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Fifty Years of *Representative and Responsible Government:*
Contemporary Relevance, Theoretical Revisions and Conceptual Reflection

Forthcoming in Representation

Over half a century has passed since the publication of A. H. Birch's *Representative and Responsible Government* (1964), yet it still continues as a seminal source for leading contemporary political scientists (see for example Rhodes 2011:280-1). Along the way it has been identified as one of the classic analyses of UK constitutional politics (Flinders 2010:73) and more broadly as one of the 'best analytical surveys of representation' (Wahlke 1971) as well as offering exceptional insights into notions of responsibility (Mair 2009:11). Birch's (1964:21) initial linkage of representation and responsibility - 'a representative system enables a government to be responsible' in a number of different ways - has come under sustained and critical reflection by subsequent scholars of both government and governance. This critical political analysis complements Birch's own recognition of the complexities and ambiguities in his conceptualisation of both representation and responsibility (plus the practical vagaries, tensions and contradictions inherent in their systemic interconnectedness as 'representative *and* responsible government'). In the intervening five decades these complexities and ambiguities have multiplied and this is reflected through increased conceptual sophistication, in a 'rethinking' of notions of representation and responsibility, and through increased complexity and indeterminacy of government itself, to the extent that the term 'governance', with all of its associated adjectives – decentred, multi-level, global, meta – is now seen as a more accurate descriptor of governing practice. In turn, these ideational and empirical challenges have resulted in claims that representative *and* responsible government has now been displaced by representative *versus* responsible government (Mair 2009, 2011); or, more dramatically still, that there has been an 'end to representative politics' (Tormey 2015) and, simultaneously, the displacement of 'standard model' linear forms of responsibility in more complex models reflecting the expansion of lateral or horizontal modes of accountability, captured most vividly in Keane's (2009, 2011) notion of 'monitory democracy'. From this perspective electoral processes and institutions in themselves provide for *neither* representative *nor* responsible government.

The aim of this article is therefore to use Birch's *Representative and Responsible* as the central intellectual reference point from which to analyse: (1) The contemporary relevance and meaning of the concepts of representativeness and responsibility; (2) The state of the discipline today in terms of understanding the relationship *between* these concepts; and (3) the distance the discipline of political studies has actually travelled from Birch's initial landmark study. Our core argument is that although the discipline has travelled a great distance in terms of *empirical breadth* and *analytical complexity* the roots of much of this scholarship owe a great deal (implicitly or explicitly) to Birch's scholarship, and specifically due to his focus on the nexus between notions of representativeness and responsibilities. The focus on this nexus (and the inevitable governing tensions that come with it) and the practical achievement of specific normative concepts is arguably *more important* today as a focus of scholarly inquiry (in the United Kingdom and far beyond) than when Birch's work was first published. Moreover, the death of the author in December 2014 makes this a fitting point to both recognise and further interrogate that set of ideas and themes that A. H. Birch crafted fifty years ago.

In order to make this argument this article is divided into five interconnected sections that offer the findings of a large synthetic research project (i.e. an approach that focuses on integrating, connecting and reflecting upon existing research contributions) that has been based at Strathclyde University and the University of Sheffied. The first section offers a very brief account of Birch's thesis regarding representative *and* responsible government as the foundation for subsequent debates. The second section looks 'beyond Birch' through the analysis of a seam of scholarship, largely derived from the field of party politics, that suggested a quite different

conceptual relationship in the sense of representative versus responsible government. This flows into the third section's focus on the broadening out of conceptualisations of both representation and responsibility in a number of islands of theorising that broadly emerged out of the 'governance turn' in political studies and political science. This includes a focus on network governance, fuzzy accountability, meta-governance and global governance as indicative topics of analysis that can be traced back to Birch's *Representative and Responsible*. And yet what is arguably as interesting but less recognised is the manner in which Birch's focus on 'the nexus' flows out across a broader range of debates and sub-fields, and notable those concerned with 'the end' or 'future' of representative politics. It is for this reason that the fourth part of this article draws upon the work of scholars such as John Keane and Simon Tormey and their quite different interpretations of the representative-responsible linkage(s). The final fifth section focuses on the 'so what?' question in the sense of reflecting

I. REPRESENTATIVE *AND* RESPONSIBLE

[735 words]

What is the core thesis or intellectual seed that was sown in Birch's *Representative and Responsible* half a century ago? At one level the answer is quite simple, the argument is that a government must somehow balance being representative (i.e. being open, inclusive, accountable, etc.) while also being responsible (i.e. controlled, stable, 'strong', etc.). '[E]veryone knows that the British constitution provides a system of representative and responsible government. These characteristics are almost universally regarded as both desirable and important', Birch states (1964:13). At a deeper level, however, his thesis questions the innate incompatibility, or at the very least the potential tension or grating that the parallel quest for these concepts may generate. In this sense his analysis reached far beyond the terrain of British politics and instead sought to expose a set of governing paradoxes that were to some extent inevitable within democratic governance and could not be dismissed in simplistic terms. (From this perspective Birch's *Representative and Responsible* has echoes of Bernard Crick's *In Defence of Politics* that was published just two years before.)

