical sexists* who consider women less capable than men, and less motivated to become representatives. Philippe de Gaulle, son of the former French President, was quite isolated when he said in 2000:

> Since the world is the world, woman does something great, and the reason why she exists on earth is to have children! All the world's discoveries have been made by man, because it is he who possesses creative imagination. (Le Monde, 2000)

Despite the number of classical sexists that still exist, this position is unacceptable in public discourse, and is rarely heard today.

The second position opposed to parity is that expressed by the *classical republicans* (Amar, 1999, pp. 15–22, 35–39). Political representation, they say, radically transcends any social or natural differences. A Right-wing MP quoting the French philosopher Alain Renaut said:

> One of the greatest achievements of the Republic…is that the subject of rights is neither a man nor a woman, neither a Jew nor a White or a Black, neither young nor old, neither landowner nor the opposite, neither rich nor poor: it is the human as such.
> Deputies represent the nation as such, and not any particular group….Any proportional representation of diversity, any parity or quota principle, refers to a perspective more reminiscent of Nuremberg's laws during the Nazi regime than any democratic idea….There are other minorities…: quotas for the most disadvantaged, for Muslims, for those who live in poor neighbourhoods will be necessary….This is the cycle that will be induced by the weakening of republican equality". (D. Julia, as cited in Assemblée Nationale, 1998)

To introduce a difference among the Sovereign people would therefore open a Pandora's box of communitarian divisions; it would import notions of identity politics and affirmative action into the French Republic, i.e., typically American products that have failed even in the US. It would ultimately destroy the Republic through the 'balkanization' of the public sphere. This discourse, a hegemonic one in the past, is still widespread among politicians and academics, but it has lost most of its appeal for the public.

Radical Marxists and deconstructionists make up the third group. While this position held little appeal for politicians or the electorate, it nonetheless had a certain influence among the feminists in the 1970s (Amar, 1999, pp. 11–14), and the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1998/2001) held a similar position. Their argument was that women cannot claim equal representation using the concept of parity, which is ultimately based on the dualism that was constructed to exclude them. "Women, no more than men, are as such a homogeneous social category", wrote feminist intellectuals in a manifesto:

> Human kind is multiple, and so are social antagonisms. To claim political parity between men and women within the framework of rules and codes that have excluded women and benefited some, although not all men, is…to nourish the illusion of real representation…and risks legitimising the social and political sexual difference, which has been socially constructed….It reproduces the masculine model." (Hirata, Kergoat, Riot-Sarcey, & Varikas, 1999)

The problem was therefore not only to reverse the hierarchy in the duality between men and women, but also to contest all the oppressive categories that force individuals to respect gender roles. Furthermore, parity would only replace male politicians by a parity political class while abolishing or deconstructing representative democracy.

The supporters of parity were equally divided (see Table 1). According to *differentialist feminists* (Kristeva, 1999), women and men are different by nature. She wrote:

> As soon as the One becomes embodied and metaphysics diffidently tries to become concerned with a humanity which is living because plural, it begins to recognize differences, and the first difference is the sexual difference, which is irreducible to the other differences because it is the foundation of the political life of the human species. When supporters of parity place the focus on the vocation of maternity, in

Table 1. A conceptual map of the French debate.

Types of argument concerning the relation between the social and the political	Parity opponents	Parity supporters
Essentialist	Classical sexists	Differentialist feminists
Transcendental/"universalist"	Classical republicans	Parity republicans
Constructivist	Radical Marxists and Deconstructionists	Pragmatist egalitarians

Source: the authors.

> the long run, they are promising a political destiny to the large majority of women and mothers who would wish to become involved. (Kristeva, 1999)

Women have different values, concerns, behaviours, interests and experiences than men, which have been marginalized in the public sphere and in political representation. Thus, an increase in the political presence of women would improve political representation: because of their potential maternity, women care for others whereas men care for power. Though this argument constituted a specific position for a minority of older generation feminists, it was widespread as a secondary argument among other women (and even some men), be they politicians, young feminists, or ordinary citizens.

Parity republicans composed the second group (Halimi, 1997). They also relied on the duality between men and women, and considered it a social construct built on sexual difference. "Neither women nor men are "categories''….They are the two sexual components of humanity". The opponents:

> Raise the false spectre of communitarianism. Today women. Tomorrow Jews, Blacks, homosexuals? A simple but uncompromising answer: women are not a community and do not share a community relationship, as defined by sociologists. They are neither a class, nor an ethnic group, nor a category. They are present in all these groups. Sexual difference is the original parameter. Before being a member of a class, a corporation, and so on, humans are first of all masculine and feminine." (Halimi, 1994)

But contrary to the claim made by the differentialist feminists, while the dual structure of gender identity is universal, the content of gender roles differs in history and between civilizations. The universalism of former French republicanism was abstract because it was blind to sexual difference, which led to the monopolization of political representation by men. Earlier feminists, such as Simone de Beauvoir, misled women when encouraging them to participate in a political life designed for men, without seeking to modify the rules of the political game. Parity means that universality has to be envisaged as a duality. Political parity between women and men would not open the Pandora's box of communitarianism as women are neither a category nor a community but one half of humanity. Women's demand for parity has nothing to do with claims for ethnic, regional, social, or group representation. This position was very specific to French political discourse. It was influential among academics, feminists and ordinary citizens, and crucial among politicians. All the political groups in parliament used this argument to officially justify their position in favour of parity (although it was strongly nuanced by the Communists and the Greens). This reshaped republicanism was decisive in explaining why the constitutional law on parity was approved by 94% of the representatives in a Parliament dominated by 92% of men. The specific representation of women was gaining popularity at a time when the idea of the representation of the working class was fading and the claim for specific ethnic group representation was only raised by a tiny minority.

The third group supporting parity was composed of *pragmatist egalitarians*. They saw parity more as a tool than a principle. The hierarchy between the sexes had been historically constructed, and affirmative action in politics was necessary to rectify past and present discriminations. This claim "is a stage, necessary, but possibly provisory—towards equality", and therefore "a strategy that aims to overcome masculine domination" (Gaspard, 1998). For Geneviève Fraisse, a philosopher who was responsible for women's rights under the government of the time, parity was "philosophically false" (Bachelot & Fraisse, 1999, p. 177), because it was based on an essentialist dualism, but it was "true in practice" (quoted in Tasca, 1998), because it was popular: "Parity is a tool for equality. There is no need to justify it philosophically, because it is only a means. The principle is equality between men and women" (Bachelot & Fraisse, 1999, p. 177). Pragmatic egalitarians thought that the fight for parity was positive only if combined with a struggle against other forms of discrimination (Collective, 1999). They supported homosexual marriage when most differentialist feminists and a number of parity republicans strongly opposed it in the name of the "symbolic order" of mankind. Pragmatic egalitarians were influential among ordinary citizens and probably a majority among academics and feminists. Although they were in the minority among politicians, they could prevent the notion of parity from being introduced in the Constitution, which mentioned only the word "equality".

It is important to stress that the arguments concerning the relationship between the social and the political cut across the opponents, and advocates of parity. Essentialist, transcendental (or so-called "universalist") and constructivist visions were mobilized on both sides. In addition, although all the advocates of parity referred to the dichotomy between men and women, they defined it differently. Differentialist feminists had an essentialist vision of the dichotomy, and of sexual difference, based on a complementarity between two equal groups constitutive of humanity. Parity republicans put forth a structuralist vision of sexual dualism and difference: the complementarity was inevitable but its meaning depended on the historical and social context. Republicans who supported parity were sceptical of sexual difference, viewing dualism as a historical construct that could lose its significance in the future due to affirmative action and a progressive equalisation of the social and political situation between men and women. Therefore, they tended to oppose the claim of complementarity. This complexity explains why the word equality, rather than parity, was included in the constitution. It also helps us understand that, although in the short term, newly-elected women were largely confined to classical "women's position" (in

the social, health care and related fields), especially at the local level (Lépinard, 2007), this has changed over time, and a number of strong female politicians have managed to occupy leading positions, including in the defence or finance ministries. The same dynamic has also favoured the discussion of the representation of ethnic groups under the label "diversity". Less than two decades after the constitutional amendment, the dualist position of the republicans who support parity has been weakened and pragmatist egalitarians occupy centre stage.

3.3. Conflicting Claims for Group Representation in India

Many of the arguments developed in the debate around parity in France were also used in India, but they were connected and hierarchized in a wide range of ways. As was the case in France, the idea that women were not competent enough was rarely expressed, or only as an off the record joke (Dutoya, 2016). While in the 1970s and 1980s there were debates within the women's movement regarding the nature of gender difference and the meaning of equality (Tawa Lama-Rewal, 2004), such issues were little discussed in the 1990s and the idea of gender quotas became fairly consensual (despite some dissenting voices, see for instance Dhanda, 2000; Kishwar, 1996). The absence of a debate on these major issues in France is largely due to the fact that the women's movement's support for women's quotas was mainly justified in pragmatic terms (Dutoya, 2014). As a member of the communist women's organization AIDWA explains; "we saw after 1975 that formal equality was not working, and we asked for quotas" (Interview in New Delhi, 2010). Thus, while many feminists were not convinced by arguments regarding the specific "nature" of women, or their "better heart", they strategically chose not to oppose those who used them, especially when parliamentary debates became particularly heated.

In the Indian Parliament, the idea of the duality of mankind was latent in many discourses. Many of the stakeholders in the debate emphasised the specificity of the gender regime in India, which relied on complementarity and mutual respect, in contrast to the "war between men and women" that was deemed to exist in the West. Hence, the objective of reservations for women was often designated as "*bhagidari*", meaning partnership or equal participation (the term was also used in the same period to designate a local participatory scheme in New Delhi) (Ghertner, 2011). In parliamentary debates, the term "*bhagidari*" was used to justify the need for reservations as a consequence of men and women's complementarity and partnership, rather than as a measure to counter gender discrimination and patriarchy as it had been expressed by the women's movement in the 1990s (Tawa Lama-Rewal, 2004). Many stakeholders insisted on the specificity (and superiority) of India in this respect. For instance, according to a Member of Parliament belonging to the Congress Party:

> India is an ancient land that has acknowledged the feminine divinity and the divinity in the feminine. Western civilization is still in its formative years, as far as these concepts are concerned…the Indian model of preserving the space for women in the society by providing her respect instead of rights is the singular distinction between our society and the western society." (V. Maitreyan, as cited in Rajya Sabha Debates, 2010)

Here, both the idea of equality between men and women (marked by universal adult franchise) and complementarity between the sexes are used to justify quotas. This intertwining of two registers of argumentation in favour of gender quotas (based on difference and equality) was found to be a common justification for women's group representation worldwide (Mcdonagh, 2002). In India as well, the gender regime is viewed as different, superior, and implicitly more modern (as the West is deemed to be in its formative years). Ironically, the claim for exceptionality is a common trope that can be found around the world.

However, the issue of the nature of gender difference, as such, was not central to the debate in India, as the main point of contention was the articulation between women's representation and group representation. While it was considered highly problematic in France, the latter already existed in India, and the question was how to combine it with the new representative claims made by women. Indeed, although many in the Congress Party did not support quotas at independence, they had to work with those who did, particularly Ambedkar, who played a key role in the writing of the constitution. As a compromise, separate electorates were rejected, but political reservations (as well as reservations for government jobs and education) were maintained to ensure the representation of "scheduled castes" (the Dalits) and "tribes" (Bajpai, 2016). Later, in the 1980s and 1990s, the lower castes, officially called "Other Backward Classes" (OBC) (around 40% of the Indian population), also claimed reservations in educational institutions and the civil services. Political reservations were however not a strong claim, and in reality the number of OBC elected representatives, both at the State and federal level climbed steadily (with important variations depending on the State), leading to what can be considered a social democratization of Indian politics in the 1990s, when the Women's reservation bill was introduced in Parliament (Jaffrelot, 2003).

In 1992, in the wave of decentralization and constitution of autonomous local governments (*Panchayats*), 33% of local government seats were reserved for women (the number was later raised to 50% in some states) (Ghosh & Tawa Lama-Rewal, 2005). The difficulty arose when deciding how to implement women's reservations at the state and federal levels. The crucial debate concerned the manner in which women's reservations should be combined with other forms of reservations, or "quotas within quotas".

Indeed, the majority of those opposing the bill belonged to parties claiming to defend OBCs and Muslims (and often belonged to these social groups). They asked for specific quotas for Muslim and OBC women, claiming that "their women" (the possessive was frequently employed) could not be represented by Hindu upper caste women (see Table 2). Their main argument was that the category "women" was without substance because of socio-economic, caste, and religious differences, which give rise to radically opposed interests. Interestingly enough, this argument was symmetrically opposed to the claims of French pro-parity republicans: it stressed the difference between women and other social depressed groups, but concluded against women's quotas if not combined with other dimensions. Male representatives emphasized the differences between women in terms of values, behaviour, and even physical appearance, describing women of high caste and class as "sophisticated" and Westernized. To quote Sharad Yadav, OBC MP of the Janata Dal in 1997: "You want to crush the rights of our women. About which women are you talking here. We do not want to restrict ourselves for the upliftment [sic] of sophisticated women only" (Sharad Yadav, as cited in Lok Sabha Secretariate, 1997, p. 384).

Partisans of the bill contested their opponents' right to speak in the name of women. Some, especially women, occasionally rehashed the old argument of women's unity beyond caste and religion, but in India, as elsewhere, most feminist activists and some female politicians recognized the plurality of situations and the intersectional dimension of domination. In this completely different context, they combined the constructivist arguments of both radical Marxists and deconstructionists with the viewpoint of pragmatic egalitarians in France. However, it was impossible to find a compromise between those who defended reserved seats for women and those who proposed "quotas within quotas". Some feminists suggested beating the opponents of the bill at their own game, or "calling their bluff" and accepting quotas within quotas (Interview with a feminist researcher, New Delhi, 2010), but they remained a minority. Most of the positions expressed by feminists in interviews or publications showed that while they were "open" to specific measures for backward class and Muslim women, they could not align with those who defended them in Parliament (Dhanda, 2000), deeming them dishonest and sexist. For instance, commenting on one of the opponents to the bill, a feminist and head of an NGO lashed out: "Look at this man, and what he does to women, he produces 14 children, that's what he did. That's what he thinks about women" (Interview in New Delhi, 2010).

In any case, major political parties, such as the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress Party opposed quotas within quotas (particularly for Muslim women in the case of the BJP) and no compromise could be found. Many feminists claim that everyone found this deadlock convenient, as no man wanted the bill to be passed (Dutoya, 2014). However, the continuous debate over women's quota probably reinforced women's legitimacy in politics. Interestingly, although the bill was never passed, the number of women candidates and elected representatives has increased steadily since 1996, though it remains quite low, with 77 women (14%) elected in the 2019 general elections.

4. Conclusion

In many ways, the issues of parity in France and women's reservations in India have followed opposing paths. While in France, parity seemed to gain acceptance surprisingly quickly, given the resistance of the republican doxa to group representation, in India, the apparent consensus around reservations met with unexpected resistance. Yet, together, the two cases highlight the key role played by women's representation in the construction of what representation is and should be in a global, yet localized discourse on political modernity and modernization. Many factors explain the failure to impose reservations in India, from the logics of coalition to the resistance of the male leadership within parties officially supporting the bill (Dutoya, 2014). Conversely, in France, the inner logic of politicians' strategies in a context of a crisis of legitimacy has been crucial to explaining the success story of the parity motto. In both cases, however, our article shows that ideas matter. Arguments are not manipulated at will. The framings have their own rationales and constraints, and they imply some path dependency.

Table 2. The main positions in the debate on women's reservation in India in the 1990s and 2000s.

Nature of the argument	Partisans of quotas within quotas	Supporters of quotas for women as an encompassing category
Cultural	Upper caste women are Westernized/different	Women constitute a group in themselves and have distinctive qualities-
Constructivist	The intersection of caste, gender and religious discriminations produces distinctive experiences and interests Discrimination based on caste and religion is a more urgent issue	In a patriarchal society, women have distinctive interests and men cannot speak for women, even in the lower castes

Source: the authors.

In India, the inability to modify the claim for women's representation to fit into the existing system of group representation was a key factor. In particular, in a rhetoric reminiscent of the 1930s and 40s, the category "women" was opposed to other categories based on caste and religion. Women's quotas were rejected, not because the nationalist universalist frame would have been inhospitable to group representation, but because gender was not perceived as a criterion fine enough to identify a group requiring special representation. Feminists and women's organization themselves were not willing to fully abandon the idea of woman as a universal citizen, unmarked by caste and religion, in a context where such identities were once again, becoming central to Indian politics.

In France, the slogan parity was efficient because it could reconcile essentialist, transcendental and constructivist arguments related to women's representation. The reframing of "republican universalism" in terms of the dualism that parity was supposed to embody was a key moment in this process that enabled the adoption of gender quotas and it contrasted strongly with the social or ethnic group representation familiar to Indian politics. Nevertheless, two decades later, this new republicanism has nearly disappeared and the universalist frame is weakening. Women tend increasingly to adopt non-traditionally "female" roles in politics, and gender difference is no longer at the forefront. Constructivist frames have won legitimacy. Group representation and the equal participation of various groups in politics are increasingly discussed, beyond an exclusive focus on gender difference. And the claim for a different kind of politics of presence—social, gender-related and ethnic—is growing in "the land of human rights".

Acknowledgments

The authors thank the join ANR/DFG funding program which has made this article possible, their colleagues of the CLAIMS research, and the two anonymous reviewers for their comments and suggestions.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

References

Achin, C. (2005). *Le mystère de la chambre basse. Comparaison des processus d'entrée des femmes au parlement, France–Allemagne 1945–2000* [The mystery of the lower house. Comparison of the women entering parliament processes, France–Germany 1945–2000]. Paris: Dalloz.

Achin, C., & Lévêque, S. (2014). La parité sous contrôle: Egalité des sexes et clôture du champ politique [Parity under supervision: Gender equality and closure of the political field]. *Actes de La Recherche en Sciences Sociales*, *204*(4), 118–137.

Amar, M. (Ed.) (1999). *Le piège de la parité. Arguments pour un débat* [The trap of parity: Arguments for a debate]. Paris: Hachette.

Assemblée Nationale. (1998, December 15). *Compte-rendu des débats de l'Assemblée Nationale, second session*. Paris: Assemblée Nationale.

Bachelot, R., & Fraisse, G. (1999). *Deux femmes au royaume des hommes* [Two women in the kingdom of men]. Paris: Hachette.

Bajpai, R. (2016), *Debating difference. Group rights and liberal democracy in India* (2nd ed.). New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Basu, A. (1996). The gendered imagery and women's leadership of Hindu nationalism. *Reproductive Health Matters*, *4*(8), 70–76.

Bereni, L. (2015). *La bataille de la parité: Mobilisations pour la féminisation du pouvoir* [The fight for political parity: Mobilizing for the feminization of power]. Paris: Économica.

Bhagat, R. (1997, May 19). Our political Janus. *The Hindu (Business Line)*.

Bhavnani, R. R. (2009). Do electoral quotas "work" after they are withdrawn? Evidence from a natural experiment in India. *The American Political Science Review*, *103*(1), 23–35.

Bourdieu, P. (2001). *Masculine domination*. Cambridge: Polity Press. (Original work published 1998)

Chattopadhyay, R., & Duflo, E. (2004). Impact of reservation in Panchayati raj: Evidence from a nationwide randomised experiment. *Economic and Political Weekly*, *39*(9), 979–986.

Cîrstocea, I., Lacombe, D., & Marteu, E. (2018). (Eds.) *La globalisation du genre: Mobilisations, cadres d'actions, savoirs* [The globalization of gender: Mobilizations, frames of action, knowledge]. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes. Collective. (1999, June 26). Manifeste pour l'égalité sexuelle [Manifesto for sexual equality]. *Le Monde*.

Committee on the Status of Women in India. (1974). *Towards equality: Report of the committee on the status of women in India*. New Delhi: Government of India.

Dhanda, M. (2000). Representation for women: Should feminists support quotas? *Economic and Political Weekly*, *35*(33), 2969–2976.

Douki, C., & Minard, P. (2007). Global history, connected histories: A shift of historiographical scale? *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, *5*(54), 7–21.

Dudley Jenkins, L. (1999). Competing inequalities: The struggle over reserved legislative seats for women in India. *International Review of Social History*, *44*(7), 53–75.

Dutoya, V. (2014). *La représentation des femmes dans les parlements de l'Inde et du Pakistan* [Women's representation in the Indian and Pakistani parliaments]. Paris: Dalloz.

Dutoya, V. (2016), A representative claim made in the name of women? Quotas and the political represen-

tation of women in India and Pakistan (1917–2010). *Revue Française de Science Politique*, *66*(1), 49–70.

Forbes, G. (1979). Votes for women: The demand for women's franchise in India 1917–1937. In V. Mazumdar (Ed.), *Symbols of power: Women in a changing* society (pp. 3–23). Bombay: Allied Publishers.

Gaspard, F. (1998, November). La parité, principe ou stratégie? [EParity, principle or strategy ?] *Le Monde Diplomatique*. Retrieved from https://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/1998/11/GASPARD/4148

Ghertner, A. (2011). Gentrifying the state, gentrifying participation: Elite governance programs in Delhi. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *35*(3), 504–532.

Ghosh, A., & Tawa Lama-Rewal, S. (2005). *Democratization in progress: Women and local politics in urban India*. New Delhi: Tulika Books.

Government of the French Republic. (1958). Constitution of the Fifth Republic. Retrieved from https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/Droit-francais/Constitution/Constitution-du-4-octobre-1958

Halimi, G. (1994, October). Etablir l'égalité politique: Un référendum pour les femmes [Establishing political equality: A referendum for women]. *Le Monde Diplomatique*. Retrieved from https://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/1994/10/HALIMI/7505

Halimi, G. (1997). *La nouvelle cause des femmes* [Women's new cause]. Paris: Seuil.

Hinojosa, M., & Piscopo, J. (2013). *Promoting women's right to be elected: Twenty-five years of quotas in Latin America* (Report for the Electoral Tribunal (Sala Electoral) of the Federal Judicial Branch of Mexico). Mexico City: Electoral Tribunal. Retrieved from https://jenniferpiscopo.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/hinojosa-piscopo-final-english.pdf

Hirata, H., Kergoat, D., Riot-Sarcey, M., & Varikas, E. (1999). Parité ou mixité [Parity or non-segregation]. In M. Amar (Ed.), *Le piège de la parité. Arguments pour un débat* [The trap of parity: Arguments for a debate] (pp. 11–14). Paris: Hachette.

Inter-Parliamentary Union. (1997). *Towards partnership between men and women in politics* ("Reports and Documents" No. 29). Geneva: Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Inter-Parliamentary Union. (1999). *Participation of women in political life* ("Reports and Documents" No. 35). Geneva: Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Jaffrelot, C. (2003). *India's silent revolution: The rise of the lower castes in North India*. London: Hurst.

John, M. E. (2000). Alternate modernities? Reservations and women's movement in 20th century India. *Economic and Political Weekly*, *35*(43/44), 3822–3829.

Kishwar, M. (1996). Women and politics: Beyond quotas. *Economic and Political Weekly*, *31*(43), 2873–2874.

Kristeva, J. (1999, March 23). Le sens de la parité [The meaning of parity]. *Le Monde*.

Krook, M. L. (2005). *Competing claims: Quotas for women and minorities in India and France*. Budapest: European Consortium for Political Research.

Krook, M. L. (2009). *Quotas for women in politics: Gender and candidate selection reform worldwide*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Le Monde. (2000, December 19). Parité mal ordonnée [Badly-ordered parity]. *Le Monde*. Retrieved from https://www.lemonde.fr/archives/article/2000/12/19/parite-mal-ordonnee_3628507_1819218.html

Lépinard, E. (2007). *L'égalité introuvable: La parité, les féministes et la république* [Elusive equality: Parity, feminists and the republic]. Paris: Presses de la FNSP.

Lok Sabha Secretariate. (1947). *Constituent Assembly of India Debates* (Vol. 4). New Delhi: Lok Sabha Secretariate.

Lok Sabha Secretariate. (1996, September 12). 11th Lok Sabha debates. *Lok Sabha*. Retrieved from http://164.100.47.194/Loksabha/Debates/1102.aspx

Lok Sabha Secretariate. (1997). *11th Lok Sabha debates*, (Vol. 14, n° 12, 1–478). New Delhi: Lok Sabha Secretariate.

Lok Sabha Secretariate. (2000, March 7). 13th Lok Sabha debates. *Lok Sabha*. Retrieved from http://loksabhaph.nic.in/Debates/textofdebate.aspx

Mamdani, M. (2012). *Define and rule. Native as political identity*. Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press.

Mani, L. (1987). Contentious traditions: The debate on Sati in colonial India. *Cultural Critique*, *7*, 119–156.

Mcdonagh, E. (2002). Political citizenship and democratization: The gender paradox. *American Political Science Review*, *96*(3), 535–552.

Menon, N. (2004). *Recovering subversion: Feminist politics beyond the law*. New Delhi: Permanent Back.

Murray, R. (2012). Parity in France: A 'dual track' solution to women's under-representation. *West European Politics*, *35*(2), 343–361.

National Constituent Assembly of France. (1789). Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen de 1789 [Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789]. Retrieved from https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/Droit-francais/Constitution/Declaration-des-Droits-de-l-Homme-et-du-Citoyen-de-1789

Phillips, A. (1995). *The politics of presence*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Pitkin, H. (1967). *The concept of representation*. Berkeley, CA, Los Angeles, CA, and London: University of California Press.

Rajya Sabha. (2010). *Rajya Sabha debates, uncorrected version, Session No. 219*. New Delhi: Rajya Sabha. Retrieved from http://rsdebate.nic.in

Saward, M. (2006). The representative claim. *Contemporary Political Theory*, *5*(3), 297–318.

Scott, J. W. (1996). *Only paradoxes to offer*. Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press.

Scott, J. W. (2005). *Parité! Sexual equality and the crisis of French universalism*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Sinha, M. (2007). Unraveling masculinity and rethinking

citizenship: A comment. In S. Dudink., K. Hagemann, & A. Clark (Eds.), *Representing masculinity: Male citizenship in modern western culture* (pp. 261–274). New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan.

Sintomer, Y. (2007). Gender and political representation: The question of parité in France. In J.-P. Deranty, D. Petherbridge, J. Rundell, & R. Sinnerbrink (Eds.), *Recognition, work, politics. New directions in French critical theory* (pp. 279–301). Leiden and Boston, MA: Brill.

Subrahmanyam, S. (1997). Connected histories: Notes towards a reconfiguration of early modern Eurasia. *Modern Asian Studies*, *31*(3), 735–762.

Tasca, C. (1998). *Rapport fait au nom de la commission des lois constitutionnelles, de la législation et de l'administration générale de la République sur le projet de loi constitutionnelle (n° 985) relatif à l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes* [*Report in the name of the commission for constitutional laws, for legislation and for the general administration of the Republic on the constitutional reform bill (nº 985) concerning equality between men and women*]. Paris: Assemblée Nationale.

Tawa Lama-Rewal, S. (2004). *Femmes et politique en Inde et au Népal: Image et présence* [Women and politics in India and in Nepal]. Paris: Karthala.

Thapar-Björkert, S. (2006). *Women in the Indian national movement: Unseen faces and unheard voices, 1930–42*. New Delhi and Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Times of India. (2009, March 10). Room for More. *Times of India*.

United Nations. (1979). *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*. New York, NY: United Nations. Retrieved from http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm

Waylen, G. (2015). Engendering the 'crisis of democracy': Institutions, representation and participation. *Government and Opposition*, *50*(3), 495–521.

About the Authors

Virginie Dutoya holds a PhD in Political Science from Sciences Po, Paris, and is a permanent researcher at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS). Her current research interests include women's political representation and participation in India and Pakistan and feminist and LGBTQI politics in these countries. Her recent publications on representation include "Defining the 'Queers' in India: The Politics of Academic Representation" (*India Review*, *15*(2), 2016, pp. 241–271) and "A Representative Claim Made in the Name of Women? Quotas and the Political Representation of Women in India and Pakistan (1917–2010)" (*Revue Française de Science Politique*, *66*(1), 2016, pp. 49–70).

Yves Sintomer has been Deputy Director of the Centre Marc Bloch Berlin, and is Honorary Senior Fellow at the Institut Universitaire de France, one of the French most prestigious institutions. He holds a PhD from Florence European University Institute, Florence, and has been invited professor or scholar in a number of institutions, including Frankfurt, Harvard, Lausanne, Louvain-la-Neuve, Neuchâtel, Peking University, Tsinghua University (Beijing), UCL London, and Yale. He has written on participatory and deliberative democracy, political representation, and German sociology. His most recent books include *Participatory Budgeting in Europe; Democracy and Public Governance* (Routledge, 2016) (with C. Herzberg and A. Röcke); and *Between Radical and Deliberative Democracy: Random Selection in Politics from Athens to Contemporary Experiments* (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming). His writings have been published in 19 languages.

Methodological Appendix: Corpus of the Research

- Indian parliamentary debates between September 1996 and March 2010 (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha): consulted at the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, and when not available there, through the online verbatim made available on the institutions' website (in these cases, the translations was done by the author). A research was carried out on the basis of key words to identify relevant debates.
- French parliamentary debates between 1998 and 2000 (available online at the French Assembly and Senate websites).
- Indian Press: Systematic analysis of two English language newspapers between 1996 and 2010 (*The Hindu* and *Times of India*), and research by keywords in the news database Factiva.
- French Press: systematic analysis of the sixty most quoted tribunes on the parity issue between 1990 and 2002.
- Interviews in India with MPs (32), feminists (8) and other stakeholders (4) (party office bearers, civil servants and journalists). Interviews in France with feminists and intellectuals (20).
- Participant observation in the feminist debates in France (1998–2000).

COGITATIO

Politics and Governance (ISSN: 2183–2463)
2019, Volume 7, Issue 3, Pages 137–151
DOI: 10.17645/pag.v7i3.2150

Article

A New Approach to Map and Quantify Representative Claims and Measure Their Validation: A Case Study Analysis

Viola Joschko [1,*] and Luis Glaser [2]

[1] Department of Political Science, Goethe University, 60323 Frankfurt, Germany; E-Mail: mail@viola-joschko.de
[2] Department of Computer Science, Goethe University, 60323 Frankfurt, Germany; E-Mail: lglaser@cs.uni-frankfurt.de

* Corresponding author

Submitted: 30 March 2019 | Accepted: 28 June 2019 | Published: 24 September 2019

Abstract
Relying on the theory of Saward (2010) and Disch (2015), we study political representation through the lens of representative claim-making. We identify a gap between the theoretical concept of claim-making and the empirical (quantitative) assessment of representative claims made in the real world's representative contexts. Therefore, we develop a new approach to map and quantify representative claims in order to subsequently measure the reception and validation of the claims by the audience. To test our method, we analyse all the debates of the German parliament concerned with the introduction of the gender quota in German supervisory boards from 2013 to 2017 in a two-step process. At first, we assess which constituencies the MPs claim to represent and how they justify their stance. Drawing on multiple correspondence analysis, we identify different claim patterns. Second, making use of natural language processing techniques and logistic regression on social media data, we measure if and how the asserted claims in the parliamentary debates are received and validated by the respective audience. We come to the conclusion that the constituency as ultimate judge of legitimacy has not been comprehensively conceptualized yet.

Keywords
multiple correspondence analysis; parliamentary debate; reception; representation; representative claims; Saward; social media; women's quota

Issue
This article is part of the issue "Rethinking Representation: Representative Claims in Global Perspective", edited by Petra Guasti (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany) and Brigitte Geissel (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany).

1. Introduction

In the political will-formation processes, increasingly complex constellations of actors exist. Traditionally, representatives are authorized by and held accountable through an election by territorially defined constituencies. Due to the increasing passiveness of voters, reflected by decreasing voter turnout, the loss of faith in political institutions, a decline of party loyalty and growing political power of non-governmental organizations, tensions concerning who has the democratic right to represent the people emerged (Näsström, 2011; van Biezen, Mair, & Poguntke, 2012). Nowadays, however, not only the elected political elite but also self-appointed actors feel entitled to make representative claims and voice political interests. The inclusion of these new voices might provide novel avenues in the production of legitimacy within democratic systems (Mair, 2009; van Biezen, 2014; Young, 2002).

It has become apparent that the traditional models of electoral accountability and constitutional representation might not be sufficient anymore. How democratic accountability and legitimacy are operationalised in these decentralized arrangements, made up of a broad variety of representative claims and claim-makers, becomes crucial in order to assess and attain democratic legiti-

macy (Guasti & Geissel, 2019). These societal developments revived the scientific debate about political representation, oftentimes referred to as "representative turn" (Disch, 2011; Näsström, 2011, 2015; Urbinati & Warren, 2008). Representation is no longer bound to a static principal-agent relationship, but is seen as a dynamic process in which elections are no guarantee that representation will be democratic (Disch, 2015, p. 487). Representative claims—i.e., claims of a subject wherein she or he vouches for a certain proposal (interest) or constituency (with that particular interest)—are mechanisms of the dynamic processes of representation.

Especially Saward's framework of representative claim-making became very influential. He sees claim-making as the core of representation: "'Representation' can be said from this perspective not to exist; what exists are claims and their receptions." According to him, "Representation is produced by processes of claim-making and consequent acceptance or rejection by audiences or parts of audiences" (Saward, 2006, p. 306).

In this claim-making process, he sets the focus on the claimed constituency and the audience respectively. He explicitly emphasizes the importance of the claimed constituency, in particular as he criticizes Pitkin (1967) for focusing solely on the representatives, while "the represented is taken as unproblematically given" (Saward, 2006, p. 300). With this, he challenges the traditional assumption of an objectively pre-existing and manifest constituency with apparent needs and interests. He puts forward the idea that in their claims, political representatives verbally construct their constituencies, e.g., as "hard working, highly educated women" and imply that they are their best representatives. However, every claim of representation leaves space for contestation or rejection by the ostensible constituency (or other political actors) (Saward, 2006, p. 302).

By emphasizing the role of the constituency, Saward subsequently derives democratic legitimacy from the reception of the claim by the audience. He considers this as a valid form of authorization:

> If we want to assess the democratic legitimacy of representative claims in a democratic 'way' (and, as democratic theorists, we should), then we must leave it up to the 'would-be constituents of claims' to decide whether or not to accept them." (Saward, 2010, pp. 144–147)

Therefore, claims are legitimate when they are perceived as such "by appropriate constituencies under reasonable conditions of judgement" (Saward, 2010, pp. 144–147).

Due to this broader perspective, which neither conceives representation as a given outcome of an electoral process any longer, nor accepts constituencies as undeniable, a necessity to examine the reception and therefore legitimacy of representative claims arises.

To allow for a systematic empirical analysis in this regard, Disch (2015) vows for a separation of three stages of claims making, whereas the first is the making of the claim and the second is the reception of the claim. The reception stage itself consists of two steps, first the audience must recognize the claim in order to then validate it, resulting in acceptance or rejection of the claim.

The most prominent systematic approach analysing representative claims can be accredited to De Wilde (2013). With his "Representative Claim Analysis" (RCA) he combines Saward's theoretical terms (claim-maker, subject, object) with the method of political claims analysis (Koopmans & Statham, 1999). In the tradition of political claims analysis, he sticks with qualitatively analysing newspaper articles, forfeiting the assessment of unaltered claims in direct speech. Here, the reception of the claim (the second stage in the process of claim-making; Disch, 2015) remains left aside.

Although a lot of research has applied some sort of representative claims analysis, it seems that no one has ever assessed representative claims from the citizens' standpoint, e.g., with a focus on the reception by a claimed constituency. For example, Kuyper (2016) proposed to derive the validity of claims from a normative evaluation by experts, instead of considering the claimed constituency as authority. In contrast, we aim at contributing to the gap in the literature by clarifying empirically who claim-makers claim to represent, i.e., which constituencies they are creating, to eventually measure the reception of the claim by the claimed constituency (measured as audience).

We do this with the aid of a case study: the introduction of the women's quota in German supervisory boards. The reason for this choice is that it was a highly polarized debate with a clear outcome, where a multitude of opposing claims were made. Also, we can test the semi-automated structuring of the parliamentary claims by comparing our results with what is commonly known about the position of the involved parties towards the quota and thus validate the application of the MCA as a basis for the assessment of the validation. Plus, if the semi-automated structuring of the claims replicates commonly known results, an application to other novel and more complex cases involving non-elected political claim-makers may be considered.

We conduct three analyses. First, claims made in the German parliament are systematically analysed within the representative claims framework. Then, we assess the reception of the claims on Twitter and determine its validity for the purpose of, finally, measuring the validation of the claims made in the parliament. This work will cover the first and second step of the claim-making process (Disch, 2015): the analysis of representative claims in the parliament and the assessment of their reception on social media. With this we provide an empirical contribution to a theoretically elaborated scientific debate about representative claim-making.

As Näsström (2011, p. 502) points out, it is important to differentiate between "diagnostic or normative work". We also acknowledge that prior to normative de-

bates about the validation of representative claims, the empirical status quo needs to be captured. Our approach is purely diagnostic, as we aim to provide a method to systematically assess representative claims and operationalise validation. However, a theoretical reflection on which stipulations need to be met in order to define claims as accepted or declined lies beyond the scope of this work and needs to be addressed in the future.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1. Making of Representative Claims

According to Saward, "a representative claim is a claim to represent or to know what represents the interests of someone or something" (Saward, 2006, p. 305). As he stresses, representation does not rely on a real constituency, however, creates an idea about it: "Representing is depicting...a constituency as this or that, as requiring this or that, as having this or that set of interests.". This stance hints at the risk of taking the constituencies' interest at face value, e.g., taking a feminist mindset for granted when referring to women as a constituency. To put it differently, if an MP claims to represent women and therefore affirms the introduction of the women's quota, it is tempting to evaluate this representative claim as valid because, at face value, women benefit from the quota and one would therefore expect them to be proponents of it. Keeping this in mind, we emphasize the importance of a systematic analysis of the constituencies' reception of the claims, all preconceptions of the researcher aside.

For us, a representative claim consists of at least three defining elements: an "issue", which in our case is always the introduction of the women's quota, a "stance", which is a position indicating a preference regarding the issue of relevance (pro, contra or neutral) and thirdly, a "claim-maker" who voices the opinion. Further elements can be a "claimed constituency", either humans (e.g., all women in Germany) or normative schemes (e.g., justice or equality) claimed to be represented, and there also might or might not be a verbalized "linkage", which refers to the relationship between claim-maker and constituency (see Figure 1). Guasti and Geissel (2019) take into account whether and how the claim-maker claims a linkage between him/herself and the represented, resulting in three types of claims: "claim of representation", "claim of values and interests" and "proclamation".

To this we add the element of "justification", conceptually referring to Saward (2010) where he introduces the "cultural code". De Wilde subsequently picks up this notion and renames it to "frame". He defines it as follows:

> In this sense, the 'framing' variable of the claims analysis method clearly resonates with what Saward calls a 'cultural code' in which a representative claim is made. The 'frame' in claims analysis is of internal character in the sense of a justification or meaning provided by the claimant. (De Wilde, 2013, p. 287)

We therefore adopt the concept of cultural code/frame, but name it "justification". We define it as the explana-

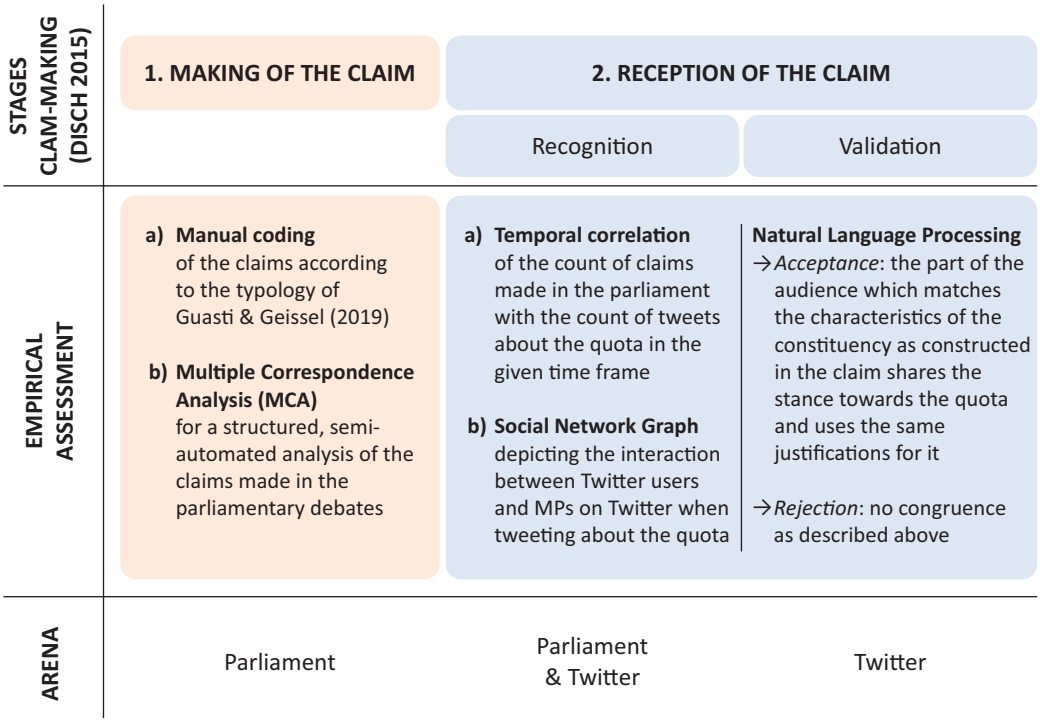


Figure 1. Overview of the conceptual framework.

tion for the stance of the claim-maker towards the issue, e.g., the explanation why the issue (introduction of the quota) is supposed to be beneficial or detrimental to the constituency according to the claim-maker.

In textual terms, a claim can be comprised of a single sentence or several connected sentences. With the sole analysis of newspaper articles, the original claims are already preprocessed and filtered through the lens of journalists. Therefore, we advocate for the assessment of direct speech of the claim-makers. In our case, we analyse parliamentary speeches, as they serve as the most accurate reflections of the MP's self-representation.

2.2. Reception of Representative Claims

Representation through claim-making only works for Saward, if claims are received by an audience. De Wilde identifies some problems for empirical inquiry in Saward's analytical framework: the operationalisation of the difference between constituency and audience. He states that the problem lies in the difficulty of identifying a passive and often not specifically mentioned audience. Therefore, he rejects the distinction as "needlessly complicated" and excludes the audience from his claims analysis (De Wilde, 2013, p. 284). Disagreeing with De Wilde, we argue that the difference between audience and constituency becomes necessary for the empirical assessment of the validation of claims. In our view, the constituency is an abstract entity, verbally constructed by the claim-maker in the claim. The audience is defined as the people who match the defined characteristics of the respective constituency as verbalized in the claim and actively accept or reject the claims. If a claim-maker states that "I am representing the men in Germany and oppose the quota, because it discriminates against men", then men in Germany are the constituency and the German men who voice that they support/oppose the quota are defined as the audience. If a claim-maker claims to represent justice (a normative scheme), then a corresponding audience does not exist, as the validation of claims necessarily entails the active expression of acceptance or rejection and thus, only human beings can be considered to be an "audience".

We define the reception of the claim as being twofold: first, the claim needs to be directly or indirectly recognised and second, it needs to be validated, resulting in acceptance or rejection of the claim by the respective audience. A claim is considered accepted if the part of the audience matching the depiction of the claim-maker's constituency shares the respective stance and justification (see Figure 2).

Before the validation of the claims can be scrutinized, we have to make sure that we can assume an audience on Twitter. Do people on Twitter actually care and talk

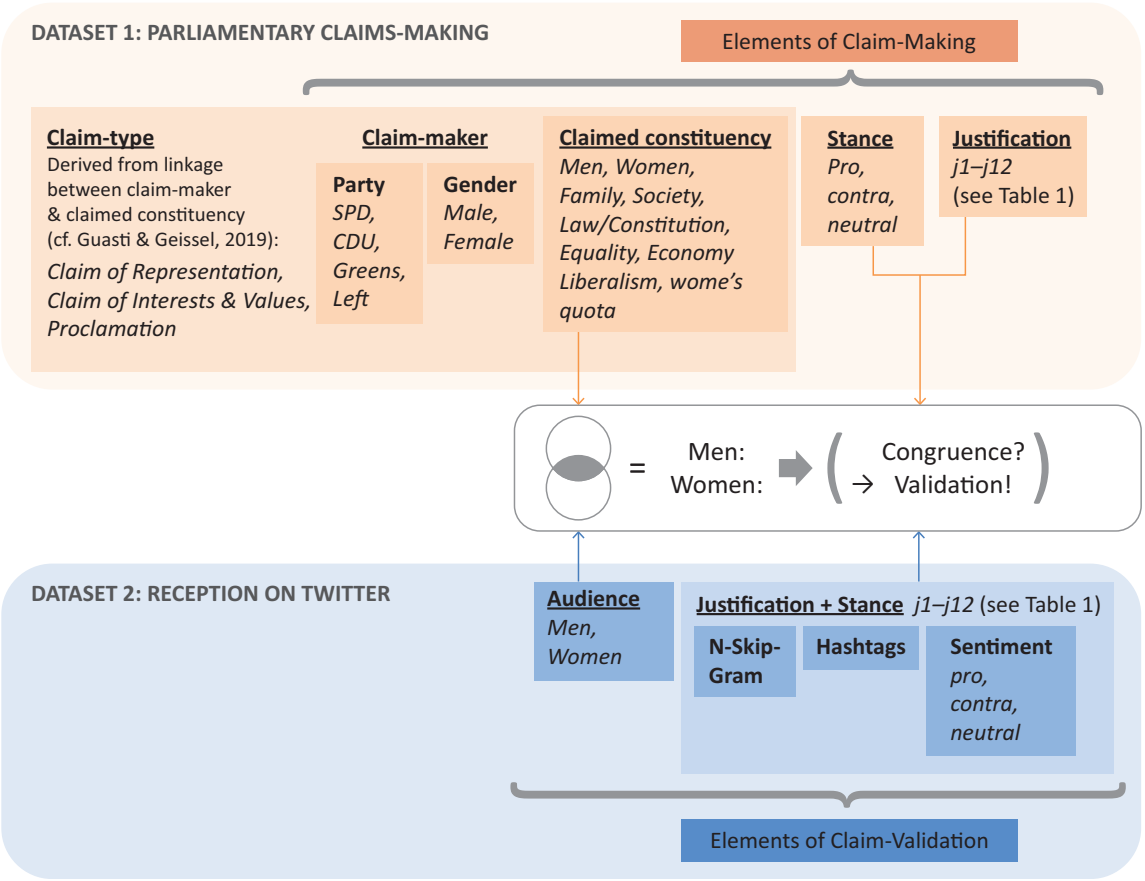


Figure 2. Overview of data structure and assessment of validation.

about the introduction of the quota? If not, it would not be reasonable to use Twitter data for validation purposes. To find out whether the Twitter debate about the women's quota is interconnected with the parliamentary debate, we first examine if MPs and Twitter users interact on Twitter by talking about the quota with each other. Second, we check the assumption of a temporal interdependence: if the parliament debates about the quota (i.e., many claims are made), we assume an increase of tweets about the quota as well. We do not think it is necessary that the audience has been directly confronted with the claims by watching parliamentary debates. We assume that the stance towards the quota and the respective justifications used for or against it in the claims could also be communicated via other tweets on the topic, newspaper articles covering the parliamentary debate, or other secondary sources.

Considering the restrictions the analysis of social media data bears, it still appeared as the most suitable source for our purpose, as people are able to express their opinion and sentiment towards an issue in an uncensored manner, directly and in an open text format. For these reasons, micro-blogging services are widely studied as a source of data on public opinion (Hassanpour, 2013; Jungherr, Schoen, & Jürgens, 2016; O'Connor, 2010; Tumasjan, Sprenger, Sandner, & Welpe, 2010). In contrast, standardized forms of public opinion surveys usually solely depict (dis)agreement on Likert scales, which are easy to interpret but poor regarding wealth of information. Plus, they are sometimes affected by social desirability bias, one of the most common biases affecting survey research (Barberá & Rivero, 2015; King & Bruner, 2000).

In sum, we operationalise the recognition of claims twofold. First, as a correlation of the count of claims made in the parliament with the count of tweets about the quota in the given time frame. Second, we check whether Twitter users and MPs interact with each other on Twitter. We operationalise interaction as a visibly interconnected social network on Twitter where the MP nodes are centrally located. This suggests that the MP is a relevant actor in the conversation. If both of these assumptions are met, we can assume the existence of an audience which validates (accepts or rejects) the parliamentary claims on Twitter.

We define validation as the congruence between claimed constituencies (as constructed in the claims) and audience (people validating the claims) in terms of stance and justification. We do not presume any kind of descriptive representation, meaning that an MP does not need to fit the descriptive characteristics of the claimed constituency. In this case this means that the gender of the MP does not play any role in the validation. If a male claim-maker claims to speak for women, then women can validate this claim.

We will not verify the factual correctness of the claims, e.g., if the MP makes claims in favour of the quota and uses the justification that the introduction of the quota is good for economy, we will not fact-check that. We will only examine whether the according audience (on Twitter) also believes so and favours the quota (stance) for this reason (justification). Thus, to consider a claim to be accepted, two conditions have to be fulfilled. The stance has to be congruent (measured as sentiment) and the justifications used in the parliament have to resonate with the audience.

We explicitly do not operationalise any threshold in terms of how congruent the claim and validation need to be in order to consider the claim accepted, because this definition of a benchmark should be set by a normative instead of an empirical approach. The implications of the findings will be discussed in the end. However, we restrict this work to the nature of a methodological trial to assess reception, not a normative evaluation thereof.

3. Making of the Claim: Empirical Analysis 1

The aim of this first empirical analysis is to map and to quantify claims as a prerequisite to measuring the reception of the claims.

3.1. Data Collection and Variables

To identify claims about the women's quota in the parliament, we analyse all the speeches of the 18th legislative period of the German Bundestag (22 October 2013–24 October 2017). To create the data set, we kept only those passages which were explicitly related to the introduction of the women's quota in German supervisory boards. Using this data, we coded the claim-maker (party and gender of MP), claimed constituency, stance (pro, contra, neutral) justification (open coding of claims) and claim type according to the claims typology of Guasti and Geissel (2019).

3.2. Method

To provide claim clusters, we examine which are the most similar and most dissimilar claims. Before the clustering, we need to quantify the claims. For this purpose, we apply multiple correspondence analysis (MCA). MCA is a dimension reduction technique for categorical and mixed data and performs data reduction by representing multidimensional data as points in a low-dimensional Euclidean vector space. The reasoning is similar to factor analysis. The goal is to measure the similarity (as distance) of single claims to cluster similar ones together. This helps to structure the claims according to the most relevant (non-)shared variable categories, representing latent structures (here: claim clusters) in the data (Rencher & Christensen, 2012). The clustering of claims facilitates the interpretability of the variety of claims made within the debate, eliminating the need to assess the reception of each single claim. Instead we assess the reception of the resulting claim clusters, which depict the relevant positions in the debate represented

Table 1. List of justifications in parliament and social media.

id	justification
1	"Quota is not an important topic, others are more pressing"
2	"Quota discriminates against men"
3	"Quota conflicts with constitution"
4	"Gender instead of qualification as the hiring criteria"
5	"Quota damages the economy"
6	"Quota benefits the economy"
7	"Quota leads to more equality, fairness"
8	"Quota is overdue and a step in the right direction"
9	"Quota is not sufficiently far-reaching"
10	"Quota leads to more qualification in board rooms"
11	"Voluntary quota is not enough, the state needs to intervene"
12	"Quota must not conflict with care work"

Note: Throughout this article we will reference these justifications as j_{id}, e.g., we refer to the first one as j1.

by the MPs in the parliament. Therefore, this first analysis provides the basis for the ensuing measurement of the reception of the claims.

We analyse a data frame of 320 claims × 31 variable categories, with claims as rows and all of the categories for every variable *j* in the columns. This table therefore has $I \times K$ dimensions and is composed of 1s and 0s. An element x_{ik} of this table has a value of 1 if the claim *i* carries category *k*, and a value of 0 if it does not (Husson, Lê, & Pagès, 2017, p. 134).

The distance between claims is calculated by summing up the squared differences between categories $(x_{ik} - x_{i'k})^2$ and dividing (and thereby balancing) by I_k, the number of individuals carrying category *k*. This distance can be expressed as:

$$d^2_{i,i'} = \frac{I}{J} \sum_{k=1}^{K} \frac{1}{I_k} \frac{(x_{ik} - x_{i'k})^2}{I_k}$$

where *J* is the number of variables, each having *K* categories.

The distance between the two categories *k* and *k*′ is calculated by counting the individuals which carry either category *k* or *k*′ and divide it by $I_k$and $I_{k'}$ respectively, the number of individuals carrying category *k* or *k*′ (Husson et al., 2017, p. 135). The squared distance between two categories can be expressed as:

$$d^2_{k,k'} = I \sum_{i=1}^{I} \left(\frac{x_{ik}}{I_k} - \frac{x_{ik'}}{I'_k} \right)$$

where *I* is the number of individuals.

We further demonstrate that it is possible to use MCA as a preprocessing technique to eventually perform a clustering method on the principal components (Husson et al., 2017), which defines homogeneous claim clusters. Due to the optimal allocation of quantitative values to categorical variables, further multivariate analyses are also facilitated (Di Franco, 2016).

3.3. Descriptive Results

In total, we found N = 310 claims in the parliament, with 70% of them made by female MPs. A total of 33 unique constituencies were referred to by the claim-makers in the parliament. For further analysis, we grouped them together, resulting in 9 different constituencies: men, women, family, society, law/constitution, equality, economy, liberalism and interestingly, after a certain point, "women's quota" itself became a constituency (normative scheme and therefore value worth representing; c.f., Guasti & Geissel, 2019). The justifications we found due to open coding in the claims are listed in Table 1.

3.4. Mapping of Claims: Analysis 1

The results of the MCA suggest to restrict the analysis to the description of the first three dimensions, which express 71.2% of the explained variance (JCA corrected principal inertia/"$R^{2"}$; c.f., Greenacre, 2017, p. 146). As in factor analysis, the most important (in terms of explained variance) dimension is the first one. The overall categories with the highest squared cosine (thus which appear most suitable to structure the whole parliamentary debate) are pro, contra and neutral and belong to the variable stance (Figure 3).

The relationship between the variable categories is shown in Figure 4. Categories with a similar profile group together, while negatively correlated variable categories are positioned on opposed quadrants. The resulting three claim clusters (Figure 3) become visibly distinguishable: the neutral cluster is depicted in the upper centre of the graph, the positive cluster in the lower left and the negative cluster in the lower right.

Figure 4 depicts the representation of the variable categories in a two-dimensional chart. Those combinations of variable categories, which are typically shared by claims belonging to the same cluster, group together in the graph. For example, in claims where the claimed con-

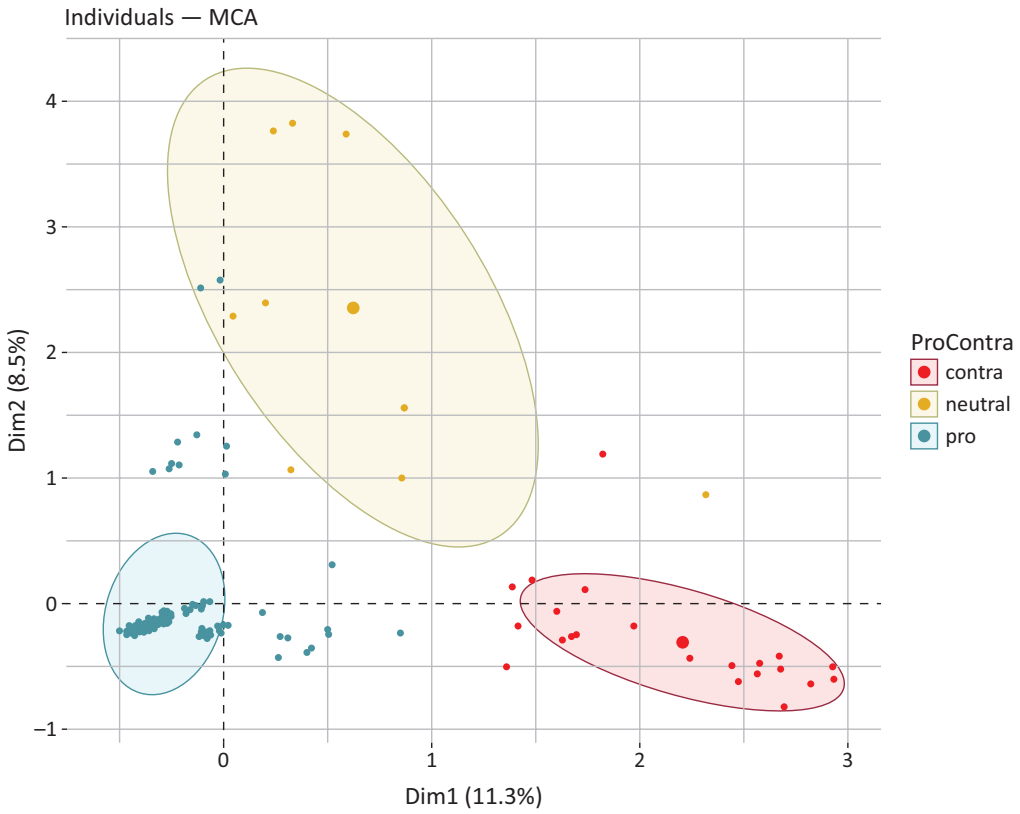


Figure 3. As a result of the MCA, we see every claim mapped as a dot on the first two dimensions, coloured according to its stance regarding the quota. The variable stance (pro, contra, neutral) appears most suitable in order to structure the claims made within the parliamentary debate about the women's quota, as they noticeably cluster together.

stituency is "men", usually the stance is contra the quota and common justifications are j1, j2, j3, j4 (lower right of the graph). These three resulting claim-clusters (see Table 2) will be objected to the validation in the end.

3.4.1. Description of the Dimensions 1–3

Dimension 1: Claims characterized by a positive coordinate on the x-axis are mostly claims that speak for

Table 2. The first analysis reveals 3 claim clusters, which are structured along the variable stance. Only significantly correlated variable categories are listed here.

Claim Clusters		
CLUSTER 1: NEGATIVE STANCE	CLUSTER 2: NEUTRAL STANCE	CLUSTER 3: POSITIVE STANCE
Claim-maker • Party: Conservatives • Gender: Male	**Claim-maker** • Party: Conservatives • Gender: Female	**Claim-maker** • Party: Greens, Left, Social Democrats • Gender: Female
Claimed Constituency: Men, Law/Constitution	**Claimed Constituency**: Family	**Claimed Constituency**: Women, Equality
Justification: j1 (Quota is not an important topic, others are more pressing), j2 (Quota discriminates against men), j3 (Quota conflicts with constitution) and j4 (Gender instead of qualification as the hiring criteria)	**Justification**: j12 (Quota must not conflict with care work)	**Justification**: j7 (quota leads to more equality, fairness), j8 (quota is overdue), j9 (quota is not far-reaching enough), j10 (quota leads to more qualifications in board rooms) and j11 (voluntary quota is not enough, the state needs to intervene
Claim-type: proclamation	**Claim-type**: no claim-type sign. associated with this claims cluster	**Claim-type** Claim of representation

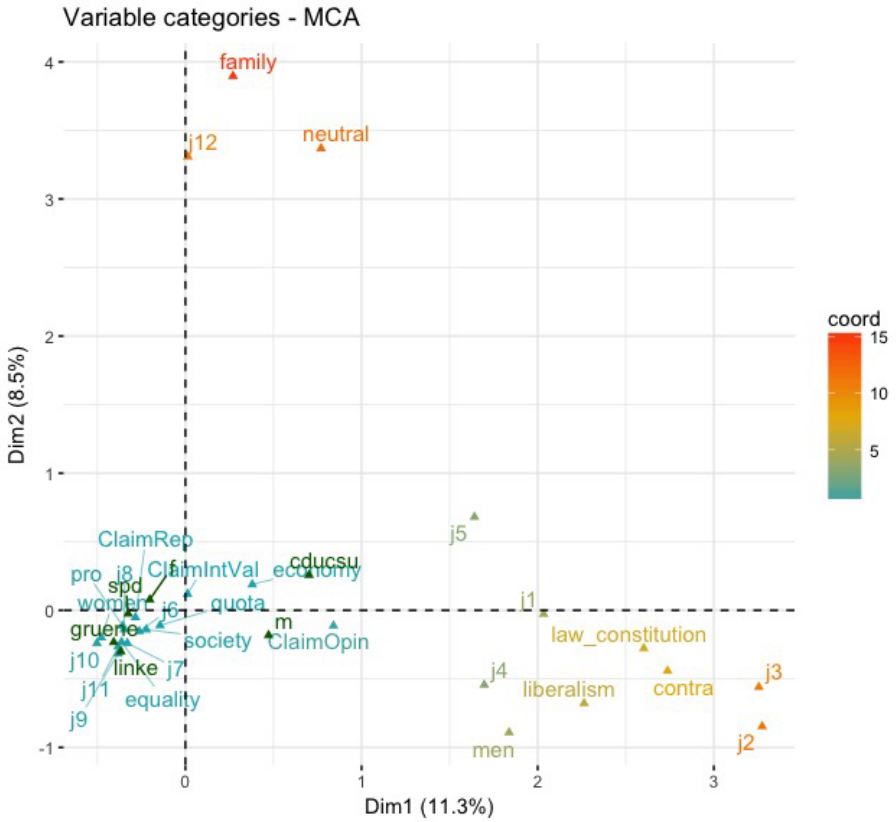


Figure 4. Relationships between the variable categories. Notes: The variable categories with similar profiles group together. The more they turn red the more distinct these categories represent the according dimension. Categories in opposed quadrants are negatively correlated. For the categorical variables, an ANOVA-model with one factor is done for each dimension. An F-test is derived to see whether the variable has an influence on the dimension and t-tests are done category by category. We can see if the coordinates of the individuals of the sub-population defined by one category are significant.

men (t = 0.27, p ≤ .001) and in the name of the law/constitution (t = 1.55, p ≤ .001). The stance is negative (t = 1.36, p ≤ .001) and the justification for this is mostly j1 (Quota is not an important topic, others are more pressing, t = 0.99, p ≤ .001), j2 (Quota discriminates against men, t = 1.99, p ≤ .001), j3 (Quota conflicts with constitution, t = 1.97, p ≤ .001) and j4 (Gender instead of qualification as the hiring criteria, t = 0.71, p ≤ .001). The type of claim closest to this group is the *proclamation* (t = 0.52, p ≤ .001). Supplementary variables associated with this dimension are *CDU* (Christian Democrats) (t = 0.65, p ≤ .001) and *male* (t = 0.27, p ≤ .001), which means these sort of claims can be attributed to male MPs from the CDU party.

In the space of negative x-coordinates, we find claims with a positive stance (pro introduction of the quota, t = −1.13, p ≤ .001) and women as constituency (t = −0.93, p ≤ .001), plus MPs who claim to speak in the name of equality (t = −0.84, p ≤ .001). Typically used justifications are j7 (Quota leads to more equality, fairness, t = −0.96, p = .003), j8 (Quota is overdue and a step in the right direction, t = −0.93, p ≤ .001), j9 (Quota is not sufficiently far-reaching, t = −0.96, p = .006), j10 (j10 = Quota leads to more qualification in board rooms, t = −1.05, p = .03) and j11 (Voluntary quota is not enough, the state needs to intervene, t = −0.96, p = .02). The type of claim most common in this group is the *claim of representation* (t = −0.39, p ≤ .001). Supplementary variables associated with this dimension are *Greens* (t = −0.25, p ≤ .001), *the Left* (t = −0.22, p = .016), *SPD* (t = −0.18, p ≤ .001) and *female* (t = 0.27, p ≤ .001). The first dimension is predominantly defined by the *stance* variable (R^2 = 0.88, p ≤ .001), opposing pro-claims in the name of women with contra-claims in the name of men.

Dimension 2: Here, claims with high and positive coordinates often refer to families as constituencies (t = 2.6, p ≤ .001), claims have a neutral stance (t = 1.7, p ≤ .001) and use justification j12 (Quota must not conflict with care work) (t = 2.28, p ≤ .001). Supplementary variables associated with this dimension are *CDU* (t = 0.23, p ≤ .001) and *female* (t = 0.09, p = .036), which means that female MPs from CDU are those making these kinds of claims. The second dimension, therefore, is predominantly defined by the variables *constituency* (R^2 = 0.69, p ≤ .001) and *justification* (R^2 = 0.75, p ≤ .001) and distinguishes neutral claims in the name of families from all the other categories.

Dimension 3: Variables with an over-average contribution to dimension 3 refer to the economy as constituency (t = 1.6, p ≤ .001), use justification j5 (Quota

damages the economy) ($t = 2.1$, $p \leq .001$) and j6 (Quota benefits the economy) ($t = 0.77$, $p \leq .001$) and *claims of interests and values* ($t = 0.41$, $p \leq .001$). Claims with positive coordinates on this dimension therefore tend to share the categories mentioned above. There are no supplementary variables significantly associated with this dimension, meaning that there is no difference regarding party and gender of MPs making these kinds of claims. The third dimension therefore is predominantly defined by the variables *constituency* ($R^2 = 0.73$, $p \leq .001$) and *justification* ($R^2 = 0.68$, $p \leq .001$) and distinguishes claims made in the name of economy from the rest.

3.4.2. Grouping Claims by Supplementary Variables

The supplementary variables gender and party of MP do not contribute to the plane construction, meaning they have not served to define the distance between the individual claims, but the categories of supplementary variables are eventually superimposed on the map. This makes it possible to investigate the influence of the gender and party of the claim-maker on their stance and claimed constituency. However, the two complementary variables are not considered for the validation analyses.

On all extracted dimensions with $p \leq .001$, *speaker party* is the supplementary variable which, in comparison with *gender*, best explains the differences between the claims with respect to their stance (pro, contra, neutral). It is also possible to explore the meaning of the dimensions by examining the content of the claims with extreme values on the respective dimensions, but this is out of scope for our work.

3.4.3. Hierarchical Clustering on Principal Components

A hierarchical clustering on principal components (HCPA) is performed using the Ward's criterion on the results of the MCA in order to identify clusters of similar claims and validate the structure found beforehand (Figure 5). The classification made on individuals due to the HCPA analysis reveals 3 clusters, corresponding to the stance variable categories pro, contra and neutral. Therefore, the HCPA results confirm the insights gained through the MCA.

3.5. Conclusion

The results of the MCA and the HCPA suggest three claim clusters: pro claims, contra claims and neutral claims. Thus, the representative claims made in the parliament can be mainly structured along those lines: claims made in favour of the quota claim to represent women and equality, use justifications j7 (quota leads to more equality, fairness), j8 (quota is overdue), j9 (quota is not far-reaching enough), j10 (quota leads to more qualifications in board rooms) and j11 (voluntary quota is not enough, the state needs to intervene) and are constructed with the claim-type *claim of representation*. Claim-makers tend to be female and either Greens, Lefts or SPD. Claims

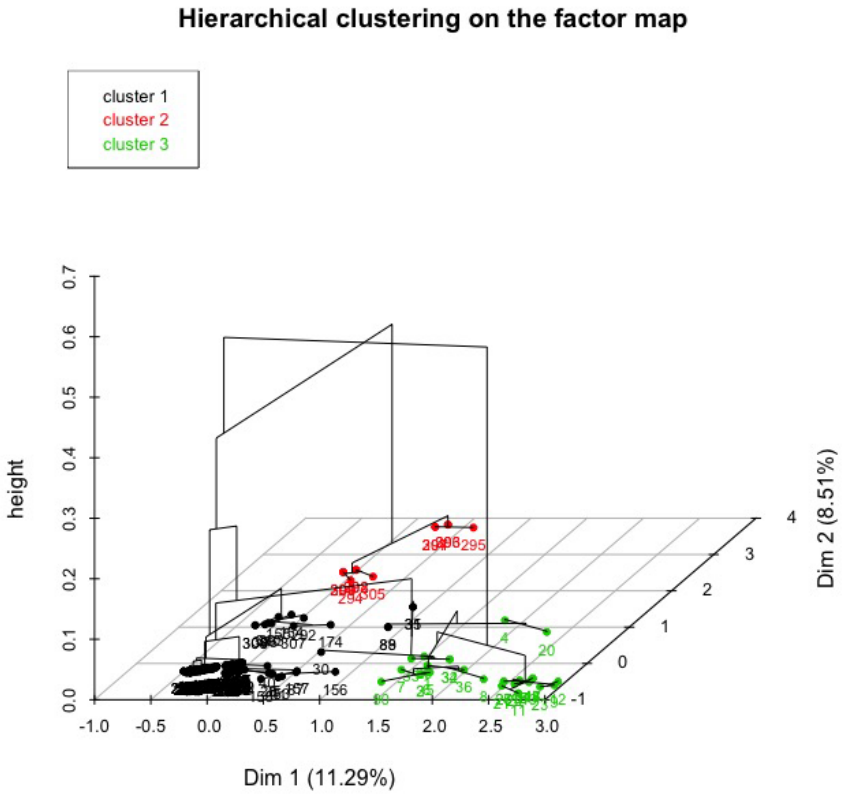


Figure 5. The dendrogram resulting from the HCPA analysis suggests a 3 clusters solution; claims are coloured according to the clusters they belong to: pro (black), contra (green) and neutral (red).

with a neutral stance regarding the quota claim to represent families, usually stressing that a quota needs to be compatible with family politics and care work. Claim-makers are usually female CDU MPs. Claims opposing the introduction of the quota are claiming to represent men and the law/constitution, use justifications j1 (quota is not an important topic, others are more pressing), j2 (quota discriminates against men), j3 (quota conflicts with constitution) and j4 (gender instead of qualification as the hiring criteria) and are constructed as *proclamation*. Claim-makers are mostly male and from CDU.

Considering that the main aspect for the differentiation between the claim-types is the claimed linkage between claim-maker and constituency (c.f., Guasti & Geissel, 2019), it appears interesting that for claims opposing the quota, oftentimes a linkage is not constructed. When claim-makers endorse the quota, they usually construct a linkage. Further research on this phenomenon is necessary and could provide new insights regarding the relationship between the represented and the representative.

We also found that party-alignment plays a more important role than gender when it comes to the stance of the MP towards the quota, which is in line with recent research (Espírito-Santo, Freire, & Serra-Silva, 2018).

MCA proved to be a suitable tool for structuring and quantifying the extracted claims. The underlying estimated structure of the debate resulting from the MCA aligns with common knowledge regarding the polarization of the debate, the different arguments and stances of the respective parties. Therefore, it seems to provide methodological face validity. Consequently, an application of this method to a case which has been less investigated seems promising.

4. Reception of the Claim: Empirical Analysis 2

4.1. Data Collection and Variables

We collected all tweets between 2013 and 2017 containing at least one of the German terms for "women's quota", "gender quota" or "Flexi-quota". We also collected the user profile information of people who posted the tweets. These profiles contain metadata including their username and occasionally their real name and/or location. We extrapolated the gender of the users, using the genderize.io API. Furthermore, we extracted both hashtags and mentions to infer topics of a tweet.

The variable *stance* was computed with the aid of a sentiment analysis (Hutto & Gilbert, 2014; Rill et al., 2012). Sentiment analysis is a way to automatically measure opinion in texts on the basis of single or multiple words which express a judgement (Taboada, Brooke, Tofiloski, Voll, & Stede, 2011). The terms are assigned a value between −1 (highly negative) and 1 (highly positive), e.g., "love" has a value of 0.82, while "not good" has a value of −0.63 (Rill et al., 2012). This results in an average sentiment per tweet, ranging from −1 to 1.

For the variable *justification*, we randomly picked 500 tweets and manually coded the justifications used. Of those, we selected meaningful 2-skip-2-grams. 2-skip-2-grams are combinations of each single word of a sentence paired with another single word within a 3-word vicinity of the initial word (e.g., "Men are being discriminated against" has the 2-skip-2-gram "men, discriminated"). Then we extracted the hashtags from the tweets. The combination of 2-skip-2-grams or hashtags with the sentiment led to the annotation of the justification. If, for example, the hashtag "*#economy*" was combined with a positive sentiment, then this led to the annotation of justification 6. If the sentiment was negative, this led to justification 5.

4.2. Descriptives

Our data collection comprised 53,807 tweets. For 18,731 Twitter users in our dataset, we were able to annotate the gender based on the first names. For the remaining part, an assumption was not possible as they used a pseudonym or did not declare their first name. For further analyses, we kept only the users for which we could estimate the gender. These 12,287 (65.6%) users accounted for 20,079 tweets.

We also checked for a regional bias. We were able to extract the location of 6,578 (35.12%) users. We found that the three most frequent states people tweeted from are the three German city states. These also have the youngest population (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2017), suggesting our data is slightly biased towards a younger audience. Manual coding of the 500 tweets resulted in 1549 2-skip-2-grams, which yielded 195 relevant bigrams we used for further analyses.

4.3. Recognition of Parliamentary Claims on Twitter

4.3.1. Recognition I: Temporal Trend

A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between the amount of tweets about the quota and the amount of claims in the parliament, showing that there is a strong, positive correlation between the two variables, ($r = 0.754$, CI[0.55, 0.87], $p < 0.001$). The line-chart in Figure 6 summarizes the results, showing that as the debate in the parliament became more vivid, people also tweeted more about the topic and the other way round.

4.3.2. Recognition II: Interaction on Twitter

Figure 7 shows the interaction between people talking about the women's quota on Twitter. Women are displayed as green nodes, men as yellow nodes and MPs as red nodes. If a user A mentions user B, we draw a directed edge from A to B. Strongly connected clusters containing German MPs suggest that MPs are directly engaged with the Twitter users that were included in our analysis.

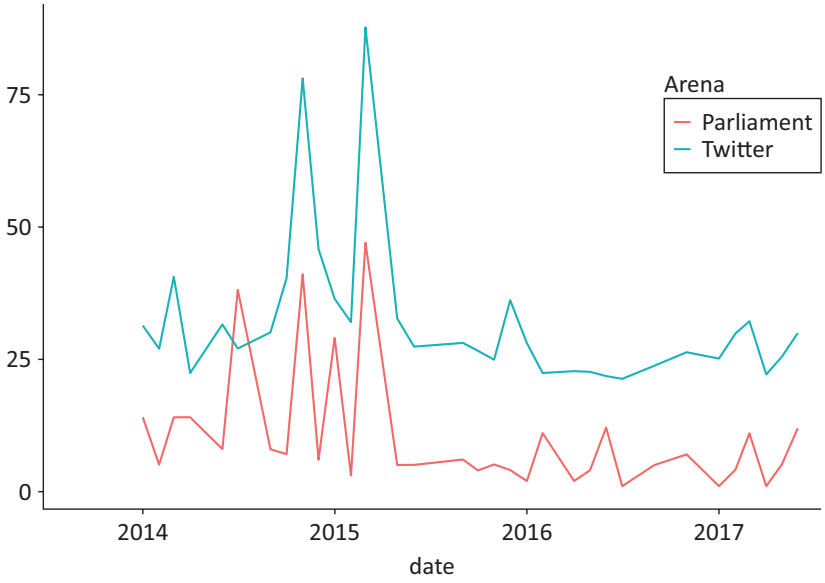


Figure 6. Recognition as count of claims in parliament and tweets about the quota.

We find that users are clustered in two large groups, ignoring small sub groups that are not connected to the largest graph. The number of male and female users is balanced. Figure 8 shows the larger group that includes several MPs with Manuela Schwesig (SPD), Heiko Maas (SPD) and Katrin Göring-Eckardt (Greens) as central points of gravity, who were heavily involved in public discussion about the women's quota.

Overall, the time correlation as well as the Twitter network-graph suggest that the parliamentary debate and the Twitter debate about the introduction of the women's quota are clearly intertwined. Having members of parliament as central cluster nodes reinforces this impression. In consequence, it seems adequate to consider Twitter as an appropriate social media platform to assess the validation of the claims by the claimed constituency.

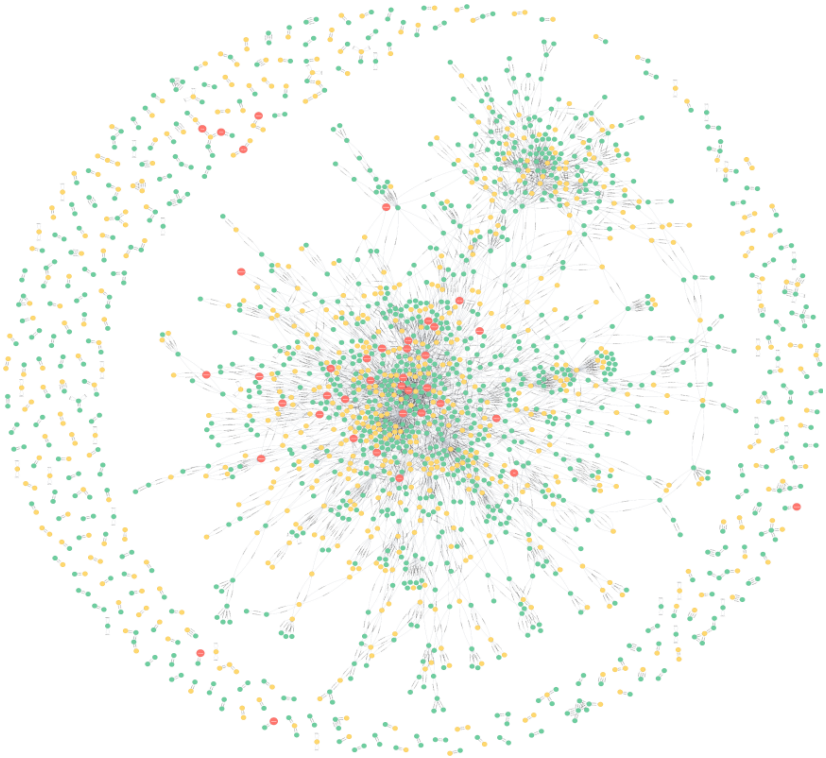


Figure 7. The dots represent Twitter users (female in yellow, male in green) and MPs (red) tweeting about the women's quota. Lines between the dots represent communication in the form of messages directed from one dot to another. The MPs appear to be central in the Twitter debate about the quota and interact with the audience.

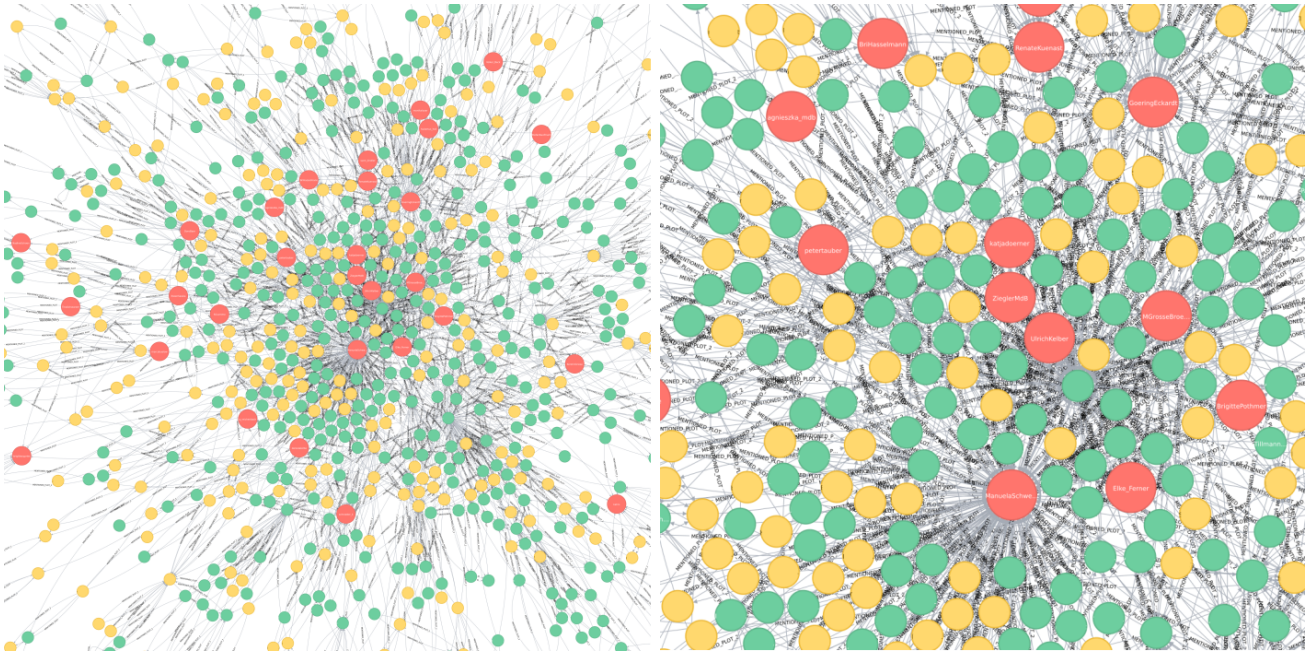


Figure 8. Central cluster of users tweeting about women's quota: MPs in red, female Twitter users in yellow, male Twitter users in green.

4.4. Validation of Parliamentary Claims on Twitter

About 70% of tweets held a neutral sentiment. Extremely positive or negative tweets were scarce. The difference between tweets created by male or female users was insignificant with Cramér's V of $\phi = 0.034$ and $\chi^2 < .001$ for tweets with a negative sentiment, $\chi^2 < .001$ for neutral sentiment tweets and $\chi^2 < .001$ for tweets with a positive sentiment. This shows that considering only the sentiment of a tweet, irrespective of the justification, is not sufficient to say that men oppose and women support the quota.

We then conducted a binary logistic regression with the Twitter users' gender as the dichotomous criterion variable (1 = female, 0 = male) and the justification the Twitter users mentioned for their stance towards the quota as predictor variable. The contrast specified was a sum contrast, which means that the intercept of the model is the Grand Mean. For the 12 justifications, 0 indicates the absence and 1 the presence of the justification in a tweet. The betas represent the change in log odds of that justification being used by a woman instead of a man (Table 3).

The logistic regression model was significant with a χ^2 of 14.8 (p = .002). The model explained 19% of variance (Nagelkerke's R^2) in the gender of Twitter users.

Significant (alpha 5%) are j3 (Quota conflicts with constitution, b = −3.26, p < 0.001) and j4 (Gender in-

Table 3. Binomial logistic regression results using gender as the criterion.

Predictor	beta	SE	Wald	p value	OR (exp)	Fit
Justification 1	−0.34	0.293	−1.149	0.250	0.714	
Justification 2	−0.65.	0.356	−1.827	0.067	0.521	
Justification 3	−3.26*	1.018	−3.199	0.001	0.038	
Justification 4	−1.05**	0.310	−3.381	0.000	0.350	
Justification 5	−1.95.	1.069	−1.820	0.068	0.142	
Justification 6	−0.13	0.517	−0.258	0.796	0.875	
Justification 7	−0.61.	0.344	−1.780	0.075	0.541	
Justification 8	−0.03	0.244	−0.122	0.902	0.970	
Justification 9	−0.33	0.363	−0.894	0.371	0.722	
Justification 10	0.22	0.223	0.333	0.739	1.250	
Justification 11	−0.45	−0.451	−0.935	0.349	0.636	
Justification 12	−0.41	−0.405	−1.088	0.276	0.666	
						Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.19$

Note: . indicates p < .10; * indicates p < .05; ** indicates p < .01.

stead of qualification, b = −1.05, p < .001) and on a 10% alpha level j2 (Quota discriminates against men, b = −0.65, p = 0.067) and j7 (Quota leads to more equality, b = −0.61, p = 0.075). These justifications, therefore, are more likely to be used by men.

The results indicate that gender is not decisive in determining the general stance towards the quota. Only sentiment in combination with the justification allows for differentiation. The negative stance towards the quota in combination with the justifications 2, 3 and 4 is in line with the respective claim-cluster, which therefore can be considered accepted. Justification 7, which is a positive justification, in combination with negative sentiment, is also significantly more likely to be used by men. This might seem counterintuitive, however, could be interpreted as sarcasm. This is very common in social media but difficult to assess. However, is should be taken into account that this analysis is just illustrative, aiming at outlining how such an analysis could be conducted.

5. Summary and Conclusion

Relying on the theory of Saward (2010) and Disch (2015), we studied political representation through the lens of representative claim-making. Our aim was to contribute to the literature by first clarifying empirically which constituencies were being constructed in the parliamentary debates on the introduction of the women's quota in German supervisory boards (2013–2017) and which justifications were used to explain the respective stance towards the quota. By those means, we found three distinct claim-clusters. Then, we assessed if and how the claims made in the parliament were received and validated (accepted or rejected) by the audience on Twitter.

We ensured that it is adequate to consider Twitter users as audience for the claims made in the parliament by analysing the temporal course of the debate between October 2013–October 2017 in both arenas, parliament and Twitter, as well as the interconnection of members of the parliament and audience on Twitter with a social network analysis. We found that when the quota was discussed in the parliament, the number of tweets about the women's quota increased and vice versa. Furthermore, the German members of parliament and Twitter users of the general public frequently interacted with each other on Twitter when talking about the women's quota. On these grounds we could assume an audience on Twitter which received the claims.

We then analysed all of the German tweets on the quota. We conducted a sentiment analysis to calculate the stance towards the quota and deduced the respective justifications. Finally, the relationship between these justifications, the user's gender and the sentiment expressed towards the women's quota were examined using logistic regression analysis.

The results show that gender alone is not decisive in determining the general stance towards the quota. When it comes to opposing the quota, men are significantly more likely to use the justifications "Quota discriminates against men", "Quota conflicts with constitution" and "Gender instead of qualification as the hiring criteria" than women. This corresponds to one of the three claim-clusters, characterized by a negative stance towards the introduction of the women's quota, referring to men as their constituency and making use of the same justifications.

At first sight, this conveys the impression that the respective claims are accepted. Nonetheless, we found that in plain numbers, men do support the introduction of the quota more often than they oppose it. However, 37% of all men express negative sentiments towards the quota, compared to 23% of women. In the end, which sort of threshold ought to be applied here in order to decide whether these claims are now considered to be accepted or rejected? Is it just to say that the majority of men supports the quota, therefore the contra-claims voiced by men of the CDU are illegitimate?

The representative turn (Disch, 2015; Näsström, 2011, 2015; Urbinati & Warren, 2008) and most prominently Saward (2010) refrained from bounding democratic legitimacy to the traditional models of electoral accountability. Instead they put forward the idea of a non-institutionalized, more flexible view on representation by looking at representative claims, basing legitimacy on their validation. Saward states that the constituency is the ultimate judge of legitimacy and without even refuting this position, we empirically reached the point where we have to admit that this is not a sufficient directive. It becomes evident that this proposal has not been comprehensively conceptualized. A crucial gap in the concept remains to be resolved: claims cannot be validated without institutionalized agreements based on a societal consensus. We need to define a threshold for acceptance and by that ask: how much acceptance is enough? Is validation to be treated equivalently to a majority voting and therefore the CDU claims in this debate must be considered rejected? Or are CDU men legitimately speaking for those 40% of men (which equals about 20% of the population) who oppose the quota for the same reasons as CDU claims and therefore they, as a minority, are empowered to validate the CDU to represent them? It becomes clear that even if we accept the constituency (audience) as normative authority, common evaluation criteria we are building our framework on need to be negotiated. This in turn requires a normative assessment beyond that of the affected constituency and therefore beyond Saward's conceptualization of reception by constituency.

Acknowledgments

We thank the anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments and recommendations. All code and documentation is available at https://github.com/glaserL/representative-claims

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

References

Barberá, P., & Rivero, G. (2015). Understanding the political representativeness of Twitter users. *Social Science Computer Review*, *33*(6), 712–729.

De Wilde, P. (2013). Representative claims analysis: Theory meets method. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *20*(2), 278–294.

Di Franco, G. (2016). Multiple correspondence analysis: One only or several techniques? *Quality & Quantity*, *50*(3), 1299–1315.

Disch, L. (2011). Toward a mobilization conception of democratic representation. *American Political Science Review*, *105*(1), 100–114.

Disch, L. (2015). The "constructivist turn" in democratic representation: A normative dead-end? *Constellations*, *22*(4), 487–499.

Espírito-Santo, A., Freire, A., & Serra-Silva, S. (2018). Does women's descriptive representation matter for policy preferences? The role of political parties. *Party Politics*. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068818764011

Greenacre, M. J. (2017). *Correspondence analysis in practice* (3rd ed.). Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Guasti, P., & Geissel, B. (2019). Saward's concept of the representative claim revisited: An empirical perspective. *Politics and Governance*, *7*(3), 98–101.

Hassanpour, N. (2013). Tracking the semantics of politics: A case for online data research in political science. *Political Science & Politics*, *46*(2), 299–306.

Husson, F., Lê, S., & Pagès, J. (2017). *Exploratory multivariate analysis by example using R* (2nd ed.). Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Hutto, C. J., & Gilbert, E. (2014). VADER: A parsimonious rule-based model for sentiment analysis of social media text. In *Proceedings of the eighth international conference on weblogs and social media* (pp. 216–225). Ann Arbor, MI: ICWSM.

Jungherr, A., Schoen, H., & Jürgens, P. (2016). The mediation of politics through Twitter: An analysis of messages posted during the campaign for the German federal election 2013. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *21*(1), 50–68.

King, M. F., & Bruner, G. C. (2000). Social desirability bias: A neglected aspect of validity testing. *Psychology and Marketing*, *17*(2), 79–103.

Koopmans, R., & Statham, P. (1999). Political claims analysis: Integrating protest event and political discourse approaches. *Mobilization. International Journal of Research and Theory about Social Movements, Protest and Collective Behavior*, *4*(2), 203–221.

Kuyper, J. W. (2016). Systemic representation: Democracy, deliberation, and nonelectoral representatives. *American Political Science Review*, *110*(2), 308–324.

Mair, P. (2009). *Representative versus responsible government* (Working Paper No. 8). Cologne: Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies.

Näsström, S. (2011). Where is the representative turn going? *European Journal of Political Theory*, *10*(4), 501–510.

Näsström, S. (2015). Democratic representation beyond election. *Constellations*, *22*(1), 1–12.

O'Connor, B. (2010). From tweets to polls: Linking text sentiment to public opinion time series. In *Proceedings of the fourth conference on weblogs and social media* (pp. 122–129). Washington, DC: The AAAI Press.

Pitkin, H. F. (1967). *The concept of representation* (1st ed.). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Rencher, A. C., & Christensen, W. F. (2012). *Methods of multivariate analysis* (3rd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Rill, S., Adolph, S., Drescher, J., Reinel, D., Scheidt, J., Schütz, O., … Korfiatis, N. (2012). A phrase-based opinion list for the German language. In J. Jancsary (Ed.), *Proceedings of KONVENS 2012* (pp. 305–313). Vienna: ÖGAI.

Saward, M. (2006). The representative claim. *Contemporary Political Theory*, *5*(3), 297–318.

Saward, M. (2010). *The representative claim* (1st ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Statistisches Bundesamt. (2017). *Statistisches Jahrbuch Deutschland 2017* [Annual Abstract of Statistics]. Wiesbaden: Statistisches Bundesamt.

Taboada, M., Brooke, J., Tofiloski, M., Voll, K., & Stede, M. (2011). Lexicon-based methods for sentiment analysis. *Computational Linguistics*, *37*(2), 267–307.

Tumasjan, A., Sprenger, T. O., Sandner, P. G., & Welpe, I. M. (2010). Predicting elections with Twitter: What 140 characters reveal about political sentiment. In *Proceedings of the fourth conference on weblogs and social media* (pp. 178–185). Washington, DC: The AAAI Press.

Urbinati, N., & Warren, M. E. (2008). The concept of representation in contemporary democratic theory. *Annual Review of Political Science*, *11*(1), 387–412.

Van Biezen, I. (2014). The end of party democracy as we know it? A tribute to Peter Mair. *Irish Political Studies*, *29*(2), 177–193.