By offering this focus on the nexus between representation and responsible Birch was making a very strong and direct critique of the traditional descriptive and institutionally focused studies of British government. For Birch, these tended to adopt over-simplistic principal-agent assumptions whereby 'political power flowed exclusively in one direction from electors to parliament and from parliament to government' (1964:74) without acknowledging reverse flows, pushback or spillovers (see 1964:74, 138, 164). '[C]onventional ways of portraying the political system' Birch argued (1964:239) implied that 'political power can be clearly and precisely located' and therefore provide 'a misleading picture of the distribution of political power and influence' (1964:240). Governing was, for Birch, far more complex and multi-dimensional than existing analyses had sufficiently captured or exposed. A focus on the relationship representation and responsibility therefore provided a simple intellectual tool through which to start articulating, exploring and exposing some of these complexities. Put slightly differently, Birch (like Crick) was concerned with the relationship between 'politics as theory' and 'politics as practice' and this allowed him to expand his analysis beyond the internal realms of governing and into broader questions of democratic legitimacy. He wrote, for example, that although '[i]n western democracies representation by election has come to be regarded as the most important form of representation, and indeed the only proper basis of a political system… it would not be right either in principle or practice simply to equate representation with election' (1964:17) and thereby presaged the debate concerning the nature and meaning of legitimacy which has grown in prominence in recent years (e.g. Wood 2016).

But in many ways Birch's classic text was a work of conceptual political analysis in which he dissected the concepts of both representativeness and responsibility to reveal their inherent

ambiguities and uses. 'Responsible government', for example, was a term that could suggest a focus on 'responsiveness' (i.e. where political and bureaucratic executives were expected to be responsive to public demands) or to invoke notions of 'duty and moral responsibility' to behave in a certain manner or against a certain set of principles (1964:18). It might even be used in a third sense to convey some sense of 'accountability' in terms of answerability by providing information, a capacity for amending behaviours and practices, and ultimately accepting culpability (both collectively and individually). The simple act of dissecting the possible interpretations of 'responsible government' was therefore critical for Birch's thesis due to the manner in which it challenges over-simplistic assumptions, revealed the existence of certain potential conceptual incompatibilities and related to the historical shift in power between the executive and legislature (i.e. the parliamentary decline thesis) which had affected the capacity of actors to externally enforce specific assumptions about behaviour. The relevance and utility of Birch's arguments are seen in the manner in which subsequent authors, such as ???? Tant (1990), David Judge (1993), ???? Beattie (1995), and David Marquand (????) have drawn upon his work to expose what have variously been termed 'Whig', 'Westminster' or 'representative' strands within the British political tradition and their relationship with 'Peelite', 'Whitehall' or 'responsible' components. And yet at its core Birch offered an analytical frame that focused on the nexus or complementarity between responsibility *and* representation. The next section reveals how this initial focus was challenged and developed in subsequent analyses that adopted a more agonistic approach couched around the notion of responsibility *versus* representation.

II. REPRESENTATIVE *VERSUS* RESPONSIBLE

[1,225 words]

The aim of this section is to look 'beyond Birch' in the sense of how the arguments set out in *Representative and Responsible* influenced subsequent studies and analyses in a process that is analogous to a form of intellectual path dependency. For Birch (see 1964:17-22) the link or nexus between representative government, on the one hand, and responsible government, on the other, flowed from the manner in which representative process allowed for the aggregation and articulation of public preferences through political parties, and for those preferences, through the electoral process, to be reflected in the policies of government (i.e. for there to be responsiveness). Moreover, where a gap existed between popular preferences and government policies the processes and mechanisms of responsibility required political parties to account for such incongruence. This was therefore an unashamedly conservative lens that correlated with Birch's view (see 1964:245) that not only did the UK enjoy a 'system of disciplined party government' but that is was also this system that ensured a proportionate balance of representation *and* responsibility was secured. It was therefore for parties to occupy, navigate and manage the mediating political space surrounding the representative/responsible nexus.