Van Biezen, I., Mair, P., & Poguntke, T. (2012). Going, going,…gone? The decline of party membership in contemporary Europe. *European Journal of Political Research*, *51*(1), 24–56.

Young, I. M. (2002). *Inclusion and democracy* (1st ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

About the Authors

Viola Joschko studied Psychology and Political Science at the University of Frankfurt. Her research interests involve applied statistics and the use of novel methodologies in social sciences. She was a research assistant in the DFG/ANR-funded project "(New) Political Representative Claims: A Global View (France, Germany, Brazil, China, India)", aiming to investigate and understand the variety of representative claims emerging around the world.

Luis Glaser is a Graduate Student in Cognitive Systems at Potsdam University and studied Computer Science and Political Science at the Goethe University Frankfurt. He is a Student Assistant at the Applied Computational Linguistics Lab at the Goethe University Frankfurt. His current main interests are NLP, reinforcement learning and discourse relations.

COGITATIO

Politics and Governance (ISSN: 2183–2463)
2019, Volume 7, Issue 3, Pages 152–164
DOI: 10.17645/pag.v7i3.2143

Article

Claims of Misrepresentation: A Comparison of Germany and Brazil

Petra Guasti [1,*] and Debora Rezende de Almeida [2]

[1] Research Unit Democratic Innovations, Goethe University Frankfurt, 60323 Frankfurt am Main, Germany; E-Mail: guasti@soz.uni-frankfurt.de
[2] Political Science Institute, University of Brasília, 70910-900 Brasília, Brazil; E-Mail: deboraalmeida@unb.br

* Corresponding author

Submitted: 30 March 2019 | Accepted: 8 July 2019 | Published: 24 September 2019

Abstract
The system of representative democracy is under considerable strain. Its institutions are struggling to maintain legitimacy, and its elected representatives are failing to keep their monopoly on (formal) political representation. An emerging multitude of (new) claim makers contests the authority of elected representatives as well as the functioning of the existing system of representative democracy by alleging misrepresentation. In this article, we identify a significant shortcoming in Saward's claims-making approach; specifically, we argue that it offers little direction in addressing misrepresentation. We distinguish between claims of representation and claims of misrepresentation, and show how the latter can fulfill one, two or all three of the following functions: (1) they appeal to an enemy/antagonist (strategy), (2) identify causes of misrepresentation related to policies, politics, and polity (persuasion), and (3) claim to create a new linkage to "the people", sometimes present themselves as new representatives (reframing). To test this proposed framework, we compare claims of misrepresentation in Brazil made by civil society groups (before and during the presidential impeachment between 2014 and 2016) and in Germany (focusing on the parliamentarians of the Alternative for Germany during the first six months of mandate). Our results suggest that claims of misrepresentation are not intrinsically democratic or undemocratic, but are instead ambiguous, have different manifestations and disparate impacts on the representative system. Our article contributes to the conceptual development of the claims approach and to further understanding several critical and current challenges to representative democracy.

Keywords
Brazil; democracy; Germany; misrepresentation; populism; representation; representative claims

Issue
This article is part of the issue "Rethinking Representation: Representative Claims in Global Perspective", edited by Petra Guasti (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany) and Brigitte Geissel (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany).

1. Introduction

Since the late 1990s, the concept of political representation has made a comeback, and has returned to the fore of democratic theory. Two contemporary political problems have driven the revival of representation, which go to the core of the standard account of representative democracy based on the centrality of elections as authorization and accountability mechanisms. First, the growing sense of crisis of representative democracy related to the decrease of trust in political elites and institutions along with the disengagement with electoral democracy. Second, contemporary politics is no longer confined to the halls of parliaments. Representative institutions around the world are being contested by an emerging multitude of (new) actors claiming to represent non-territorial issues (e.g., globalization, climate change, and identities). Interest groups contribute to redefining both the constituencies and the representatives (cf. Saward, 2008).

These political developments have inspired theorists to question the polarity between representation

and democracy, and the exclusivity of elections as the main source of legitimacy (Mansbridge, 2003; Plotke, 1997; Rehfeld, 2006). Representation is no longer an alternative to direct democracy, but enables the continuous participation—even if indirectly—and the inclusion of citizens during the political processes (Urbinati, 2006). Furthermore, the notion that interests and identities are endogenous to representative politics and constructed by electoral and non-electoral, formal and informal representatives, is key to the "representative turn" in democratic theory. The representative turn embraces different vocabularies and analytical-theoretical proposals (Saward, 2010; Vieira, 2017).

This article contributes to the development of the representative claims approach by focusing on the performative and constructivist aspects of representation. We follow Saward and define representation as a practice performed by claims, which may be expressed through a variety of sites, processes, and actors (Saward, 2006, 2010). In this performance, makers present themselves or others as speaking, embodying, symbolizing an idea or image (referent) of the constituency (object) and offered claims to an audience. Saward's approach allows us to analyze competing and different claim-makers: Marine Le Pen speaking 'in the name of the people' and Emmanuel Macron seeking to be 'the president of all the people of France' in the 2017 French Presidential elections. It also allows us to study claims by non-elected claim makers—such as students demanding action on climate change in March 2019 ("If you do not act like adults, we will"), or US students demanding gun control in March 2018 ("We are the change").

However, Saward's (2010) focus on positive claims offers little direction in addressing negative claims or claims of misrepresentation, which have become even more relevant in contemporary politics. The only two references to misrepresentation treat it as a consequence of malfunctioning of the representative system; or as unavoidable due to the incompleteness of political representation. We argue instead that claims of misrepresentation are constitutive of the claims-making process. They express not only the constituencies' dissatisfaction, but also can serve as part of a strategy and political style intended to discredit opponents and thereby to persuade the audience. As such, claims of misrepresentation have the potential to specifically affect the political system, and in particular to deepen the democratic deficit and cultivate political crisis (Moffitt, 2016; Urbinati, 2019).

To unpack claims of misrepresentation, we build on contributions from the literature on political crisis and populism, and use them to further develop the performative understanding of representative claims (Saward, 2017). Unpolitical discourses represent forms of counter-democracy to monitor and control representatives (Rosanvallon, 2008). Counter-democracy can engender negative effects and deepen the representative gap by simultaneously undermining the discourses of elected representatives and stressing the role of alternative claim makers, using the audience as an alternative form of 'legitimacy' (Urbinati, 2006, 2010). In the context of such growing spectacularization of politics, representatives tend to adopt discourses oriented *toward specific* audiences in order to gain support (Moffitt, 2016). Claims of course must tap into familiar frameworks to be compelling (Saward, 2010). Democratic crisis and misrepresentation have a strong appeal in the contemporary social and cultural context, and serve as an example of a familiar framework. The literature on populism highlights anti-political, anti-party, and anti-establishment discourses and strategies, which enable us to discuss the challenges that claims of misrepresentation present to representative democracy (Hartleb, 2015; Kaltwasser, 2014; Schedler, 1996).

We seek to disentangle the claims of misrepresentation, and to identify the claimants. Specifically, we unpack how claims of misrepresentation are strategically constructed to void the existing linkage between representatives and the constituency, to delegitimize political opponents and to create a new, direct linkage by dividing the world into friends and enemies (cf. Buštíková & Guasti, 2019). We focus on the variety of causes identified by claimants in order to appeal to the audience, and how they construct new linkages to solve the problem, sometimes presenting themselves as new representatives. Student climate activists illustrate this phenomenon: they claim that lack of action on climate change by elected representatives is endangering their future: "We are missing our (school) lessons, so that we can teach you one." Second, students claim that solutions to climate change are known, and there is no reason for politicians not to act other than the lack of political will, self-interest or moral corruption of the politicians (and 'adults' as a whole). Third, the students perform representation, casting themselves as the new representatives: "Hey adults, we will take it from here", forming a new constituency—future voters.

We adopt a comparative approach to assessing this framework. Focusing both on the Global North and the Global South provides significant variation in representative claims made by different actors in different arenas (cf. De Wilde, 2019), and also allows us to identify patterns and themes across different political contexts. Among the potential claimants that have exploited claims of misrepresentation, we choose civil society representatives that participate intensely in public debate and mobilization during the Brazilian presidential impeachment (2014–2016), and representatives of the Alternative for Germany (AfD) during the first six months of their mandates in the German Parliament (2017–2018). These debates focus on different substantial issues, take place among different actors (elected/non-elected), within different sites (electoral and non-electoral arena; online and face-to-face debate), appeal to different constituencies and propose different solutions.

Notwithstanding the many differences between the cases under study, both have experienced similar moments of political rupture to the existing system, and an increasing rejection of the political establishment and status quo. The majority of claims of misrepresentation present new political demands, while challenging the legitimacy and authority of the elected representatives regarding what they do (policies), how they do it (politics) and for whom they do it (polity). However, differences remain in the emphasis that the actors give to the types of causes of misrepresentation in each country. In this article, we do not seek to explain the causes of the 'misrepresentation' but rather to reflect on contemporary challenges to representative democracy by producing a novel framework for the analysis of (claims of) misrepresentation.

The remainder of the article proceed as follows. The first section presents the theoretical framework, starting from the representative and constructivist turn in democratic theory. After presenting the claims-making approach, we highlight some limitations in Saward's account and propose a new direction to analyze the claims of misrepresentation. The second section explains the methodological orientation and techniques. The third and fourth sections present the Brazilian and German claims of misrepresentation, based on different sources of data and political contexts. Finally, we draw some conclusions regarding the similarities and differences between the cases, and discuss the effects of negative claims on democratic representation.

2. What Type of Claims? Performance and the Challenges of Democratic Representation

The growing tensions between representation and democracy in the rapidly changing political context have led to a significant revival in the study of representation—the 'representative turn' in democratic theory—that questions the level of importance that elections play in representation, and proposes the inclusion of others forms of non-electoral representation (Mansbridge, 2003; Näsström, 2015; Plotke, 1997; Rehfeld, 2006; Vieira, 2017). Representation is constructive. It generates knowledge, enables the capacity to share insight and to resolve conflicts (Plotke, 1997, p. 31). As such, democratic politics is partially constituted through representation. The main aim of the constructivist approach to representation is to open up (theoretically) new ways of thinking about the relationship between representation and democracy. For example, it expands participation in representative forms, and enhances communication by the combination of political judgement and will of the people (Plotke, 1997; Urbinati, 2006). In addition to the reform of representative government, more and more special-interest groups, civil society organizations, and social movements are responsible for diversifying political representation and questioning the boundaries between formal and informal representations. To empirically examine democratic mechanisms, we need to think about the concept of representation as constructed by actors in a political arena (Mansbridge, 2003; Saward, 2006; Schmitter, 2009).

In this scenario, Saward's concept of representative claim has been proven extremely valuable, inviting us to focus on dynamics of representation rather than on forms of representation, and on what representation does rather than what it is (Saward, 2010, p. 4). In this approach, interests are not merely present, but they are themselves 'made' through representative politics, and this 'requires' concentration on the performative dimension and inbuilt flexibility of the concept of representation. As an event or series of events, representation is performed through claims (Saward, 2010, p. 36). This allows us to pay attention to a wide array of potential claim-makers, such as the actors in the electoral and party field; self-authorized representatives in individual and collective level, such as civil society organizations, NGOs, social movements and interest groups, delegated representatives and experts.

More than claiming, representatives need to show what they are doing in the sense that framing, staging, and acting are necessary to construct and negotiate collectivity (Vieira, 2017, p. 13). Performance is therefore integral to representing, and visualized from three key features:

(1) Emphasis on the constitutive character of political representation—refers to German *darstellen*—every act of representation includes the element of picturing. The representative (subject) becomes a representative by portraying himself/herself as such, or by being portrayed by the maker—which may be the same person—to the constituency (object) (Saward, 2010, pp. 47–48). A successful claim might or might not make a persuasive argument, but it must have a particular resonance—often by using existing and recognizable frameworks (frames);
(2) What is represented (the object of the claim) is the idea of the represented (Saward, 2010, p. 36); claim-makers construct verbal and visual images of their constituencies—and claim to put different 'ideas' of the represented into play (referent), which are always partial and opened up for contestation;
(3) Representation is neither bad nor good, in principle, but needs to be "read back" by the constituency/object and audience, responsible for judging the (legitimacy of) representative claim. This is the theatrical element of the performative aspect—representation through claims only works if claims are acknowledged by the audience (acceptance, rejection, engagement).

There is growing criticisms of this approach. It focuses on the destabilization of the traditional distinction between

participatory and representative politics, the distinction among the elements of constructivist processes, and the normative insufficiencies of constructivism to assess political representation as democratic (Almeida, 2018; De Wilde, 2013; Disch, 2015; Näsström, 2015, p. 507).

In this article, we argue that claims of misrepresentation are constitutive to the process of claim-making. The inclusion of negative claims as representative's performance, as a strategy of persuasion and reframing of the political discourse, is necessary to understand the varied effects of this political style. The recognition of negative claims as part of the process of representation—acting, staging, and framing—can illuminate how the role of makers becomes prominent, and claims are affected by audiences. We show that this audience effect goes beyond the mutual and democratic influence envisaged by Saward, since the receptiveness of the audience to negative claims can influence the performance of representatives.

Misrepresentation has always been part of the history of representation. The claims of misrepresentation are ever-present—in partisan conflicts expressed through rival discourses created to discredit and deceit the opponent or the public—and have always played a role in modern political representation (Disch, 2011). Moreover, as the notion of inclusion depends on what is excluded, so Pitkin's definition of representation depends on the inverse understanding of what is *not* represented. Misrepresentation is inevitable, even when we represent ourselves (Alcoff, 1991). Thus, the theory of representation needs to develop categories to understand the dynamics of misrepresentation, especially when they are strategically explored by (populist) actors to discredit their opponents, the system and representative democracy as a whole.

Until now, the emergence of claim makers asserting misrepresentation has been associated with the malfunctioning of representative democracy (Saward, 2010). There is a disagreement about their impact on the political system. Pierre Rosanvallon sees the gap between democratic society (abstract) and democratic sovereignty (personified as will) as a 'constitutive aporia'—the necessary distance between the figuration of reality and reality itself (Rosanvallon, 2008). The incomplete character of representation in the figuration of the people opens up spaces for the democratic contest—expressed by claims of misrepresentation (Saward, 2006, 2010, 2017). For Rosanvallon (2008), the exercise of counter-politics is an essential part of modern democracy and complementary to representative democracy. There are many aspiring political parties and advocacy groups seeking to challenge the status quo to accuse representatives or other advocacy groups of not representing their constituency. Although negative power is unpolitical in its forms, it is not anti-political in its outcome (Taggart, 2018; Urbinati, 2010, p. 70).

Contrary to Rosanvallon, Urbinati (2010) suggests that unpolitical expressions generate dispassionate judgment that can have both positive and negative effects on representative democracy. The positive effect is the potential for revitalization; the negative effect is the risk of bypassing the legitimate authority of citizens' suffrage (Urbinati, 2010, p. 75). Although Urbinati (2019) favors openness to contestation instead of interruption and containment of the democratic practices, she is skeptical about the growing openness of spaces for criticism of the representative government, which establishes cloven and negative citizenship with little room for exercising equal political power.

The emphasis on performance exalts the role of the speaker (maker/subject) and derives legitimacy from appeal/acceptability. On the one hand, it reinforces inequality in the process of claim-making, since the good performer has more chance to attract an audience, and people are subjects of opinions, not will. On the other hand, claims become audience-dependent, impacting how they are framed and for which purpose.

Thus, it is essential to analyze the effect of audiences. Some scholars have highlighted the impact of audience attention in shaping the public debate (De Wilde, 2019; Michailidou & Trenz, 2013; Moffitt, 2016). Studying populist leaders, Moffitt (2016, p. 47) differentiates between the audiences that populist leaders seek to rely on. Therefore, representation is not only *for* an audience (those who should receive and evaluate the image of them offered by the subjects), but also oriented *to* an audience. Politics has become more stylized, spectacular and mediatized, a point made years ago by Manin (1997), requiring claims more appealing to audiences, including their constituents, but also the government, donors, and journalists (De Wilde, 2019).

Political representation is audience-driven, which means that claims are constructed based on the filter of the audience. In Saward's performative understanding of representation, representatives must shape-shift their performance constantly to convincing the audience (Saward, 2014). However, considering only positive claims, Saward leaves unaddressed the issue of incentives derived from the audience to produce negative claims, since framing discourses based on crisis and misrepresentation has a strong appeal and taps into familiar frameworks. Claim-makers are not only questioning misrepresentation because of its natural incompleteness and intention to improve representative performance, but also utilize crisis as a tool against the status quo (Moffitt, 2016). In other words, a crisis arises as a result of a mismatch between the political system and political demands (Ankersmit, 2002), and as a product of claims of misrepresentation that overemphasize the void between representatives and the represented in order to gain political attention.

To unpack claims of misrepresentation, we incorporate important insights about the risks involved in negative claims, such as increasing skepticism and extremism, from the literature on the interplay between populism and democracy. The incorporation of this specific

strain of populism literature enables us to conceptualize claims as rhetoric and strategically constructed by the makers to audiences (Hartleb, 2015; Kaltwasser, 2014), as communicative strategy of populist leaders and political style that is performed, enacted and embodied by actors across the world (Moffitt, 2016). Taggart's notion of 'unpolitics' as a populist confrontation with representative democracy, shows how populism plays up popular sovereignty while downplaying other democratic features such as rights and the rule of law (Taggart, 2018, p. 80). Populism represents a fundamental and profound ambivalence about polity, politics, and policies in a representative democracy.

The value and distinctions in this field study are vast, but to characterize positive and negative claim, we take three elements. First, it helps to understand how claimmakers construct themselves as challengers by identifying an antagonist, such as representative democracy, political elites, or immigrants (Moffitt, 2016); and by creating and exploiting a cleavage between us and them that is possible due to their identification as outsiders (Barr, 2009; Schedler, 1996). The definition of outsiders varies according to their position in the political system: e.g., from outside, such as civil society actors with renewed discourses of the political system, or from "inside", politicians that take advantage of their marginal location to criticize political establishment (Barr, 2009; Rodríguez Andrés, 2016). Claims of representation are always partial and open to the political contestation (Saward, 2010). Claims of misrepresentation, however, go further. Claims of misrepresentation exhibit characteristics of antagonistic conflicts, a claim to be universal, national, and sometimes hegemonic, with implications to think about (representative) democracy (Mouffe, 2013).

Second, in order to persuade others, claimants present causes and targets of misrepresentation: representative democracy and the political system (polity), politics (established parties, and/or establishment) or policies (cf. Hartleb, 2015). While in the actual political discourse, these categories are overlapping, it is crucial to conceptually distinguish what is being contested in order to understand how claims of misrepresentation affect representative democracy. Anti-establishment politics present the crisis as a diagnosis, and its cure is less in a change of policies, and more in the field of politics—changes in personnel, accountability and citizen participation (Barr, 2009, p. 37; Buštíková & Guasti, 2019). The challenges to the polity are profound, as populism revels in its transgression of existing norms and the repudiation of representative politics as a process for resolving conflict (cf. Taggart, 2018, p. 81).

We argue that more empirical research is needed to grasp the variety of claimed 'causes' of misrepresentation and distinct claims of representation. We argue that claims of misrepresentation are often a precursor to claims of representation: claimants use the claim of misrepresentation to eradicate the existing (formal) linkage between rival representative and the constituency, in order to posit themselves as the 'true' representative. Thus, to fully understand the claim of representation in the time of growing populism, we ought to also focus on the claim of misrepresentation.

Third, as claims of misrepresentation are often a precursor to positive claims or discourses, it invokes crisis to mobilize support and demand immediate action (cf. Moffitt, 2016; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2011). The solutions to the problem of misrepresentation include the removal of the opponent or enemy, new types of representatives and participatory politics, adopting a more direct linkage between (populist) leaders and the people (Barr, 2009; Buštíková & Guasti, 2019; Taggart, 2018). In our cases, the performative appeals to the ordinary man, the people or the general interest is not always followed by an explicit demand of an alternative representative or even by the creation of a populist leader (cf. Buštíková & Guasti, 2019). Instead, the role of claim makers becomes prominent, and claimants are 'only' discrediting the existing policies and politics, including forms and subjects of representation (De Wilde, 2013).

In summary, we define the claim of misrepresentation as claim maker presents new demands by disputing the existence of a linkage between established representative and the claimed constituency (1: strategy), by identifying a cause of misrepresentation attacking existing policies, politics, and/or polity (2: persuasion): and, sometimes, by establishing itself as the new representative or proposing another solution (3: reframing).

The majority of claims of misrepresentation both present new political demands, while challenging the legitimacy and authority of the elected representatives regarding what they do (policies), how they do it (politics) and for whom they do it (polity). Claims of misrepresentation are ambiguous, rather than intrinsically democratic (Rosanvallon, 2008) or adversarial to democracy (Urbinati, 2010). They are present in the right and left spectrum, and can be democratic or undemocratic, inclusionary or exclusionary (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2011; Taggart, 2018).

Focusing on claims of misrepresentation opens up new possibilities to analyze representation, while maintaining the performative understanding that representative claims are constructed to persuade and produce an effect on the audience (Saward, 2017). It is essential to point out that there are not only cooperative but also competitive dynamics that can distinctly affect the political system (De Wilde, 2013).

3. Operationalization of the Cases and Methodological Remarks

3.1. Case Selection and Comparability

Our analysis aims to test the generalizability of the concept—the "claim of misrepresentation' (Bunce, 1998, p. 206)—by focusing on two singular events that represent ruptures of representative democracy. Testing the

applicability of our concept in the Global North and the Global South enables us to highlight the comparability of the challenges facing representative democracies, to observe variation in representative claims—positive and negative—and to offer claims of misrepresentation as a useful analytical concept. We do not focus on the effects of these ruptures, the reasons why claims of misrepresentation arise, their salience or impact.

In many ways, our cases could not be more different. Germany is an established democracy in the Global North and Brazil is a transition country in the Global South. We focus on two types of actors, elected representatives and self-selected civil society representatives. Our arenas are the parliament during plenary sessions and online fora. We seek a deeper understanding of the moments of rupture in which (populist) insurgents question the legitimacy of the existing order along three dimensions: policies, politics, and the polity.

Following Sartori (1991) and Tarrow (2010), we believe there is a value in comparing very different cases as an 'intermediary step in theory building' (Tarrow, 2010, p. 245). Testing the extent to which in two very different countries and arenas, different actors use claims of misrepresentation to challenge the legitimacy of the existing political order enables us to both test and refine our theory (cf. Collier, 1991; Lieberman, 2005). Despite the differences in our cases, we find similar claims portraying misrepresentation, identifying the subject misrepresenting, and (sometimes) proposing solutions.

Finally, despite the distinctions between claims made in Facebook pages, which presuppose the possibility of edition and deletion, compared to speeches in parliament, it is necessary to consider two features. First, a qualitative analysis of claims has shown that plenary parliamentary debates—expected to be superior considering the opportunity to speak for minutes—sometimes feature lower quality of representative claims than mass media (De Wilde, 2019). Second, considering our framework that claims are audience-driven, even discourses in parliaments are performed and theatrically constructed to appeal to the audience.

3.2. Operationalization and Method

We are comparing the presence of claims of misrepresentation in Brazilian debates, before and during the presidential impeachment between 2014 and 2016, with those in Germany during the first six months of the AfD in the German Parliament 2017 and 2018. We find a high number of claims of misrepresentation, a significant degree of variation in the combination of positive and negative claims, and varying degrees of focus on policies, politics, and polity. Both teams used three comparable categories to analyze the material:

1) Claim makers (who speaks);
2) Subject (who acts/does not act/should act on behalf of the claimed constituency);
3) Claimed Constituency (on whose behalf claim-maker to speak).

The Brazilian case was analyzed using indirect discourses made by five civil society organizations pro-impeachment in their Facebook Fan Pages. The data was collected between 17 December 2016 and 5 December 2017, using Netvizz Facebook's API. The posts collected from each civil society group were organized as a .csv database. The data encompasses the claims of misrepresentation presented from 1 November 2014, shortly after the re-election of Dilma Rousseff, until 31 August 2016, when the impeachment trial took place at the Brazilian Senate. We have collected posts made by the managers of the public pages, in a total of 45,721 posts, and performed a sample of 10% of this material on R Statistical Software, sorted by year and month of creation. The content of posts was analyzed using Atlas.ti Software. The unit of analysis corresponding to each message posted, including images, videos, or links to external pages. A total number of 2,970 claims were identified from 4,574 posts published on Facebook's pages. Claims of misrepresentation were the most dominant, making up 87.9% (2,611) of the overall claims' sample. Claims of representation made up 12.1% (359). A total number of 1,524 posts[1] were classified as non-claims, concerned with daily activities carried out by the organizations, and calls for mobilizations in favor of impeachment.

The German case was analyzed using 34 full shorthand stenoprotocols from the plenary meetings of the German Bundestag between 24 October 2017 and 18 May 2018 (first six months of the current term, the first in which AfD is present). A total number of 2,259 claims were identified from statements by MPs of the AfD. Both formal and informal speech was analyzed (formal speech is an address by an MP, while informal speech is an interjection by an MP during the address of an MP from opposing party). Claims of misrepresentation made up 66.4% (1,500) of the overall sample (2,259 claims) and were the most dominant form of claim-making by the MPs of the AfD for Germany (claims of misrepresentation were dominant category both among formal and informal forms of speech). Claims of representation made up 6.7% of the sample (151). Excel and Atlas.ti were utilized to analyze the claims.

3.3. Unit of Analysis and Application

Our unit of analysis corresponds to one claim—usually a sentence or part of a sentence identified by the coder. Concerning Facebook pages, one post equals one sentence. In German parliamentary debate, one discourse may contain various sentences. A claim of misrepresen-

[1] Some posts were not identified because their content was no longer available on the Internet. In the Revoltados ONLINE (ROL) Facebook Page, 235 posts were excluded from the analysis because they neither contained the text nor the link to the content.

tation may contain all or some of the elements, identification of an antagonist or a subject that misrepresent, a cause of polity, politics, and policy related to different themes, and a solution. We will use an example to make this clear—one from Brazil and one from Germany (see Table 1).

4. Brazilian Case of Impeachment: Claims of Misrepresentation without Representation?

The impeachment of the Brazilian president, Dilma Rousseff, is an interesting phenomenon to study claims of misrepresentation in a scenario of political representation and party crisis. Since her re-election in 2014, Dilma Rousseff had been targeted with many criticisms. After a period of instability, loss of control of the political dynamics in Congress and several impeachment's requests in parliament, Eduardo Cunha, then-Speaker of the House, initiated the impeachment proceedings in December 2015, which concluded on 31 August 2016. Many factors explain this decision and the Brazilian political crisis. Here, we focus on the strategy of some civil organizations that, in claiming the misrepresentation of the president and her political party, have contributed to the impeachment and the intensification of an unprecedented political crisis.

Despite the large number of civil society organizations involved in the impeachment campaign, other studies (Dias, 2017; Tatagiba, Trindade, & Teixeira, 2015) and news articles indicate that five groups have led the mobilization process: Movimento Brasil Livre (MBL), NasRuas Movement, Movimento Endireita Brasil (MEB), Vem Pra Rua Brasil (VPR) and Revoltados ONLINE (ROL). The sample analyzed contains 1,282 MBL messages, 1,036 from NasRuas, 443 from MEB, 395 from VPR, and 1,418 from ROL.

In a short period, pro-impeachment groups made a variety of claims, based on an intensified presence in the Facebook pages.[2] They are located in the right-wing spectrum, defend economic liberalism, and consider themselves non-partisan organizations. Despite similarities, their ideological profiles vary. MBL was founded by young leaders in 2013, while NasRuas (established in 2011) and ROL (established in 2000)[3] are run by liberal professionals previously engaged in anti-corruption groups. MEB, on the other hand, was created in 2006 by entrepreneurs and liberal professionals to include right-wing people in the political system. Some of them have already disputed elections or worked in elected administrations (Dias, 2017). VPR was founded by entrepreneurs, who mobilized in the face of Rousseff's impending re-election in 2014, as they tried to prevent it. All pro-impeachment groups are outsider groups anxious for change, but they do not share the same political project or strategies to accomplish their goals (cf. Dias, 2017; Rodríguez Andrés, 2016). During the impeachment campaign, some—NasRuas and ROL—claimed more conservative and aggressive agendas. Other, such as VPR, could be identified as center-right. Nonetheless, all groups took the growing public rejection of the results of the economy, corruption scandals, government's actions or disputes over moral issues—to position themselves as relevant political actors pursuing their agenda.

The pro-impeachment claim-makers systematized dissatisfactions and proposed narratives that strategically void the existing linkage between the president and the people, and blame Dilma Rousseff and her government (608 claims), Workers' Party—PT (561), the ex-president Luís Inácio Lula da Silva (434), and other politicians from PT and other parties (286) for the political crisis. Some claims do not present a clear subject of misrepresentation, and are only related to a cause. Among the claims of misrepresentation (2,611), 70.5% were focused on disagreements on politics, 19.9% on policies and 7.4% on the polity. A distinct type of claim has emerged in the online sphere, namely, the misrepresentation of mass media (2.2%), especially "Folha de São Paulo" and "Rede Globo"[4], due to the organizations' evaluation of the poor quality of journalistic coverage of the political crisis. Concerning the claims of representation (359), 58.8% were focused on proposals on politics, 34.8% on policies, and 6.4% on the polity.

During two years of intense political turmoil, these organizations explored the crisis and appealed to politics as the leading cause of misrepresentation. However, the rejection of politics does not affect the whole establishment or all political parties. The problem is specific to the PT—that was 14 years in power of the Federal government—and its leaders. Corruption, theft or conspiracy represents 24% of the universe of 2,611 claims of misrepresentation. The second cause of misrepresentation on politics is also related to corruption: the politicians' attempt to discredit Car Wash Investigation (an ongoing criminal investigation by the Federal Policy of Brazil), delay or obstruct justice (10%). They also appeal to ideological justification and embrace conspiracy theories. This simplifies the complex reality, such as the need to oppose socialist, communist, Bolivarian or leftist ideas (9%), and persuades the public about the inevitability of impeachment (Taggart, 2018).

The performative process of persuasion assumes different forms of accusation and disputed narratives regarding policies. On the one hand, they blame the government's policies for the economic crisis, growth of the unemployment rate and raising taxes, especially MBL (6.7% of claims of misrepresentation). On the other, or-

[2] They have different presence on Facebook considering the number of followers of the Page in the time of data collection: MBL (1,729.352 likes); ROL (2,116); VPR (1,476.453); NasRuas (366,287), and MEB (649,759).

[3] ROL is the oldest group, and it was created to combat pedophilia on the internet. After the huge wave of protests in 2013, the group engaged in the anti-corruption campaign.

[4] Folha de São Paulo is one of the country's main newspaper with the largest circulation and influence, and Rede Globo is the largest media conglomerate in Brazil and one of the largest media company in the world.

Table 1. Examples of analyzed claims of misrepresentation in Germany and Brazil.

Category	Germany		Brazil	
	Quotation	Explanation	Quotation	Explanation
Policy disagreement on policy.	Since there is no German government, I am convinced that first; we have to shape foreign policy in our interest because no one else does it for us.	The first part insinuates that the current government does not represent German interests; the second part is disagreement on policy.	Dilma deliberately destroyed the economy and created the crisis to continue in power. Dilma should move out (MBL).	Dilma does not represent. There is a claim of misrepresentation on policy—economy—and a solution has been presented: Dilma out.
	Therefore, I urge you to finally make sound programs for the people in this country as well as for the migrants.	Disagreement on policy, but simultaneously claim of misrepresentation—government parties represent neither (German) citizens, nor the migrants.	There is a serious socioeconomic imbalance in Brazil, after more than a decade of a government of misleading propaganda. The unemployment appears as the most powerful indicative of this. Every minute seven workers are fired in Brazil….We are under the domination of the same cadre of corrupt and incompetent politicians (NasRuas).	Corrupt politicians do not represent. There is a claim of misrepresentation on economic issues—unemployment. Simultaneously, they claim misrepresentation on politics—misleading and corrupt politicians. No solution or redefinition is clearly articulated.
Politics disagreement with estab-lished/ruling parties on how politics is run.	You have said a lot about yourself about your parliamentary and democratic habits.	Attacking MP of an established political party, MP of AfD insinuates established parties are undemocratic.	Does anyone have any doubts that the bandit Lula looted Brazil through the BNDES (National Bank of Development)? Billions have been diverted on behalf of the political power project of his party. #SomostodosMoro; #ImpeachmentJá (NasRuas).	Lula does not represent. He is treated as an enemy, a thug. Corruption is the cause of misrepresentation. As a solution, they support Judge Sergio Moro—from Car Wash Investigation—and demand Dilma's impeachment.
	They (citizens) were even lied to; to mask the enormity of uncontrolled immigration, the myth of skilled labor immigration became one of the founding lies of the old parties shortly after the opening of the border.	An accusation of the established parties of lying to citizens (and also disputing government policy).	We are in mourning, because of so much that the Workers'' Party (PT) has stolen from Petrobrás. #PTOUT! (MEB)	Workers' Party does not represent. The cause is corruption in Petrobrás. The solution is the removal of PT.

Table 1. (Cont.) Examples of analyzed claims of misrepresentation in Germany and Brazil.

Category	Germany		Brazil	
	Quotation	Explanation	Quotation	Explanation
Polity disagreement on the definition of polity.	An incredible lack of solidarity with your people!	Insinuates that social democrats do not represent the people.	The people have not been heard. By 52 votes to 27, Edson Fachin was approved by the Senate to be the next Minister of the Federal Supreme Court. It will be a long 18 years that we will have to endure the partisan rigging of the Judiciary (ROL).	Senate does not represent. The cause is related to the lack of legitimacy of ministers' choice, and the lack of autonomy of the Supreme Court. No solution.
	An activating family policy, as demanded by us, would be a priority instead of exchanging our people.	The real speech segment is a mixture of more elements—a claim of representation ('activating family policy' claim of misrepresentation on polity—the government is exchanging its citizens by migrants).	The National Congress of Workers' Party is a freak, with a Bolivarian mentality. We cannot let they transform us in a new Venezuela. Say not to communism (VPR).	Workers'' Party does not represent. The polity misrepresentation is related to their intention to change the Brazilian political system to communism.

Notes: Movimento Brasil Livre (MBL); Movimento Endireita Brasil (MEB); Revoltados ONLINE (ROL); Vem Pra Rua Brasil (VPR). Source: Analysis of the German and Brazilian cases.

ganizations claimed the tenets of economic liberalism, including the defense of privatization and entrepreneurship, and the expansion of individual freedom (4.4%). Other problems raised are related to education, health, and public security policies.

In respect to polity, the primary disagreement was about the constitutionality and legality of Dilma's impeachment (8.1%). Although impeachment is previewed legally, during the process, there were juridical doubts if Dilma Rousseff had committed a crime of responsibility. Pro-impeachment organizations intensely defended the legality of impeachment and its use as a solution for the political crisis. The Federal Supreme Court was also a target (4%). According to the posts on Facebook, their decisions violated the division of powers and politically interfered in impeachment procedures.

The organizations sought primarily to encourage rejection of the political scenario rather than presenting positive claims. The constituencies are only implicit and appear through the discourses that embody the desires of Brazilian people or the nation. Among the total of claims of misrepresentation and representation (2,970)[5], Dilma's impeachment was the *sine qua non* condition for the cure of misrepresentation (30%), followed by arguments of "PT Out" (21%) and the demand for Lula's imprisonment (11.4%). One notable difference to Saward's original representative claims framework is that although they are both presenting political demands and making assertions about something—there are positive claims about politics and policies (Castiglione, 2017), they are not portraying themselves as representatives or rarely pointing out someone as the representative. They are makers without subjects and indicate other representatives only to blame and discredit them (cf. De Wilde, 2013). The judge Sérgio Moro was the most cited as the potential representative (92 claims of 359 claims of representation), especially by NasRuas and ROL, and Michel Temer (33), the vice-president who took office after Dilma withdrawal of the post in May 2016 during impeachment procedures, was mentioned by NasRuas and MBL.

Although it is challenging, and it is not our intention to evaluate the impact of these discourses on political crisis, it is possible to affirm that these organizations act as a trigger to the crisis. They created a discursive political environment of complete misrepresentation of the politics, with clear identification of a specific enemy—the PT, and its leaders, that have contributed to the result of impeachment. They were also responsible for mobilizing

[5] The percentage of solutions was calculated among the total of claims (positive and negative) since in distinct posts it was common to share hashtags or requests for impeachment, #PTOUT, and Lula's imprisonment.

Brazilian people against the government. Among the total of 1,524 of Facebook posts identified as non-claims, 1,030 (67.6%) were related to call for mobilizations, that led millions of people on the street to protest between November 2014 and August 2016. Finally, although they initially do not present themselves as alternative representatives, the claims of misrepresentation were precursors of positive claims presented post impeachment. After all, their strategic appeal to the audience regarding the need for an immediate change of the political landscape was crucial for gaining future electoral support. The five organizations launched or support candidates in 2016 municipal elections, and their main leaders participated in 2018 national elections. NasRuas, MBL, and ROL elected federal deputies[6], who were among the main articulators of the organizations' Facebook pages.

5. German Case AfD in the German Bundestag: The Combination of Claims of Representation and Claims of Misrepresentation

In this case study, we have focused on claims raised by the AfD in its first six months in the German Bundestag (24 October 2017–18 May 2018). AfD is the first radical right political party, which successfully entered the German Parliament since WWII (Arzheimer & Berning, 2019). Its main appeal is anti-establishment (politics), anti-immigration (policy), and anti-Muslim (polity). We coded 3,464 pages of documents, identified 2,259 claims, of which 1,500 (66.4%) were claims of misrepresentation and 6.7% (151) claims of representation. Of the claims of misrepresentation, approximately 50% focused on disagreements on policy, 30% were focused on disagreements on politics and approximately 20% on the polity.

Regarding policy, AfD focused on several issues: migration, monetary policy, and defense policy. The rejection of migration policy dominated all AfD speeches. In every formal speech by an AfD member of parliament (MP) regardless of the main topic, rejection of migration policy of the Merkel government was included. The criticism of the monetary policy was the second most frequent policy disagreement and represented the expression of AfD's Euroscepticism. It portrays the Markel's government as overreaching and setting the German taxpayers up for failure. It also portrays the German government as giving up sovereignty both to the European Commission and to France. The third most common policy issues criticized by the AfD were foreign military mission (and as a proxy NATO). In these claims of misrepresentation, AfD is critical towards the government—accusing it of underfunding the military, betraying German soldiers and risking their lives by sending them to foreign missions underequipped. On a more general level, this critique questions the meaning of military missions as such and calls for the focus on internal security instead.

The AfD portrays refugees as a security risk, as a drain on state resources, and more generally as a threat to German culture and the way of life. The refugees are often reduced to Muslims and portrayed as a particular danger to German women (especially following medialized cases of attacks on women by migrants). After an attack of a young Muslim on a Jewish pupil in Berlin in Spring 2018, AfD called for a discussion on antisemitism in the German Bundestag. In this one-hour debate *Aktuelle Stunde* ('Current Issues') refugees and Muslims (used interchangeably) were portrayed as the primary source of anti-Semitism in contemporary Germany. The AfD, which itself has strong anti-Semitic elements, portrayed itself as the defenders of the Jews in Germany against the danger posed by anti-Semitic refugees.

In respect to policy, it is important to say, that as a small oppositional party, AfD's actual impact on policy is non-existent. Other parties support none of the AfD proposals, and AfD rarely supports bills or resolutions by other political parties. An exception is the support of the AfD neoliberal wing for some proposals by the oppositional (and neoliberal) Free Democratic Party (FDP). However, given that both AfD and FDP are in opposition, none of their proposals or resolutions won a majority vote on the floor of the German Parliament.

The fact that other parties consistently refuse AfD proposals fuels the claims of misrepresentation on politics. Here the AfD portrays itself as the 'true voice of the people' and accuses the established parties (*Altparteien*) of betraying the will of the people. Interestingly, most critique does not target the government, Chancellor Angela Merkel, or her Christian Democratic Union (CDU/CSU). Instead, the primary target of the claims of misrepresentation are the Social Democrats (SPD).

AfD accuses SPD of betraying the workers and portrays itself as the 'new workers party.' This is a strategic move on the part of the AfD—a strategy based on the calculation that future votes for AfD will come from the current SPD voters' disenchantment with the SPD's shift towards the center and embrace of European integration and multiculturalism. In this way, the AfD seeks to exploit the gap between the SPD elite (more cosmopolitan) and the electorate (more communitarian). The AfD does not see similar potential for voter switch on the center-right, thus the focus of accusations of misrepresentation on politics on the SPD or target all parties as a whole—thus portraying the current system as corrupt (morally not economically).

The claims of misrepresentation focused on polity represent attempts at redefining who constitutes polity (exclusion of naturalized citizens, holders of double citizenship) and the rejection of values (gender equality, religious freedom, integration). In these claims, the AfD portrays itself as the representative of the nation, national identity, sovereignty, German language, German history, German constitution, traditions, justice, democracy (in

[6] The MBL has changed its political strategy since 2016. They have launched 46 candidates, elected six municipal representatives in different Brazilian cities and states, and elected in 2018 three federal deputies. See Movimento Brasil Livre (n.d.).

particular direct democracy), fairness human/women's rights, defender of religious freedom (for Jews and Christians, not for Muslims). It accuses other parties of betraying these norms, value, and constituencies.

In terms of constituency, we identified an internal split within the AfD: (a) neoliberal group of MPs focused on criticism of Euro, the EU, European monetary policies, presents itself as the representative of German taxpayers, German enterprises, (and normative schemes such as nation, national sovereignty, national identity); (b) a group of MPs who see AfD as the new worker's party and sees itself as the representative of specific groups which the Merkel rule "betrayed" and "left behind" these are most often soldiers, ordinary working German families, small farmers, small and medium enterprises, car owners. There is a deep division within the AfD on economic policy, and the (only) issue that unifies these two factions within the AfD is the rejection of the refugees and the Merkel refugee policy. Given the significant differences in AfD support in the old (former Federal Republic of Germany) and the new German states (former German Democratic Republic), it is interesting that the underdogs (those left behind) are rarely portrayed as the 'East Germans.'

In respect to polity, some AfD MPs also embrace a conspiracy theory that the migration policy is a plot by the establishment, which has lost the support of 'true Germans' to create new electorate by granting citizenship to migrants and refugees. This conspiracy theory has been circulating among the radical right in Germany for some time, but it is now presented on the floor of the German Parliament. This discourse strongly resonates with those of the white supremacists in the USA, who often chant 'you will not replace us' (alluding to minorities).

The AfD case shows a campaign strategically designed and directed to claim the misrepresentation of the people not only by the government, but by the establishment as a whole (both parties in power and the opposition—especially the Greens). The AfD discourse is populist and Eurosceptic. It combines both right-wing populism (portraying people as a nation, exclusionary) and left-wing populism (speaking on behalf of those 'left behind').

The strategy of the AfD is to present the diagnosis—the linkage between the established parties and 'the (German) people' is broken, because the establishment is morally and politically corrupt and misrepresents the people in terms of policies, politics, and polity; and the cure—to present itself as the new representative of the people. To do so, the AfD uses the claims of misrepresentation as a precursor to its claims of representation.

6. Conclusion

The representative turn in democratic theory has rapidly changed the way representation is defined and comprehended. Also, the recuperation of a constructivist dimension of representation presents in different traditions over time has generated three significant shifts (1) from political will to political judgment; (2) from constitutional to constitutive character of representation; and (3) from electoral to non-electoral representation. Michael Saward (2006, 2010, 2014), the most cited author in this redirection, alerts us to analyze representation based on its performative role, instead of on the static model based exclusively on elections.

Despite many advantages of the claim perspective, we argue that it does not address the negative claims or offer clear direction to assess them. To perform this task, we suggest to incorporate contributions from Rosanvallon (2008) and his evaluation on the positive effects of claims of misrepresentation—counter-politics; Urbinati's concern of the unpolitical (2010), and the populism literature on 'unpolitics'—the enemy, the appeal to the "people" and the presence or not of a positive claim (Taggart, 2018).

We consider claims of misrepresentation to be ambiguous regarding their effects on representative democracy, and strategically employing persuasion and performance—presenting critiques of policies, politics, and polity, in order to demand changes—and (in some cases) highlight the broken linkage between elected representatives and the people, and potentially to establish themselves as the new representatives.

We identify both similarities and differences between our two cases. The nature of our cases leads to different claim makers—in the German case, these are members of parliament for the AfD (the marginalized outsiders), in the Brazilian case, the makers vary (outsiders of the political system), and there is no indication of explicit subjects. As for objects, we find similarities—both cases show the populist division between the corrupt elite and the 'pure people' (cf. Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2011). The causes of the misrepresentation are the moral (German case) and both moral and financial (Brazilian case) corruption of the political establishment (cf. Taggart, 2018).

Claim makers present new demands, but also challenge existing policies, politics, and polity. However, the different actors and political contexts influence the primary focus in the misrepresentation of policies, in Germany, and politics, in Brazil. Both cases present a strong appeal to the political crisis to convince the audience, but have different ways to address the problems of misrepresentation.

While AfD performatively presents itself as the new representative of 'the people', pro-impeachment organizations are makers that construct neither the constituency, nor the subject. With respect to exclusionary versus the inclusionary character of the populist discourse, both cases can be described as exclusionary, in Brazil of specific political actors and parties, and Germany of Muslims and refugees (cf. Arzheimer & Berning, 2019; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2011). The effect of these claims of misrepresentation will largely depend on

the reaction of the established parties—if they will focus on the message, not on the messenger—addressing the grievances of the people, rather than demonizing the ascending political opponents.

Acknowledgments

We thank the DFG and ANR for their kind funding of the research project "(New) Political Representative Claims: A Global View (France, Germany, Brazil, India, China)." We also thank the three anonymous reviewers for their comments and recommendations. The Brazilian, sample data used in this article were part of the Master Dissertation defended by Tayrine Dias in the Political Science Institute of the University of Brasilia. We are grateful to her for sharing her data, which was recoded and analyzed by the authors to understand claims of misrepresentation.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

References

Alcoff, L. (1991). The problem of speaking for others. *Cultural Critique*, *20*, 5–32.

Almeida, D. R. (2018). The constructivist turn in political representation and its challenges to democratic legitimacy: Lessons from participatory institutions in Brazil. *Representation*. https://doi.org/10.1080/00344893.2018.1551241

Ankersmit, F. (2002). *Political representation*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Arzheimer, K., & Berning, C. C. (2019). How the alternative for Germany (AfD) and their voters veered to the radical right, 2013–2017. *Electoral Studies*, *60*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2019.04.004

Barr, R. R. (2009). Populists, outsider, and anti-establishment politics. *Party Politics*, *15*(1), 29–48.

Bunce, V. (1998). Regional differences in democratization: The East versus the South. *Post-Soviet Affairs*, *14*(3), 187–211.

Buštíková, L., & Guasti, P. (2019). The state as a firm: Understanding the autocratic roots of technocratic populism. *East European Politics and Societies*, *33*(2), 302–330.

Castiglione, D. (2017). Outsider–insider's perspectives. *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, *43*(3), 292–293.

Collier, D. (1991). The comparative method: Two decades of change. In D. A. Rustow & K. P. Erickson (Eds.), *Comparative political dynamics* (pp. 7–31). New York, NY: Harper Collins.

De Wilde, P. (2013). Representative claims analysis: Theory meets method. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *20*(2), 278–294.

De Wilde, P. (2019). The quality of representative claims: Uncovering weakness in the defense of the liberal world. *Political Studies*, *1*(22), 1–22.

Dias, T. (2017). *É uma batalha de narrativas: Os enquadramentos de ação coletiva em torno do impeachment de Dilma Rousseff no Facebook* [It is a battle of narratives: The collective action frames around Dilma Rousseff's impeachment on Facebook] (Master dissertation). University of Brasília, Brasília, Brazil.

Disch, L. (2011). Toward a mobilization conception of democratic representation. *American Political Science Review*, *105*(1), 100–114.

Disch, L. (2015). The "constructivist turn" in democratic representation: A normative dead-end? *Constellations*, *22*(4), 487–499.

Hartleb, F. (2015). Here to stay: Anti-establishment parties in Europe. *European View*, *14*(1), 39–49.

Kaltwasser, C. R. (2014). The responses of populism to Dahl's democratic dilemmas. *Political Studies*, *62*(3), 470–487.

Lieberman, E. S. (2005). Nested analysis as a mixed-method strategy for comparative research. *American Political Science Review*, *99*(3), 435–452.

Manin, B. (1997). *The principles of representative government*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mansbridge, J. (2003). Rethinking representation. *American Political Science Review*, *97*(4), 515–528.

Michailidou, A., & Trenz, H. J. (2013) Mediatized representative politics in the European Union: Towards audience democracy? *Journal of European Public Policy*, *20*(2), 260–277.

Moffitt, B. (2016). *The global rise of populism: Performance, political style, and representation*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Mouffe, C. (2013). *Agonistics: Thinking the world politically*. London: Verso.

Movimento Brasil Livre. (n.d.). Parlamentares. *Movimento Brasil Livre*. Retrieved from http://mbl.org.br/parlamentares

Mudde, C., & Kaltwasser, C. R. (2011). *Voices of the peoples: Populism in Europe and Latin America compared*. South Bend, IN: Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies.

Näsström, S. (2015). Democratic representation beyond election. *Constellations*, *22*(1), 1–12.

Plotke, D. (1997). Representation is democracy. *Constellations*, *4*(1), 19–34.

Rehfeld, A. (2006). Towards a general theory of political representation. *The Journal of Politics*, *68*(1), 1–21.

Rodríguez Andrés, R. (2016). El ascenso de los candidatos outsiders como consecuencia de las nuevas formas de comunicación política y la desafección ciudadana [The rise of outsider candidates as a consequence of new forms of political communication and citizen disaffection]. *Comunicación y Hombre*, *12*, 73–95.

Rosanvallon, P. (2008). *Counter-democracy: Politics in an age of distrust* (Vol. 7). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sartori, G. (1991). Comparing and miscomparing. *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, *3*(3), 243–257.

Saward, M. (2006). The representative claim. *Contemporary Political Theory*, *5*(3), 297–318.
Saward, M. (2008). Representation and democracy: Revisions and possibilities. *Sociology Compass*, *2*(3), 1000–1013.
Saward, M. (2010). *The representative claim*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Saward, M. (2014). Shape-shifting representation. *American Political Science Review*, *108*(4), 723–736.
Saward, M. (2017). Agency, design, and 'slow democracy'. *Time & Society*, *26*(3), 362–383.
Schedler, A. (1996). Anti-political-establishment parties. *Party Politics*, *2*(3), 291–312.
Schmitter, P. C. (2009). Re-presenting representation. *Government and Opposition*, *44*(4), 476–490.
Taggart, P. (2018). Populism and 'unpolitics'. In G. Fitzi, J. Mackert, & B. S. Turner (Eds.), *Populism and the crisis of democracy. Volume 1: Concepts and theory* (pp. 79–87). New York, NY: Routledge.
Tarrow, S. (2010). The strategy of paired comparison: Toward a theory of practice. *Comparative Political Studies*, *43*(2), 230–259.
Tatagiba, L., Trindade, T., & Teixeira, A. C. C. (2015). Protestos à direita no Brasil (2007–2015) [Right-wing protests in Brazil]. In S. V. e Cruz, A. Kaysel, & G. Codas (Eds.), *Direita, volver! O retorno da direita e o ciclo político brasileiro* [The right returns! The return of the right-wing and the Brazilian political cycle] (pp. 197–212). São Paulo: Editora Fundação Perseu Abramo.
Urbinati, N. (2006). *Representative democracy: Principles and genealogy*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
Urbinati, N. (2010). Unpolitical democracy. *Political Theory*, *38*(1), 65–92.
Urbinati, N. (2019). Judgment alone: Cloven citizenship in the era of the Internet. In D. Castiglione & J. Pollak (Eds.), *Creating political presence: The new politics of democratic representation*. Chicago, IL, and London: The University of Chicago Press.
Vieira, M. (2017). *Reclaiming representation: Contemporary advances in the theory of political representation*. New York, NY: Routledge.

About the Authors

Petra Guasti is an Interim Professor at the Institute of Political Science, Goethe University Frankfurt (Democratic Innovations Unit). She was AY 2018/2019 Democracy Visiting Fellow at the Ash Centre for Democratic Governance and Innovation, Harvard Kennedy School. Her main research focus is democracy, more specifically the growing tension within the system of representative democracy in respect to its legitimacy. Her research appears among others in Democratization, Communist and Post-Communist Studies, European Political Science, East European Politics and Societies and Cultures and Politics and Governance.

Debora Rezende de Almeida is a Professor in the Institute of Political Science at the University of Brasília (Brazil). Her PhD dissertation, from Federal University of Minas Gerais, received the Honorable Mention from Capes in 2012 (Coordenação e Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior). She is the recipient of the 2016 Best Book Prize, awarded by the Brazilian Political Science Association, for her book *Representação Além das Eleições*. She has published articles on political representation theory and civil society participation in *Critical Policy Studies* and *Representation*, among others.

COGITATIO

Politics and Governance (ISSN: 2183–2463)
2019, Volume 7, Issue 3, Pages 165–178
DOI: 10.17645/pag.v7i3.2131

Article

The Radical Right versus the Media: from Media Critique to Claims of (Mis)Representation

Louise Knops [1,*] and Benjamin De Cleen [2]

[1] Department of Political Science, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, 1050 Brussels, Belgium; E-Mail: louise.knops@vub.be
[2] Department of Communication Studies, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, 1050 Brussels, Belgium;
E-Mail: benjamin.de.cleen@vub.be

* Corresponding author

Submitted: 29 March 2019 | Accepted: 6 May 2019 | Published: 24 September 2019

Abstract
Criticizing mainstream media for their 'lies' or 'fake news' has become a common political practice on the radical right. Further empirical research is needed to better understand the intricacies of these attacks on media, in particular for the way they relate to criticism of the political system as a whole and to matters of political representation. How do radical right actors construct a sense of political misrepresentation through their critique of media, and how does this allow them to make representative claims? This is what we explore in this article through a discourse analysis of the Flemish radical right youth movement Schild & Vrienden. Drawing inspiration from constructivist theories of representation, we explore the entanglement in empirical practice between two dimensions of representation: 1) between its literal meaning (as 'portrayal') and its political meaning (as standing or speaking for), and 2) between representation and misrepresentation. With our analysis, we shed light on the increasing politicization of the media as a non-electoral space of representation and misrepresentation, and on the role played by media criticism in the radical right's broader (meta)political strategies.

Keywords
discourse; media critique; misrepresentation; radical right; representative claims; Schild & Vrienden

Issue
This article is part of the issue "Rethinking representation: Representative claims in global perspective", edited by Petra Guasti (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany) and Brigitte Geissel (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany).

1. Introduction

Whilst there is nothing new about the radical right criticizing the media, such attacks have certainly gained visibility, especially since Donald Trump's campaign for the US presidency in 2016. Criticism of mainstream media can be heard across the political spectrum, but is particularly prominent on the extremes (where explicitly ideologically inspired alternative media also play a stronger role). It is nowhere as visible and as structural as on the radical right. Jibes from 'fake news media' to 'lying press', and accusations that the 'politically correct' and 'left-wing' media are 'enemies of the people' in cahoots with political elites are common currency on the radical right, from the US to Europe and well beyond. In Belgium, a Flemish radical right youth movement—*Schild & Vrienden* (*Shield and Friends*, S&V)—has recently made a noticeable entry in the political scene amongst others for its aggressive discourse on media and pretension to 'speak the truth' that the media are said to 'hide'.

Attacks on the 'lying press' are not merely denunciations of how media portray radical right leaders, movements, parties. They are also fundamental criticisms of how these media represent the world; of their portrayal of migration, Islam, the nation, but also of masculinity, femininity and the traditional family, to name just a few issues. Ultimately, these criticisms link up with the radical right's nativist claims to represent the nation, its con-

servative positioning as defenders of the social order and of traditional identities, and its populist claims to represent the 'ordinary people' or the 'silent majority'. Used by radical-right political parties as well as activists and movements, this media critique is part of a broader metapolitical and ideological struggle to question established truths and values and to undermine the credibility of mainstream media. As such, attacks on media have also become a key discursive tool that is mobilized by radical right actors to feed a much broader sense of resentment vis-à-vis the political as well as cultural establishment, ultimately reinforcing the feeling that 'we are not being represented'.

In the current context of a so-called 'crisis' of representation, further empirical research is therefore needed to better understand how media criticism enables radical right actors to construct a sense of political misrepresentation and profile themselves as representative actors. This is what we explore in this article through a discourse analysis of the Flemish radical right youth movement S&V. In particular, based on a discussion on the two meanings of (mis)representation—as (mis)portrayal and as political (mis)representation—we shed light on the increasing politicization of the media as a non-electoral space of representation and misrepresentation.

To theorize these connections, we first turn to constructivist theories of representation. With its focus on the performative dimension of representative claims, this literature provides us with the necessary conceptual tools to identify and analyze the different layers in the representative discourse of S&V. After this theoretical section, we turn to a brief thematic analysis to document the centrality of media in the discourse of S&V. We then conduct a detailed discourse analysis of the S&V discourse about media as found in text, audio and audio-visual content on the S&V public Facebook page. We conclude by providing a summary of our key findings and reflect on their broader implications for the study of the relation between the media, the radical right and democracy.

2. On Representation and Misrepresentation

2.1. The Meanings of (Political) Representation

As famously documented by Hanna Pitkin (1967), the word representation has multiple meanings; from its literal, etymological sense of 'making present again' (representation from the Latin word *repraesentare*) to its juridical-political meaning, referring here to the relationship between voters and their elected representatives.

As Michael Saward remarks, "from Rome to early modern times, there are overlapping notions of representation as symbolizing, resembling, portraying, standing for, acting for a collectivity, authorized and non-authorized portraying" (2010, p. 5). In his semantic analysis of the word, Yves Sintomer speaks of an "almost infinite multiplicity of uses" (2013, p. 14). Amongst the historical uses of 'representation', lies the idea of 'portrayal'; a picture or a painting represents someone or something which is not literally present. In contemporary society, media feature as a prominent provider of 'representations' (as portrayals) of individuals and groups.

As far as *political* representation is concerned, the dominant understanding of the word in Western Europe has been associated, since the 17th century, with electoral institutions; what Sintomer calls 'mandate-representation' (2013). Pitkin (1967) defines political representation by opposing a substantive dimension ("acting in the interest of the represented in a manner responsive to them") to the more descriptive and symbolic dimensions of representation ("standing for the represented by virtue of resemblance or symbolization"). More recently, the meaning of political representation has significantly evolved under the so-called constructivist turn (Saward, 2010). Amongst others, scholars have sought to address the "widespread sense of remoteness of elected politicians" and "provoke fresh thinking about what representation in politics is, and what it can be" (Saward, 2010, pp. 1–2). Political representation moved from the dominant mandate conception to a broader, all-encompassing idea of "creating political presence" (Castiglione & Pollack, 2019) that stretches beyond the realm of elections. Here, one dimension that sets electoral and non-electoral representation apart is the way in which people's preferences or choices are thought to be represented. In electoral representation, it is believed that citizens' choices are mostly expressed through votes. In non-electoral representation "they [i.e., citizens' choices] are seen as operating in more informal settings through voice" (Saward, 2019, p. 279). This suggests that a variety of actors—well beyond parliament and party politics—can be seen as representatives, or 'makers' of representative claims: social movements, civil society actors, trade-unions, but also grassroots initiatives and citizens themselves.

This constructivist approach to representation redefines the contours of what counts as 'political representation' in other ways. It highlights that representation—whether electoral or not—originates in a representative claim: a claim "to represent or to know what represents the interests of something or somebody", presented to an audience (Saward, 2010, p. 38). As such, this perspective draws attention to the highly performative aspects of representative claims: "the claim-making activity participates in the construction of represented groups and the representations (in a symbolic sense) of these groups" (Dutoya & Hayat, 2016, p. 2), an argument also central to, for example, Ernesto Laclau's much older discourse-theoretical work on, amongst others, populism (Laclau, 1977).

Drawing on Saward's terminology (Saward, 2010, p. 36), this means that the maker of a representative claim (this 'maker' may or may not be the 'subject' that is claimed to be a representative) contributes to the construction of the 'object' (the constituency or group that

is claimed to be represented by the 'subject') and to the *idea of* that 'object' (the idea of 'the people' for example)—what Saward calls 'a referent'. An important role is played here as well by the 'audience' that may receive, accept or reject the claims in and outside electoral cycles; this audience consists of the members of the group that is claimed to be represented but also of other groups of citizens and other actors (political competitors, media, etc.) who can accept, reject or ignore these claims. In this context, Eline Severs has stressed the importance of remaining attentive to the substantive core and relational dimension of representation, arguing that we need to "discern mere claims to 'speak for' the represented from those instances in which the perspectives of the represented are actually taken up" (Severs, 2012, p. 172). This distinction, as Severs argues, is highly contextual. Claims can indeed be implicit and explicit depending on the extent to which audiences' terms of reference or familiar frameworks overlap with that of the claim-maker.

As pointed out by Guasti and Almeida (2018), these non-electoral forms of representation are likely to emerge most strongly in moments of rupture between citizens and their elected representatives. This is commonly referred to as a 'crisis of representation', revolving around the general feeling that 'we are not represented'. From a constructivist point of view, this (feeling of) crisis is, itself, also (co-)constructed through claims of (mis)representation.

2.2. The Meanings of (Political) Misrepresentation

In the same way that representation harbours multiple meanings, misrepresentation too points to different notions. In its most literal sense, misrepresentation means "the action or offence of giving a false or misleading account of the nature of something" (Lexico, n.d.). This literal meaning is often mobilized politically by marginalized and disadvantaged groups (Akachar, 2018; Bull, 2005), to denounce the misrepresentations (as misportrayals) produced by dominant groups in an attempt to maintain their hegemonic status. This literal meaning has also been mobilized by actors who seek to construct a sense of victimization around groups that would not typically be considered as victims. Consider here for example the figure of 'the white man' constructed as a victim of mass-immigration and anti-white racism; a situation which, according to the radical right, is being *misrepresented* (distorted) by the politically correct media, as our analysis will show.

Misrepresentation has another—more strictly political—meaning, captured by the idea of *claims of misrepresentation*. As explained by Guasti and Almeida (2018), claims of misrepresentation are raised by actors challenging the monopoly of power by elected representatives. Such claims do not only challenge *elected* representatives, as illustrated by the populist argument that a corrupt or failing 'establishment'—consisting of politicians, but also intellectuals, artists and media—does not represent ordinary people. Claims of political misrepresentation have received significantly less attention in the constructivist literature. They deserve further investigation, however, because of the close connection between claims of misrepresentation and the broader sense of 'crisis' of representation. Indeed, from a constructivist point of view, actors claiming that 'we are not represented' may also contribute to the very crisis they claim to be the response to (Moffitt, 2015). Or to put it differently, claims of misrepresentation are not only symptoms of a 'crisis', they also discursively co-construct the crisis in question.

If political representation consists of claims that 'create political presence' (Castiglione & Pollack, 2019), we could expect that political misrepresentation may be invoked through claims that denounce the 'political absence' of a particular actor or voice in a debate, or the distortion of its real voice. This strongly echoes Saward's definition of wider interests and new voices' representative claims, i.e. claims that are "based on the fact that an important perspective within a debate is not being heard or voiced" (Saward, 2010, p. 98). This formulation at once signals the simultaneous occurrence of claims of misrepresentation and representative claims. Indeed, a claim of misrepresentation (of a group being not heard/voiced or represented incorrectly) almost inevitably implies (at least implicitly) a claim of representation. The actor claiming that a group is 'misrepresented', simultaneously claims a) to know the misrepresented group, b) to speak in the name of that group.

To summarize our theoretical argument, let us try to visualize the dimensions of (mis)representation along the meanings developed so far (see Table 1).

In our analysis, we will refer to two meanings of representation: its literal meaning (representation as portrayal) and its more strictly political meaning (representation as standing for or speaking for, that originates in a representative claim and creates 'political presence'). The same goes for misrepresentation; we look at its literal meaning (misrepresentation as misportrayal, which can be found most prominently in media criticism) and its political meaning (political mispresentation as *not* standing for, *not* speaking for, found in claims about 'political absence' or distortion). We seek to explore the connec-

Table 1. The two meanings of (mis)representation.

	Misrepresentation	Representation
(Mis)portrayal	[A]	[C]
(Not) standing for/speaking for	[B]	[D]

tions between these dimensions in an effort to better understand how a critique of misportrayals by the media [A] is connected to claims of political misrepresentation [B], and how these are connected to arguments about truthful portrayal [C] and representative claims in the stricter political sense [D].

3. Schild & Vrienden: Case Description

S&V describes itself as a 'metapolitical' movement; the term metapolitics refers here to the aim of achieving cultural-ideological hegemony, which surpasses the practices of party politics and is aimed at broader ideological shifts. The notion of 'metapolitics' has a long history dating back to German romantic nationalism (Viereck, 2003) and has been connected to the 'right-wing Gramscianism' of Alain de Benoist and the French Nouvelle Droite founded in the late 1960s. At the time, their aim was to use originally left-wing Gramscian theories of cultural hegemony in a right-wing attempt to change societal consensus (Bar-On, 2007; Maly, 2018c). In a similar move, under its own description as a 'metapolitical' movement', S&V strives to recover the 'Flemish youth's resilience' ; it refers to itself as the embodiment of a new 'counter-culture' that seeks to challenge the 'cultural marxism' inherited from May '68, of which the media are one of the flag bearers.

S&V is also a very particular mix of local and global elements. On the one hand, S&V draws on global developments which include the embracing of internet culture by younger generations of radical right activists (inspired by the US Alt.Right or the French *Génération Identitaire*). S&V's use of meme culture, references to Pepe the Frog, its slogan 'Make Vlaanderen Great Again' (in reference to Donald Trump's 2016 election slogan), the English subtitles of its videos all show its international embeddedness and attempts to reach a global radical right audience (Maly, 2018a, 2018b, 2018c). At the same time, S&V is a local phenomenon that is rooted in the history of Flemish nationalism and is closely associated with the (radical) right-wing tendencies of the so-called Flemish Movement. The choice of '*Schild & Vrienden*'[1] as a name and several of its key slogans (e.g., *Linkse Ratten, Rol uw Matten*, translated by S&V itself as 'Leftists Rats, get the fuck out'), evidence how it draws on traditional tropes and references of the Flemish nationalist radical right. Whilst S&V members have been involved in the right-wing Nieuw-Vlaamse Alliantie (New-Flemish Alliance, NVA) as well as in the radical right Vlaams Belang (VB), S&V leader Dries Van Langenhove's running in the 2019 federal elections for the radical right party VB seems to mark the encapsulation of the movement within the Flemish nationalist radical right (the VB did well in the elections and Van Langenhove is currently a representative for the VB in the Belgian Parliament as well as one of its most radical voices). Finally, this global-local entanglement is also apparent in S&V's media critique: The movement draws on global radical right themes (fake news, the lying press, cultural marxism, the politically correct journalistic elite) and at the same time on well-rehearsed narratives more specific to the Flemish radical right.

To understand S&V's rise to prominence and its contentious relation with media, one episode in the recent history of the movement bears particular significance. On 5 September 2018, the Flemish television broadcaster (VRT) aired a reportage in the programme *Pano* to reveal the 'true face' of S&V, showing, for example, how S&V members shared racist, anti-Semitic and sexist memes in their private chat groups. There were strong reactions to the content revealed in the reportage, including a judicial investigation[2] and the temporary suspension of S&V spokesperson Dries Van Langenhove from Ghent University. At the same time, the reportage strongly increased the visibility of S&V. Indeed, S&V and others on the radical right turned the Pano reportage into the perfect opportunity for collective victimization; arguing here that the 'leftist' public broadcaster had provided a dishonest portrayal of S&V and, through this misportrayal, had betrayed the entire 'Flemish people'.

4. Corpus and Method of Analysis

There are two main steps in our analysis. First of all, to get an idea of the relative importance and texture of S&V discourse about media, we performed a quantitative thematic analysis of the Facebook posts of the movement. Secondly, we performed a detailed discourse analysis of the media-related content to lay bare the connections between (mis)portrayal and political (mis)representation.

4.1. The Centrality of Media in S&V Discourse: Descriptive Thematic Analysis

The corpus for our quantitative thematic analysis consists of the content of S&V public Facebook page between 5 October 2017 (the creation of the public Facebook page) and 28 January 2019 (date of data extraction with Netvizz). Our final Facebook data set consists of 313 posts[3]. For each post, we also collected the related comments and meta-data (number of likes, shares, comments and reactions). We did not analyze the comments; our analysis being centered on the claims by S&V as an actor, rather than the individual reactions of S&V followers.

[1] This name refers to the 'Matins of Bruges' battle of 1302, a central historical reference in Flemish nationalist mythology. The name Schild and Vrienden comes from a battle cry of that period that was also used as a shibboleth to distinguish speakers of Flemish dialect from French speakers.

[2] At the time of writing, this judicial investigation is ongoing. The leader of the movement has been charged with the violation of Belgian laws on racism and holocaust denial, amongst others.

[3] Given the recent restrictions imposed on Facebook's API and the limitations of the application Netvizz, the figures presented in this section should not be considered as exhaustive and may present a small margin of error.

Based on a thematic analysis, we then identified the posts that refer to media explicitly (i.e., posts that mention media in general or a particular medium, in the form of an explicit denunciation or on a more informational basis). This amounted to 165 posts (53 % of total Facebook content)[4]. This confirms the centrality of media (at least in terms of frequency) in the discourse of S&V and the relevance of focusing on this theme in particular. Holt and Haller (2017, 2018) in their work on the far-right movement PEGIDA, also found that a large proportion of their discourse (around 40%) was explicitly devoted to media.

The high presence of media-related content also needs to be considered in the context of our period of analysis—one during which a major media-event occurred: the production of the controversial Pano documentary by VRT (as explained in our case description). Although we do not engage with the reception of the posts (the likes, comments, etc.) in our analysis, it is useful to briefly discuss the levels of engagement of the media-related posts as they evidence the popular and contentious character of the S&V critique of media on Facebook. The level of engagement of each post is calculated by adding the number of likes, comments, shares and reactions. The average level of engagement in the total Facebook corpus (the 313 posts) is 1228. When looking at the content that generated engagement rates above the average, we found a predominance of media content. For example, in the twenty posts that generated the highest engagement rates (from 2763 to 22631), twelve posts displayed explicit and elaborate attacks on media.

Within this corpus of 165 posts about media, we then identified the main themes. The overview below shows the posts' *central* themes; the posts having been coded in one theme-category only:

1) S&V representations in mainstream and alternative media (without any accusation of misportrayal) (53 posts);
2) S&V criticizes the media for 'misportrayals':
    2.1) social and political issues are misportrayed by the media (30 posts),
    2.2) S&V is misportrayed by the media (accusations of unfair 'framing' of the movement and its spokesperson) (24 posts).
3) S&V criticizes censorship by the media (content pulled off from the web, accounts blocked on social media) (25 posts);
4) S&V sets-up its own independent media channel (12 posts);
5) Other criticisms of media (e.g., of the functioning of media institutions, controversies around particular journalists or news-outlets) (9 posts);
6) Other media material (e.g., posts about the growing count of followers on Facebook, Instagram) (12 posts).

This schematic overview provides a number of important indications. For one, our overview shows S&V's ambiguous relation to traditional 'mainstream' media (see Holt & Haller, 2017, 2018, about PEGIDA). On the one hand, criticism of mainstream media is an oft-recurring topic in S&V discourse (categories 2, 3 and 5; 88 posts in total). On the other hand, S&V highlights its own media performances, proudly showing how well-known mainstream media report on the movement (category 1; 53 posts). Similarly, social media are central to the movement's communication and operation, and it often refers to numbers of online followers to strengthen its representative claims. But it also frequently denounces instances of 'censorship' by social media. The latter, as we will see in more detail later, has been used by S&V to construct a sense of injustice and victimhood. Most importantly, for our purpose, this thematic analysis reveals that S&V does indeed produce much discourse on misrepresentations (misportrayals) by media—either of the movement itself or of the issues it focuses on, especially migration.

4.2. Unpacking the Media Critique: Discourse Analysis

In our discourse analysis we aim to lay bare the structure of S&V's media criticism. We focus on its criticism of media's misportrayal of political actors and societal realities, its claim to represent reality truthfully, and the links between these arguments and political claims of representation and misrepresentation.

We conduct an in-depth analysis of the 165 media-related Facebook posts. Since no single post in the dataset is 'text-only' (all posts are text and link and/or photo and/or video and/or meme), the dataset amounts to around 330 items consisting of written and spoken texts (the text of the posts but also speeches and interviews in mainstream and radical right media), videos (that can also be found on the movement's YouTube channel), photos and visuals, memes.

Drawing on a post-structuralist discourse-theoretical approach (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001), our analysis is macro-*textual* in that we consider that discourse analysis can be based on (any combination) of written and spoken words, images, sounds, gestures, events, and so on. Our analysis is also macro-*contextual* in that we believe that we can only understand S&V discourse by taking into account a broad context—with the Flemish and global radical right, its history and current developments as most relevant contexts (Carpentier & De Cleen, 2007). Our analysis follows the coding procedures and qualitative-interpretive prin-

[4] The non-media related content of our Facebook corpus (148 posts) relate to S&V activism (displaying the range of activities organized by the movement, from political contestation actions to charity actions, e.g., blood donations), information about Flemish cultural heritage and traditions, reactions to political events and controversies (in particular in the field of migration), jokes and memes with party political and/or ideological content, denunciations of all kinds, calls for donations to contribute to S&V through the purchase of promotional material (T-shirts, stickers). A large amount of posts also concerned the election of the S&V leader as student representative of Ghent University

ciples of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2003). We combine theoretical inspiration with analytical openness by integrating the notions of (mis)representation-as-(mis)portrayal, representative claims and claims of misrepresentation as sensitizing concepts. Rather than imposing a conceptual framework on the material, these sensitizing concepts point the qualitative researcher to relevant parts of the material (Bowen, 2006; Charmaz, 2003) in the process of gradually moving from descriptive open coding that stays close to the texts, to axial coding that identifies patterns in the texts under study, towards ever more interpretive, selective and theoretically inspired coding that allows us to address our research question in its complexity.

Given our aim to explore S&V's discourse on media through the lens of representative claims and claims of political misrepresentation, we pay attention to instances where such claims emerge in explicit forms (typically in written or spoken texts) but also to more implicit forms. To identify instances of claim-making, we pay attention to all aspects of S&V discourse (in whatever modality) to capture more subtle and implicit claim constructions. Concretely, we look at *arguments*, but also *vocabulary*—the way S&V "word[s] or lexicalize[s] the world in particular ways" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 129). We pay particular attention here to S&V's referential strategies (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, pp. 45–56), asking how it refers to and visually represents particular people and groups of people—especially media, politicians, the groups it claims to represent, and also itself. We study how S&V presents these groups and their relations between them, linguistically, visually and audio-visually.

5. The Representative Turns in the Discourse of S&V on Media

Our analysis is organized as follows (Table 2). First, we discuss the different accusations of misrepresentation-as-misportrayal formulated by S&V (focusing on *what* is claimed to be misrepresented by the media) and *how* it voices those criticisms [A]. We then document why these denunciations are fundamentally political in the stricter sense [B], unveiling the different antagonisms at play and *who* is claimed to be misrepresented politically and *by whom*. Finally, we show how [A] and [B] are also intimately connected to S&V's' claims to speak the truth—presented as an act of political representation in itself—and to the movement's own representative claims in the strict sense [C–D]. To be clear, we follow this order for reasons of argumentative clarity. We are not implying that these are separate steps in S&V discourse. Quite the contrary, we will show how claims of representation and misrepresentation occur at the same time, as well as how (mis)portrayal and political representation are intimately connected.

5.1. Misrepresenting the Truth

The central accusation found in the data is the idea of 'truth misrepresentation' or 'truth obfuscation' by the media. The movement continuously argues that 'politically correct' media are indeed hiding crucial elements of the truth (S&V, 2018a). Firmly located within the discursive field of the radical right, S&V refers to the 'lying press' (*leugenpers*), a designation inspired by the German notion of *Lügenpresse* associated with the German radical right movement PEGIDA and originating in Nazi propaganda (Holt & Haller, 2017). Similarly, S&V builds on the (radical) right's tradition of anti-political correctness rhetoric to attack the media for giving a politically correct (as opposed to factually correct) image of the world, for example by using politically correct words that produce a skewed representation of reality. For example, as shown in Figure 1, S&V caricatured a "dictionary of mainstream media" arguing that "the mainstream media has already scrapped and replaced

Table 2. From (mis)portrayal to (mis)representation: The structure of S&V discourse.

	Misrepresentation	**Representation**
(Mis)portrayal of *what, and by whom*	[A] The lying, politically correct press accused of hiding the truth, of manipulation	[C]; S&V constructed as speaking and revealing the truth (in particular on migration)
	Accusations of censorship, thought police	S&V and the radical right constructed as defenders of conservative values, freedom of speech, democracy; political *in*correctness as an act of truth-speaking
	Accusations of ideological bias directed to the media and the political establishment constructed as a left-wing, pro-migration and negative force	
(Not) standing for/speaking for *whom*	[B] Claims about political misrepresentation of:	[D] Claims about political Representation of:
	Taxpayer (esp. versus state broadcaster)	Taxpayer
	Autochthonous Flemings (versus migrants)	The Flemish youth, the Flemish people
	Right-wing underdog/majority (versus leftist elite)	The Silent majority
		The Right

a whole range of words, now the word 'white' is being targeted, we recommend this dictionary for anyone reading mainstream media articles!" (S&V, 2018c, authors' translation).

The media are not only accused of distorting the truth, but also of censoring those who do speak the truth. These arguments emerge in denunciations of mainstream media, social media companies and crowdfunding platforms, who are accused of blocking the accounts and deleting content produced by S&V or other radical right organizations (as shown in Figure 2, S&V, 2018d).

In some cases, the mass media and social media platforms are presented as part of the same powerful group

Figure 1. The politically correct dictionary of mainstream media, according to S&V.

Figure 2. A satiric cartoon over the alleged censorship by social media companies against S&V.

that aims to keep people from seeing the truth: "We brought you the information that the mass-media are hiding; that's why Facebook blocked Dries' [Van Langenhove, S&V leader] personal account" (S&V, 2018k, authors' translation). S&V regularly denounces the media for their participation in "oppression" and "censorship" and for being a "thought-police", a terminology with a long history drawing on the anti-communist tradition of (Flemish and other) radical right movements.

Given the centrality of migration and (Flemish, European, Western) identity in S&V's political agenda, these accusations of 'truth misrepresentation' also focus on how media portray migration. The viewpoints taken by the media are not treated by S&V as competing perspectives but are de-legitimized fundamentally as 'lies' or 'distortions'. For example, by 'fact-checking' numbers mentioned by the public broadcaster, S&V argues that "the VRT NWS lying press is going full speed ahead; through malevolent figures, the VRT wants to make you believe that there are just as many women as men in the migration flows flooding to Europe" (S&V, 2018f, authors' translation). Elsewhere, S&V describes the use of these malevolent figures and images as "emotional manipulation", as shown in Figure 3 (S&V,2018n, authors' translation).

Finally, S&V also accuses the media for (mis)representing the movement itself, attacking them for "framing'' S&V as a "bunch of racists" (S&V, 2018l, authors' translation). This is particularly striking in the corpus that covers the period after the VRT Pano reportage (from 05.09.2018 onwards). In a 10-minute video labelled 'Trial by the Media', S&V denounces and deconstructs what it describes as misrepresentations, the "frames", in which the VRT has portrayed S&V, later described as "attempts

Figure 3. The emotional manipulation by the media over migration, through the eyes of S&V.

by the leftist media to demonize [S&V leader] Dries Van Langenhove" (S&V, 2018o, authors' translation).

These repeated denunciations of how the media portray reality and S&V create the overall sense that the media's representation of reality is fundamentally untrustworthy and indeed morally suspect. This, as we will show, links up closely with the more political meaning of misrepresentation. Indeed, the vehement way in which S&V denounces the untruths—through constant accusations of lying, emotional manipulation, framing, demonizing, censoring—gives the impression that 'scandals' have been committed. As pointed out by Rosanvallon (2008, pp. 42–43), to denounce a scandal is to make public what has been hidden; it conveys a kind of ultra-reality to facts, it involves a stigmatization of the authorities and can be used as a means to give a "civic lesson". Hence, by uncovering the wrongdoings of the media, S&V attempts to boast its own credibility as political challenger; one who denounces the 'malfunctioning of the political system as a whole' (Guasti & Almeida, 2018, p. 13). The movement thus constructs a moral juxtaposition between S&V as a morally righteous force, and mainstream media and politics as morally suspect.

5.2. Misrepresenting You, the Taxpayer

One very explicit connection S&V makes between misportrayal by the media and political misrepresentation focuses on the public broadcaster VRT. The VRT was explicitly targeted 24 times by S&V in our Facebook corpus; it was also the source of inspiration for some of S&V's longest and most widely shared video clips (e.g., the video 'Trial by the Media'). Drawing on a long-established argument used by the radical right Vlaams Belang, S&V denounces the misuse of public money by the VRT, in particular in the context of the Pano reportage. Here, S&V explicitly interpellates people as taxpayers whose money is being used to misportray reality, to "frame" S&V, and ultimately, for "manipulating you…with your own taxpayer money" (S&V, 2018l, authors' translation).

Whilst the *Pano* reportage about S&V provided a favourable context for this connection to emerge (as explained in our case description above), there are other instances in the data where the figure of the 'betrayed taxpayer' appears. For example, when S&V accuses the VRT of 'censorship' and 'propaganda' after it reported an S&V video on 'Immigrants' riots in France' to Facebook (for copyright infringement), resulting in the deletion of the video in question:

> The taxpayer is clearly not allowed to question the propaganda of the state. The VRT is angry because a million citizens could see how we are being lied to with our own money….Share this message to fight against censorship by the state broadcaster. (S&V, 2018h, authors' translation)

The term 'state broadcaster'(*staatsomroep*) is used here and elsewhere to stress the public broadcaster's connections to the state and the 'regime'. This critique of the VRT also extends to how the broadcaster is supposedly dominated by a broader leftist establishment. This becomes clear in the following excerpt in which S&V denounces the hiring of a new online communication officer at the VRT:

> The word is out! The news at the VRT will now be framed by Jihad Van Puymbroeck. We know Jihad for her statements about the 'Flemish culture that does not exist', but this young lady was also active previously with Kif Kif Movement, this subsidy-junkie organization which constantly bashes Theo Francken[5]…and wants to get rid of Zwarte Piet[6]. After working for the Green party…Jihad is now ready to tell us what we ought to think, with our own taxpayers' money! (S&V, 2018b, authors' translation)

The construction of an antagonism between on the one hand the 'leftist' media that misportray migration, 'Flemish culture' and S&V, and on the other hand the betrayed (Flemish) taxpayer as a misrepresented group is part and parcel of a broader strategy where the media is positioned as a political opponent in its own right; one whose legitimacy can be contested, and against which counter-claims can be formulated.

5.3. A Matter of (Political) Absence

Going back to the idea of political representation as the creation of 'political presence', in this section we show how S&V actively creates a sense of 'political absence', i.e., that a voice is *not being heard* in the political debate, but also being *silenced* actively. The most literal examples of how S&V constructs this 'political absence' are found in denunciations of censorship. S&V regularly reports social media pulling S&V content off their platforms and blocking S&V accounts, and it also refers to other radical right-wing media and actors being 'censored'. The broader political implications of this censorship are clearly illustrated in the example below where S&V—again drawing on long-established radical right tropes—moves from censorship by 'tech giants' to the idea 'of voices not allowed on board' and ultimately to 'a threat for *our* democracy and freedom of speech':

> The Infowars channels and accounts were simultaneously deleted yesterday by Spotify, YouTube, Google, Apple and Facebook. It is clear that the tech-giants

[5] Then State Secretary for Asylum and Migration for the right-wing Flemish nationalist Nieuw-Vlaamse Alliantie.

[6] In the Netherlands and Belgium especially, Saint Nicolas (Sinterklaas) is celebrated on the 6th of December with gifts to children. The controversial figure of 'Black Pete' is the 'helper' of the white Saint Nicolas (Sinterklaas); there is a controversy revolving around the Black Pete being impersonated in blackface and his looks that are considered a racist reference to colonial times.

> don't want to allow certain voices on board, in particular during the US mid-term elections. Regardless of what you think of Infowars, it is clear that censorship represents a threat for our democracy and freedom of speech; register for our newsletter and join the fight against censorship. (S&V, 2018i, authors' translation)

Beyond social media, S&V also constructs media (in general) as the culprit for the silencing of particular voices. This is connected to the recurring theme of a left-wing hegemony over media and culture. In an interview with the alt-right channel *Red-Ice*, the S&V leader discusses the dominance of the left in the sphere of media and culture:

> It has been very easy to be left-wing for the past decades; all the big media personalities, all the singers were left-wing and if they were right-wing, they would simply not talk about politics in fear of being smeared and slandered by the media. (S&V, 2018j, authors' translation)

Drawing on a well-rehearsed argument used by the Flemish and global radical right, S&V constructs the image of a media and cultural sphere that is so strongly dominated by the left that right-wing media personalities and artists would not even dare to speak out politically for fear of 'being smeared and slandered' (see De Cleen, 2016). The broader argument here—and this is crucial from the perspective of representation in its political sense—is that media and culture are sectors that are disproportionately left-wing compared to the rest of society. This, the right-wing populist argument goes, gives the left-wing elite a political *megaphone* that is in no way warranted by political support for the left among ordinary people. And it allegedly gives the left the opportunity to *silence* right-wing voices in the political debate. In this manner, media, S&V argues, who should be "the fourth estate…those who control our politicians…the watchdog of democracy" have become "the lapdogs of the establishment and the hunting dogs of cultural marxism" (S&V, 2019a, authors' translation).

The left-wing bias of the media, according to S&V, is also apparent in the media's coverage of migration and, more broadly, of events involving people with an immigration background. Media are accused of silencing the 'truth' about migration but also for "ignoring for decades the growing problem of criminal migrants in our cities, who have been stealing from fellow citizens, attacking help-services and hosting terrorists" (S&V, 2018e, authors' translation). Through a long list of denunciations of media ignoring or hiding problems with migrants, S&V turns misportrayal by the media into a broader political problem voiced in highly moral terms; migration is constructed by S&V as detrimental to innocent people (e.g., in S&V, 2018g)—that is, 'innocent white autochthonous (Flemish) people' allegedly suffering from migration.

The becoming of the 'media' as political opponent in its own right—one that is accused of political misrepresentation in the strict sense—comes most strikingly to light in a speech given by the S&V leader at a protest against the government's signing of the UN Marrakesh Migration pact co-organised by the movement (Brussels, 16 December 2018):

> Do you really think, dear journalists, that there is anyone here present, who still believes you when you label allochthones who commit crimes in our cities simply as 'youngsters'? Do you really think that there is anyone here present who still believes you when you speak of 'incidents', when we know that it's about Islamic terrorism?…No, dear journalists, your time is over!…Everyone here present realizes that the leftist mainstream media only represents a tiny fraction of our people and that the majority is on our side. (S&V, 2019a, authors' translation)

This quote highlights the representative turn in the S&V discourse on media in several ways. Indeed, although this speech was held at a demonstration against the government's support of the UN Migration Pact, this speech is directly addressed to 'journalists'—not elected or governmental officials. Moreover, when referring to 'the tiny majority' represented by the leftist media, the speaker uses the Dutch verb *vertegenwoordigen*—a verb that refers only to representation in the sense of standing for/speaking for, not in the sense of portrayal. A claim which is then immediately followed by the representative claim by S&V (2019a, authors' translation) itself that "the majority is on our side".

These constructions and the creation of a sense of 'political absence' are particularly noteworthy in a context where Belgian politics are *not* dominated by left-wing parties. Most of the excerpts presented above were published at a time where the right-wing party Flemish party NVA was in government. By claiming that right-wing voices are silenced in this context, the discourse of S&V effectively pushes citizens to seek their 'representation' even further to the right. Van Langenhove's running in the elections for the VB in the May 2019 elections further illustrates this.

5.4. Speaking the Truth as Political Representation

In this last empirical section, we document how the denunciations analyzed above serve as a basis for S&V to claim first to 'speak the truth', but also, to speak for the Flemish youth, the Flemish people and the 'silent majority'. In its discourse about media, S&V builds its representative claims onto a broader argument of 'truth-speaking'. This is rooted in a long tradition of 'new realist' discourse (Prins, 2004) on the (radical) right that claims to 'say things like they are' and break (purported) taboos concerning, especially, multicultural society.

As such, the truth-speaking defended by S&V can be seen as part and parcel of a political struggle to make hegemonic a particular vision of the world. A version of

reality which is claimed to be censored by media, the cultural sector and universities who are presented as a politically correct left-wing elite. And in a populist move, this view of reality is presented as the view of a 'silent majority' that is opposed to the left-wing dominated media. In this manner, S&V portrays itself as an actor who not only speaks the truth, but crucially, *by* speaking the truth, *speaks for* the silent majority. The representational relationship that is constructed thus goes beyond a populist representative claim—*representing by claiming to know* the ordinary people and their interests and defending them against the elite. S&V also claims to *represent others by claiming an authority over 'truth'*. As such, political representation (representation as standing/speaking for) becomes closely aligned with a much more metapolitical epistemological struggle over representations of reality (representation as portrayal); it becomes a struggle between truth-tellers and liars. As a result, S&V's pretension to speak the truth turns into a representative claim; 'I tell you the truth, therefore I represent you'.

This becomes very explicit in S&V's discourse about setting up its own independent *media* channel. Under the argument that "truth has its own rights" (S&V, 2018q, authors' translation) and that we need "to keep informing Flanders" (S&V, 2018p, authors' translation), S&V seeks not only to tell the truth with its own media channel and media material, but to finally give a voice to the silent majority. Referring to one of their most famous actions (*'t Gravensteen*, March 2018, see Figure 4) and the video thereof, the leader of S&V says:

> We didn't expect the video to go this viral. Even though it was censored on multiple social media platforms, it has been shared and watched over a million times. This shows that there is a huge silent majority that's starting to get a voice. (Interview in the Voice of Europe, 2018)

This idea of giving voice is also physically embodied by the S&V spokesperson himself, who regularly appears with a megaphone in videos and photos (as in this video of their Gravensteen action). The megaphone adds to Van Langenhove's construction as a leader and as a spokesperson who speaks for others, as do the numerous videos and photos showing how people support him and his political efforts (patting him on the shoulder, cheering him on, wanting to take selfies with him).

The politico-representative connotation of S&V's media-channel proposal reaches a pinnacle in the context of Van Langenhove's participation in the Belgian federal elections (May 2019). In the speech announcing his presence as head-of-the-list (*lijsttrekker)* for the radical right party Vlaams Belang, he argues that:

> I will be leading a joint list with the Vlaams Belang for the election of the Federal Parliament. Next to the creation of S&V and the set-up of a new media channel, I am taking-up this third channel because politics is too important to be left in the hands of politicians. (S&V, 2019b, authors' translation)

In his enumeration, Van Langenhove explicitly puts the S&V media channel on a par with running for elections—arguably the most traditional way of politically representing others. But this is not the only instance where media and representative claims are tightly intertwined.

Figure 4. S&V as megaphone of the silent majority.