In recent decades a number of studies of representative government in western liberal democracies (e.g. Katz 1987, 2014; Jones and McDermott 2004; Dalton et al. 2011; Hill et al. 2015; Bardi et al. 2014; van Biezen 2014) have questioned the capacity of parties to fulfil this role in ways that contest Birch's initial position. Nadia Urbinati's *Representative Democracy* (2006), for example, highlights the dilemma faced by political parties in fulfilling this role due to their status as 'partial-yet-communal associations' in which they must translate a myriad of partial and often incompatible preferences and demands into a set of homogenous policies that are framed as being in 'the public interest'. This, once again, resonate with Crick's focus on the role of political institutions, in general, and political parties, in particular, as mechanisms of conflict resolution – 'the tough squeezing of collective decisions out of multiple and competing interests and opinions' (Stoker, 2006). As David Farrell emphasises (2014), political parties occupy a position in which the distinction between *representative parties* and *governing parties* veils the existence of a potentially far-reaching tensions or trade-offs. To some extent therefore, and linking back to Birch's *Representative and Responsible* as a key articulation point, the tension between responsiveness and responsibility has been a constant theme in the field of party politics, but without necessarily

being posited as a contradictory or incompatible relationship (for a discussion see Bardi *et al.* 2014:238, 241).

A significant shift in approach (i.e. from 'representative *and* responsible government' to assumptions concerning 'responsiveness *versus* responsibility') emerged largely from the analyses of modern party dynamics and representative processes by Peter Mair (2009; 2011). These would, in time, be crystallised into Mair's *Managing the Void* (2014) and would offer a powerful argument concerning the supposedly benign linkage of 'responsiveness' and 'responsibility' and instead posit 'a growing gap *between* representation and government' [emphasis added]. Moreover, not only had the twin *representative* and *responsible* components of party politics become disentangled but the position had been reached where parties had now moved 'their centre of gravities from civil society to the state' with a concomitant shift from '*combining* representative and governmental roles (or combining representative and procedural or institutional roles) to building on their governmental role alone' (Mair 2011:8 original emphasis). With this perceived separation of roles came a new division of labour 'whereby the mainstream parties would govern, or primarily govern, while other agencies [including organised groups, social movements, self-authorised representatives, the media, and 'niche' or 'challenger' parties] would look after the citizens' representative needs' (Mair 2011:8). Simple serial principal-agent conceptions of representation were therefore rejected in a manner that connects with Birch's similar position; whereas Mair's focus on the emergence of complex organisational networks within civil society above and beyond 'traditional' political parties dovetails with the arguments of Keane regarding monitory democracy (discussed below). The core insight for the purposes of this article, however, was Mair's contention regarding the emergence of legitimation problems 'unless parties can represent as well as govern' (Katz and Mair 2009:760). The conceptual presumption being that governing and representing can be disentangled in both theory and practice.

If Birch offers a lens based around parallel processes of 'representation *and* responsibility' and Mair offers a bifurcated prism of 'representation *versus* responsibility' then the work of Enroth (2015) offers a forceful critique of the latter and shifts the focus of attention back towards the former. Enroth's basic argument is that Mair's analysis of the 'cartel party' and contemporary party-state relationships too easily assumes that the representative functions of parties have been eroded or, as Enroth puts it, '[e]nter the cartel party, exit party representation' (2015:4). The focus of mainstream parties may well have shifted in recent years, Enroth concedes, through the emergence of 'valence politics' and a focus on demonstrating governing competence but it remains too simplistic to suggest that the representative link between voters and parties has been severed. Parties, as Michael Saward (2010) has shown in detail, still have to make claims to represent the interests and opinions of their collective constituencies, and these claims have to be accepted by those constituencies. In this manner it is not a case that different typologies of parties (cadre, mass, catch-all, or cartel) can be used to differentiate some types of party that represent and some that do not, instead it is more accurate to distinguish between different party types according to different claims to represent. In the end, therefore, the changes and developments in party government mapped by Mair and others has not according to a separate strand of scholarship resulted in 'representative *versus* responsible government' but rather point to more complex and expansive interactions between processes of representation and responsibility in 21st liberal democratic states.

But what this section has shown is the ongoing and contemporary relevance of the representative/responsible nexus that was first brought to the fore by Birch in his 1964 book. It has presented this argument through recourse to the field of party politics and it would be possible to drill down further into this seam of scholarship in order to further demonstrate the shadow of Birch's scholarship. The emergence and role of 'insurgent' and often populist parties across Western Europe, for example, can (and has) been set explicitly within the representative/responsible debate with the danger interpreted as being that party systems may become increasingly bifurcated 'with the established parties acting responsibly, but not very responsively, and the populist parties and other outside challengers acting responsively, but not very responsibly' (van Biezen 2014:189). The representative/responsible nexus has also been

challenged by the shift towards the politics of depoliticisation (see Flinders and Buller 2006:298; Pettit 2004:58; Flinders and Wood, 2015) whereby elected politicians and political parties support the widespread delegation of powers, responsibilities and governing competencies away from the direct control of representative actors or processes in an attempt to demonstrate governing competence, reduce democratic pressures, overcome well-known credible commitment dilemmas, etc.. The result being interpretations of the 'hollowing out of democracy' that locate debates concerning the representative/responsible nexus into broader concerns regarding the emergence of fuzzy governance and fuzzy accountability and force anyone tracing the broader contemporary relevance of Birch's *Representative and Responsible* to move from the field of party politics to the sphere of governance and public policy.