Beyond 'the silent majority', S&V weaves other representative claims into its critique of media. It claims to know 'Flanders', 'Flemish society', 'the Flemish people' and the 'Flemish youth'; it claims to defend and speak for these groups by equating itself with them. Linguistically, this equation takes place through the use of and shift between pronouns; in particular from 'us' to 'all Flemish', as shown in the excerpt below that refers to the Pano reportage:

> Dear all, be critical; watch the documentary and pay attention to the deliberate attempts by the VRT, which is paid by your taxpayers' money (300 million euros/year), to frame us as a bunch of racists, and all Flemish as a group of extremists. Don't fall in their trap. (S&V ,2018l, authors' translation)

Elsewhere, S&V invokes the Flemish people's bravery and valiance in the face of political oppression to strengthen its own profile as a nationalist rebel and speak on behalf of these 'silenced' groups, and ultimately 'Flemish society':

> They have made it hard for us, but the Flemish doesn't give up. You must continue to question the media because only then can we reduce its grip over Flemish society. Share this video clip and help us in our judicial fight. (S&V, 2018m, authors' translation)

In the first sentence we see the construction of an antagonism between 'they' (the media) and 'us' (S&V) which is equated with 'the Flemish'. In the second sentence this is translated into a direct interpellation of the audience—'you'—as a member of 'the Flemish society', who needs to support S&V in its struggle against the media.

Finally, all these claims also link up closely to the movement's claim to speak on behalf of 'the (Flemish) Youth'. S&V portrays itself as a movement that seeks to trigger a 'positive mental switch' among the youth, one that aims to strengthen the youth's resilience. In this context, S&V sees itself as the very example of 'resilience' by presenting its media activism (the set-up of an independent media channel in particular) as a form of resistance against the system, whilst also presenting its truth-telling as a condition for the Flemish youth to recover its resilience.

6. Conclusion

In this article, we zoomed in on the role of media criticism in the discourse of the Flemish radical right youth movement S&V. We demonstrated that accusations of misportrayal are not merely powerful denunciations of the media. In the discourse of S&V, these attacks actively construct and continuously feed into a broader claim that 'you' and ultimately 'we' are being misrepresented politically; a claim that is intimately connected to S&V's own representative claims. Through our focus on the double meaning of (mis)representation—as portrayal and as speaking for—we documented how the media are discursively constructed as a political actor in their own right—one that is not only in cahoots with the political 'establishment' but who also becomes the target of counter-claims usually reserved for 'illegitimate politicians'. We showed how the media are directly held to account for the silencing of particular voices in the debate, and in some cases, even held accountable for 'the growing problem of migration'. Finally, we documented how an alternative right-wing medium—S&V's independent media channel—is also explicitly presented as an instrument for political representation in the strict sense. It is constructed not only as a means for S&V to 'speak the truth' but also to 'give a voice to 'Flemish society' and 'the silent majority'.

These findings contribute to further our understanding of how the radical right politicizes the media as a non-electoral space of representation and misrepresentation. The media, in S&V discourse, become a representative actor—one that *gives a voice to others* and *represents others*; and crucially, one that can be accused of *not giving a voice to particular groups in society*, of *misrepresenting you* and that can be demanded to become more politically representative of society.

Our analysis also shows how political representation thus becomes closely linked to a more metapolitical struggle over truth and epistemic authority. Indeed, S&V's grievances towards media are not merely about demanding that media represent their point of view (and the point of view of the subjects S&V claims to represent politically). S&V ultimately demands that media represent reality *from their own point of view*, i.e., the one defended by the radical right. S&V's media critique thus contributes to the construction of an uncompromising political battle between those who speak the truth (the radical right) and those who deny that truth, i.e., outright liars (the left and the entire political mainstream).

Our findings also evidence that, contrary to the belief that radical right movements may act in silos or 'echo-chambers', S&V continuously engages with mainstream media—both by discrediting them as liars and by drawing attention to the content they produce in order to boast their own credibility and prove their arguments (see Holt & Haller, 2018). In other words, the movement uses mainstream media to thrive, it uses the 'politically correct establishment' as political opponent to establish its own authority (in contradictory ways). This has important implications for approaching these movements and their relation to the democratic system as a whole. These are not marginal phenomena on the fringes of society, but actors who are inherently tied to the 'mainstream' in complex ways: they construct their political identity in opposition to a supposedly left-dominated political and media mainstream, derive credibility from both positive and negative attention from mainstream media and politics, and seek inroads into the mainstream to extend their own appeal and reach hegemonic status.

However, our analysis has been limited to one side of the claim-making activity: how S&V denounced the misportrayal and political misrepresentation of certain groups and, in turn, claims to speak on behalf of these groups. As such, our analysis does not inform us on the success of these claims and whether or not they are being contested, accepted or rejected by the groups invoked into being, and their broader audience. Further research is therefore needed to better understand how anti-media discourses affect representational relationships in the broad sense, and in particular people's perceptions and relations to established representative institutions.

Finally, our analysis raises important questions about the ways in which S&V's media critique may grant credibility to the rest of their discourse, in particular on issues of migration, Islam, the nation, but also of masculinity, femininity and the traditional family. By continuously calling out the media's 'untruths' and entangling these denunciations with other types of antagonisms, S&V may come across, in the eyes of its audience, as 'truth-teller' on other matters as well. This aspect certainly merits further attention, especially given the increasing normalization of anti-immigrant discourses worldwide and the retreat of tolerance as core value of our democracies.

Acknowledgments

This research was supported by the Fonds Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek–Vlaanderen (FWO), grant G062917N (2017–2021) and the VUB Strategic Research Programme: Evaluating Democratic Governance in Europe (2018–2022). The authors would like to thank Professor Eline Severs, Jouke Huizer and Chloé Janssen for their valuable comments on earlier versions of this article.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

References

Akachar, S. (2018). *Representation in the eye of the beholder? Flemish Muslim youth on (not) feeling politically represented* (Doctoral Thesis in Political Sciences). Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Brussels.

Bar-On, T. (2007). *Where have all the fascists gone?* London: Routledge.

Bowen, G. A. (2006). Grounded theory and sensitizing concepts. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *5*(3), 12–23.

Bull, S. (2005). *Media and ethnic minorities*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Carpentier, N., & De Cleen, B. (2007). Bringing discourse theory into media studies. *Journal of Language and Politics*, *6*(2), 267–295.

Castiglione, D., & Pollack, J. (2019). *Creating political presence: The new politics of democratic representation*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Charmaz, K. (2003). Grounded theory: Objectivist and constructivist methods. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Strategies of qualitative inquiry* (pp. 249–291). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

De Cleen, B. (2016). The party of the people versus the cultural elite. Populism and nationalism in Flemish radical right rhetoric about artists. *JOMEC—Journal of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies*, *9*, 70–91.

Dutoya, V., & Hayat, S. (2016). Making representative claims: The social construction of political representation. *Presses de Sciences Po, Revue Française de Science Politique*, *1*(66), 7–25.

Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analysing discourse. Textual analysis for social research*. London: Routledge.

Glynos, J., & Howarth, D. (2007). *Logics of critical explanation in social and political theory*. London: Routledge.

Guasti, P., & Almeida, D. (2018). *Claims of misrepresentation: A comparison of Germany and Brazil*. Paper presented at the ECPR General Conference, Hamburg, Germany, 22–25 August 2018.

Holt, K., & Haller, A. (2018). Paradoxical populism: How PEGIDA relates to mainstream and alternative media. *Information, Communication & Society*. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2018.1449882

Holt, K., & Haller, A. (2017). What does 'Lügenpresse' mean? Expressions of media distrust on PEGIDA's Facebook pages. *Politik*, *20*(4), 42–57.

Laclau, E. (1977). *Politics and ideology in Marxist theory. Capitalism, fascism, populism*. London: Verso.

Laclau, E., & Mouffe, C. (2001). *Hegemony and socialist strategy: Towards a radical democratic politics*. London: Verso.

Maly, I. (2018a). Waarom schild en vrienden geen marginaal fenomeen is [Why Schild & Vrienden is not a marginal phenomenon]. *Digitt Magazine*. Retrieved from https://www.diggitmagazine.com/articles/schild-vrienden

Maly, I. (2018b). *Nieuw rechts* [The new right]. Berchem: EPO.

Maly, I. (2018c). *The global New Right and the Flemish identitarian movement Schild & Vrienden: A case study* (Tilburg Papers in Culture Studies No. 220). Tilburg: Department of Culture Studies of Tilburg University.

Misrepresentation. (n.d.). In *Lexico*. Retrieved from https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/misrepresentation

Moffitt, B. (2015). How to perform a crisis: A model for understanding the key role of crisis in contemporary populism. *Government and Opposition*, *50*(2), 189–217.

Pitkin, H. (1967). *The concept of representation*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Prins, B. (2004). *Voorbij de onschuld. Het debat over integratie in Nederland* [Beyond innocence. The debate

on migration in the Netherlands]. Amsterdam: Van Gennep.

Reisigl, M., & Wodak, R. (2001). *Discourse and discrimination: Rhetorics of racism and antisemitism*. London: Routledge.

Rosanvallon, P. (2008). *Counter-democracy: Politics in an age of distrust*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schild & Vrienden. (2018a, January 5). Onze politiek correcte media verzwijgen cruciale elementen van het nieuws. Dat wisten jullie ongetwijfeld al maar het wordt met de dag duidelijker [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/schildenvrienden/

Schild & Vrienden. (2018b, January 8). The word is out! Het nieuws bij VRT NWS wordt vanaf nu voorgekauwd door Jihad Van Puymbroeck. We kennen Jihad vooral van haar uitspraak [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/schildenvrienden/

Schild & Vrienden. (2018c, January 26). De mainstream media hebben al een heleboel woorden geschrapt en vervangen. Nu is het woord blank aan de beurt. Het zou te positief klinken en moet daarom voortaan vervangen worden door wit [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/schildenvrienden/

Schild & Vrienden. (2018d, March 12). De laatste dagen schoten linkse trollen in een kramp. Ze vonden geen antwoord op ons succes en grepen dan maar naar scheldpartijen doodsbedreigingen censuur en leugens. Het ontbreekt hen blijkbaar aan inhoudelijke argumenten [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/schildenvrienden

Schild & Vrienden. (2018e, April 26). De media negeerden decennialang het groeiende probleem van criminele migranten in onze steden die burgers bestolen hulpdiensten aanvielen en terroristen onderdak gaven. Nu worden de media zelf aangevallen [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/schildenvrienden/

Schild & Vrienden. (2018f, June 20). De leugenpers van VRT NWS draait weer op volle toeren. Door kwaadwillig cijfers en termen te verdraaien wil VRT u doen geloven dat de migratiestroom naar Europa evenveel vrouwen als mannen bevat [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/schildenvrienden/

Schild & Vrienden. (2018g, July 7). Moslim migrant uit Niger steekt Duitse vrouw dood en onthoofdt 1-jarige baby op het perron. De Duitse autoriteiten reageren door de huizen binnen te vallen van de mensen die over de feiten berichten en zelfs het parlement wordt gecensureerd [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/schildenvrienden

Schild & Vrienden. (2018h, July 19). Ons filmpje over de allochtone rellen in Frankrijk werd zonet verwijderd door Facebook na een klacht van VRT. De belastingbetaler mag blijkbaar de staatspropaganda niet in vraag stellen. VRT is boos omdat bijna een miljoen burgers [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/schildenvrienden/

Schild & Vrienden. (2018i, August 9). De kanalen van Infowars werden eergisteren tegelijkertijd door Spotify Youtube Google Apple en Facebook verwijderd. Het is duidelijk dat de tech-giganten sommige stemmen niet aan bod willen laten komen zeker in aanloop naar de Amerikaanse tussentijdse verkiezingen [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/schildenvrienden/

Schild & Vrienden. (2018j, August 13). Dries Van Langenhove werd geïnterviewd door Lana Lokteff van Red Ice. Ze spraken over de ontmoeting met Orban over rolmodellen aan de rechterzijde en over de verschillen tussen Oost en West-Europa. Abonneer zeker op hun youtube kanaal: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFUC7NaTxZanB_FVOJN92eg [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/schildenvrienden/

Schild & Vrienden. (2018k, August 23). De afgelopen weken was ons bereik zeer groot. We brachten u de informatie die de massamedia verzwijgen. Daarom blokkeerde Facebook het persoonlijke account van Dries. Je kan de censuur omzeilen door hem op zijn persoonlijke pagina te volgen [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/schildenvrienden/

Schild & Vrienden. (2018l, September 5). Vanavond zendt VRT een PANO-reportage over Schild & Vrienden uit. De afgelopen maanden filmde VRT tientallen uren positief beeldmateriaal. We mochten de reportage zonet inkijken en constateerden dat VRT al dit positieve beeldmateriaal naar de prullenmand heeft verwezen [Facebook status update]. https://www.facebook.com/schildenvrienden

Schild & Vrienden. (2018m, September 19). Ze hebben het ons moeilijk gemaakt maar de Vlaming is geen opgever. Durf de media in vraag stellen want alleen zo kunnen we hun grip op de samenleving verminderen. Deel dit filmpje en help ons in de juridische strijd [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/schildenvrienden/

Schild & Vrienden. (2018n, September 26). Emotionele manipulatie. Elke dag opnieuw [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/schildenvrienden

Schild & Vrienden. (2018o, November 15). De linkse media hebben Dries Van Langenhove maandenlang proberen demoniseren het resultaat zie je in dit filmpje [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/schildenvrienden/

Schild & Vrienden. (2018p, November 26). Het filmpje over het Marrakesh Migratiepact werd op 2 dagen tijd bijna 400.000 keer bekeken. Tegen morgen zullen een half miljoen Vlamingen geïnformeerd zijn over de inhoud van dit "zelfmoord-pact". Wij kunnen deze

filmpjes enkel blijven maken [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/schildenvrienden/

Schild & Vrienden. (2018q, December 17). BEWIJS: Brusselse oproerpolitie geeft toe dat burgemeester Close hen heeft opgedragen om er op te kloppen en zo veel mogelijk arrestaties uit te voeren. Ik ben benieuwd of de media dit zullen brengen. DEEL dit filmpje. De waarheid heeft haar rechten! [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/schildenvrienden/

Schild & Vrienden. (2019a, January 2). Speech Dries Van Langenhove Mars tegen Marrakesh, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eqw9-IVDn3s&feature=youtu.be [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/schildenvrienden/

Schild & Vrienden. (2019b, January 9). Ik zal een gezamenlijke lijst met Vlaams Belang trekken in Vlaams-Brabant voor het Federale Parlement. Naast de uitbouw van Schild & Vrienden en een nieuw mediakanaal ga ik als partijonafhankelijk activist ook deze derde uitdaging aan want politiek is te belangrijk om over te laten aan politici [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/schildenvrienden/

Saward, M. (2010). *The representative claim*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Saward, M. (2019). Liminal representation. In D. Castiglione & J. Pollack (Eds.), *Creating political presence: The new politics of democratic representation* (pp. 276–297). Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Severs, E. (2012). Substantive representation through a claim-making lens: A strategy for the identification and analysis of substantive claims. *Representation*, *48*(2), 169–181.

Sintomer, Y. (2013). The meanings of political representation: Uses and misuses of a notion. *Raisons politiques*, *2*(50), 13–34.

Viereck, P. (2003). *Metapolitics: From Wagner and the German romantics to Hitler*. New Brunswick, NJ, and London: Transaction Publishers.

Voice of Europe. (2018). There is a huge silent majority that's starting to get a voice: Interview with leader of Belgian patriotic youth group. *Voice of Europe*. Retrieved from https://voiceofeurope.com/2018/03/there-is-a-huge-silent-majority-thats-starting-to-get-a-voice-interview-with-leader-of-belgian-patriotic-youth-group/#.WrPAS5e55iM.twitter

About the Authors

Louise Knops is a Doctoral Student in the Department of Political Science of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel. Her research focuses on citizens' expectations and feelings towards representative democracy, in particular through the study of contemporary movements spanning across the Belgian political landscape.

Benjamin De Cleen is Assistant Professor at the Communication Studies Department of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, where he is the Coordinator of the English-Language master on Journalism and Media in Europe. His research is situated within critical discourse studies, and has mainly been focused on radical right rhetoric, and on the discourse-theoretical conceptualization of populism, nationalism and conservatism. Benjamin is the chair of the Centre for Democracy, Signification and Resistance that brings together people from the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, University of Ljubljana, University of Essex, Charles University in Prague, and Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (https://www.researchcenterdesire.eu).

COGITATIO

Politics and Governance (ISSN: 2183–2463)
2019, Volume 7, Issue 3, Pages 179–188
DOI: 10.17645/pag.v7i3.2122

Article

Political Representation in the Discourse and Practices of the "Party of the Common Man" in India

Stéphanie Tawa Lama-Rewal

Centre d'Etudes de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 75006 Paris, France;
E-Mail: tawalama@ehess.fr

Submitted: 28 March 2019 | Accepted: 28 June 2019 | Published: 24 September 2019

Abstract
One of the many challenges presented by populism concerns its relationship with political representation. What happens when an anti-politics movement wins elections? This article offers an analysis of the exercise of power by the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP, Party of the Common Man), which has been ruling the city-state of Delhi since 2015, in order to bring elements of answer to this question. On the basis of discourse analysis as well as direct observation of meetings, the article first identifies a series of populist tropes in the official discourse of the AAP, including a de-emphasis on representation to the advantage of participation. It then describes the two main participatory schemes implemented by the AAP government since 2015, and shows that these generate, in different ways, a magnification of the mediation work that is central to political representation at the local level in the Indian context. Finally, the article argues that the party has been developing, through these participatory schemes, a form of "inclusive representation" (Hayat, 2013), in which inclusion is linked to mobilization.

Keywords
Aam Aadmi Party; India; mediation; participatory democracy; political representation; populism

Issue
This article is part of the issue "Rethinking Representation: Representative Claims in Global Perspective", edited by Petra Guasti (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany) and Brigitte Geissel (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany).

1. Introduction

One of the many challenges presented by populism to its observers concerns its relationship with political representation. If "the populist ideology fosters a particular mode of political representation" (Kaltwasser, 2014, p. 484), then what do we know about it, at a time when an increasing number of political projects and regimes across the world are being qualified as "populist"? In order to bring elements of answer to this question, this article analyses the exercise of power by the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP, Party of the Common Man), which has been ruling the city-state[1] of Delhi since 2015. The AAP was born from an anti-politics movement, "India Against Corruption" (2011–2012), that vehemently denounced misrepresentation. What happens, then, when this type of anti-politics movement wins elections?

In an article interpreting the "contending representative claims" put forward in the 2014 general elections in India, Niraja Gopal Jayal argues that the AAP's representative claim is a populist one. Indeed she considers that the AAP and Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP; Indian People's Party) together bring about "a shift from one dominant type of representative claim to another" (Jayal, 2016, p. 177). Her analysis is based on the early life of the AAP, a party created in 2012, that successfully fought regional elections in 2013, briefly governed the city-state of Delhi, and fought national elections in

[1] In the Indian constitutional architecture Delhi has a specific status: since the adoption of the 69th Constitutional Amendment Act in 1991, Delhi has been a "quasi-state", officially called the National Capital Territory of Delhi (NCTD). Like the other 29 states of the Union, the NCTD has its own legislative assembly and government, but this government is weak because it has no control over three domains that, in this particular case, pertain to the Central government, namely land development, police, and law and order. The Chief Minister (CM) of Delhi is therefore closer to a city-manager; yet the centrality of Delhi in India's political life confers him/her a lot of media attention.

2014, that time without much success. This was a period, therefore, when the party spent more time campaigning than governing.

I propose in this article to re-examine the qualification of the AAP as a populist party, with a specific focus on its conception of political representation, on the basis of fieldwork conducted in the next phase in the life of this party, what might be called its formative years as a party of government (and not only of opposition). This period starts in February 2015 with a massive electoral victory (the party wins 67 seats out of 70) and is marked by a series of "institutional improvisations and experiments" (Kaltwasser, 2014, p. 485), including two new participatory schemes. The analysis of these two schemes, I will argue, complicates the negative equation between populism and representative democracy posed by Jayal.

"Populism" is admittedly a problematic concept, as it is both overused and contested; but its very ubiquity invites us to engage with its descriptive and analytical value. The normative use of this concept dominates political commentary today: "populism" in the public debate is often the name of a "pathology of democracy" (Rosanvallon, 2011; Tarragoni, 2013), a qualification that implies negative judgement. In the Indian context, this concept was mostly associated, until recently, to Dravidian parties (that have been ruling the southern state of Tamil Nadu)—always in a dismissive manner, to denounce a combination of personality cult, corruption and demagogy. But the rise to political dominance of the BJP, since 2014, has also been analysed in terms of right-wing populism (Jaffrelot, 2019; McDonnell & Cabrera, 2019).

In the scholarly sphere, populism has been the focus of growing attention in the past two decades. While a review of this vast literature is beyond the scope of this article, I want to point at two broad, and largely overlapping, divides in such scholarship, in order to clarify where the present article stands.

The first divide concerns the very definition of populism as an object of empirical investigation. Many scholars today work with the "ideational approach" proposed by Cas Mudde, who defines populism as a:

> Thin-centred ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic camps, the 'pure people' and the 'corrupt elite', and which argues that politics should be an expression of the volonté générale (general will) of the people. (Mudde, 2004, p. 543)

Following the pioneering work of Margaret Canovan (1999), Mudde (2004) and Kaltwasser (2014) have inspired researchers to engage with the study of populism as a set of ideas that can be investigated through studies of discourse, rhetoric and claims (see, for instance, Bonikowski & Gidron, 2016). However, other scholars have analysed populism through a focus not so much on ideas as on practices, in order to identify the characteristics (and consequences) of the exercise of power by populist parties: this is the case of Takis Pappas (2019) who studies variants of "ruling populism" (p. 82) in Europe and South America.

The second divide regards the assessment of the relationship between populism and democracy. Canovan (1999), Mudde and Kaltwasser (2013), but also Laclau (2007) consider that populism can have a positive impact on democracy insofar as it "can be both a threat to and a corrective for democracy"(Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2013, p. 168). Indeed populism can be right-wing or left-wing; conservative or progressive (Bonikowski & Gidron, 2016); exclusionary or inclusionary (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2013). This open stance however is criticised by Pappas, who defines populism as "democratic illiberalism" and considers that "populist rule leads to liberalism's decay and sometimes even to democratic breakdown" (Pappas, 2019, p. 82).

This article asks what the AAP says and does about political representation; it identifies populist tropes—including de-emphasising representation—in the party's discourse, but also democratic innovations—ultimately redefining representation—in its practices, thus justifying an agnostic position regarding the relationship between populism and democracy.

In terms of methodology, the article is based, firstly, on political discourse analysis, the corpus being composed of a series of "texts and talks" (van Dijk, 1997) collected between 2013 and 2017: three electoral manifestoes (2013, 2014, 2015); six speeches by Arvind Kejriwal, the party leader; 24 semi-directed interviews with cadres, elected representatives and volunteers of the party, as well as four interviews with NGO workers and four interviews with bureaucrats working for the Delhi government (about one fourth of the corpus was in Hindi). Secondly, I could directly observe two meetings organised in the framework of the participatory devices under study, and since such meetings are often video-recorded, I could analyse the video-records of another five such meetings.

The article will first consider what the party says, and then what it does, in terms of political representation. Thus Section 2 will identify populist tropes in the official discourse of the AAP, including a de-emphasis on representation to the advantage of participation. Section 3 will describe the two main participatory schemes implemented by the AAP government since 2015, and show that they produce, in different ways, a magnification of the mediation work that is central to political representation at the local level in the Indian context. In the last section I will argue that the party has been developing, through these participatory schemes, a form of "inclusive representation" (Hayat, 2013) in which inclusion is linked to mobilization.

2. A Discourse with Populist Overtones and a De-Emphasis on Representation

The AAP was born from the "India Against Corruption" movement (2011–2012). As shown by Aheli

Chowdhury[2], even though this movement's discourse about politics was so negative that it was considered as "anti-democratic" by several observers (Chatterjee, 2011), it was also a critical moment in the construction of a new "representative claim" (Saward, 2010) by Kejriwal, the party leader, and his fellow organisers. The AAP, formally launched in October 2012, claimed to enter politics in order to "clean it from inside", to "change the rules", to "make politics more honest" and democracy more participative (an idea conveyed through the centrality of the term *Swaraj*—self-government—in the party's discourse). In December 2013, the young party contested elections to the Delhi Legislative assembly, and to everybody's surprise came second with 28 seats out of 70, behind the BJP (31 seats) but far ahead of the Congress party (8 seats). After some hesitation, the AAP decided to form the government with the support of Congress Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs). This first mandate was short: the alliance was a very fragile one, and the government resigned after only seven weeks. However, emboldened by its success in Delhi, the AAP went on to contest national elections in 2014, but won only four seats. The party then decided to focus again on Delhi, reinventing itself as the party of good, local, participatory governance (Tawa Lama-Rewal, 2014), and when new elections were organised in February 2015, it won with a historic majority (67 seats out of 70).

Let us first look at the rhetoric of the party, which is at its clearest in programmatic texts and talks, i.e., in election manifestoes and major addresses of the newly elected CM. Such rhetoric offers at the same time a critique of democracy as it exists and a demand for a better (or more) democracy. As Jayal rightly points out, this is typical of the "redemptive politics" associated to populism (Canovan, 1999). More precisely, one can identify six populist tropes in the official discourse of the party.

One, the struggle against corruption is central to the party's project. Thus Kejriwal (2014), in his resignation speech, declares:

> They say we cannot govern. But in the past so many years, they couldn't audit the power companies, we did it in five days; in 65 years they couldn't reduce corruption, we did it in 49 days. We filed a FIR [First information Report] against corruption by Sheila [Delhi's former CM], Mukesh Ambani [a major industrialist]—they say 'govern, don't do all this'. Come on, acting against the corrupt is true governance.

Two, in continuity with the anti-corruption movement, the party denounces political misrepresentation, in effect challenging, as Petra Guasti and Debora Almeida put it, "the legitimacy and authority of elected representatives" (2019, p. 154). Diagnosing the existence of a "representation gap" (Huber & Ruth, 2017, p. 462) is indeed typical of anti-politics movements. The AAP thus asserts that political leaders, far removed from the everyday reality of common people, are unable to take the right decisions:

> While our country has achieved a system of free and fair elections in a minimum sense of the term, the mechanism of political representation does not offer meaningful and substantive choices to the citizens, nor does it provide a level playing field for political competition. (AAP, 2014)

Three, the governed (the ruled) are opposed to the governing (the rulers), in a recurrent contrast between the common man (*aam aadmi*)/common people (*chote log, janta*) and politicians (*netas*) and bureaucrats (*babus*):

> Swaraj promised nothing short of self-rule: people's control over their destiny, power to decide on matters concerning their well-being, to direct the apparatus of power and hold rulers accountable. Swaraj is about rule by the people, not by netas or babus. (AAP, 2014)

However—and this is a first caveat regarding the populist nature of the party—it must be noted that the AAP is not critical of *all* elites—it does not target judges, journalists or intellectuals; therefore, it is not so much anti-establishment as anti-politics (Barr, 2009, p. 4).

A fourth populist feature of the party's discourse is that it conceives "the people" as a unified whole—the differences, inequalities and conflicts among individuals and groups are practically never mentioned. But at the same time, and this is a second caveat, the party is not concerned about the boundaries of such "people". Its conception is closer to *plebs* than to *ethnos* (Kaltwasser, 2014, p. 480), In other words, the people is here defined by a (dominated) socio-economic condition, not by culture or identity; there is no "dangerous other" implied in such notion of "people", as opposed to the BJP's discourse for instance (McDonnell & Cabrera, 2019, p. 487). Indeed the "socio-economic dimension of exclusion" (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2013, p. 167) is central in the party's discourse, suggesting that the "host ideology" (Huber & Ruth, 2017, p. 466) of AAP's populism is closer to the Left than to the Right—even though the party carefully avoids conflating the "people" with the poor (only). In fact, the image of "the common man", offered as a substitute to more specific categories of the popular used by other Indian parties, such as the poor, Dalits, workers, etc., signals that the AAP refuses to engage into identity politics. There is an almost abstract quality of such image of the popular—*almost* only, because it does, even if unwittingly, betray the fact that women are strongly under-represented at all levels in the party.

The party's rhetoric emphasizes, fifthly, a common commonness between the people and the AAP government; it suggests a consubstantiality that flattens the verticality inherent in political power, and erases the phase of conquest of power by the party from its narrative.

[2] See her article in this thematic issue.

Thus spoke Kejriwal (2015), after becoming CM for the second time, in February 2015:

> Delhi again has an Aam Aadmi government…it's not me who has taken the CM's oath. All of you have taken this oath. It's not me who has become Delhi's CM. Every citizen of Delhi has become the state's CM.

However, even though the leader insists that he is himself a common man, there is only one leader (Wyatt, 2015). This is another central feature of populism, which is not explicitly present in the AAP discourse but very much so in its practice.

Elected representatives, too, must be like the people: in the relationship between representatives and their constituents, likeness is preferable to distinction. Thus, the party repeatedly emphasized its intention to put an end to "VIP *raj* [rule], VIP culture" (Kejriwal, 2014). Moreover—and this is a sixth characteristic of populist parties (Kaltwasser, 2014, p. 479)—the AAP sees representation in terms of an imperative mandate. In 2014, the party's manifesto asserts:

> Aam Aadmi Party is contesting elections not merely to form the government but to fundamentally transform the system of governance. We believe that decision-making power resides with the people and should be exercised directly by them. In our vision of Swaraj, every citizen of India would be able to participate in decisions that affect their lives. People will make the decisions and elected representatives would implement them….Provisions of 'Right to Reject' and 'Right to Recall' (will) be introduced. (AAP, 2014)

The emphasis on participation, which is unique, in the Indian context, to the AAP, rests on the idea that democracy needs be made more participatory in order to be both more efficient and more democratic. Thus, elected representatives are supposed to take decisions not only on behalf of the people and for the people, but also *with* the people. What is being proposed is a kind of co-government. In his first address as CM, given in front of a huge crowd of supporters in December 2013, Kejriwal insisted on this image:

> Our fight was never to make Kejriwal CM. It was to hand power back to the people. Today, the aam admi (common man) has won…friends, we must run Delhi together. The seven ministers won't run the government, officials won't run the government, police won't run it. We'll evolve a system where all 1.5 crore [15 million] people together run the government. (Kejriwal, 2013)

On the whole, while the party has a lot to say about participation, governance and government, statements about representation are rare. The rhetoric of the AAP emphasizes the misrepresentation produced by politics as it exists, that is, by the other parties; but it also de-emphasizes political representation in its own vision for the future, insisting instead on participation. No positive representative claim follows, as is often the case (Guasti & Almeida, 2019), the negative claim of misrepresentation. There is a "prescription for change" (Barr, 2009, p. 4) but it concerns participation, not representation.

3. Participatory Practices and Magnified Mediation

Looking at what the AAP has been doing since 2015 regarding its promise to develop participation, however, shows that the relationship between representation and participation is not a zero sum game. Indeed, the party implemented two participatory dispositives that gave birth to new forms of political representation: the *mohalla sabhas* (neighbourhood assemblies) and the *SMC mahasabhas* (School Management Committees' super assemblies).

The idea of the *mohalla sabha* is that of a micro local meeting—on the scale of a neighbourhood, i.e., about 5000 people in the context of Delhi—where local residents will discuss development works required in their area, and will together decide on a series of priorities in this regard. Between 2009 and 2015, this idea constantly evolved, as activists became party leaders and then ministers. From 2013 onwards, a small team of dedicated AAP cadres worked at improving its formula so as to find the right scale, the right frequency, and the right modus operandi.

A first step towards the institutionalization of the *mohalla sabha* was taken in the Spring of 2015, shortly after the AAP was voted to power for the second time, through a pilot experiment with participatory budgeting. This new experience was first conducted in a limited number of constituencies (11 out of 70), but all the resources at the disposal of the new government were invested in it. Thus, in each constituency, 30 to 40 *mohallas* were delimited, with a view to have a roughly equal number of residents, and as far as possible, some socio-economic homogeneity. In order to organise the meetings in each neighbourhood, two "*mohalla sabha* coordinators" were nominated by the elected representative, the MLA. Their role was, before the meeting, to inform local people and encourage them to participate; during the meeting they had to moderate discussions between residents, but also between residents and officials representing the various concerned departments (in charge of water, horticulture, roads, etc.); and after the meeting they were in charge of following up and making sure that departments were working as per the priorities identified by the *mohalla sabha*.

On the basis of this pilot experience, the government prepared for the next round of participatory budgeting (scheduled for September 2016) in a more systematic manner: new NGOs were roped in to identify and train 6000 coordinators. In parallel, a detailed mapping of local infrastructure was conducted, along with

a precise identification of the departments and offices in charge of these various local "assets". On the basis of this huge collection of information, a mobile application was conceived specifically for *mohalla sabha* coordinators, so that they could immediately identify the person to contact in case of an overflowing drain, broken light bulbs, potholes in the road, etc. This whole organisation was financially planned for in the framework of the Swaraj (self-government) Bill, presented by the AAP as its signature piece of legislation. However, the Swaraj Bill was never notified, because from May 2015 a peculiar institutional tussle developed between the Central government, dominated by the BJP and represented in the constitutional architecture of the city-state by the Lieutenant Governor, and the regional government headed by the AAP, thus severely constraining the room for manoeuvre of the latter.

Facing the virtual suspension of the Swaraj Bill, the team of AAP cadres who had been working on *mohalla sabhas* then decided to shelve the project and invest their energy in a domain less dependent on the power of the Lieutenant Governor: the 1024 government schools where the children of Delhi's poorest residents are enrolled. Indeed, these cadres saw the SMCs as a potentially significant site for participatory democracy. SMCs are planned for in the Right to Education Act, an ambitious policy adopted at the national level in 2009 but badly implemented in most parts of India. The Education Ministry of the Delhi government decided to take seriously the elections to renew SMCs, due in late 2016. According to the law, each school must have an SMC composed of 16 persons: the school principal; a teacher of the school; 12 parents elected by other parents; a social worker; and the MLA, that is, the local elected representative. The objective became to give SMCs a central role in the government's project to improve the quality of schools, through two innovations: firstly, the MLA was to be represented in each SMC by an "MLA representative", nominated by him/her; secondly, several NGOs were roped in to train the 14,000 newly elected "parent members" of SMCs, to help organize SMC *mahasabhas* (super assemblies), and to follow up work.

SMC *mahasabhas* are large meetings where the SMCs of all the government schools of a constituency will present their grievances and demands to officials of several concerned departments (Education, but also Water, Police…) in the presence of the local MLA. These *mahasabhas*, even though they focus only on one sector—education—and involve only one category of citizens—parents—clearly are a continuation of *mohalla sabhas*. They offer another version of the organised confrontation between citizens and the administration, moderated by the elected representative. However, lessons have been learnt after the pilot experiment with *mohalla sabhas*, and one can observe the results of organisational learning. For instance, much more attention is devoted to equipping parent members of SMCs with the resources necessary for a real dialogue. Thus, each SMC *mahasabha* is preceded by a long preparation work that involves the training of parent members, the repeated solicitation of bureaucrats, the diffusion of information in an adequate form, etc. As a result, SMC *mahasabhas* have become effective platforms for grievance redress[3].

Both the short-lived participatory budgeting and the more successful SMC *mahasabhas* have implications for political representation in Delhi. In both cases indeed one can observe a redefinition of mediation work, as such mediation is magnified in two different ways.

Firstly, the role of the elected representative as mediator between his/her constituents and the state administration, a role considered as essential in the Indian context, takes on a new dimension because of the public nature of the meetings of *mohalla sabhas* and SMC *mahasabhas*. Such meetings are staged in a way that favourably highlights the central position of the MLA in between aggrieved citizens and a complex bureaucracy, as he/she not only monitors the discussion, but also intervenes to remind bureaucrats of their obligations vis-à-vis citizens. Thus, both *mohalla sabhas* and SMC *mahasabhas* have become possible sites for a political performance by the MLA, who both mediates and displays his/her mediation, as explained by an NGO worker in charge of preparing SMC *mahasabhas*:

> The SMC *sabhas* (assemblies) are a fantastic political platform for MLAs….Because he or she can reprimand officers in front of the parents, the parents will applaud, think "he is a tough guy, he is speaking for us" and most of the time actually the MLA…doesn't do much, but the SMC *sabha* becomes the platform to show that "look, I care so much"….We don't mind it too much, because our work is also getting done, for us also its important that the departments do get reprimanded…but we are very mindful the fact that it is a very political platform, it's a platform that helps the Aam Admi Party electorally as well. (Interview, Delhi, 2017)

Secondly, mediation work is expanded through the nomination of "*mohalla sabha* coordinators" and then "MLA representatives". We have seen that in the aftermath of the pilot participatory budgeting, 6000 MS coordinators were selected before the whole project was suspended. And since 2016, around 1000 MLA representatives have been nominated to take part in SMCs.

Today the latter are active even beyond this specific participatory scheme: several MLAs told me how their "representatives" are nominated, trained and involved in

[3] The empowerment of school management committees is only one part of the Delhi government's education policy, that also includes a significant increase in the budget allotted to the sector, building school infrastructure (classrooms, toilets, etc.) and reforming teachers' training. This consistent effort since 2015 has definitely improved outcomes: results for the 2018 exams at the end of class 12 revealed that the pass percentage was better in government schools (91%) than in private institutions (88%). For a balanced assessment of the AAP government's education policy, see Dhingra (2019).

local governance in a more or less formal manner. It is important to note that this new character is recognised by bureaucrats—one of them indeed mentioned "the local representative" to refer not to the MLA, but to his nominee. The use of vocabulary is interesting here: on the one hand, the elected representative is never called "representative" (or *pratinidhi*) by my interviewees, who will mention only the "MLA", sometimes the "*vidhayak*" (legislator), very rarely the "*neta*" (leader). On the other hand, the person nominated by the MLA to represent him/her, even if he is sometimes named "MLA proxy" or "MLA nominee" by party cadres, is most often called "MLA representative".

The MLA representative is always a party volunteer, someone who has time to spare for this work and who will know how to speak to bureaucrats. It's almost always a man, either somebody who has a business that can run without him, or a retired person.

What does he do? In the context of SMCs, his first function is a symbolic one—he signals that SMCs have to be taken seriously, as explained by a party cadre:

> Parents often feel disempowered…in schools, parents often could not even enter schools, were turned away by the guard at the door. What really helped was the fact that there was a representative from the MLA's office (in the SMC), it meant that there is someone who is politically empowered and therefore…they could help ensure that the governmental administrative structure gives some recognition to these parents. So if someone is coming from MLA's office, they would obviously be served tea in the same kind of cups as the principal, therefore the parents also could be served in the same plates, so that prevented lots of class bias that used to exist even in the defunct (SMCs)....I have heard about how in some MCD [Municipal Corporation of Delhi] schools, the principal would sit on the chair and the parents sit on the floor in SMC meetings. So the presence of the MLA representative ensured that there was better treatment of SMCs, because of the MLA, that is, political empowerment, that gives to the parents more of a voice. (Interview 2017)

The second function of the MLA representative is to work on local peoples' grievances regarding their area:

> We solve grievances….Any sort of grievances. Now MLA's power lies in specific areas. For instance...there is Electricity Department, then there is Water Department…and Public Works Department [PWD]….So we deal with all these issues….Essentially our (mobile) numbers are with a lot of people, because we are representatives in our specific areas and also as a whole in the constituency. (Interview with MLA representative, 2017)

His third role is that of a liaison officer: he communicates information from the MLA to local residents, but also—and this is significant regarding political representation—he talks to the MLA on behalf of the residents as a collective:

> Their job is basically a postman, so whatever work is needed in their area, they will let me know that this is the high priority work, for example at 1 pm today, we have a meeting at Delhi Jal Board (Water Department), so I will go and meet the officer there. So, seven, eight volunteers will be available there, so we will be discussing more the budget that I have got, let's say 2 crores (20 million rupees), and I have works which are lined up which are 7 crores....So we will all sit and we will prioritize, let us give 20 lakhs (two million rupees) to this, 7 lakhs to this, 8 lakhs to this…because I don't know what is high priority in different areas. (Interview with MLA, 2017)

Thus the MLA representative is expected to intercede/intervene on behalf not of individuals, but of a collective: either the constituency of the MLA as a whole, when he acts as proxy of the MLA in a meeting with bureaucrats; or one portion of this constituency, when he acts as the spokesperson of a neighbourhood in a meeting with the MLA. Because the MLA representative is somewhat formally given the role of "speaking for" a collective (to paraphrase Hanna Pitkin) we can consider that he does perform some political representation. However, the MLA and his/her representative have clearly different mandates: while the MLA is an elected representative, his/her nominee is a delegated one.

AAP cadres present MLA representatives as crucial actors in the party's project of decentralizing decision-making. Except in the Education sector, however, MLA representatives are actors of deconcentration rather than decentralization. Through the nomination of his/her 30 to 40 "representatives", the MLA distributes power only to party volunteers or supporters; and the power of each nominee is only, as I said, a delegation of his/her own power, which makes it very difficult for MLA representatives to contest the MLA's vision or decisions. Indeed, all interviewees insisted on the need to "act", "solve", and "get things done"; there was no mention of debates within the group formed by the MLA and his/her representatives, let alone of dissension.

So, are MLA representatives any different from the swarm of party workers hanging around party offices in all Indian metropolises? Beyond their new name, are they not the same, well known figures of everyday politics, described in the works of political anthropologists studying urban India? (See for instance Berenschot, 2010; Björkman, 2014; and Witsoe, 2011). There is obviously one common feature: just like other parties, the AAP uses the semi-formal position of MLA representative to distribute symbolic resources to its supporters, i.e., the social prestige that comes from being associated to the MLA and speaking on a regular basis to bureaucrats.

One difference, however, is the tentative formalization of the relationship between the MLA and the MLA representative. There will be a poster put up in the office of the MLA, displaying the names of his/her representatives along with their phone number and the departments of which they are respectively "in charge". There can also be a letter written by the MLA, specifically requesting a department to accept Mr. X as his/her representative, as explained by the secretary of an MLA:

> We have here a dedicated team of 20 people, for electricity issues, MCD issues, PWD issues, Forest Department…this gentleman looks after issues related to the Delhi Jal Board (Water Department)....This gentleman coordinates with everyone…and MLA has officially sent a letter to the department concerned, (saying) that "I authorize so and so, his mobile number so and so, to speak, coordinate and communicate with our department officials on my behalf on issues related to (our) Assembly constituency". He's given a letter to the concerned Minister and asked "please advise your officials to cooperate with them." (Interview, Delhi, 2016)

This semi-institutionalization of MLA representatives, this emphasis on a transparent deconcentration of the MLA's mediation work, precisely demonstrates a will to differentiate MLA representatives from the multiplicity of mediators that characterises Delhi's governance (Tawa Lama-Rewal, 2011) such as party workers, "informal leaders", or the self-appointed representatives of Resident Welfare Associations.

4. Making Representation Inclusive

Another, more important difference between the AAP and other political parties is the magnification of mediation achieved through (i) its public performance by MLAs and (ii) its expansion by MLA representatives. In the participatory devices described above, elected representatives "speak for" the people, but also *with* the people, offering an example of what Samuel Hayat calls "inclusive representation":

> Political representation can be called inclusive when it enables citizens to fight against exclusion from professional politics by acquiring (its) language and by using it to intervene in decision-making processes from which they are excluded. This form of the inclusive use of representation can be designated as the inclusion of citizens through their politicization. (Hayat, 2013, p. 119)

The empowerment of SMCs, especially through the organisation of SMC *mahasabhas*, is arguably a case of such "inclusion by politicization". An NGO worker who coordinated the organisation of several SMC *mahasabhas* thus evokes a major, if intangible result of these meetings:

> SMCs don't just serve as the grievance redressal platform, they are also somehow a means to give people a sense that the state is listening to them, and that is something that does not happen in India too often. Indians don't engage too much with the state, their engagement with the state largely happens only during the election. That is the only time they feel that the state exists, and state exists for them. Otherwise Indians usually see the state as a somewhat repressive, autocratic power, which they don't have anything to do with. But here it is a platform where they see all the officials who are responsible for whatever their school is supposed to be running, and here is the platform where they have the power to shout at officials and tell them that "you have not done your work", because when they go to a government office to get the work done, they are at a position of inferiority and they are never listened to…but here the official is coming to them, and here is a platform which is exclusively for them. (Interview 2017)[4]

While SMC parent members are formally trained in order to play their role in an effective manner, MLA representatives receive more informal (but not necessarily less effective) "training sessions", as explained by an MLA:

> We do have training sessions, so they (MLA representatives)…know, basically what are the stages of getting the work done….What will happen is that we will call them to the officers' meeting, slowly they will understand that this is how things will work…like, these three four people here, they all are party volunteers…so they'll just sit here like a fly on the wall, and grasp whatever they can. (Interview 2017)

When I asked MLA representatives how bureaucrats reacted to their intervention, here is what one of them told me:

> They (bureaucrats) never listened to us because we were amateurs, you know? When we came in, we didn't understand the structure. So the first two years we learned how to speak to them. We learned how to get the work done by them. Because they also slowly realised that we don't really have any authority over them…but now they don't want to get into that mess to be very honest. So work happens. Because, they know at the end of the day, we can very much call them and then get the work done. So it is only going to elongate the time of the whole process. (Interview 2017)

[4] This description suggests that the SMC *mahasabha* is the latest avatar of the *jan sunwai* (public hearing), a form of mobilization cum platform for grievance redressal whose specific emotional dynamics helps "restore the citizenship" of its participants (Tawa Lama-Rewal, 2018).

Where should we place MLA representatives in the representative system of Delhi politics? The distinction made by Hayat between two modes of inclusion by politicization, i.e., internal and external inclusion, is heuristic:

> We will distinguish between internal inclusion, based on actual mechanisms of representative government, and external inclusion, which relies on the construction of forms of representation outside the institutions of representative government. (Hayat, 2013, p. 118)

The difficulty of applying this distinction to the Delhi case results from—and highlights—the fact that the AAP government has made the boundaries between formal and informal mediation/representation, and between representation and participation, even more blurred than they used to be when the Congress party was in power in the city-state. *Mohalla sabhas* and empowered SMCs might well exemplify "external inclusion", but the semi-formal MLA representative is more difficult to categorise. On the one hand the very concept of "MLA representative", that is, "representative's representative", implicitly emphasises elections as the principal source of legitimacy (directly for the MLA, indirectly for his representatives). On the other hand, MLA representatives carry mostly the informal (but nevertheless important) part of the mediation work assigned to the MLA.

This merging of "internal" and "external" inclusion might be called "inclusion as mobilization". Indeed, the representative claim of MLAs, in the AAP, is a mobilizing one. The modus operandi of *mohalla sabhas* as well as SMC *mahasabhas* signifies that the legitimacy of the local elected representative proceeds not only from his/her election, but also from his/her capacity to mobilize constituents, to have them participate in the devices set up by the government. In other words, the MLA embodies popular sovereignty, but not completely; he/she needs "the people" to be physically present at his/her sides in order to completely (that is, symbolically as well as juridically; for a discussion of the different meanings of political representation, see Sintomer, 2013) represent his/her constituency. As an MLA put it:

> We represent people and the premise of our power is based on the people having elected us, so obviously even today whenever there is some work which is getting delayed, I can talk to an officer and tell him this is what the *mohalla* voted for; there have been instances where I've told residents of the *mohalla* to come with me for that meeting, so I can put further pressure on that officer, that "I have these 50 people from the *mohalla* sitting over here, outside your office, please give them an answer." (Interview 2016)

This conception of the representative as mobilizer is both a legacy of the past avatar of the party as a (anti-corruption) movement, and central to a political strategy that could be described as permanent canvassing. Indeed, the semi-institutionalization of some 3,000 MLA representatives would obviously consolidate the party's presence and visibility on the whole territory of Delhi. The selection and nomination of MLA representatives is a way to keep the AAP's army of volunteers busy, to reward loyalties, to offer incentives. It consolidates the MLA's—and therefore the party's—hold on the constituency. However political convictions are not necessarily at odds with political compulsions: in this case, the party arguably wants to mobilize people both because this will increase pressure on local authorities to get work done, and because it should be an asset in the next elections.

5. Conclusion

Seven years after its creation, the AAP is no longer the "unidentified political object" that it used to be (Roy, 2014), even though it has been, since 2015, in a situation that is at the same time uniquely favourable (it won 67 seats out of 70 in Delhi) and exceptionally constraining (its conflict with the Lieutenant Governor has resulted, since 2016, in near institutional paralysis). I have shown that the party's discourse reveals many affinities with populism, including a denunciation of misrepresentation, and a de-emphasis on representation in a more positive sense. The promotion of participation both in the discourse of the party and in its practices (once it formed the government) confirms the proximity, underlined by Margaret Canovan (1999, p. 14), between populisms and what she calls "participatory radicalisms"—even though the AAP has consistently valued decision more than deliberation, and will more than judgement.

Looking at the two main participatory dispositives implemented by the party complicates the negative equation between populism and representative democracy posed by Jayal, who considered that in its early years at least, the party, while it "formally accept(ed) the framework of representative democracy…simultaneously work(ed) to undermine it" (Jayal, 2016, p. 178). I have argued that the role given to the MLA in *mohalla sabhas* and in SMC *mahasabhas*, as well as the semi-institutionalization of MLA representatives, both magnify the mediation work that is central to political representation, and reassert that election is the main (if not exclusive) source of legitimacy. Moreover, *mohalla sabhas* and SMC *mahasabhas* are innovations that can doubtlessly be called "democratic", even if imperfectly so. Finally, the conception of the elected representative as mobilizer is central to a form of "inclusive representation".

Acknowledgments

This research is part of a collective research project jointly funded by ANR and DFG, called CLAIMS (https://claims.hypotheses.org/68); it greatly bene-

fited from discussions within the team. I also want to thank the two anonymous reviewers as well as Brigitte Geissel and Petra Guasti for their insightful comments and suggestions.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

References

Aam Aadmi Party. (2014). Aam Aadmi Party: National manifesto 2014. *Aam Aadmi Party*. Retrieved from https://aamaadmiparty.wordpress.com/2014/04/03/aam-aadmi-party-national-manifesto-2014

Barr, R. R. (2009). Populists, outsiders and anti-establishment politics. *Party Politics*, *15*(1), 29-48. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068808097890

Berenschot, W. (2010). Everyday mediation: The politics of public service delivery in Gujarat, India. *Development and Change*, *41*(5), 883–905. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7660.2010.01660.x

Björkman, L. (2014). 'Vote banking' as politics in Mumbai. In A. Piliavsky (Ed.), *Patronage as politics in South Asia* (pp. 176–195). Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Bonikowski, B., & Gidron, N. (2016). The populist style in American politics: Presidential Campaign discourse, 1952–1996. *Social Forces*, *94*(4), 1593–1621. https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/sov120

Canovan, M. (1999). Trust the people! Populism and the two faces of democracy. *Political Studies*, *47*(1), 2–16. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.00184

Chatterjee, P. (2011). Against corruption = Against politics. Retrieved from https://kafila.online/2011/08/28/against-corruption-against-politics-partha-chatterjee

Dhingra, K. (2019, February 23). As AAP turns government schools around, questions about learning linger. *The Wire*. Retrieved from https://thewire.in/education/as-aap-turns-government-schools-around-questions-about-learning-linger

Guasti, P., & Almeida, D. R. (2019). Claims of misrepresentation: A comparison of Germany and Brazil. *Politics and Governance*, *7*(3), 152–164.

Hayat, S. (2013). Inclusive representation. *Raisons Politiques*, *50*(2), 115–135.

Huber, R. A., & Ruth, S. P. (2017). Mind the gap! Populism, participation and representation in Europe. *Swiss Political Science Review*, *23*(4), 462–484. https://doi.org/10.1111/spsr.12280

Jaffrelot, C. (2019). *L'Inde de Modi: National-populisme et démocratie ethnique* [Modi's India: National-populism and ethnic democracy]. Paris: Fayard.

Jayal, N. G. (2016). Contending representative claims in Indian democracy. *India Review*, *15*(2), 172–195. https://doi.org/10.1080/14736489.2016.1165556

Kaltwasser, C. R. (2014). The responses of populism to Dahl's democratic dilemmas. *Political Studies*, *62*(3), 470–487. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.12038

Kejriwal, A. (2013). Kejriwal's address after oath taking. *The times of India*. Retrieved from https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/assembly-elections-2013/delhi-assembly-elections/Remember-were-here-to-serve-never-be-arrogant-Arvind-Kejriwal/articleshow/28075560.cms?prtpage=1

Kejriwal, A. (2014). Arvind Kejriwal's speech in the Legislative Assembly, January 2014. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E4Vxvr18UNQ

Kejriwal, A. (2015). Kejriwal's address after becoming CM for the second time. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NAViJaoXpag

Laclau, E. (2007). *On populist reason*. London: Verso.

McDonnell, D., & Cabrera, L. (2019). The right-wing populism of India's Bharatiya Janata party (and why comparativists should care). *Democratization*, *26*(3), 484–501. https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2018.1551885

Mudde, C. (2004). The populist zeitgeist. *Government and Opposition*, *39*(4), 541–563. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1477-7053.2004.00135.x

Mudde, C., & Kaltwasser, C. R. (2013). Exclusionary vs. inclusionary populism: Comparing contemporary Europe and Latin America. *Government and Opposition*, *48*(2), 147–174. https://doi.org/10.1017/gov.2012.11

Pappas, T. S. (2019). Populists in power. *Journal of Democracy*, *30*(2), 70–84. https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2019.0026

Rosanvallon, P. (2011). Penser le populisme. *La Vie des Idées*. Retrieved from http://www.laviedesidees.fr/Penser-le-populisme.html

Roy, S. (2014). Being the change. The Aam Aadmi party and the politics of the extraordinary in Indian democracy. *Economic and Political Weekly*, *49*(15), 45–54.

Saward, M. (2010). *The representative claim*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sintomer, Y. (2013). Les sens de la représentation politique: Usages et mésusages d'une notion. *Raisons Politiques*, *2*(50), 13–34.

Tarragoni, F. (2013). La science du populisme au crible de la critique sociologique: Archéologie d'un mépris savant du peuple [The science of populism as assessed through the prism of sociological critique: An archeology of a knowing contempt for the people]. *Actuel Marx*, *2*(54), 56–70. https://doi.org/10.3917/amx.054.0056

Tawa Lama-Rewal, S. (2011). Urban governance and health care provision in Delhi. *Environment and Urbanization*, *23*(2), 1–19.

Tawa Lama-Rewal, S. (2014). Les défis extraordinaires du "Parti de l'homme ordinaire". Retour sur les élections Indiennes de 2014. *Noria*. Retrieved from http://www.noria-research.com/les-defis-extraordinaires-du-parti-de-lhomme-ordinaire-retour-sur-les-

elections-indiennes-de-2014
Tawa Lama-Rewal, S. (2018). Public hearings as social performance: Addressing the courts, restoring citizenship. *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal*, *17*. https://doi.org/10.4000/samaj.4413
van Dijk, T. A. (1997). What is political discourse analysis? *Belgian Journal of Linguistics*, *11*(1), 11–52. https://doi.org/10.1075/bjl.11.03dij
Witsoe, J. (2011). Corruption as power: Caste and the political imagination of the postcolonial state. *American Ethnologist*, *38*, 73–85. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-1425.2010.01293.x
Wyatt, A. (2015). Arvind Kejriwal's leadership of the Aam Aadmi party. *Contemporary South Asia*, *23*(2), 167–180. https://doi.org/10.1080/09584935.2015.1025038

About the Author

Stéphanie Tawa Lama-Rewal is a political scientist who studies Indian democracy through three major themes: group (especially women's) representation; participatory experiments; and urban governance. Her recent publications include *Les Avatars de la Participation en Inde. Formes et Ambiguïtés de la Démocratie Participative* (Avatars of Participation in India. Forms and Ambiguities of Participatory Democracy, Paris, Editions du Croquant, 2018) and (co-edited with Amélie Blom) *Emotions and Mobilisations in South Asian Politics* (Delhi, Routledge, 2019).

COGITATIO

Politics and Governance (ISSN: 2183–2463)
2019, Volume 7, Issue 3, Pages 189–198
DOI: 10.17645/pag.v7i3.2155

Article

Anti-Corruption Movement: A Story of the Making of the Aam Admi Party and the Interplay of Political Representation in India

Aheli Chowdhury

Department of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi, 11001 Delhi, India;
E-Mail: aheli.chowdhury@gmail.com

Submitted: 30 March 2019 | Accepted: 26 July 2019 | Published: 24 September 2019

Abstract
The Aam Admi Party (AAP; Party of the Common Man) was founded as the political outcome of an anti-corruption movement in India that lasted for 18 months between 2010–2012. The anti-corruption movement, better known as the India Against Corruption Movement (IAC), demanded the passage of the *Janlokpal* Act, an Ombudsman body. The movement mobilized public opinion against corruption and the need for the passage of a law to address its rising incidence. The claim to eradicate corruption captured the imagination of the middle class, and threw up several questions of representation. The movement prompted public and media debates over who represented civil society, who could claim to represent the 'people', and asked whether parliamentary democracy was a more authentic representative of the people's wishes vis-à-vis a people's democracy where people expressed their opinion through direct action. This article traces various ideas of political representation within the IAC that preceded the formation of the AAP to reveal the emergence of populist representative democracy in India. It reveals the dynamic relationship forged by the movement with the media, which created a political field that challenged liberal democratic principles and legitimized popular public perception and opinion over laws and institutions.

Keywords
Aam Admi Party; India; India Against Corruption; Janlokpal; political representation; populism

Issue
This article is part of the issue "Rethinking Representation: Representative Claims in Global Perspective", edited by Petra Guasti (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany) and Brigitte Geissel (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany).

1. Introduction

Recently there has been a lot of interest in understanding new ways of 'doing politics' in India. The 2014 general elections and the rise of Narendra Modi as Prime Minister from the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), it is argued, has ushered in a different style of politics in India, often described as populism (Gudavarthy, 2019; Jayal, 2016). The formation of the government in Delhi[1] by the Aam Admi Party (AAP; Party of the Common Man) and the rise of its leader Arvind Kejriwal in the 2013 and 2015 state elections is also been argued to be another critical milestone in Indian democratic politics (Jayal, 2016; Roy, 2014). This party, as Stephanie Tawa Lama-Rewal (2019) mentions, claimed to have entered politics to "clean it [*politics*] from inside", to "change the rules" and to "make politics more honest". The AAP was founded as the political outcome of the India Against Corruption Movement (IAC), also known as the *Janlokpal* Movement that lasted for 18 months from 2010 to 2012. *Janlokpal*, in which *Jan*, a Hindi word meaning the 'people'. *Lokpal*, a Sanskrit word meaning 'caretaker of people', was used to stand for an Ombudsman body representing public interest. This word was coined by the

[1] Delhi is the national capital of India and is fully funded by the Union Government of India. It is a city as well as union territory of India. It has its own Legislative Assembly, the Lieutenant Governor, Council of Minister and Chief Minister. In 2013 Delhi Legislative Assembly Elections, all the three contesting parties, the BJP, the AAP and the Indian National Congress Party (INC) failed to get a majority and there was a hung Assembly. However, AAP formed a minority government with support of INC. They soon dissolved the government after 49 days claiming differences with INC. Delhi Legislative Assembly Elections were held again in 2015 and in this AAP won by a landslide majority winning 67 seats out of 70 seats and formed the government.

IAC Movement to claim that this version of the body of Ombudsman were the true representative of the interest of the people. The movement demanded the passage of *Janlokpal* Act, which would institute an Ombudsman body to hold parliamentarians to account. The movement mobilized public opinion against corruption and was able to capture the imagination of the middle class in the process throwing up several questions of representation for public discussion.

This article draws from fieldwork conducted in 2014 and 2015 to trace the transformation in the media field after the 1990s and how that influenced the modes of contestations of social movements in contemporary India. By interrogating the process of the construction of political representation by the IAC Movement and the ways in which it influenced the dynamics of democratic politics in India, I develop two arguments. First, the emergence of IAC marked a significant moment that altered the political field in India and allowed for the rise of a populist language of social movements, which appealed more to authoritarian rather than democratic values. And second, that the media played a crucial role in driving this change.

2. Political Representation and Media: Theoretical Framework

In *The Representative Claim* (2010), Michael Saward built on Hannah Pitkin's classic model of representation in *The Concept of Representation* (1967). Pitkin's book, an influential theoretical work in the field of political representation, suggested representation was "substantive acting for others", where representing meant "acting in the interest of the represented" (Pitkin, 1967). This conceptualization limited the role of the represented and reduced it to passive acceptance and receiving information given by the represented. Saward argued that representation is dynamic and a two-way process where representations are constructed by making claims. Claim making lies at the core of his conceptualization. He stressed that the process of claim making is essentially performative in nature, where constituencies are created by claims made by actors, rather than being factual products of elections. Saward writes that "representing is performing, is action by actors and the performance contains or adds up to a claim that someone is or can be representative" (Saward, 2006, p. 302). Further, he writes that representative claims can only exist if 'audiences' acknowledge them in some way, therefore pointing to its dual effect, i.e., the 'subject' effect and the 'object' effect (Saward, 2006). The claim making process lies in the dynamics of the engagement of the subject and the object. The claims are made to represent a particular constituency and audience, while at the same time this very process of claim making is instrumental in constituting the audience (Saward, 2006, p. 304). The creation of audiences is essential for representative claims to exist, thus pointing to the imperative role played by the media in this process. As Bourdieu mentions, that symbolic power constitutes the given by stating it, to act upon the world by acting upon the representation of the world. It does not reside in 'symbolic systems', but is defined in and by a definite relation that creates belief in the legitimacy of the words and of the person who utters them, and it operates only in as much as those who undergo it recognize those who wield it (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 148). Media institutions gain significance as specialized agents of cultural production wielding the power to constitute representation. Media is a site of production, reproduction and circulation of facts that no one questions. It plays a critical role in the circulation of unconscious material and occupies a privileged position in the symbolic struggle to make things seen and believed (Bourdieu, Poupeau, & Discepolo, 2008, p. 323).

In the context of India, media institutions have undergone several transformations in recent decades. There have been transformations in the print media as well as the electronic media (Jeffrey, 2000; Mehta, 2008). For both these forms the 1990s proved to be critical turning point. For the electronic media, 1990 saw the entry of satellite television in India. This completely altered the field of media and the politics that followed. The sociological journey of television can be plotted along some events that transformed television in India.

Rajagopal in his book, *Politics after Television* (2004), examines the rise of Hindu Nationalism with the *Ram Jhanmabhumi* Movement (birthplace of Lord Ram Movement) that led to the demolition of the Babri Masjid[2] in 1992. He argues that it was the screening of the televised epic of *Ramayana* by the state control electronic media channel Doordarshan that led to creation of a collective consciousness, which was essentially of Hindu Nationalism (Rajagopal, 2004). It was this Hinduised collective consciousness that the BJP leaders appealed to in the *Ram Janmabhumi* Movement, which had followed soon after. Television played this role not because of any intentional bias of the media towards a particular religion, but because of the inherent way the *Ram Janmabhumi* Movement was understood by the people within the media as well as outside it (Rajagopal, 2004, p. 172). Further to understand the audience that the televised epic of *Ramayana* was serving, he introduces the term 'split public'. He maintains that central to the split is the unfulfilled mission of secularism in a deeply divided Indian society. The creation of the Indian secular state after Independence, never really resolved the tension between orthodox Hindu and progressive nationalists, and maintained a split polity that on the one side retained an official secular public sphere and on the other side a heterogeneous popular culture which was

[2] It was a mosque in Ayodhya, located in the state of Uttar Pradesh in India. Debates around it long existed in the popular discourse of the area that it was built by destroying a pre-existing temple of Lord Rama (Hindu God). On December 6th, 1992, the mosque was destroyed by the Hindu nationalist groups part of the *Ram Janmabhumi* Movement led by the right-wing party, BJP.

still significantly Hinduised. The penetration of electronic media led to the blurring of the boundaries of this split, which was used to its advantage by the BJP in mobilizing massive Hindu sentiment around the *Ram Janmabhumi* Movement. They were able to convert this into electoral success in the next general elections, going on to form the government.

Rajagopal's work on television provides an important historical background to understand construction of popular political representation by media. Nirija Jayal (2016) on the other hand, builds on Bourdieu and Saward to interrogate the process of construction of political representation by political actors and its implications on the theory of representative democracy. In this she shows how the new forms of representation have slowly developed. The emergence of populist representation and Caesarist forms of representation have preceded traditional forms of representation, which have relied on aggregation of preferences or descriptive representation (Jayal, 2016, p. 173). Jayal shows the coming to power of the AAP in Delhi and the Narendra Modi-led BJP at the Union government in India to have relied on the populist and Caesarist forms of representation respectively.

Ajay Gudavarthy in his book, *India after Modi: Populism and the Right* (2019), examines the emergence of populism in India through a series of events in the regime of Narendra Modi's government post 2014 general elections. He writes that the turn to populism is a global phenomenon with specific characteristics. They include creation the 'people' as against an identifiable 'outsider'; a strong leader around whom all processes would revolve and finally symbols capable to merging 'facts' and 'fiction' and creating popular perception and narratives to establish and sustain the supremacy of the 'strongman' (Gudavarthy, 2019, p. 3). He highlights how perception is the key driver used to break the dichotomy of politics and policies and stripping laws of its social legitimacy. These phenomena have become visible in the last four years in India, where the Hindu-Muslim conflict has been used to create 'authentic people—the Hindu' in crisis against a perceived outsider the 'Muslim'.

This article builds on Jayal and Gudavarthy's argument to show how the anti-corruption movement that preceded the formation of the AAP engendered the political field that allowed for the new forms of representations to emerge. I use Saward's central concept of the dynamic, performative and constitutive nature of political representation to provide an insight into the IAC's construction of representative claims and constituencies, as well as the role played by the media in this process.

3. IAC: The Beginning

Between April 2011 and November 2012, the IAC captured the popular imagination in India, especially in Delhi, the national capital region of the country. The movement was set against the backdrop of several instances of large-scale political corruption by the ruling regime. Prominent amongst these was the case of corruption in the Commonwealth Games of 2010 (hosted by India from 3rd to 14th October in Delhi) that implicated the Chief Minister of Delhi, Sheila Dikshit. Several reports of gross irregularities and loss due to corruption surfaced. The loss to the exchequer was estimated to be close to Rs. 2,300 crores by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.[3]

The movement began with a complaint filed in the form of a First Information Report (written document prepared by the Police on receiving information about the commission of a cognizable offence) against Sheila Dikshit at the Parliament Street Police Station[4] on November 14th 2010 by Arvind Kejriwal. At the public event that followed, Kejriwal declared the launch of the 'movement against corruption' and demanded for passage of the *Lokpal* bill to put a stop to the widespread corruption in governance.

The central character of this movement, Arvind Kejriwal, was an officer in the Income Tax Department of the Government of India, who began his work by fighting corruption and bribery in Department itself. He set up camps outside the Income Tax office to assist people in seeking the redressal of their grievances without having to pay bribes. His work as an anti-corruption activist got him interested in the ongoing struggle that demanded for the citizens' Right to Information[5] (hereafter RTI). He soon joined the RTI movement and also founded a non-profit organization *Parivartan* ('Change'). The RTI Act was passed by the Parliament of India in 2005 (Jayal, 2007; Pande, 2007; Webb, 2010).

In the years after 2005, Kejriwal organized many campaigns that pushed for greater use of the RTI Act and ways to fight corruption in everyday governance. In most of the campaigns, media partnership played a critical role. Institutional collaborations with different media, both print and electronic, helped champion the use of RTI Act as an anti-corruption tool. The media relationships forged during these campaigns were later used to mobilize support for the IAC. The IAC campaign of 2010 was, however, a leap into a territory that generated much public interest. Starting off as an anti-corruption campaign, it soon snowballed into a country-wide move-

[3] The Comptroller and Auditor General of India is an autonomous body established by the Constitution of India to audit all receipts and expenditure done by the Government of India, the state (federal) government and all bodies and authorities substantially financed by the government.

[4] It is a prominent street near the Parliament of India and all surrounding area falls under the jurisdiction of this Police station. This is a high security zone in Delhi and remains under high surveillance round the clock.

[5] India inherited the Official Secrets Act of 1923 from its colonial past. Vide this legislation all government information was secret. It applied to government servants and citizens and made spying, sharing 'secret' information, unauthorized use of uniforms, withholding information, interference with the armed forces in prohibited/restricted areas, among others, punishable offences. If guilty, a person may get up to 14 years' imprisonment, a fine, or both. This Act prohibited sharing of any government information with citizens. The RTI campaign that began in the early 1990s in the India, challenged this colonial act and demanded citizens' RTI. See Baviskar (2010), Jenkins and Goetz (1999) and Singh (2010).

ment that threw the government off track. The movement's leaders made claims of representation, which finally led to the overthrow of the incumbent government and capturing of state power in the 2013 and 2015 federal elections of Delhi by the Kejriwal-led AAP.

4. Claim Making and Political Representation: IAC and the Media

Post the launch of the IAC on November 14th 2010 in Delhi, the movement held several other events in Delhi and in other parts of the country. All these were designed to be media events, where the messages were made available to be televised, circulated and consumed. One of my informants mentioned that the movement right from the onset foregrounded media as a central actor, and different aspects of the movement were designed accordingly (NK, 2014, Interviewed on November 13th). IAC, as the name suggests, claimed to represent the 'people of India' who were against corruption and demanded immediate action. The claim was strategically built, which in the process constructed both the representative as well as the represented, i.e., the constituency. A leading face is critical for the construction of a representative who will represent the constituency. A search for a 'face' ensued as recounted by another informant (SM, 2014, Interviewed on September 16th). Until now, all anti-corruption campaigns by Kejriwal were led by him, but for this one, he wanted a more 'representative face', one that would have a mass appeal (NK, 2014, Interviewed on November 13th). Kejriwal approached religious and spiritual leaders such as Baba Ramdev, a yoga guru and spiritual leader, and Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, a spiritual leader and founder of Art of Living Foundation, both leaders having huge mass support and following amongst the urban elite and middle class population across the country and overseas. Both these personalities were engaged in the initial protests and events. The IAC successfully tapped into the followings of these two spiritual leaders to build its initial support base in Delhi and other urban areas. The large number of volunteers of the Art of Living Foundation in Delhi and other parts of the country formed the initial backbone for the movement. However, later, with increasing popularity many others joined. After the initial boost, IAC soon distanced itself from these two leaders but continued to draw on their support. However, Kejriwal continued to look for a 'face' to lead the campaign; the movement needed a 'face' that could appeal to large section of the population, a non-elite yet someone who could not be dismissed by the middle class and the elite (NK, 2014, Interviewed on November 13th).

4.1. Making of the 'Representative'

Anna Hazare was a self-proclaimed Gandhian, known to have made significant changes in terms of good governance in a small village, Ralegaon Siddhi, in the state of Maharashtra. He had contributed to anti-corruption activism in Maharashtra and had been on hunger strike to pressure the Maharashtra government to implement the RTI Act. He had been awarded the Padma Bhushan for his efforts (the third highest civilian award given by the Republic of India for distinguished service of a high order). Though regionally significant, he was not well known to the national media. Kejriwal was looking for a face who could lead the campaign. Anna Hazare was someone whose image could be popularised by the national media. The narrative that was built around Hazare projected him as a pure and selfless old man, a true 'nationalist', ready to lay down his life for the nation. Kejriwal and his team built a twofold strategy. First, to create an identity of Anna Hazare and establish him as the leader of this anti-corruption campaign. Second, to create the constituency, 'the people', for Anna Hazare to represent (BK, 2014, Interviewed on August 6th; NK, 2014, Interviewed on November 13th; SM, 2014, Interviewed on September 16th).

For the first, the image of Mahatma Gandhi was borrowed. Saward writes that representative claims that resonate amongst the audience are made from 'ready mades', i.e., from existing terms and understandings that the audience recognize. The style, timing and content of a representative claim has to link with a contextual framework that is familiar. The claim has to repeat the familiar as well as add something new for it to be acceptable to the audience (2006, p. 303). The narrative that was woven around Anna Hazare was that of a 74 years old man, who had given all his life to serve the nation as part of the Indian Army. He owns nothing, just a plate to eat and a bed to sleep on, he stays in one room of a temple, has no bank balance, no car and no personal property, has no affiliation with any political party, nor any desire for high titles. He has been fighting for the last 20 years against corrupt and anti-social people, his efforts have forced 6 corrupt ministers to resign and 400 corrupt officials were dismissed from their jobs. During his fight, the government had jailed him, but he wore that as a badge of honor. He believed that he has one life to serve the country and he cannot bear to see injustice been done, and was ready to give up his life fighting for the welfare of people of his country. He was determined to uproot corruption. He was ready to fast unto death to protest against government inaction on fulfilling the demand for a strong *Lokpal* Act'. The narrative was of him being an undisputable leader similar to Mahatma Gandhi who had emerged to lead the country out of the dark days of corruption was created and reinforced at every stage. The link with Mahatma Gandhi also sought to revive the anti-colonial nationalism narrative and draw parallels of this movement with independence struggle of India. Mahatma Gandhi had fought against the colonial government to free India and Anna Hazare would fight the corrupt government to free India from the shackles of corruption and darkness. Slogan and visuals saying *Bhrashtrachar Bharat Choro* (Corruption

Quit India) modeled around the historical movement of Quit India Movement of August 1942 or *Kale Angrezo Bharat Choro* (Black Englishmen Quit India) were indicative of the how heavily the movement borrowed from independence movement of India. And in this narrative Hazare was the self-claimed '*dusra* or second Gandhi' fighting '*aazadi ki dusri ladhai*' ('second freedom struggle'; Pinney, 2014).

Political representation is performative in nature, and a lot of that performance is played out through visuals and actions that serve to make the claims real (Saward, 2006). Consistent and powerful visuals were created to build the image of Anna Hazare on the existing repertoire of visuals of Mahatma Gandhi. The movement used, posters, banners, national flag, stage backdrops, slogan and all other communication avenues to link Anna Hazare to Gandhi and to the independence movement. All events repeatedly used Anna's photo and juxtaposed it with portraits of Gandhi in the backdrop. Use of Gandhi *Topi* or Gandhi Cap, named after Mahatma Gandhi and used during Independence movement, use of slogans like, '*Anna nahi, yeh aandhi hain, Desh ka doosra Gandhi hain*' ('This is not Anna, but he is like a storm, he is the second Gandhi of the country') served to reinforce the linkage (Pinney, 2014; Webb, 2015). The cap was sold widely at the protest sites and had 'We want *Janlokpal*' and 'I am Anna', written on either side. The display of large national flags and nationalist slogans at protest sites became an important symbol linking 'nationalism' to this movement. The campaign used several props to sustain the visual continuity of the representations.

In addition to the caps and posters, careful designing of backdrops of the stage set up at the protest events also kept the message consistent and uniform. Further the claim of IAC to be representing the 'national voice against corruption' was constructed through several tropes and in this the assertion made by the media to be speaking on 'behalf of the nation' was critical (Jayal, 2016). For construction of the media narrative, first, the movement had a name, which was distinct, and claimed representation of the entire nation to be part of this campaign. Second, it delivered a solution that was chosen by the people themselves, that is, the *jan-lokpal* or the people's *lokpal*, where '*Jan*' meaning 'people'. This contested claims of any other drafts of the *Lokpal* bill to be representative vis-à-vis the 'people's draft'—the *Janlokpal*. During the deliberation on the *Lokpal* bill, many drafts were suggested. But it was only the *Jan—Lokpal* bill drafted by the IAC that claimed to be 'representing the interest of the people' and publicly dismissed all other drafts. The channels showed Kejriwal burning the government draft of the *Lokpal* bill by claiming it as 'jokepal' rather than '*lokpal*'. The claim of representation was established by claiming that thousands of people had contributed to the drafting process of the *Janlokpal* bill. Email ID and helpline numbers were widely publicized on media platforms asking people for their suggestions. This also acted as a primary vehicle for the movement to connect with its constituency and give them the feeling of been heard and participated. Third, the campaign had a distinct logo, which was used consistently for all posters and all communication material. Fourth, the campaign had a leading face, Anna Hazare, who claimed to represent the values of Mahatma Gandhi. Like Gandhi, Hazare also was an ardent follower of non-violence and he chose classic Gandhian tools of protest—that is *anshan* (hunger strike)—to fight the '*azaadi ki doosri ladai*' (second struggle for independence). To reiterate this image further, at the beginning of each protest, Anna Hazare was seen visiting Mahatma Gandhi memorial at Rajghat (located in Delhi). He was seen spending time praying for inspiration and power for his fight. Careful attention was paid by IAC on image-engineering, where Hazare would be seen offering prays, sitting on green grass on a spotless white sheet wearing spotless white *dhoti and kurta*! A lot of attention was given to the actions of Hazare and key faces of the movement, and also to how those actions were 'perceived' by the media.

4.2. Making of 'Represented'

Next, if political representation is understood as a 'framing' process that is dynamic in nature, then claims define the contours of the frame and encode the representation while simultaneously also influencing how and who it will seek to represent, i.e., its constituency (Saward, 2006). Essentially saying that by the very act of claiming representation of a certain group, we shape the identity of that group. The IAC campaign used 'corruption' as the hinging idea to define the identity of the group. The movement claimed that if you are against corruption then you are part of IAC.

'Corruption' is a catch-all term and emerged into prominence in 1990s within the international development discourse dominated by the paradigm of good governance. Studies show that corruption appeared in the forefront of policy discussion of international donor agencies, especially the World Bank, during this time. These studies argue that the obsession with corruption was prompted by the need of international donors to explain the failure of structural adjustment policies. Attention to corruption has grown in tandem with the policies of liberalization, privatization and decentralization. In this, corruption in state apparatus forms the basis of demanding reduction in state power and making way for privatization and rule of market (Harrison, 2006; Schmitz, 1995; Szeftel, 1998). Now, if we understand the media to be a significant vehicle for entry of market in the society, then there is a natural alliance of the media and the agenda that highlights corruption of the state (Rajagopal, 2004, p. 35). Moreover, corruption by definition means different things in different contexts. Two broad categories can be used to understand corruption—'political corruption' operating in the realm of highest level of government and 'bureaucratic' or petty corruption, experienced at the lowest level of government ex-

perienced by citizens in everyday interactions with the state. Within this, there can be 'experienced' corruption and 'perceived' corruption (Harrison, 2006).

Kejriwal, during his early years as anti-corruption activist, targeted petty corruption in everyday transactions with the state. His action drew from the premise that the act of exchange of information from the government to the people was sufficient to address 'corruption' and to correct the erring behavior of the state. The IAC Movement, however, straddled both the aspects of corruption, i.e., political corruption and bureaucratic corruption and often used them interchangeably. It also used language and strategies that collapsed the distinction between 'experienced' corruption and 'perceived' corruption. The depiction of real life stories in a form of short videos narrating the experience of corruption of a particular individual and how that had impacted his/her life was instrumental in shaping the perception of corruption in general and in building a perception that corruption pervaded all transactions of the state (see Al Jazeera English, 2011). It created a sense of crisis in governance, which could only be addressed by ensuring flow of information from the state to its people and by creating an all-powerful body, in the form of an Ombudsman, the *Lokpal*. The media played a significant role in creating an atmosphere of crisis in governance and in stripping the ruling government of its legitimacy. It was instrumental in construction of a narrative of political and bureaucratic corruption by translating 'perceived' corruption to 'experienced' corruption. Dedicated programing on government failure and round the clock coverage of protest created a dramatic image of the movement and established Hazare as the true 'savior'. This also helped in construction of a community that had only one nebulous identity—that they were against corruption. The mediatized campaign not only used corruption as a commodity to transform the field of interaction of the citizen, it also altered the state and society relationship, making the boundaries porous.

4.3. Creation of 'Represented' through Direct Action

Further, if creation of the identity of the represented is to be understood in electoral terms, then what we are looking at is the process by which the representative claims made by the IAC worked to construct an electoral constituency. IAC used direct action where it engaged its constituency to take up acts targeting the state. For instance, a movement pamphlet/handbill of IAC, titled 'Let's Form Vote Banks Against Corruption' circulated amongst the volunteers of IAC mentions:

> The political parties and candidates win by very narrow margins. In Delhi, almost 110 candidates won by less than 1000 votes in last municipal elections. This means that if 500 votes were polled differently, it could have changed election results…if 200 families in a ward come together and decide to vote as a block, they can change the electoral results of a ward. They can force all candidates to agree to their demands. Together, they can't make anyone win, but they can make anyone lose elections. Can we get such people together in each ward and form a "vote bank against corruption" in each ward? (IAC, 2011a)

The handbill instructed people to write to their elected representative threatening them to either pass the *Janlokpal* bill or else they will not vote for him the next time. Similar to the instruction given in the handbill, Hazare and Kejriwal in many other instances demanded 'direct action' from their constituency. For instance, people were asked to protest in front of residences of elected representatives demanding their support to the passage of the *Janlokpal* bill in the Parliament or else they would continue to demonstrate. The Facebook pages of the IAC urged people to send emails to the Prime Minister, Law Minister, Home Minister and others, demanding action on the demands of the movement. Pre-written text was provided to supporters to use in the emails stating that that as a responsible citizen of the country they were concerned about the health of fasting Anna Hazare, who was the 'Greatest Social Reformer India has ever seen' and that his demands were 'extremely beneficial to the future of India'. The email would close with a threat by the citizen to fast unto death if the government failed to accept the demands (IAC, 2011b).

The IAC constituency was however not only created through such direct actions. As Rajagopal in his analysis of the transformation of politics after television explains that television has the power to construct 'communities of sentiment' (2004, p. 6). Television brings public events into a private space. This allows the individual viewer to develop an imaginative reconstruction of themselves as being enmeshed in the televised event and to reflect the sentiments expressed in it. 24X7 live streaming from the IAC protest sites enabled the formation of these 'communities'. Television channels showed people in large numbers joining the protest and with every day that the protest was live streamed the turnout increased. Channels covering the protests ran messages such as '*jaan salaab*' (a sea of people), '*janta ka hujum*' (a spirited crowd has arrived) depicted mass support to the movement. The telecast of the protest and the accompanying messages were instrumental in creation of a 'nationalist' sentiment that further provoked others to join. 'Communities of sentiments' were constructed, which were further consolidated by social media interactions. Facebook pages allowed exchanges between individuals who were watching the protest on television in their private spaces, to share sentiments through short emotive messages about the 'nation'. These interactions further deepened these associations and shaped collective identities. During this time, the discourse of the movement evoked several collective identities—'nation', 'country', 'the people', 'movement', 'civil society', 'us vs them'. All these communities were constructed in the

minds of the viewers and supplemented by the virtual interactions on the social media platforms. The experience of those attending the protest sites was similarly mediated as they consumed the televised image and messages of the movement via mobile devices. It is clear that the direct actions demanded by the IAC Movement on its Facebook pages helped to establish these collective identities and 'communities of sentiment' from which the constituency of the IAC movement was formed.

Niraja Jayal (2016), in her analysis of representative claims categorized this form of politics to be 'populist', where the legitimacy stems from 'speaking on behalf of the people'. This straddles between two forms of politics—one that promotes pragmatic politics that follows the rule of law and upholds sanctity of institutions, while the other is redemptive in nature and is grounded in power of the people. The IAC makes this dynamic visible. The movement demanded that a law be legislated by a process that refused to acknowledge the legislative framework set out by the Constitution of the country. It was dismissive of the Parliament, the Judiciary and all political leaders. It called for total revolution by provoking people to ambush elected representatives and threatened government with mass hunger strikes. These were indicative of its redemptive form of politics. Politicians and offices of elected representatives were rendered illegitimate and Parliament made into an object of protest. The movement made constant reference to the 'streets that belonged to the 'people' as being a more legitimate site than the Parliament for vetting of the *Lokpal* bill' (Jeelani, 2011). Also, populist forms of politics put a lot of emphasis on direct democracy—i.e., referendums through text message, mails, or opinion polls. IAC constantly engaged its constituency through 'direct action'. In this, the citizen is rendered not only as a participatory being taking decisions and actions into his/her own hands, but also as distrusting and suspicious of the other and with the potential for vigilantism. He or she is also making judgments and subjecting the government and the 'other' to constant scrutiny. Activities such as targeting covert "sting" video operations at public officials alleged to be corrupt provoked and publicly established the legitimacy of vigilantism. As Amit Bhaduri (2011) writes, the very essence of representative political democracy is that it restricts the political participation of its citizen to choosing representatives in elections. But when direct action by citizens is provoked then it gathers momentum and erupts with elected representatives losing their legitimacy. Such circumstances make way for 'heroes' who can step into provide a solution and show the way forward. An example of this from the IAC Movement is the moment IAC leaders targeted Sheila Dikshit, the then Chief Minister of Delhi, and accused her of corruption as a retaliatory action; Anna Hazare was arrested from his residence in the early hours of the morning on August 16th, 2011. The Police arrested him giving flimsy grounds that he was threatening to sit on an indefinite hunger strike demanding the *Janlokpal* bill. This impulsive behavior of the government was projected by IAC to be indicative of loss of legitimacy and power of the political class. Bhaduri (2011) explains that the impatient attitude of 'now or never' of the people that followed post the arrest of Hazare was not just due to history of years of inaction of the government, but an interpretation that there has been manipulation of procedures to protect the corrupt. In the crisis that ensued, Anna Hazare emerged as an undisputable leader of the anti-corruption crusade (Bhaduri, 2011).

4.4. Media: The Arbitrator of Change

Rajagopal (2004), writes that politics to a great extent is carried out through the means of communication. The emergence of electronic media enabled institutionalized production and circulation of images and symbols, which displaced and transformed the boundaries of the political sphere. The media transformed the political sphere by its ability to produce and circulate images and symbols and make it available for consumption in the private space of our homes. Through media various unrelated events and temporal realities were stitched together into a single communicative event. The media campaigns on anti-corruption by Kejriwal valorized 'corruption' as an act of the state against its citizens and 'information' as a currency that can be exchanged for the value of better governance. Rajagopal (2004) writes that television works in parallel, and interlinked, with the economy, where it is active in the material and symbolic reproduction of capitalist relations. Television works to commodify and assign value to abstract concepts and ideas that can be exchanged and reproduced through the circuit of its circulation. The media campaigns served to commodify 'corruption' in a way that could be reproduced and circulated.

In the IAC Movement the discourse of corruption was carefully yoked within a cultural and symbolic context that resonated with the Hinduized media. The projection of Anna Hazare, as a symbol of austerity, of purity served to emphasis an abstract Brahminical concept of Hinduism that asserts its Hindu identity and at the same time is inclusive of the 'other', thus the symbolic presence of the Muslim clerics and Archbishop of Delhi. The ritualistic morning prayers and all day *bhajans* at the protest sites with Indian flags in the background set the stage for the resurgence of a new form of Hindu Nationalism.

I use Rajagopal's work to argue that the IAC Movement also marked a significant moment in the transformation of the media and the political field it produced. The populist representations of IAC Movement created by the media where it liberally borrowed Hindu symbols on the one hand and nationalist images on the other, paved the way for a resurgence of Hindu Nationalism. The Hindu identity was implicitly evoked through symbolic representations, such as the depiction of *Bharat Mata* (Mother India) as a Hindu Deity and the use of slogans such as '*Bharat Mata ki Jai*' ('Long live

Mother India'). Hazare, along with been projected as the new avatar of Gandhi, was also referred as *aj ke Krishna* or Krishna of today (Hindu God) and other such Hindu figures in the media saturated discourse of the movement (Pinney, 2014). Further, singing of *Bhajans* (prayers) at the protest sites were some of the symbols instrumental in consolidating the Hindu identity of the movement. Also, the visible presence of people like Baba Ramdev made the connection stronger. These implicit connections to Hindu identity was explicitly balanced with symbolic activities like celebration of Ramadan and Eid at the protest site along with celebrating the Hindu festivals like *Jan-Mashtami*—the festival celebrating the birth of Lord Krishna during the August protest of 2011 at Ramlila Maidan.

The claim making process of IAC constituted a constituency that was amorphous—essentially urban, middle class, Hindu, vigilant, distrusting of politicians and Parliamentary processes. And as Jayal (2016) points out that populist politics does little to really encourage participation of its constituency. Instead, it directs the emotional fervor to establish a leader, who has a personalized and centralized style of leadership. Kejriwal established himself as the leader and consolidated the power of popularity of the IAC Movement with the formation for the AAP in 2012. But as Stephanie Tawa Lama-Rewal (2019) explains the coming to power of AAP in Delhi was also tormented with contestations. First, its forming the minority government by taking support from Congress whom it had overthrown; second, Kejriwal resigning within 49 days of taking to office; third, Kejriwal publicly apologizing for his resignation claiming that it was his biggest mistake; fourth, its public contestation and verbal battles with the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi leading to a paralysis of governance in Delhi; fifth, its open battle with the Municipal Corporation of Delhi and lastly its dramatic split with Yogendra Yadav and Prashant Bhushan, the key leading faces of the movement. All these worked to erode the public image of Kejriwal as the leader of the nation. He had lost the legitimacy to 'represent India' that he had built in the last couple of years. By then Narendra Modi and BJP had emerged to represent the rising Hindu nationalist constituency and was successful in occupying the vacant space left behind by Kejriwal, as larger than life 'hero'.

As Gudavarthy (2019) mentions through 2014, a larger than life personality was created in the person of Narendra Modi, which served to position him as defending Hindus and the Hindu national identity. It was further strengthened through his fights against Pakistan and the perceived 'other' within. The IAC Movement, that preceded the rise of Narendra Modi, showed similar characteristics. The representative claims created an authentic community, i.e., 'the people' who were against corruption, second, it constructed the perception of governance crisis and calling for the 'direct action' and involvement of citizens in drafting laws instead of elected policy makers. For instance, Hazare and Kejriwal claimed that the streets, in belonging to the 'people', were more legitimate than the Parliament, the home of 'corrupt government'. Further the use of nationalist symbols within the mediatized movement narrative served to stir up the existing perception of Hinduised nationalism. The movement built popular perceptions and authoritarian demands that undermined laws and institutions and paved the way for the emergence of populism in India.

5. Conclusion

In this article, I use the theoretical framework provided by Michael Saward to analyze the construction of political representation of the IAC Movement that unfolded in India during 2010–2012. The trajectory of the movement is traced to understand how the dynamics of the representation was created. I draw from this to make the following conceptual points.

First, considering political representation to be a two-way process of mutual exchange between the representative and the represented, the IAC Movement makes visible the construction of the representative and the represented. The image of Anna Hazare as 'strong' leader of the movement was constructed using various media tropes. The movement revolved around his personality and the virtues surrounding it. The movement also used symbols that merged perception with experience, i.e., merging facts and fiction. The representative claim making processes through this resulted in creation of a constituency that essentially transformed to become a Hindu nationalist identity.

Second, it made visible how the process of claim making often created a competitive environment to see one claim succeed over the other in order to claim authenticity of representation. That is, the IAC often deliberately pitted one claim against the other, such as the claim of *Jan-Lokpal* was pitted against *Lokpal*; '*Aam Admi*'—common man—pitted against the concept of *Khas Admi* or the elite and privileged; civil society pitted against *sarkari* civil society—with the IAC being the true representative of civil society, rather than a civil society that was co-opted and captured by the government. Saward (2006) mentions that the space of representation is contested; I argue that it is not only contested, with competing claims operating to claim attention of the constituency, but that deliberately orchestrated contestations also take place in order to further entrench the link between the representative and represented.

Lastly, it made visible how the transformation in the representative claim making is linked to the transformations in democratic politics and the leaderships that emerge within them. The literature on populism indicate how populist representations have emerged and built on the traditional political representations that either been aggregation of preferences or have been descriptive representations (Jayal, 2016). Therefore, the tracing of the trajectory of the claim making process is indicative of the nature of the democratic processes it engendered.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Stephanie Tawa Lama-Rewal and the Centre for South Asian Studies (CNRS-EHESS), Paris for their support to my work. I would like to acknowledge my friends Anupama Ramakrishnan, Rukmini Barua and Martin Webb for their valuable input to this article.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

References

Al Jazeera English. (2011). India anti-corruption protest continues. *YouTube*. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q7loGdtWXGk

Baviskar, A. (2010). Winning the right to information in India: Is knowledge power? In J. Gaventa & R. McGee (Eds.), *Citizen action and national policy reform* (pp. 130–146). London: Zed.

Bhaduri, A. (2011). Corruption and representative democracy. *Economic and Political Weekly*, *46*(36), 15–17.

Bourdieu, P., Poupeau, F., & Discepolo, T. (Eds.). (2008). *Political interventions: Social science and political action*. New York, NY: Verso Books.

Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, J. D. L. (1992). *An invitation to reflexive sociology*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Gudavarthy, A. (2019). *India after Modi: Populism and the right*. Delhi: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Harrison, E. (2006). Unpacking the anti-corruption agenda: Dilemmas for anthropologist. *Oxford Development Studies*, *34*(1), 15–29.

India Against Corruption. (2011a). *Let's form vote banks against corruption* [Pamphlet]. New Delhi: India Against Corruption.

India Against Corruption. (2011b, April 1). Send letter to PM, Law Minister and others for Jan Pal bill [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/notes/india-against-corruption/send-letter-to-pm-law-minister-and-others-for-jan-lok-pal-bill/165318140190081

Jayal, N. G. (2007). New directions in theorising social accountability? *IDS Bullentin*, *38*(6), 105–112.

Jayal, N. G. (2016). Contending representative claims in Indian democracy. *India Review*, *15*(2), 172–195.

Jeelani, M. (2011, September 1). The insurgent: How Arvind Kejriwal, the architect of Anna Hazare's anti-corruption campaign, brought the rage of an indignant nation to the government's door. *The Caravan*. Retrieved from https://caravanmagazine.in/reportage/insurgent

Jeffrey, R. (2000). *India's newspaper revolution: Capitalism, politics and the Indian language press*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Jenkins, R., & Goetz, A. N. (1999). Accounts and accountability: Theoretical implication of the right-to-information movement in India. *Third World Quarterly*, *20*(3), 603–622.

Mehta, N. (2008). *India on television: How satellite news channels have changed the way we think and act*. New Delhi: Harper Collins.

Pande, S. (2007). The right to information and societal accountability: The case of the Delhi PDS campaign. *IDS Bullentin*, *38*(6), 47–55.

Pinney, C. (2014). Gandhi, camera, action! India's 'August spring'. In P. Werbner, M. Webb, & K. Spellman-Poots (Eds.), *The political aesthetics of global protest: The Arab spring and beyond* (pp. 177–192). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Pitkin, H. F. (1967). *The concept of representation*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Rajagopal, A. (2004). *Politics after television: Religious nationalism and the reshaping of the Indian public*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Roy, S. (2014). Being the change. *Economic & Political Weekly*, *49*(15), 45.

Saward, M. (2006). The representative claim. *Contemporary Political Theory*, *5*(3), 297–318.

Saward, M. (2010). *The representative claim*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Schmitz, G. J. (1995). Democratization and demystification: Deconstructing "governance" as development paradigm. In D. Moore & G. Schmitz (Eds.), *Debating development discourse: Institutional and popular perspectives*. London: Macmillan Press.

Singh, S. (2010). The genesis and evolution of the right to information regime in India. In *Towards a more open and transparent governance in South Asia regional workshop* (pp. 27–29). New Delhi: Indian Institute of Public Administration.

Tawa Lama-Rewal, S. (2019). Political representation in the discourse and practices of the "Party of the Common Man" in India. *Politics and Governance*, *7*(3), 179–188.

Szeftel, M. (1998). Misunderstanding African politics: Corruption and the governance agenda. *Review of African Political Economy*, *25*(76), 221–240.

Webb, M. (2010). Success stories: Rhetoric, authenticity, and the right to information movement in north India. *Contemporary South Asia*, *18*(3), 293–304.

Webb, M. (2015). Contemporary Indian anti-corruption movements and political aesthetics. *FocaalBlog*. Retrieved from http://www.focaalblog.com/2015/04/23/martin-webb-contemporary-indian-anti-corruption-movements-and-political-aesthetics/

About the Author

Aheli Chowdhury is a Development Professional based in Delhi. She holds a PhD in Sociology from Delhi School of Economics and her work explores intersectionality of media and social movements in India. She works amongst urban poor to facilitate their rights to education and governance and has been involved with several rights-based campaigns, including the National Campaign for People's RTI in India. She is also actively engaged with and studies policy gaps in social accountability and service delivery.

COGITATIO

Politics and Governance (ISSN: 2183–2463)
2019, Volume 7, Issue 3, Pages 199–207
DOI: 10.17645/pag.v7i3.2119

Article

On Authoritarian Political Representation in Contemporary China

Demin Duan

School of Government, Peking University, 100871 Beijing, China; E-Mail: demin.duan@pku.edu.cn

Submitted: 27 March 2019 | Accepted: 24 May 2019 | Published: 24 September 2019

Abstract
Both in the Party Charter and in the State Constitution, the Chinese Communist Party claims to represent the Chinese people. Instead of treating this claim as mere rhetoric made by the party for propaganda purposes, this article demonstrates that it indicates a rather significant transition in the party's understanding of its relationship with the people. Particularly, roughly about two decades into the Open and Reform policy initiated under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, the party made a strategic choice in imagining itself as the representative of the people instead of the revolutionary vanguard. This change in the language was very remarkable in the post-1949 Chinese history, in the sense that the party no longer considers itself as the facilitator of proletariat revolution, but as the authoritarian representative in the political community. If representation means "re-presentation", as in bringing something absent present, this appears to be what the party tries to do. By embodying the nation, the party tries to represent both the rich and the poor, acting as the arbiter of forever present discords and conflicts within the society. Clearly, this representation has nothing to do with what people usually call "democratic" representation. But considering that representation and democracy are conceptually rooted in very different sources, exploring "authoritarian representation" in contemporary China would enable us to better understand both China and democratic representation.

Keywords
authoritarian politics; authority; China; Chinese Communist Party; deliberation; democracy; representation

Issue
This article is part of the issue "Rethinking Representation: Representative Claims in Global Perspective", edited by Petra Guasti (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany) and Brigitte Geissel (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany).

1. Introduction

In today's China, the Chinese Communist Party (hereinafter abbreviated to "CCP" or "the Party") claims to represent the People. It also claims that it is mandated by history to represent the nation, in accordance with the tenets of justice, fairness, harmony, freedom, and so on. Usually, this claim is treated as mere rhetoric for propaganda purposes. But considering it from its historical background, it indicates a rather significant transition in the party's understanding of its relationship with the people. Particularly, roughly about two decades into the Open and Reform initiated under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, the party made a strategic choice to imagine itself as the representative of the people instead of the revolutionary vanguard. This change in the language was very remarkable in the post-1949 Chinese history, in the sense that the party no longer considers itself as the facilitator of proletariat revolution, but as the authoritarian representative in the political community. If representation means "re-presentation," as in bringing something absent present, this appears to be what the party tries to do. By embodying the nation, the party tries to represent both the rich and the poor, acting as the arbiter of forever present discords and conflicts within the society. Clearly, this representation has nothing to do with what people usually call "democratic" representation. But representation and democracy are conceptually rooted in very different sources, only coming into alliance in modern times, as Hannah Pitkin and others have shown. By shedding light on representation in an "undemocratic" context, we could better understand regimes such as the contemporary Chinese Party–State and what makes representation "democratic".

2. The Representative Turn

Usually, the most important turn in contemporary Chinese history can be traced to 1978, when right after the disastrous Cultural Revolution, the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee of the CCP announced its Open and Reform policy. Under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, the Party opened the country to the world and conducted many reforms—especially economic—within the country. The massive surge in economic development, the so-called "rise of China," and the drastic change in the society and people's lives in China are all direct results of this policy. So, it is a very crucial "turn" in every sense of the word. Actually, there is another turn, and one which is no less important. But perhaps, because it happened at a much less dramatic historical juncture, it is not even noticed as a turn. Only in the light of this second turn, however, can the true political significance of the Open and Reform policy, which has been mostly fathomed in economic terms, be properly understood. On 24 February 2000, on an inspection tour to Guangdong Province, the then Chinese president and General Secretary of the CCP Jiang Zemin stated the following:

> A review of our Party's 70-plus-year history elicits an important conclusion: our Party earned the people's support during the historical periods of revolution, construction and reform because *it always represented the requirements for developing China's advanced productive forces, the orientation of China's advanced culture and the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people*. (Jiang, 2013, pp. 1–2, emphasis mine)

As it turned out, this is not a random "pep talk" spelled out on an occasional tour. It can be identified as the start of a well-designed ideological campaign that lasted for many years and arguably defined Jiang's presidency (Bo, 2004; Dickson, 2003; Jia, 2004; Kuhn, 2010, pp. 107–109; Patapan & Wang, 2018; Song, 2005). Two years later, the "Three Represents" slogan was ratified by the CCP at the Sixteenth Party Congress and was incorporated into the revised Party Charter. Another two years later, in 2004, it was finally enshrined into the newly revised State Constitution and given an official title "The Important Thought of 'Three Represents'", next in line to Marxism, Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, and Deng Xiaoping Theory. Although, Jiang's name is not mentioned here, it is undoubtedly one of his most recognized political legacies in China (Bo, 2004).

No serious China observer would doubt the importance of this "Three Represents" slogan. As many pointed out, "banners" such as the "Three Represents", "Scientific Outlook on Development" and the "China Dream" are extremely important, offering normative directions and policy initiatives for the nation (Kuhn, 2010, pp. 107–108; Patapan & Wang, 2018). Particularly, under the cover of Party building and disciplining required by the idea of the "Three Represents", the phrase "the Party *always* represented" quickly turned into a *normative* requirement, whereby "it should always represent". It was thus made mandatory for (mostly local) Party officials to do what they could to promote the general interests of the People—largely understood in economic terms—by way of attracting private investment, encouraging foreign trade, developing high technologies, etc. In comparison, the "Scientific Outlook on Development" promulgated by president Hu Jintao was largely seen as a response to the extensive "unscientific" style of economic growth in the preceding decades. Thus, referring to the state-society/public-private relationship in the Chinese case, Dickson comments in an article back in 2003 that the "Three Represents" slogan signifies the Party's willingness to allow its ties to the rest of society to weaken (Dickson, 2003, p. 12). Starting from similar ground, Jia Hepeng draws a rather contrasting conclusion by saying that the Party was "in fact, strengthening its orthodox ideology so as to increase its authority and legitimacy" in times of fast economic development and social change (Jia, 2004, p. 261). Similarly, Song opines that this campaign was just another old school ideology game played by the Party to "reconceptualise reality" in order to solidify its ruling position (Song, 2005, p. 32).

Important and interesting as these observations are, what they do not capture is that the new language adopted by the Party actually reflected a new reality in China. The crucial question to our analysis here is: Why the Party use the term "representative" instead of the much more commonly used one—"the vanguard" (*xian feng*)? To be sure, the term "vanguard" is still used today, in both the Party Charter and the State Constitution, denoting the party's "communist" nature. But ever since 2002, it was put side by side with the term "represent" in the opening paragraph of the Party Charter, which now states the following:

> The Communist Party of China is the *vanguard* for the Chinese working class, the Chinese people and the Chinese nation. It is the core of leadership for the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics and *represents* the development trend of China's advanced productive forces, the orientation of China's advanced culture and the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people. (CCPS Editors, 2013, p. 363, emphasis mine)

These two sentences, emphasizing two apparently different elements—"vanguard" and "represent,"—actually summarize the Party's historical evolution. Since its inception, the CCP has revised its Party Charter at every plenary session of the Party Congress, thus, 19 versions of the Charter have been created so far. A pattern arises when we browse through all these versions (see CCPS Editors, 2013), especially the first sentences that declare the Party's structure and aim. The earlier back in time we

go, the more the Party characterizes its nature and aim as "universal." From 1921 to 1943, the Party explains what it is up to by asserting its membership of the Communist International and its role as the vanguard of the "universal" class. However, in 1945, at the end of the Sino–Japanese War and the beginning of the Second Chinese Civil War (1945–1949), it asserted that it was the vanguard of the "Chinese" working class, speaking for the interests of the Chinese Nation and People. After the Party won the civil war, the "national" character of the Party seemed to give way to a more universalistic orientation. The language in the Party Charter swung back to strong terms like "vanguard of the working class" and "radical revolution," which lasted until the end of the Cultural Revolution in late 1970s. In the 1982 version of the Party Charter, the Party started to present itself as one who "represents" the interests of all nations (or ethnic groups) in China, while still acting as the "vanguard of the working class." Then in 2002, as mentioned above, the "Three Represents" was promulgated and incorporated into the Party Charter, with a "representation" narrative seeming to overtake the narrative of the "vanguard".

In history, of course, the term "vanguard party" deals essentially with Vladimir Lenin's distinction between a party of reform and a vanguard party of revolution. Capitalism, as Lenin (1969) argued, predisposes the workers to the acceptance of socialism; but the proletariat, on its own or under reformist party leadership, can only achieve "trade-union consciousness." A new type of party is thus needed to imbue the working class with revolutionary consciousness, which led them to combat repressive economic political systems such as tsarism, and usher forth the transformation of society. In this regard, as Lenin says, "the role of vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory" (Lenin, 1969, p. 26). In this sense, the vanguard party is both outside and inside the working class as well as both visible and invisible. That is, it lies outside the working class and is thus forcefully visible, since it has to bring consciousness to the working class and effectively bring about revolutions. But at the same time, it is also inside the working class and "invisible" in the sense that the party's aim is not really to rule society, but to let the people (or the working class) be aware of their own historical mission and be able to rule themselves. If this is the "classical" sense of political representation in the Leninist tradition, apparently, the CCP distanced itself from it by shifting from "vanguard" to "representation."

In this context, "representation" means very different things. We can say that a portrait represents the person portrayed, or an actor on stage in a Shakespearian play represents Hamlet. But it makes no sense to say that a portrait acts as the vanguard of the person portrayed, or that an actor is the vanguard of the role he/she plays. Hannah Pitkin gives a general definition to representation by saying that it literally means *re-presentation*—"the making present in some sense of something which is nevertheless not present literally or in fact" (Pitkin, 1967, p. 9). But both "vanguard" and "representation" in the CCP's language seem to contain some of this definition. Jean-Jacques Rousseau was helpful in this regard when he charges that representation is by nature a "feudal" institution, distinct from the people's rule (Rousseau, 2002, pp. 211–212). In his understanding, political representation—in whatever form—inevitably sets the representatives apart from the represented (the people), and places the former above the latter. Hence, his uncharitable comment that the English nation is only free "during the election of members of Parliament; as soon as they are elected, it is enslaved and counts for nothing" (Rousseau, 2002, p. 211). However idiosyncratic this Rousseauian definition may seem today, we believe it succinctly summarizes the practice of political representation as a form of ruling, a point that could easily be drowned out by people's equation of representation and democracy in today's language. Therefore, from this Rousseauian perspective, Leninist revolutionary vanguard would not be a form of representation because the intention of vanguard is not exactly to rule the society, but to transform it through revolution. Furthermore, we venture to say that the sense of representation contained in the "Three Represents" tilts towards this Rousseauian definition of political representation and is largely different from the vanguard idea.

The meaning of the CCP's turn from vanguard to representative becomes much clearer when we go back to the moment when the Party spelled out the "Three Represents." Around the year 2000, two decades into the Open and Reform era, the form and composition of society have changed rapidly. Before the 1980s, society was governed and structured using Marxist egalitarian principles, and the People were generally poor. Although, there were inequalities among people during this time, especially between those in the city and the countryside, between those who worked for state-owned enterprises and those who did not, these can be identified as largely "bureaucratic" rather than class-based inequalities (Dillon, 2015). As popularly known, the Open and Reform policy propelled the country onto fast-track economic development. This may have been naturally good for the People, but it poses political challenges to the Party. For after two decades of growth, the workers and peasants, whom the Party is supposed to speak for, were seen at the bottom of the newly emerged social stratification, while cadres, quasi-cadres, and "capitalists," such as private business owners and entrepreneurs, are better off.

As a social phenomenon, this was heavily discussed by Chinese intellectuals at the time, leading to government censorship of some publications (Lu, 2002; Zheng, 2004). This social stratification was confirmed by Li Yi's research based on statistical data (Li, 2005). Obviously, this does not go well with the Party's image as a proletariat vanguard. The looming question to be asked is: Is the Party still a communist party or not? If it is, how are the working class and peasants now found at the bottom

of the society? After the 1980s, Party theorists worked very hard to justify the course taken by the Party, mostly emphasizing the need to combine local Chinese realities and characteristics with Marxist theories and ideologies (Choi, 2011). It is no coincidence then, that around this time, the term "representation" emerged in the Party's updated self-portrait of its relationship with the Chinese People. By representing the People, the Party does not have to negate any social strata or class. Instead, it mediates their potentially conflicting interests, synthesizes them, and goes beyond them to the level of far-sighted, overarching "general interests." By presenting these general interests, the Party brings what is absent, present—a literal meaning of "representation".

Theoretically, of course, the Party could have switched back to vanguard mode at this historical juncture. But instead, it chose to reassert its authority without alienating the newly emergent "capitalistic" forces. Although, capitalistic forces are not specifically mentioned in the "Three Represents," it is clear from the language and corresponding policies that "capitalists" are no longer seen as the "enemy of the people" who should be eliminated here and now. In the light of this, after 2002, the CCP began to open its membership to those who had more commonly been considered as the people's enemy: mostly entrepreneurs and technical personnel (Renmin Ribao, 2003). In a speech given at the 80th anniversary of the Party, President Jiang declared that they would "join workers, farmers, intellectuals, cadres and PLA officers and men in an effort to build socialism with Chinese characteristics". Therefore, it became "necessary to accept those outstanding elements from other sectors of the society who have subscribed to the Party's Programme and the Constitution…and have met the requirements for the Party's membership through a long period of tests" (Jiang, 2013, p. 280). This attests to the above argument that the Party does want to be a representative that presents a unified image of the People. This is not to say that the Party has forsaken its communist (or vanguard) nature, indeed, this is far from the truth. Looking at it from both historical and theoretical perspectives, there has been a "representative turn" in contemporary China, one that is in a way even more significant than the turn made by the Open and Reform policy.

3. Representation in the People's Congress

In order to fully explicate the CCP's representation, there is need to further put it under a local comparative light by briefly mentioning the other form of "representation" in the Chinese political context, one that is more widely known and talked about, namely, representation in the People's Congresses. Indeed, members of these congresses—both the National People's Congress (hereinafter abbreviated as "NPC") and Local People's Congress—are called "representatives of the people" (*ren min dai biao*). As the Constitution and the law require, they have to be elected by the People, and they do go through electoral processes. As members of legislative bodies, they are supposed to represent the views and interests of their constituents and review governmental reports, including their budget, law proposals, policy proposals, and so on. So, in the face of it, they are not so far away from what political representation looks like, for instance, in western democratic countries. But of course, the difference is that these elections are tightly controlled by Party-led authorities and the representatives are largely authorized to sit in congress by the Party instead of the electorate (Yuan, 2011).

However, it should be noted that, once in congress, some representatives could act defiantly against the Party authority and challenge its position on certain major issues, as Mr. Huang Shunxing did in 1992 when the NPC voted for the massive Three Gorges project proposal. The controversial project proposal was passed, but not without a historical record of both objecting and abstaining votes (6.7% voting no, 25.2% abstaining, and 0.09% not voting). In a later interview, speaking on his motive for objecting, Mr. Huang said that, as both a representative of the People and a member of the human community, his absolute responsibility was to speak the truth as he saw it (Huang, 2013). It could be said that, in challenging the Party's position, Mr. Huang formed a direct representational relationship with the people as a whole, not primarily by referring to the electoral process that supposedly put him in congress, but by referring to some "high values". The Constitution of China, for instance, specifically states that the NPC is the highest state organ and has the right and power to elect the president and oversee the government. This alone should give some members of the NPC enough sense of honor and duty, despite the NPC's de facto status in the political system.

On the other hand, there has been much debate recently on the emergent ability of the People's Congresses today to restrain the government's power, to the extent that they may inch towards a certain kind of "check and balance" dynamism (Almén, 2013; Kamo & Takeuchi, 2013; Manion, 2015; Truex, 2016). However, nobody could yet deny the fact that congresses are not really independent from the Party. To put the Party-Congress relationship in context, in the 1980s, Deng Xiaoping directed that the Party should no longer substitute itself for the state—a typical organ of which is the People's Congress—but function behind it, providing fundamental principles and guidelines (Deng, 1994). The purpose of this, however, was not exactly to put a check on the Party, but to consolidate the Party's power on a largely different basis—which is summarized in this article as "the representative turn." From our perspective, the People's Congress actually participates in the Party's representation of the People, rather than forming an institutional check on it. On the one hand, it is difficult today to imagine that any law or public policy proposal may enter the NPC, let alone be passed, without the Party's initial consent. In other words, the real ulti-

mate representative claims on the People's general interests have to be made by the Party. But on the other hand, it also seems imperative that these claims be formally passed by the NPC and presented as the voice of the People. This mere process, guaranteed by Deng's Principle of Party–State separation, functions to moderate the Party's power, forcing it to seriously consider the kinds of proposal it puts through the NPC. This is exactly why the composition of NPC representatives is so visibly descriptive of the components of Chinese society—man, woman, workers, farmers, soldiers, cadres, different ethnicities, different provinces, Party members and non-Party members, etc. (Yi, 2010, pp. 46–47). When the NPC annually convenes, the representatives usually put on outfits that directly depict their supposed identity. By so doing, the Party solely represents the People, making exclusive claims on their general interests, with the NPC forming an integral part of this representation.

4. Representation without Elections

The above analyses have been made with the assumption that political representation is conceptually distinct from democratic politics, and hence, could be meaningfully aligned with authoritarian regimes. This disentanglement of political representation and democracy, however, is hardly something new. In the western tradition, from Jean-Jacques Rousseau's early critique of representation (Rousseau, 2002, pp. 221–222), to contemporary reflections on representation and democracy such as in Hannah Pitkin (2004), many scholars tend to distinguish the two, while defending democracy. However, the thriving of representative democracy in modern times significantly contributes to the confounding of the two concepts. David Poltke, for instance, states that representation is the same as democracy in an article titled "Representation is Democracy" (1997). In her article "Representation and Democracy: Uneasy Alliance", Pitkin characterizes the uneasy relationship between the two:

> Like most people even today, I more or less equated democracy with representation, or at least with representative government. It seemed axiomatic that under modern conditions only representation can make democracy possible. That assumption is not exactly false, but it is profoundly misleading, in ways that remain hidden if one treats it as an axiom and asks only technical rather than fundamental theoretical questions. (Pitkin, 2004, p. 336)

Against this background, and given the global domination of western concepts in political theory discussion today, perhaps, it is worthwhile to mention Michael Saward's contribution in order to clarify where we stand theoretically in our discussion of political representation in China.

Saward (2006) criticizes traditional understanding of representation in representative democracy for largely taking the represented as an unproblematic given, while he tries to refocus attention on how representatives shape or construct the represented by making subjective claims. Both logically and factually, representative claims could exist outside what people usually understand as democratic politics. He notably cites the U2 singer and political activist Bono, who stated: "I represent a lot of people [in Africa] who have no voice at all….They haven't asked me to represent them. It's cheeky, but I hope they're glad I do" (Saward, 2009, p. 1). He did not move to apply this approach to authoritarian politics, but it appears to have the potential. However, the problem with this approach is how to reconcile the subjectivity of representative claims with an inevitable demand for "objective" meanings. While representative claims are certainly subjective in nature, not all of them are accepted as truthful in a given society at a certain time.

Saward employs culture to explain this problem. He argues that culture sets limits or parameters as to the type of "claims"—or subject–object links—that can plausibly be made in any given context (Saward, 2006, p. 311). But he also claims that cultural codes themselves could somehow be constructed. If that is true, then how could they function as a stabilizing and restraining force for subjective representative claims? Would not their ability to function in this way be significantly discounted? It is not clear from Saward's texts. While building on his focus on representative claims, especially their subjective nature, we tried to give a different explanation to how subjective representative claims could obtain objective meanings. We argued that, in any given community—arguably even in a "global" community—there would be values that are held as fundamentally true by all—or at least, the vast majority—of its members. Values such as justice, fairness, harmony and so on are typical ones among them. But there are also more culturally charged ones, such as the idea of "Mandate of Heaven" in ancient China. Any representative claims have to be made with reference to these values in order to obtain some level of objectivity.

However, representative claims—in whatever forms they are made—are still always subjective, in the sense that they can never be completely identified with those values. In other words, there would always be multiple ways to make representative claims on questions such as "who are the people?", "what are the people's best interests?" This applies to both what we usually call "democratic representation" and the "authoritarian" type of political representation. In democratic politics, different representatives make diverse claims simultaneously and they compete with each other in an openly and largely orderly fashion. Whereas, typical authoritarian representatives always try to make exclusive claims on, say, the people's best interests; but they still have to refer to common values in society in order to acquire objectivity for their claims. This is because there is a relative gap between authoritarian representatives and common values, they are exposed to potential critiques or challenges from society, thus, allowing a certain level of public deliberation.

On the other hand, the "vanguard" type of representation we mentioned above goes beyond this spectrum of representation, because in there, objectivity of representative claims are entirely contained in the Marxist "historical truth" that is supposed to be imbued into the people by representatives, rather than the peoples' common values being translated by representatives into laws and policies.

As indicated, when someone in the NPC, such as Mr. Huang, stands up and challenges the Party's position, he/she would most likely point to some "high values" for which the Party could be criticized, as Huang actually did. These high values range from the most common principles of common good, to the Party's own mottos, including, "Seek Truth from Facts" (*shi shi qiu shi*). This would also include culturally informed ideas like conscience, historical responsibility, or even the notion of Heaven. Scholars have noticed that dissidents in China are not necessarily anti-government, as they often only want to hold the authorities accountable for their own promises (Schell, 1994). In this sense, they actually share some overarching values and principles with the authority. Even for those dissidents who are defiantly anti-establishment, they cannot be so far removed that there is nothing in terms of value that they can both lay claim to. In other words, as is visible in the Chinese case, dissidents criticized the authorities by offering an alternative representation of the people, that is, through values supposedly subscribed to by the community as a whole.

More interestingly, the Party actually does the same thing in safeguarding its own position in society. If we pay close attention to the Party's language, we will notice that, in addition to values and principles such as justice, harmony, "Seek Truth from Facts" and so on, there is an almost ubiquitous reference to the role of "history" in the CCP becoming the (only) ruling party in China. Indeed, Party leaders and theorists have often commented that "History has chosen the CCP" (Niu & Wang, 2016; Zhang, 2017). The Communist Party is then the ultimate true bearer of history's mandate; this is because, in relation to Marxist teachings, it is the only genuine advocate of the Chinese People, and also the key to the nation's resurrection after defeat and humiliation in the hands of exploitive classes and imperialistic forces. In a sense, we could even say that, in the Party's language, the ancient Confucian ideal of the "Mandate of Heaven" has been replaced by the Mandate of History.

More importantly, in contemporary China, the Party could be and actually is restricted by these high values, as seen from the example of Mr. Huang. But there is also evidence from outside the People's Congress that is equally important. We have seen many occasions whereby the Party-led authorities have rectified some major policies or past courses, arguably on the basis of objections by society. The case of the "Re-education through Labor Act" (also known as Lao Jiao, hereinafter, abbreviated to the RLA) is perhaps, the most famous and exemplary one. Put into effect in 1957, the RLA allowed the police department to detain persons for minor crimes—such as petty theft, prostitution, etc.—without trial. Critics, including those from outside China, had long decried this act as a typical example of a human rights violation. But largely it was criticism from within the country—most notably by legal scholars and NPC representatives—that prepared the ground for its retraction (Zhou, 2012). For instance, in 2007, Professor Jiang Ping and a further 68 scholars sent a public letter to the Standing Committee of the NPC and State Council to petition for the abolition of the RLA.

Among the sources Professor Jiang and others drew on to make their case, was the state Constitution. Enacted in 1982, the Constitution clearly indicates that "No citizen may be arrested except with the approval or by decision of a people's procuratorate or by decision of a people's court." If the Constitution is the "fundamental law of the state" as it claims to be, regulations such as the RLA are basically unconstitutional. Moreover, scholars also argued that there is a requirement to "construct a harmonious society of fairness, justice, democracy, and rule of law" (Ifeng, 2010), one that the central government itself has proclaimed to guarantee. In 2013, and largely against this background, the Third Plenum of the 18th Party Congress announced that this act would be abolished. Later that year, the Standing Committee of the NPC passed a motion to formally abolish the RLA.

This case, among others, proves that it is possible for a kind of deliberation or debate on public matters to exist, despite the fact that the authority always tries to prevent alternative representative claims from surfacing in public. However, this is only possible when there exists a level of truth—composed by common values—that the authority has to rely on to make representative claims, but nevertheless, cannot lay exclusive claim to. The Party makes representative claims by referring to the values that the society deems true, but it is also restricted by these values. Indeed, any representative claims have to be made with reference to these values in order to acquire a sense of objectivity. But as soon as these claims are made by particular persons or parties, they are inevitably detached from those values themselves, making them inevitably subjective. As a consequence, representative claims are always subject to criticisms and challenges.

5. Representation: Authoritarian and Democratic

Since common values are what give representative claims objectivity and values have a lot to do with culture, it is worthwhile to discuss representative claims from a cultural historical perspective, especially since we have already mentioned the traditional cultural elements in the CCP's representative claims. But we argued that culture and its values do not only "set limits or parameters" to the type of representative claims that could plausibly be made in a given community, they also enable people in the community to propose various forms of claims. This is first and foremost clear in pre-modern China.

In ancient China, as Duan (2014) pointed out, there was a "Heaven–Ruler–People" relationship involved in its political dynamism, in which the ruler formed a relationship with the people by referring to the "Mandate of Heaven." In the classic Confucian text, *Mencius*, for instance, Master Mencius stated that a ruler is a true ruler not because any other particular person—such as his father, the king—gives him the position, but only when he is ordained by Heaven (Mencius, 2009, p. 103). But how can Heaven's will be known? According to Mencius, "It is through the people that the Heaven's will is known," for "Heaven sees as my people see. Heaven hears as my people hear" (Mencius, 2009, p. 104). In this relationship, the ruler derives legitimacy from Heaven and thus become supreme, so opposing the ruler is tantamount to opposing Heaven. But in this authoritative relationship, while the "Mandate of Heaven" grants the ruler a supreme position, it also gives room for people to question his actions. Early classical Confucians even conceived the notion of the Dao, or "Way," which transcends any particular authority and to which all forms of human existence should submit (Yao, 2000, pp. 139–189). This apparent dualism of authority could indeed facilitate a certain level of deliberation on public issues, as the emperor's governance always appears to be gauged by transcendental truth, mostly by those Confucian scholars who deem their raison d'être as being the upholder of Confucian ideals (He, 2014).

To an extent, the emperor's power seems to have been both legitimized and restricted by the level of authentic values, it could perhaps be said that the emperor "represents" the people, although at that time, neither "representation" as a political concept nor the idea of sovereignty of the people existed. Eric Voegelin in his *The New Science of Politics* says that "articulation is the condition of representation," and that "in order to come into existence, a society must be articulate by producing a representative that will act on its behalf" (1987, p. 41). According to this idea, both King of England in ancient times and the Soviet Union government are such articulators or representatives. In our analysis, this sense of articulation could be best understood as representatives' "translation" of common values into tangible laws and policies. Moving from ancient to modern times, there is certainly no doubt that language and social political conditions are now dramatically different. The CCP is not claiming that it be sanctified by the "Mandate of Heaven". After all, it was born out of the Marxist movement with a fundamentally hostile attitude toward religious practices and symbols. Nevertheless, just as it is impossible to purge all traditional meaning from language, the Party's relationship with the People following the "representative turn" could—or shall we say, must—still be understood in a way that is not so different from what is described above.

This also sheds light on the consequences of the rejection of those traditional values and henceforth, the collapse of the "traditional" authoritarian representation. In China, this happened mostly during the Cultural Revolution era, when traditional values were considered as backward and reflective of feudalistic dynastic rule. They were rejected so that people could be liberated from feudal shackles and achieve freedom. But nobody was really free because nobody was able to draw on those high values to launch criticism or minimal level of debate with regard to the authority's decisions. It is only after the end Cultural Revolution and during the Open and Reform era that people started to reclaim that relative freedom to bring up diverse representative claims. This is not to say the CCP today has stopped trying to make exclusive representative claims. But the type of representation embodied in the "Three Represents" implies that alternative representative claims from society are possible as a result of the independence of those high values.

This reflection should give us some thought on modern democratic representation as well. In modern democracies, representation is often gauged by how "truthfully" it reflects people's views and interests. We are not saying that this is wrong, but it needs much more clarification than it usually gets. As stated by Saward (2006), there is perhaps no such thing as "the truthful interests of the people" to start with. All meaningful articulations of the people's interests are constructed by representatives who are making claims. There is an undeniable and unbridgeable gap between representative claims on people's best interests and the people (or their best interests) themselves. But what is particular about democratic representation is that this gap is kept institutionally visible. That is to say, in democratic politics, it should always be legitimate and normal to propose new representative claims; and any representative claims embodied in government's laws and policies are potentially replaceable by other claims through institutional means. Whereas in authoritarian politics, the gap is kept institutionally invisible; it is definitely abnormal for people to introduce non-official representative claims on their own. It usually takes extraordinary means—such as petitions and protests—to effectively bring new claims into the political system. Traditional theories of democracy and representation tend to draw the line between democratic and authoritarian politics on the basis that, in the former, there is "representation" truthful to the people' interests, while there is no representation at all in the latter. We differ from this stance by arguing that it is not the existence of representation, but how representation is formalized and institutionalized, that distinguishes authoritarian politics from democratic politics.

6. Conclusion

This article delineates the transition from "vanguard" to "representation" in the CCP's articulation of its relationship with the people. We take this not as a mere play in language, but as a reflection of social reality. This is mostly seen in the true significance of the "Three

Represents"; but it is also reflected in the Party's relationship with the People's Congress. It seems that there is a significant level of credibility or truth in the CCP's claim to represent the people, especially when compared with its other claim—being the revolutionary vanguard. But what exactly is this level of truth? Could the CCP be really understood as the representative of the Chinese people? Isn't "representation" a concept exclusively meant for democratic politics?

To answer these questions and to better explain the CCP's representative claims, we follow Pitkin and other researchers to disentangle representation and democracy. But we mainly focus on Michael Saward's idea of representative claim, as it points directly to the constructive nature of political representation without any regard to democratic institutions such as elections. Certainly, the CCP's representation of the Chinese people could be understood as a kind of construction composed by "claims," such as those embodied in the "Three Represents." But subjective representative claims need to acquire at least some objectivity so as to function in any given context. Saward believes that objectivity comes from culture; but we argue that it is common values in a given community that give objectivity to representative claims. In other words, representatives make claims by referring to common values in order to be accepted as true. But as soon as claims are made, they are inevitably detached from common values themselves.

This understanding of political representation applies to both democratic and authoritarian politics, thus, engendering the distinction between democratic and authoritarian representation. With regard to contemporary Chinese politics, the CCP's representation could be understood in terms of seemingly exclusive representative claims, which were made with reference to "high values" in China. Since those values are "common" to the society, they open way for potential criticism and public debates from society concerning the authority's decisions, however inconstant and scant they may be. This pattern of political representation is comparable to ancient authoritarian representation in the "Heaven–Ruler–People" relationship and under the idea of "Mandate of Heaven"; and it is very different from the "vanguard" kind of representation in the Cultural Revolution era. Above all, our focus on representation does not only serve to unravel one of the most important notions in contemporary Chinese politics, a notion that has barely been studied so far. It also promises a new direction in studying Chinese politics, especially considering that the field is currently dominated by the "democratic-authoritarian" dichotomy. We at once break the dichotomy by highlighting representative claims in both democratic and authoritarian politics, and redraw the line between the two on how representation is formalized and institutionalized.

This study also sheds light on modern representative democracy. Nowadays, people usually tend to believe that the main problem of democratic politics lies in the seemingly ineliminable discrepancy between representatives and the People's will. This is not exactly wrong, but it is insufficient in both explaining such complexities of modern democratic politics as populism, and offering possible solutions. Our analyses showed that democracy is much more than "letting people speak their own will" and eliminating the gap between the representatives and the people. In democracies, even in a very small community with a very limited number of citizens, there has to be someone who make claims for the best interests of the people by referring to values that members of the community could identify with. We argued that the gap between the representative and the represented actually lies at the center of modern democracy. Therefore, it seems that not only can modern democracy not do away with political representation, but it is critically reliant on it in order to preserve a space for open, effective participation and public deliberation. To square the circle, if an authoritarian type of political representation is able to produce public deliberation in a limited public sphere, political representation is even more critical to democratic politics.

Acknowledgments

Professor Antoon Braeckman of the University of Leuven, Professor Yves Sintomer of Paris 8 University, Professor Haig Patapan of Griffith University (Australia) read an early version of this article. I am grateful for their valuable suggestions. I also thank the editorial team at *Politics and Governance* and two anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

References

Almén, O. (2013). Only the party manages cadres: Limits of Local People's Congress supervision and reform in China. *Journal of Contemporary China*, *22*(80), 237–254.

Bo, Z. (2004). Hu Jintao and the CCP's ideology: A historical perspective. *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, *9*(2), 27–45.

CCPS Editors. (2013). *Zhong Guo Gong Chan Dang Zhang Cheng Hui Bian* [Collection of the charters of the Chinese Communist Party]. Beijing: CCPS Press.

Choi, Y. (2011). The evolution of "socialism with Chinese characteristics": Its elliptical structure of socialist principles and china's realities. *Pacific Focus*, *26*, 385–404.

Deng, X. (1994). *Deng Xiaoping wen xuan* [Selected works of Deng Xiaoping] (Vol. 2). Beijing: Renmin Press.

Dickson, B. J. (2003). Whom does the party represent? From "three revolutionary classes" to "Three Represents". *American Asian Review*, *21*(1), 1–24.

Dillon, N. (2015). *Radical inequalities: China's revolutionary welfare state in comparative perspective*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Duan, D. (2014). Reviving the past for the future? The (in)compatibility between Confucianism and democracy in contemporary China. *Asian Philosophy*, *24*(2), 147–157.

He, B. (2014). Deliberative culture and politics: The persistence of authoritarian deliberation in china. *Political Theory*, *42*(1), 58–81.

Huang, X. (2013). Huang Shun Xing Cai Fang Wen Da [Questions and answers with Huang Shun Xing]. Retrieved from http://www.doc88.com/p-4731603516287.html

Ifeng. (2010). 69 Min Xue Zhe Shang Shu Hu Yu Fei Chu Lao Jiao [69 scholars' petition for the abolition of Lao Jiao]. Retrieved from http://news.ifeng.com/opinion/topic/laojiao/201004/0414_9958_1603357.shtml

Jia, H. (2004). The Three Represents campaign: Reform the party or indoctrinate the capitalists? *Cato Journal*, *24*(3), 261–275.

Jiang, Z. (2013). *Selected works of Jiang Zemin* (Vol. 3). Beijing: Foreign Language Press.

Kamo, T., & Takeuchi, H. (2013). Representation and Local People's Congresses in China: A case study of the Yangzhou Municipal People's Congress. *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, *18*, 41–60.

Kuhn, R. L. (2010). *How China's leaders think: The inside story of China's reform and what this means for the future*. Singapore: John Wiley & Sons.

Lenin, V. I. (1969). *What is to be done? Burning questions of our movement*. New York, NY: International Publishers. Li, Y. (2005). *The structure and evolution of Chinese social stratification*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Lu, X. (2002). *Dang Dai Zhong Guo She Hui Jie Ceng Yan Jiu Bao Gao* [A report of contemporary chinese social stratification]. Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press.

Manion, M. (2015). *Information for autocrats: Representation in Chinese local congresses*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mencius. (2009). *Mencius*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Niu, X., & Wang, T. (2016). *Li Shi Wei She Me Xuan Ze Zhong Guo Gong Chan Dang* [Why history has chosen the Chinese Communist Party]. Changchun: Jilin Publishing Group.

Patapan, H., & Wang, Y. (2018). The hidden ruler: Wang Huning and the making of contemporary China. *Journal of Contemporary China*, *27*(109), 47–60.

Pitkin, H. F. (1967). *The concept of representation*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Pitkin, H. F. (2004). Representation and democracy: An uneasy alliance. *Scandinavian Political Studies*, *27*(3), 335–342.

Renmin Ribao. (2003). Cong Yi Wei Si Ying Qi Ye Zhu Yao Qiu Ru Dang Tan Qi [Starting from a request of a private business owner to join the Party]. *Renmin Ribao*. Retrieved from http://www.people.com.cn/GB/shizheng/252/9483/10239/20030224/929072.html

Rousseau, J.-J. (2002). *The social contract and the first and second discourses*. New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press.

Saward, M. (2006). The representative claim. *Contemporary Political Theory*, *5*, 297–318.

Saward, M. (2009). Authorization and authenticity: Representation and the unelected. *The Journal of Political Philosophy*, *17*(1), 1–22.

Schell, O. (1994). *The mandate of heaven: A new generation of entrepreneurs, dissidents, bohemians, and technocrats lays claim to China's future*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

Song, X. (2005). Signs of the times: The discourse of "Three Represents" and globalisation. *East Asia*, *22*(3), 25–40.

Truex, R. (2016). *Making autocracy work: Representation and responsiveness in modern China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Voegelin, E. (1987). *The new science of politics: An introduction*. Chicago, IL, and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Yao, X. (2000). *An introduction to Confucianism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Yi, Z. (2010). China's political system. Beijing: China International Press.

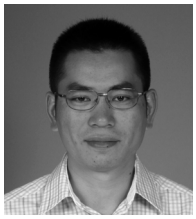
Yuan, Z. (2011). Independent candidates in China's Local People's Congress elections. *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, *16*, 389–405.

Zhang, X. (2017). *Li Shi Ru He Xuan Ze Le Zhong Guo Gong Chan Dang* [How history has chosen the Chinese Communist Party]. Wuhu: Anhui Normal University Press.

Zheng, H. (2004). *Zhong Guo She Hui Jie Gou Bian Hua Qu Shi Yan Jiu* [A research on the transformation of the chinese social structure]. Beijing: China Renmin University Press.

Zhou, Y. (2012). Lao Jiao Zhi Du De Li Shi Yu Fei Chu Hu Sheng [The history of Lao Jiao and the calls for its abolition]. *Yan Huang Chun Qiu*, *12*, 22–28.

About the Author



Demin Duan is an Associate Professor of Political Science at the Department of Political Science, School of Government, Peking University, China. His main research interests include democratic theories, political representation, Alexis de Tocqueville's thought and French liberalism, regime studies in a comparative perspective, etc.

COGITATIO

Politics and Governance (ISSN: 2183–2463)
2019, Volume 7, Issue 3, Pages 208–219
DOI: 10.17645/pag.v7i3.2151

Article

The Evolution of Representative Claim-Making by the Chinese Communist Party: From Mao to Xi (1949–2019)

Emilie Frenkiel [1,*] and Anna Shpakovskaya [2]

[1] School of Public Administration and International Exchanges, Université Paris-Est Créteil, 94000 Créteil, France; E-Mail: emilie.frenkiel@u-pec.fr
[2] Institute of East Asian Studies, University of Duisburg-Essen, 47057 Duisburg, Germany; E-Mail: anna.shpakovskaya@uni-due.de

* Corresponding author

Submitted: 30 March 2019 | Accepted: 26 July 2019 | Published: 24 September 2019

Abstract
This article traces the evolution of representative claim-making by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) since the proclamation of the People's Republic of China in 1949 up to the present day. Based on the analysis of official political discourses on the mass line, the Three Represents and more recent ongoing discourses on digitalization, we demonstrate the change and continuity of claim-making by the CCP. We show that while representative claim-making has undergone a significant transformation from the CCP as the representative of the working class to the sole representative of the Chinese people and nation, the CCP has been consistent throughout decades in maintaining its hegemony over representative claim-making.

Keywords
China; digitalization; discourse; mass line; political representation; representative claim-making; responsiveness

Issue
This article is part of the issue "Rethinking Representation: Representative Claims in Global Perspective", edited by Petra Guasti (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany) and Brigitte Geissel (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany).

1. Introduction

In this article we analyze the evolution of official discourses on political representation by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949 up to the present day. Over its 70 years of holding power, the CCP and its discourse on representation have undergone a significant transformation. From the onset of World War II and the civil war against the Nationalists, in a country whose large rural population was extremely poor and illiterate but which is now a rising world power—closer to the century-old nationalist objectives of making China rich and strong, with a strikingly unequal but, overall, a healthier, better educated, more urbanized population—the CCP has evolved into a massive Party claiming 90 million members (6.4% of the Chinese population). With the unofficial acceptance of entrepreneurs within the Party even before it was officially authorized with the theory of the Three Represents (put forward by former President Jiang Zemin in 2000 and later added to the Constitution in 2002, implying that the CCP represents (i) advanced productive forces, (ii) orientations of advanced culture, and (iii) the fundamental interests of the majority of the Chinese people) and the active recruiting of intellectual elites and talented students (80% of new members are now under 35), the CCP has also moved away from the focus on revolution and class struggle and presented itself as a reformist ruling Party (*zhizheng dang*) capable of representing the interests of the Chinese people in times of rapid change prompted by technological advancements. In line with these profound socio-economic changes, the CCP has been adjusting its claim to be representative of the Chinese people.

A key premise of our article is that official discourse should be taken seriously. By official discourse, we mean the most immediate form of political discourse, i.e., "text and talk of professional politicians or political institutions" that "have political functions and implications" (Van Dijk, 1997, pp. 12, 14). The study of official discourses is illuminating as it reveals the official way of thinking, conceptual shifts and evolving aims. Political discourse analysis involves looking at "how politicians think, speak and write about [an issue] and how such discourse and cognition influence political action and hence political structure" (Van Dijk, 1997, p. 42). The Chinese official discourse should therefore neither be ignored as mere propaganda nor simply seen as a description of reality, but should be acknowledged as moulding reality (Li, 2001), as performative and impactful. As Michel Sorace wrote, "for the Chinese state, official discourse and terminology are not merely descriptive; they are also meant to be exemplary and normative, authoritative and binding" (Sorace, 2017, p. 7). As a result, we agree with him that "framing the problem of ideology as a question of belief misses how it functions as an assemblage of practices that shape people's everyday habits of speech and dispositions" (Sorace, 2017, p. 10). In this article, we analyze official discourses attributed to former and current political leaders and which we have identified as explicitly or implicitly focusing on representation. As they are canonical speeches, they can easily be found in collected speeches in print or online.

For analytical purposes, we adopt the perspective of the constructivist turn in the theory of political representation. After Hanna Pitkin published *The Concept of Representation* in 1967, where she posits the existence of a stable meaning of the concept of representation and the equivalence of political representation with electoral politics, a certain consensus about political representation in English and American political theory emerged (Pitkin, 1972, p. 209). She identifies four different forms of representation: descriptive, symbolic, formalistic and substantive. Some authors have recently challenged the description of political representation as a simple principal-agent relationship between a pre-existing constituency and an elected legislator acting independently but responsively to its constituents, and have enriched the discussion of political representation with new themes (Urbinati & Warren, 2008). What has been called the "constructivist turn" of political representation (Disch, 2011; Mulieri, 2013; Saward, 2010) focuses on the performative role of representation (what it does rather than simply what it is). Our article aligns with Saward's argument that the interests and identities of the representatives and the represented are not fixed prior to the act of representation, but are constructed through representation (Disch, 2011; Näsström, 2011, p. 506; Saward, 2010). He argues that the focus on electoral forms of representation fails to account for diversified representative claims, which are not only made by elected legislators. With these non-electoral political practices, spokespersons and different forms of delegation and embodiment emerge.[1] This constitutive process manifests through representative claim-making: "a claim to represent or to know what represents the interests of someone or something" (Saward, 2010, p. 305).

To focus on the CCP's representative claims, we find it fruitful to also proceed from the typology of representation developed by Yves Sintomer and inspired by the work of Hasso Hoffman. It encourages us to go beyond the "deceptive familiarity" of representation and its occurrences in English and Romance languages (Sintomer, 2013). According to Sintomer, representation can first be divided into two categories: political-legal and symbolic. Within the category of political-legal representation, the most conventional meaning is mandate representation (acting for), but it also has the meaning of identity representation or embodiment (acting as).[2] In the framework of embodiment representation, the explicit expression of consent, delegation or further screening from the represented to authorize the representative to speak and act on their behalf is not required. In fact, the representation relationship is supposed to be based on an immediate community of interests, opinions, beliefs and often identity between the representative and the represented. Taking identity representation into consideration is crucial when studying the CCP's claims to represent, as it allows us to understand its claim to political-legal representation despite the absence of direct elections of top leaders. As to symbolic representation, it cannot only take the form of making an absent present (figuration) but also implies the exhibition of a presence, an aspect which Pitkin overlooked (Sintomer, 2013). To complete this typology, Sintomer also highlights the difference between representation as distinction and descriptive representation (Bourdieu, 2001; Gaxie, 1978; Sintomer, 2013, in reference to Manin, 1997), which cuts across the divide between symbolic and legal-juridical conceptions of representation. When representation is conceived as distinction, famously illustrated by Madison (Rossiter, 1961) or Sieyes (1789), representatives are expected to be more capable, wiser and more civic-oriented than the represented. In contrast, when representation is conceived as descriptive, there is a demand for similarity between the represented and the representatives, who must "mirror" (look like) the former.

[1] Even though Saward (2010) and De Wilde (2013) only focus on claim-making in democratic contexts, extending this approach to non-democratic cases is acceptable as long as the focus does not switch to the reception of these claims.

[2] As Sintomer (2013) has shown, this last sense of representation is too often overlooked in the theory of representation (including in Pitkin) despite the fact that assimilating the parts to the whole (*pars pro toto*) was a recurrent conceptualization of representation in the European Middle Ages, which has left its mark on more modern conceptualizations of political-legal representation. Indeed, it is blatantly present in the case of charismatic leaders, whether monarchical, self-appointed or democratically elected, but also in some conceptions of parliament (Burke, 1949) and even in radical democratic experiments like the Occupy movement (with the famous slogan "We are the 99%").

Figure 1 summarizes the typology of political representation offered by Sintomer.

As presented in the figure, *distinction*, *description* and *substantive* forms are individual categories that are applicable to the realization of both political-legal and symbolic representation. It is thus possible, for example, that symbolic representation is manifested through distinction to achieve the substantive effect of representing. Different combinations are therefore possible. It must be also noted that these are ideal types that may often overlap in real politics. This being said, we consider this typology to be useful for deconstructing and analyzing different nuances and forms of representative claims.

We break down selected texts into the components from Saward's model of claim-making, as in the following example: "A Maker (M) puts forward a Subject (S) which stands for an Object (O) that is related to a referent (R), e.g., content of representation and is finally offered to an Audience (A)" for tracing and analyzing the evolution of the CCP's representative claim-making over several decades. In the discourse we study, we find that on the one hand the claim-maker (M), the CCP, has been positioning itself as the sole representative (the subject (S) of representation) of the interests of the Chinese people (object (O)), often by suppressing alternative representative claims. Under the influence of Lenin's vanguard Party concept, the CCP combined representative claims pertaining to both political-legal (identity) and symbolic representation, with alternative claims of descriptive distinction representation and above all substantive representation.

On the other hand, the CCP has been adjusting its claims of representation to the rapidly changing realities and trying to improve its capacity to respond to the interests of the people. At the turn of the millennium, the official discourse becomes more openly elitist and technocratic to improve substantive representation (performance). Another object of the representative claim surfaces, namely the nation (which should be richer and stronger), but it tallies with the still prevalent claim to represent all the Chinese people. To make the elitist evolution acceptable, the traditional Maoist method of the mass line (the mass line—*qunzhong luxian* in Chinese—is the guiding method, formulated by Mao Zedong in 1943, of consulting the masses, collecting their opinions and eventually formulating them into state policies) is updated on the basis of diverse forms of consultation. While the discourse on consultation of the masses has always been present, it has intensified and these devices compensate, at least symbolically, for the more explicit guardianship discourse (representation as distinction). Consultation is related not only to symbolic but also to substantive representation as a convenient way to identify the urgent problems that need solving and thereby maintain the image of the Party as the best representative of the Chinese people's and the nation's interests.

The article consists of five parts. Following the Introduction, we outline the dynamics of representative claim-making in authoritarian China. We then focus on discourses on the CCP's continuous but evolving hegemonic claim to represent the Chinese people over five generations of leaders. In the fourth part, we discuss the implications of the new information and communication technologies (ICTs) and digitalization for political representation in China. We summarize our findings in the conclusion.

2. The Dynamics of Representative Claim-Making in China

Despite the existence of various formal and informal, top-down and bottom-up channels for interest expression in China (Heberer, 2016), the Chinese context is characterized by the prevalence of the CCP's persistent hegemonic claim—since the proclamation of the People's Republic of China in 1949 and throughout the five generations of the CCP leadership—to represent the fundamental interests of the majority of the Chinese people.

As the sole representative of the majority of the people, the CCP performs three main tasks. First, it is expected to respond to people's needs. Mao's famous 1944 slogan "Serve the people" (*wei renmin fuwu*) is still one

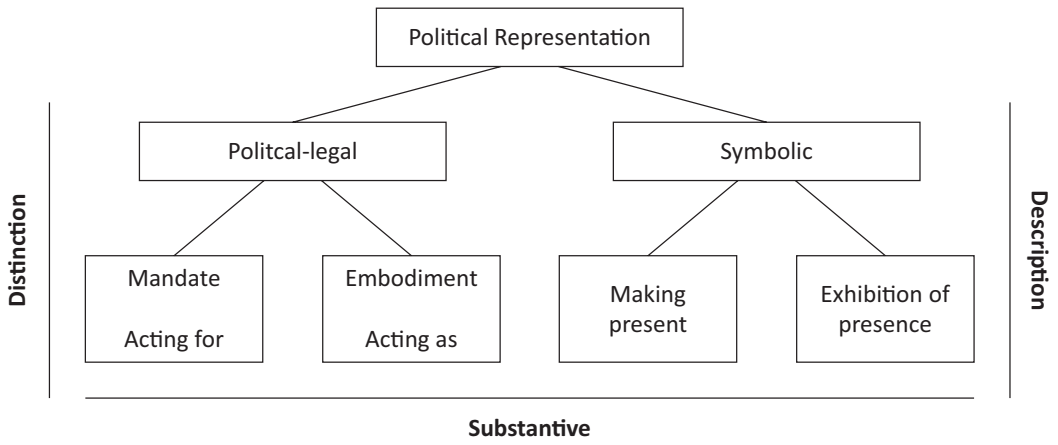


Figure 1. Categories of political representation. Source: The authors.

of the Party's main claims and Xi recently stated that "wholeheartedly serving the people has been always the fundamental goal of the Party and the main reason why our Party is supported and loved by the people" (Renmin Ribao, 2015). This can be interpreted as a substantive representative claim, as, according to Hannah Pitkin's definition, representation is a "substantive acting for others" and "acting in the interest of the represented, in a manner responsive to them" (Pitkin, 1972, p. 209). The Party has therefore striven to legitimize itself through depicting itself as a better representative of people's interests than conventional elected representatives in the West (in "formal democracies") because of the substantive representation (and therefore supposed "substantive democracy") it achieves (Frenkiel, 2015) through the delivery of a long-term perspective and tangible results, like military victories, women's liberation and collectivization in its first period and after Mao's death, economic performance, poverty alleviation, "small prosperity" (*xiaokang*), infrastructure building, regaining power on the international scene, becoming an innovative nation and so on.

In connection with these objectives and achievements, the Party's second task is to identify core national interests, which are formulated in major speeches and reports (five-year plans, Party congress reports). Thirdly, given the pluralization of society and of interests resulting from the growing gap between those who have benefited most from the Reform and Opening Policy launched in 1978 and the others, the CCP acts as a coordinator of various and often conflicting interests of different social groups with the main goal of maintaining social stability (*weiwen*). This goal has been blatantly officialized under Hu Jintao's "building a harmonious society" (*jianshe hexie shehui*) slogan. Social stability and subordination of individual interests to collective national interests have been the fundamentals of the CCP's vision of political representation. However, with the Party's transformation to a ruling Party, forsaking class struggle, conflictuality has been gradually erased and politics conceived as a series of problems needing to be identified, then solved consensually and scientifically (as illustrated by slogans such as "scientific socialism" and "scientific governance") by a well-trained technocratic elite (Li, 2009) selected through meritocratic principles (Bell, 2015; Gore, 2019), and surrounded by the best experts (Frenkiel, 2015). In this apoliticized conception of politics, the CCP depicts itself as a neutral arbiter, never defending its own interests but only the people's and the nation's (He & Yao, 2011). In other words, as Demin Duan (2019) writes in an article on the CCP's representative turn from vanguard to representative published in this special issue, with the theory of the Three Represents, the CCP shifts from a revolutionary vanguard conception of representation (letting people be aware of their own historical mission and be able to rule themselves) to a more technocratic and elitist understanding of representation that places the representatives above the represented.

3. The Evolution of the CCP's Hegemonic Claim from Mao to Xi (1949–2019)

In official discourse, the focus is put on substantive representation, as representation is often defined as the capacity to be responsive and responsible. To display representativeness (the capacity to represent the majority), the Party-state must demonstrate its responsiveness to and responsibility for the needs and interests of the people. The evolution of the discourse on the mass line is a case in point; so too are the current official discourses on digitalization.

The traditional conception of representation by the CCP derives from Lenin's conception of the Party as the vanguard of the working class. Mao innovated by including the peasants, whom he tended to glorify, in the revolution and recruited them to political offices after 1949. The vanguard role assumed by the Leninist Party rests upon two assumptions: first, that a single Party is capable of representing the interests of the working class as a whole without a critical opposition to help it avoid and correct omissions, inaccuracies and mistakes; and, second, that the vanguard is capable of speaking in a single, united voice for those it claims to represent, in the absence of competition (Geras, 1981; Thornton, 2016).

Even though the word *daibiao* (represent) does not appear in Mao's speeches theorizing the mass line, this theory helps us understand how the Leninist concept of representation by the vanguard Party was applied to the Chinese context. Mass line theory (*qunzhong luxian*) was first formally expounded in war times in "Some questions concerning methods of leadership", a resolution written by Mao and adopted by the Central Committee on 1 June 1943. The resolution formalizes practices which communists had more or less consciously adopted for the leadership (cadres) to connect with the masses. Mao considered the mass line as one of the main work methods of the Party, based on the principle described as "all for the masses, all depend on the masses, from the masses and among the masses" (*yiqie weile qunzhong*, *yiqie yikao qunzhong*, *cong qunzhong zhonglai*, *dao qunzhong zhongqu*). Specifically, this method consists in ensuring that leaders are never "cut off from the masses" and constantly reconnect with them through three main functions: collecting and distilling popular perceptions/interests, avoiding bureaucratism and elitism, and educating the masses for them to finally no longer need leaders when they become fully capable of ruling themselves. The mass line is therefore based on the absence of a presumption of ordinary citizens' personal autonomy.

The mass line was also explicitly presented in a speech entitled "Organize!" that Mao gave on 19 November 1943 in which he forbids senior cadres and militaries to be cut off from the masses. The idea conveyed in that speech is similar to Liang Qichao's idea at the end of the 19th century to tap into the Chinese people's will and formidable latent energy to strengthen

the nation. Mao uses the image of Zhuge Liang (one of the most brilliant strategists in Chinese history, who lived during the Three Kingdoms period), whose like can supposedly be found in every Chinese village, to convey a non-elitist conception of the people's capacities. Through education and propaganda, leaders impose policies that they derive from the needs that the masses themselves express, albeit confusingly. With the mass line, Party cadres are to promote policies put forward by a vanguard Party whose distinction and wisdom are urgently needed to transform and distil amorphous public opinion into policies benefiting the Chinese people in the long run. Even though Mao emphasized democracy, implicitly, it seems that we are close to what Robert Dahl called the "guardianship discourse" (Dahl, 1989) in the sense that only an especially qualified elite can govern for the common good (Manion, 2015, p. 86). Mao, however, insists on the right proportion of responsiveness necessary for this representation to be substantive and not just symbolic (Frakt, 1979). The representatives are supposed to sincerely listen and learn from ordinary citizens, respond to them and translate their raw opinions into political decisions. The Party line is dictated neither by the people nor the Party cadres, who are merely messengers because, as Hanna Pitkin wrote on the intermediary spectrum of representation, "a man who merely consults and reflects without acting is not representing in the sense of substantively acting for others" (Pitkin, 1972, p. 211). The traditional vanguard Party conception, which is central to the CCP's representative claim and its application in the mass line, therefore combines identity representation, descriptive representation and representation as distinction (Sintomer, 2013). The Party is not a separate caste outside of the people but rather a *pars pro toto*. The mass line and the vanguard Party are therefore framed as democratic. Party cadres are selected among and act as the working class and the peasants (identity representation) and are like them (descriptive representation). They are not an aristocratic elite, but are nevertheless presented as more capable than ordinary citizens, speaking both like them and better than them (distinction).

Deng Xiaoping further maintained that the interests of the people should be placed above everything else and suggested four criteria (in the form of questions) that determine a policy's success: Is the policy approved by the people? Is it supported by the people? Does it make people happy? Do the people promise to endorse it? (Renmin Ribao, 2014). This, at least in theory, suggests an active role for the people in legitimizing the CCP's function as the sole representative. Deng further pointed out:

> What's good about having the multi-Party system of capitalist countries? The multi-Party system is a result of the mutual struggle among bourgeois groups that can never represent the interests of the vast working masses of the people. There are multiple parties in our country too, but they all serve the socialist cause under the premise of acceptance of the CCP's leadership. (Zhong, 2009)

Both Mao and Deng viewed representation of the collective interests of the people as a fundamental mission of the Party and its representative capacity as an essential guarantor of social justice and stability. The CCP as the main and the only representative also sought validation from the people. At least in theory, the people could approve or disapprove the policies by streaming their voices through carefully designed and managed official channels. The mass line pertains to this process. The administration of letters and visits (*xinfang*) created in 1951 has also been "responsible for receiving, registering, and forwarding testimonies and requests to the concerned parties" (Hua & Thireau, 2010) and has provided a fundamental mechanism at all administrative levels for a wide range of individuals and groups to expose injustices, embezzlement, or the faulty application of administrative procedures. It was the sole channel for the Chinese people to voice their discontent until the 1980s, and is still used by people to this day. The digitalization of the bureaus (especially with the creation of websites and accounts on social media) has greatly facilitated access to their services. Finally, even though the media are considered to be the mouthpiece of the CCP, since 1987 and liberal-leaning Zhao Ziyang's reference to "control by the media" or watchdog journalism (*yulun jiandu*) in the political report he delivered at the 13th Party Congress, the idea of the media as compelling the authorities to be more transparent and providing communication channels between the Party and the people has been present in official speeches, albeit in a more or less toned down manner depending on the context (Repnikova, 2018; Salmon, 2011).

This logic of representation was also maintained in the post-Deng era. Jiang Zemin's pivotal "Three Represents" theory, ratified at the 16th Party Congress in 2002, is the leading example of the CCP's adaptability to the new realities and new challenges for representation. Since the Reform and Opening Policy was launched in 1978, Chinese society had transformed and diversified, with new social groups emerging and demanding that their voices are heard and interests addressed. Rather than suppressing new demands for representation and provoking social dissatisfaction and unrest, the CCP absorbed and integrated them into its own system. With the Three Represents, the object of representation (O), the people who the CCP is supposed to represent, no longer refers only to the working class and the peasantry but also includes capitalists, which is a major change in discourse (even though in practice, changes occurred before the theory was announced). By absorbing the new (elite) representative social forces, the CCP successfully preserved its status as a hegemonic representative of the interests of the majority of people. Thus, the capacity to represent the majority has been seen by the CCP top leadership as the source of the Party's legitimacy, sur-

vival and continuity. For example, in one of his speeches in 2000 Jiang Zemin stated:

> The reason our Party enjoys the people's support is that throughout the historical periods of revolution, construction and reform, it has always represented the development trend of China's advanced productive forces, the orientation of China's advanced culture, and the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people. (China Daily, 2010)

The so-called fundamental interests of the people include economic, cultural and political interests. By representing "advanced productive forces", the Party represents the economic interests of the people. By representing the orientation of advanced culture, the Party claims to represent the cultural interests of the people (development of creativity, mind and spirit). Finally and most importantly, the Party also claims to represent the political interests of the people by guaranteeing that the people remain the true and the only master of the country (*renmin dangjia zuozhu*).

In a similar vein, Hu Jintao emphasized:

> Our Party is the Marxist ruling Party. All tasks and responsibilities of the Party are for the benefit of the people's interests. To represent the fundamental interests of the majority of the people…has been consistently the guiding thought of four generations of leaders in our Party. (Wu, 2006)

As a result, since the Three Represents, the Party still considers itself as a vanguard Party even though it no longer claims to represent the proletariat alone but the whole Chinese people and nation. As reflected in the revisions to the Constitution adopted in November 2012 during the 18th Party Congress:

> The Communist Party of China is the vanguard both of the Chinese working class and of the Chinese people and the Chinese nation. It is the core of leadership for the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics and represents the development trend of China's advanced productive forces, the orientation of China's advanced culture and the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people. (Constitution of Communist Party of China, 2012)

The Party has metamorphosed and adapted to new domestic and international social and economic conditions (Shambaugh, 2008). In order to legitimize itself and to curb its ideological crisis, the Party has sought to demonstrate not only continuity but also its efforts to adapt to changing contexts and reform. It strives to show itself as the only possible guarantor of the country's interests, development and stability, while remaining in touch with social realities (Cabestan, 2014, p. 58). China's economic and diplomatic rise on the international stage has helped to legitimize these claims while rising inequalities have weakened them. The ubiquitous campaigns against corruption and poverty are framed to counter the view that past reforms have not benefited the whole population equally and that officials are cut off from people's needs. They are more or less explicitly reminiscent of the mass line.

Xi Jinping, for his part, has placed emphasis on improving the formal institutions of political representation, such as people's congresses and political consultative conferences. In his speech at the 19th National Congress of the CCP in 2017, in addition to drawing attention to the traditional definition of people's congresses as organs of power (*quanli jiguan*), he stressed that people's congresses should better perform their representative function and eventually become organs of representation while maintaining a close connection to the masses (Xi, 2017). Undoubtedly, the Chinese leadership sees digitalization as one of the sources of improvement of its representative capacity. For example, in 2016 Xi Jinping demanded that all Party and government cadres should follow the people's demands online, should learn how to use the internet to hear the needs of the people, collect "benign" opinions and suggestions and respond to the concerns of the people (Zhou, 2016). In June 2016, the Central Leading Group for Comprehensively Deepening Reforms, led by Xi Jinping, adopted "Suggestions on improving implementation of closer ties between the National People's Congress (NPC) representatives and the masses". The "Suggestions" require the establishment of new and well-functioning online platforms for improving the connection between the people and NPC representatives. The document also calls for the establishment of multiple channels for people's representatives to express public opinions more effectively (Wang, 2017).

Another interesting development that we have been observing in China in recent years is personification of representation or what Yves Sintomer labels embodiment representation (Sintomer, 2013). From official rhetoric, we can see that representation is presented to the public as the major mission not only of the Party but of the Party chief himself. Xi Jinping is often portrayed by the state media as the true representative of the people (*renmin daibiao Xi Jinping*) and the story of Xi's rise from the grassroots (his father was a senior general but the family was persecuted during the Cultural Revolution) to highest leadership level has arguably been depicted as appealing to people. Official commentators have interestingly framed the reason why Xi's Thought has supposedly become popular among the people in reference to representation. His popularity is said to be mainly due to his capacity to represent the needs of the people and respond to their claims (Liang, 2018). Given the strict authoritarian context, the popularity of the president and the CCP's claims are hard to verify. We can nonetheless hypothesize, if confirmed, the efficiency of tightly controlled communication and a drilled narrative presenting

Xi as the saviour combining representation as distinction and embodiment representation. He is presented as having started from zero (during the Cultural Revolution), being a simple man (eating and talking simply) and knowing the common people (*laobaixing*) well, a strong and seasoned but benevolent ruler (*xi dada*) willing to make tough decisions to redress other officials' lack of rectitude and responsiveness. This narrative frames Xi as the embodiment of a strong and modern China, the right ruler to lead China towards further modernization (having been in charge of one of the most modern and developed province in the past) in the age of digitalization.

4. Digitalization and Political Representation

Speedy proliferation of the ICTs and particularly social media in China stimulated the creation of online spaces for bottom-up self-expression (Han, 2018b), online activism and alternative opinions (deLisle, Avery, & Yang, 2016; Frenkiel & Wang, 2017; Yang, 2009; Zheng, 2007). This also allowed different patterns of representation and representative claim-making to emerge (Heberer & Shpakovskaya, 2017, 2018). Since the introduction of Weibo in 2009, the platform has become the largest and most important space for public debate, including contestation of official discourses on representation in China. In the past five years, however, the Party-state has been consistently introducing tougher regulations and censorship practices to monitor and control dissemination of information and fake news and to guide public opinion, thereby affecting the platform of most relevance to the issue of claim-making. Weibo microblogging provided intellectuals with an opportunity to publicly express their individual opinions on the state of representation and make claims relating to representation and misrepresentation (Shpakovskaya, 2018). Popular microbloggers are key opinion leaders who are followed by millions of fans. The most critical ones have been systematically censored and blocked by the authorities. Thus, we argue that a previously freer online space that allowed public debate on political representation and claim-making has gradually become dominated by the Party-state that vigilantly maintains its position as sole representative of the Chinese people and their interests.

In the following passages, we demonstrate the discourse on the ICTs and digitalization that the CCP has been promoting online and offline. More specifically, our analysis of Xi Jinping's official speeches from 2014 to 2018 shows that digitalization is often presented by the leading authorities as both a prerequisite for development and a potential source of social instability and crisis. As the sole representative of the "people's fundamental interests" as well as of "new productive forces" and "advanced culture", as claimed in the Three Represents, the CCP has been actively attempting to secure the leading role in the process of modernization through digitalization.

4.1. Digitalization as a Prerequisite for Socio-Economic Development

The Party-led transformation of China into a digital superpower (*wangluo qiangguo*), first proposed by Xi Jinping in 2014, had become, by 2018, one of the leading strategic thoughts (*zhanlve sixiang*) of new development (*xinxing fazhan*).[3] In official speeches, digitalization and the new ICTs are presented to the public as an unprecedented opportunity for promoting China's rapid development. In the most recent version of this well-established trend, digitalization—according to Xi Jinping—"represents new productive forces and the direction for new development" (Renmin Ribao, 2018). First and foremost, digitalization is seen as an opportunity for economic growth driven by technological innovations. Technological innovation in artificial intelligence, big data management and innovative initiatives by small and medium-sized businesses are thus all considered essential for the overall economic modernization of the country.

Furthermore, a new notion of a "smart society" (*zhihui shehui*) was put forward by Xi Jinping in 2018. Deriving from the concept of the "smart city", building a "smart society" is the ultimate goal of digitalization. No clear-cut definition has been yet spelt out; however, the notion boils down to the general idea of an equal society enabled by digital technologies. This equality, e.g., equitable economic development based on mutual aid between rich cities and poor countryside and equal access to social welfare, can supposedly be reached by narrowing down digital gaps between cities and villages and between different social groups (Shan, 2018). It is also emphasized that a "smart society" must manifest socialist values and be appropriate for Chinese national specificities. The goal, then, is not simply to mimic foreign models: in a smart society, "individual interests must fuse with national interests and priorities in order to achieve the third millennium goal—the building of a smart society with Chinese characteristics" (Li & Zhang, 2017).

In addition, Xi Jinping strongly encouraged government officials and people's congress deputies to revive the traditional mass line by actively engaging with the public online. At the Work Symposium on Cybersecurity and Informatization in 2016, for instance, he demanded that in the spirit of the mass line, all Party and government cadres should follow the people's demands online. Xi stressed that:

> Netizens come from the people; when people go online, their will and expectations also go online. Our leading cadres should follow the people. Party cadres should learn how to exercise the mass line on the in-

[3] The concept of "a digital or cyber superpower" was first proposed in 2014. Later, in 2015, the concept was further developed in the Internet Plus Action Plan proposed by the central government. In 2018, Xi Jinping put forward the concept of "Strategic Thought on Cyber Superpower" (*wangluo qiangguo zhanlve sixiang*), which is considered a further theoretical development of the framework for cyberspace governance and cybersecurity in China.

> ternet. They should often go online, learn what people think and want, collect good thoughts and opinions and actively respond to the people's concerns and doubts. Let the internet become a new channel for understanding and listening to the masses, for solving the problems of the masses, for nurturing democracy and for subjecting ourselves to supervision by the people. (Renmin Ribao, 2016)

The above extracts have two important implications. On the one hand, the Party-state has been actively adapting to the changing environment stimulated by the ICTs. By appropriating the ICTs for better and more efficient social service provision, the CCP aims to recreate and reemphasize its image and function as the sole representative of the people. By promoting the idea of the digital mass line, the CCP aims to enhance its bond with the people by demonstrating its closeness to the hearts and minds of the people through the use of ICTs. This may be interpreted as a form of mixed symbolic representation combining descriptive representation and politics of presence where the CCP acts as a representative that demonstrates similarities with and closeness to the represented.

E-governance may potentially contribute to the CCP's ability to better identify and respond to the interests of the people and thus improve its capacity for substantive representation. On the other hand, the consistent reference to conventional notions such as the mass line and Party's leadership also suggests that the CCP adheres to the idea of consultation and responsiveness as parts of representation through channels that are tightly controlled by the CCP and that it has no intention of weakening its monopoly over representation.

4.2. Digitalization as a Source of Instability and Risk

Digitalization and new ICTs are not only depicted as the driving force for socio-economic modernization and development, but are also highly associated with instability and crises. In the official discourse, they are often presented as a source of digital crime, fraud, falsified information, pornography and potential cause of chaos. Therefore, the greatest attention has been paid to preserving cybersecurity. Moreover, cybersecurity is continuously equated with state security and directly linked to the interests of the people that the CCP is to represent. Xi Jinping emphasized that "without a secure cyberspace, there can be no secure state or stable economy, and the interests of the overwhelming majority of the people thus cannot be guaranteed" (Renmin Ribao, 2018).

Most importantly, the Party defines cyberspace security and management as its foremost responsibility to the nation and the people: "We must strengthen our cyberspace governance in accordance with the law and with an attitude responsible to the society and the people" (Cyberspace Administration of China, 2016).

In addition to cybersecurity, another notable development is the call to actively create a safe and positive online ecology. The cyberspace is often criticized by authorities for being too negative (link with previous quote's "good opinions") and aggressive. This negativity and aggression are considered unhealthy and are thus in conflict with the interests of the netizens, particularly the younger internet users. The internet should therefore be cleaned up by spreading positive energy (*zhengnengliang*):

> It is necessary to enhance the construction of online content, its positive propagation online, also to nurture a positive and healthy online culture that encourages aspirations toward improvement and goodness. It is necessary to nourish the people's hearts and society with core socialist values and outstanding achievements of human culture. It is important to ensure abundance of positivity in order to create for the internet users, and young users in particular, a cyberspace that is clean and healthy. (Cyberspace Administration of China, 2016)

To fulfil its responsibility as the main guarantor of cybersecurity and positive online ecology, the Party-state has made efforts aimed at (1) regaining its central presence in the cyberspace by establishing official platforms for dissemination of official narratives and online communication with the people (King, Pan, & Roberts, 2017); (2) building up a professional team of cyberspace managers; (3) improving the regulatory framework; and (4) tightening online censorship and enacting self-censorship (King, Pan, & Roberts, 2013). Most notably, as some researchers have shown, the creation of a positive and ideologically correct online environment is not only a product of tightening censorship and coercion, but is also a result of persuasion (Repnikova & Fang, 2018), negotiation (Jiang, 2016), and active online engagement of pro-regime netizens (Han, 2018a) and nationalists (Schneider, 2018).

From the representation perspective, the CCP certainly positions itself as the sole capable representative of the people's interests, e.g., it is the CCP that possesses the necessary capacity to deal with the emerging danger brought about by digitalization. It claims to be the guarantor of safety and order. That is in line with representation as distinction, discussed above, and with substantive representation. To achieve its goal of being the sole representative, the CCP has been suppressing alternative claim-makers, such as outspoken bloggers, in the name of a safe and stable online environment. At the same time, however, the CCP has been actively penetrating the internet by establishing a wide net of websites for e-governance aimed at better social service provision through consultation.

5. Conclusions

To better understand the nature of political claim-making, we used Yves Sintomer's ideal types to go be-

yond the "deceptive familiarity" of representation and its occurrences and analyze the official conceptualization of representation in China in light of this typology. We have seen that his concept of embodiment representation (acting as) allows us not only to approach the CCP's representative claims in terms of symbolic representation (descriptive representation and politics of presence) and substantive representation (acting for), but also to grasp its political-legal dimension despite the absence of direct elections of top leaders.

Applying discourse analysis, we examined the evolution of the CCP's representative claim-making since 1949 to the present day and draw the following conclusions. First, there has been a continuous upgrading in conceptualization of representation and expression of representative claims by the CCP leaders. This is revealed in the Three Represents, as well as in the recent speeches of Xi Jinping. Not only has the CCP diversified the formulation of who it represents (the object of representation), but it has also raised the significance of representation by referring to representation as the Party's duty and responsibility, aimed at improving its capacity to represent substantively. More specifically, we showed that in the Chinese official discourse, the focus has gradually been put on substantive representation as the CCP has often presented itself as a performance-driven Party acting in a responsive way. To display representativeness (the capacity to represent the majority), the Party-state must demonstrate its responsiveness to and responsibility for the needs and interests of the people. In pursuing this aim under Mao, the CCP tended to employ both the elements of representation as distinction and description. After the Three Represents and its elitist turn, claims of symbolic representation have been more vigorously combined with claims of substantive as well as identity representation. Our analysis of the evolution of the discourse on the mass line and the current official discourses on digitalization both exemplify this dynamic. Since the Party leadership has gradually considered the interests of the Chinese people as more diverse and less objective, it has indeed presented itself as a neutral arbiter and relied more extensively on popular consultation, without yielding anything of its claim to represent, which is in line with Pitkin's emphasis on the role of consultation in substantive representation.

Secondly, alongside changes in discourse, we also trace continuity. We contend that over decades, political representation has invariably been perceived by the CCP as the capacity to represent the interests of the majority of the Chinese people. Most importantly, the CCP has been positioning itself as the sole representative of the Chinese people. In the age of fast proliferation of the new ICTs, the CCP has adjusted its discourse on digitalization by presenting it as both a prerequisite for development and a source of chaos. That is how the CCP attempts to justify its increasing control over the internet: it is supposedly the duty of the sole representative to maintain stability and make the most of the use of new technologies in the interests of the Chinese people and the nation. We argued that to fulfil its responsibility as the main guarantor of cybersecurity and positive online ecology, the Party-state has enhanced its online visibility as well as tightened its control over alternative claim-makers that emerged online. We thus conclude that alongside improving the CCP's governing capacity and substantive representation with the use of digital technologies, the conventional representation dynamics, where the CCP has been maintaining its monopoly over representation, remains predominant.

To sum up, over past decades the CCP has been adjusting its representative claim to the rapid socio-economic transformations reshaping the country by moving from the Leninist and Marxist ideals of representation of workers and peasants in the continuous class struggle and positioning itself as a Party that represents the interests of the Chinese people and the future of the nation. We demonstrated how the CCP has embraced various strategies over the decades, emphasizing elements of political-legal (mandate and embodiment) and symbolic representation as well as distinction and description representation. We also highlighted a shift in the focus of representation from symbolic to substantive, mainly through digitalization of the mass line and consultation. Finally, we showed how social media in China have provided a platform for bottom-up claims on representation and misrepresentation. By promoting itself as the sole capable representative of the national interests and guarantor of security in the digital age, the CCP attempts to legitimize its intolerance towards alternative claim-makers and preserve its hegemony over claim-making.

Acknowledgments

Both authors contributed equally to this article. The authors would like to express their sincere thanks to the guest editors Petra Guasti and Brigitte Geissel for their constructive comments and suggestions to improve the quality of the article, as well as to the two blind reviewers. The authors are also grateful to the German Research Foundation (DFG) and French Research Agency (ANR) for generously funding their research for this article as part of the French–German Joint Cooperation Project "New Political Representative Claims: A Global View—France, Germany, Brazil, China, India Compared (2016–2019)".

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

References

Bell, D. (2015) *The China model*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (2001). *Langage et pouvoir symbolique* [Language and symbolic power]. Paris: Seuil.

Burke, E. (1949). Speech to the electors of Bristol. In R. J. S., Hoffman & P. Levak (Eds), *Burke's politics, selected writings and speeches*. New York, NY: Knopf.

Cabestan, J. P. (2014). *Le système politique chinois. Un nouvel equilibre autoritaire* [The Chinese political system. A new authoritarian balance]. Paris: Presses de Sciences Po.

China Daily. (2010). Three Represents. *China Daily*. Retrieved from http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/cpc2011/2010-09/08/content_12474313.htm

Constitution of Communist Party of China. (2012). Constitution of Communist Party of China. *China.org.cn*. Retrieved from http://www.china.org.cn/china/18th_cpc_congress/2012-11/16/content_27138030.htm

Cyberspace Administration of China. (2016). Xi Jinping zongshuji zhuchi zhaokai wangluo anquan he xinxihua gongzuo zuotanhui qiangdiao: Rang hulianwang genghao zaofu guojia he renmin [General Secretary Xi Jinping presides at a symposium on cybersecurity and digitalization: Emphasizing the Internet to better benefit the country and the people]. *Cyberspace Administration of China*. Retrieved from http://www.cac.gov.cn/2016-08/15/c_1119330260.htm

Dahl, R. (1989). *Democracy and its critics*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

deLisle, J., Avery, G., & Yang, G. (Eds.). (2016). *The internet, social media, and a changing China*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

De Wilde, P. (2013). Representative claims analysis: theory meets method. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *20*(2), 278–294.

Disch, L. (2011). Toward a mobilization conception of democratic representation. *American Political Science Review*, *105*(1), 100–114.

Duan, D. (2019). On authoritarian political representation in contemporary China. *Politics and Governance*, *7*(3), 199–207.

Frakt, P. (1979). Mao's concept of representation. *American Journal of Political Science*, *23*(4), 684–704.

Frenkiel, E. (2015). *Conditional democracy*. London: ECPR Press.

Frenkiel, E., & Wang, S. (2017). Les jeunes Chinois dans différents espaces nationaux: Expressions et engagements politiques [Young Chinese in different national spaces: Political expressions and commitments]. *Participations*, *17*(1), 5–33.

Gaxie, D. (1978). *Le cens caché* [The hidden census]. Paris: Seuil.

Geras, N. (1981). Classical Marxism and proletarian representation. *New Left Review*, *1981*(125), 75–89.

Gore, L. (2019). The Communist Party-dominated governance model of China: Legitimacy, accountability, and meritocracy. *Polity*, *51*(1), 161–194.

Han, R. (2018a). (Un)civil society in digital China | Withering Gongzhi: Cyber criticism of Chinese public intellectuals. *International Journal of Communication*, *2018*(12), 1966–1987.

Han, R. (2018b). *Contesting cyberspace in China: Online expression and authoritarian resilience*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

He, D., & Yao, Y. (2011). Shehui pingdeng, zhongxing zhengfu yu zhongguo jingji zengzhang [Social equality, neutrality of government and economic growth]. *Jingji Yanjiu*, *2011*(1), 4–17.

Heberer, T. (2016). *Reflections on the concept of representation and its application to China* (Working Papers on East Asian Studies, Institute of East Asian Studies, University Duisburg-Essen). Duisburg: University Duisburg-Essen.

Heberer, T., & Shpakovskaya, A. (2017). *The digital turn in political representation in China* (Working Papers on East Asian Studies, Institute of East Asian Studies, University Duisburg-Essen). Duisburg: University Duisburg-Essen.

Heberer, T., & Shpakovskaya, A. (2018). Shuzihua jishuxia zhengzhidaibiao zhuanxing: Zhongguode anli ji qi lilun yiyi [The transformation of political representation through digital technologies: The case of China and its theoretical implications]. *Guowai lilun dongtai*, *2018*(10), 68–77.

Hua, L., & Thireau, I. (2010). *Les ruses de la démocratie: Protester en Chine* [Democracy's tricks: Protesting in China]. Paris: Seuil.

Jiang, M. (2016). Managing the micro-self: The governmentality of real name registration policy in Chinese microblogosphere. *Information, Communication and Society*, *19*(2), 203–220.

King, G., Pan, J., & Roberts, M. E. (2013). How censorship in China allows government criticism but silences collective expression. *American Political Science Review*, *107*(2), 326–343.

King, G., Pan, J., & Roberts, M. E. (2017). How the Chinese government fabricates social media posts for strategic distraction, not engaged argument. *American Political Science Review*, *111*(3), 484–501.

Li, S. (2001). Zaizao yuyan [Restore language]. *Zhanlue yu Guanli*, *2*, 110–115.

Li, C. (2009). The Chinese Communist Party: Recruiting and controlling the new elites. *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, *38*(3), 13–33.

Li, T., & Zhang, C. (2017). Shijiuda baogao "zhihui shehui" jiedu: Xi Jinping shuode "zhihuishehui" jiujing shi sha? [Interpretation of the "smart society" in the 19th National Congress: What is "smart society" according to Xi Jinping?]. *Besticity*. Retrieved from http://www.besticity.com/newsExpress/174629.html

Liang, J. (2018). Xi Jinping xin shidai zhongguo tese shehui zhuyi sixiang de san ge xiangdu [The three dimensions of Xi Jinping's new socialist thought with Chinese characteristics]. *Cpcnews.cn*. Retrieved from http://theory.people.com.cn/n1/2018/0508/c40531-29971743.html

Manin, B. (1997). *Principles of representative gouvernement*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Manion, M. (2015). *Information for autocrats: Representation in Chinese local congresses*. Cambridge: Cam-

bridge University Press.
Mulieri, A. (2013). Beyond electoral democracy? A critical assessment of constructivist representation in the global arena. *Representation*, *49*(4), 515–527.
Näsström, S. (2011). Where is the representative turn going? *European Journal of Political Theory*, *10*(4), 501–510.
Pitkin, H. (1972). *The concept of representation*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
Renmin Ribao. (2014). Deng Xiaoing lilun zai zhongguohua makesi zhuyi Zhong de diwei he zuoyong [The status and role of the Deng Xiaoping theory in China's Marxism]. *People.cn*. Retrieved from http://opinion.people.com.cn/n/2014/0825/c1003-25528600.html
Renmin Ribao. (2015). Shizhong jianchi renmin liyi zhishang [Persistently uphold the interests of the people]. *People.cn*. Retrieved from http://opinion.people.com.cn/n/2015/0826/c1003-27516546.html
Renmin Ribao. (2016). Xi Jinping zhuchi zhaokai wangluo anquan he xinxihua gongzuo zuotanhui [General Secretary Xi Jinping presides at a symposium on cybersecurity and digitalization]. *Cpcnews.cn*. Retrieved from http://cpc.people.com.cn/n1/2016/0420/c64094-28289000.html
Renmin Ribao. (2018). Xi Jinping: Minrui zhuazhu xinxihua fazhan lishi jiyu, zizhu chuangxin tuijin wangluo qiangguo jianshe [Xi Jinping: A keen grasp of the historical opportunity of digitalization, independent innovation and promotion of building of cyber superpower]. *Cpcnews.cn*. Retrieved from http://jhsjk.people.cn/article/29941696
Repnikova, M. (2018). *Media politics in China*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Repnikova, M., & Fang, K. (2018). Authoritarian participatory persuasion 2.0: Netizens as thought work collaborators in China. *Journal of Contemporary China*, *27*(113), 763–779.
Rossiter, C. (1961). Federalist paper no. 10. In C. Rossiter (Ed.), *The federalist papers: Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, John Jay*. New York, NY: New American Library.
Salmon, N. (2011). Investigating China: What it means to be a journalist in a socialist market economy. *Books & Ideas*. Retrieved from https://booksandideas.net/Investigating-China.html
Saward, M. (2010). *The representative claim*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Schneider, F. (2018). *China's digital nationalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Shambaugh, D. (2008). *China's Communist Party: Atrophy and adaptation*. Berkeley, CA, and London: University of California Press.
Shan, Z. (2018). Dui zhihui chengshi de xin kuozhan—Renmin ribao xinzhi xinjue: zhihui shehui wei shehui xinxihua zhiming fangxiang [New expansion of smart cities—New insights from People's Daily: Smart society leads the direction for the informatization of the society]. *People.cn*. Retrieved from http://opinion.people.com.cn/n1/2018/0124/c1003-29782429.html
Shpakovskaya, A. (2018). *From deputy to blogger: An empirical map of political representation in the Chinese cyberspace*. Paper presented at the 17th Chinese Internet Research Conference, Leiden, The Netherlands.
Sieyes, E-J. (1789). *Dire de l'Abbé Sieyès sur la question du véto royal, à la séance du 7 septembre 1789* [Abbé Sieyès on the royal veto power at the 7 September 1789 meeting]. Versailles: Baudouin.
Sintomer, Y. (2013). Les sens de la representation: Usages et mésusages d'une notion [The meaning of representation: Uses and misuses of a notion]. *Raisons Politiques*, *2*(50), 13–34.
Sorace, C. (2017). *Shaken authority: China's Communist Party and the 2008 Sichuan earthquake*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
Thornton, P. (2016). The cultural revolution as a crisis of representation. *The China Quarterly*, *2016*(227), 697–717.
Urbinati, N., & Warren, M. E. (2008). The concept of representation in contemporary democratic theory. *Annual Review of Political Science*, *11*, 387–412.
Van Dijk, T. A. (1997). What is political discourse analysis? *Belgian Journal of Linguistics*, *11*(1), 11–52.
Wang, H. (2017). Sange chuangxin zengqiang daibiao lianxi qunzhong shixiao [On how three innovations improve the linkage between representatives and people], *Renda Jianshe* (NPC construction), *2017*(1), 31.
Wu, T. (2006). Zhongguo Gongchandang shi renmin liyide daibiao [The Chinese Communist Party is the representative of the interests of the people]. *People.cn*. Retrieved from http://theory.people.com.cn/GB/49150/49151/4225675.html
Xi, J. (2017). Zai Zhongguo Gongchandang di 19 ci quanguo daibiao dahui shang de baogao [The report by Xi Jinping delivered at the 19 National Party's Congress]. *People's government of the PRC*. Retrieved from http://www.gov.cn/zhuanti/2017-10/27/content_5234876.htm
Yang, G. (2009). *The power of the internet in China: Citizen activism online*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
Zheng, Y. (2007). *Technological empowerment: The internet, state, and society in China*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
Zhong, Z. (2009). Zhongsu butong de gaige kaifang yuanyu butong de lilun zhidao [The different reform and opening policies between China and the Soviet Union stem from the different theoretical guidance]. *People.cn*. Retrieved from http://theory.people.com.cn/GB/41038/9368567.html
Zhou, S. (2016). Lingdao ganbu yao xuehui tongguo wangluo zou qunzhong luxian [Leading cadres must learn to follow the mass line by means of the Internet]. *People.cn*. Retrieved from http://politics.people.com.cn/n1/2016/0430/c1001-28316212.html

About the Authors

Emilie Frenkiel is an Associate Professor in Political Science at Université Paris-Est Créteil, France. She is the author of *Conditional Democracy: The Intellectual Debate on Political Reform in China* (ECPR, 2015). Her research interests include political representation, deliberation, political reform and participatory innovations in China, and civic tech. She is a member of the editorial boards of social science journals *La Vie des Idées* and *Books & Ideas*.

Anna Shpakovskaya (PhD) is a Senior Research Fellow in the French–German Joint Cooperation Project "New Political Representative Claims: A Global View—France, Germany, Brazil, China, India Compared (2016–2019)". She works at the Institute of East Asian Studies, University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany. Her research interests include the theory of political representation, digitalization of political representation in China and Russia, international non-government organizations, the International Red Cross humanitarian movement, and the Chinese Red Cross.

Politics and Governance (ISSN: 2183-2463)

Politics and Governance is an innovative new offering to the world of online publishing in the Political Sciences. An internationally peer-reviewed open access journal, Politics and Governance publishes significant, cutting-edge and multidisciplinary research drawn from all areas of Political Science.

www.cogitatiopress.com/politicsandgovernance

COGITATIO