III. GOVERNANCE, REPRESENTATION & RESPONSIBILITY

The central argument of this article is that Birch's *Representative and Responsible* remains a valuable text for scholars with an interest in contemporary democratic governance due to the manner in which it focuses attention on the tension between notions of representativeness and responsibility that must somehow be navigated by political actors and institutions. Fifty years have passed since the first publication of Birch's most renowned book and the changes in relation to social, economic, political, cultural and technological processes have been far-reaching and are captured in Zygmunt Bauman's concept of 'liquid modernity' in which traditional social anchorage points have, to a great extent, been eroded. The aim of this section is to locate Birch's *Representative and Responsible* at the confluence of a set of debates concerning the transition from government to governance and the impact of this transition for notions of both representation and responsibility in order to assess the distance the discipline of political studies has actually travelled since Birch's initial landmark study and why his analysis remains germane. In this regard it is essential to recognise that in many ways Birch's work prefigured the rise of governance as arguably the 'uber concept' of the final decades of the twentieth century. His critique of the artificialities of 'accepted ways' of describing British government and the 'misleading picture of the distribution of political power and influence' (1964, 240) focused on the rejection of simple principal-agent models or zero-sum assumptions about the position of power (see (1964:113,131,138,140,207,211). Governing, for Birch, was not the preserve simple of ministers and their officials but also encompassed a broad range of non-elected and non-governmental organisations that often challenged dominant assumptions regarding centralised and hierarchical structures. In this respect, and with the benefit of hindsight, Birch was actually an early pioneer of the analysis of governance before the development and analytical implications of the concept had actually been conceived. This can be illustrated by setting Birch's focus on the representative/responsible nexus within the context of four specific sub-fields of governance-theoretic research - network governance, meta-governance and global governance.

i. Network Governance [1,000 words]

Although the term 'governance' can be traced back several centuries it is sufficient for the purposes of this article to locate 'the governance turn' of the late twentieth century squarely against the publication of Rod Rhodes *Understanding Governance* (1997) with its emphasis on the transition from traditional hierarchies to complex networks and markets and how this complicated traditional conceptions of governing. This 'shift from a hierarchic state to governance in and by networks' - to paraphrase Mark Bevir (2010:81) – posed distinctive questions for notions of representation and representativeness that resonated with the earlier arguments of Birch. The emergence of what Matthew Flinders (2008:3) describes as a 'dense sphere of independent agencies, non-majoritarian institutions, "parastatal" or "satellite" bodies, extra-governmental organizations, hybrids [fringe bodies, quangos]' in which governmental bodies are but one (admittedly core) actor within an increasingly fluid network directly challenged conventional notions of what constituted representative and responsible government (see

Hendricks 2009:709). More specifically, the perceived 'hollowing out of the state' appeared to emphasise a certain market-based understanding of responsible government that prized efficiency, delivery and outputs above the more representative and process-based considerations associated with scrutiny, openness, etc. To some extent this development was not surprising given that much of post-war British political studies had been dedicated to charting the decline of parliament and the dominance of the executive, the analysis of governance arguably charted little more than the latest stage in this process and the gradual evisceration of the direct capacity of elected politicians and their officials. But when located against Birch's thesis the transition was arguably far deeper than this historical account suggests. As Saward (2005:180) emphasises, 'We are not dealing here with a simple transfer of "representative" politics from one type of domain to another, but rather a significant shift in the primary political sense of representation as a practice and concept'.

The question then focuses on understanding the nature of this 'significant shift' in terms of its institutional, ideational and normative dimensions. At a structural or institutional level there is no doubt that the architecture of the modern state has been transformed and this has been captured in a burgeoning literature on the 'unbundling' (????) or 'unravelling' (?????) of the state. The centrifugal (???) delegation of powers, responsibilities and functions away from governmental structures combined with the fragmentary impact of market logic have created two core challenges that speak directly to the emphasis on *Representative and Responsible* government offered by Birch. The 'problem of many hands' (????) identifies the inefficiencies and risks created by the creation of numerous links in the chain of delegation through which public polices are implemented and regulated. The core insight, simply put, being that the 'more hands' or institutions that play a role within any delivery chain then the harder it becomes to identify exactly who is responsible for what. Fuzzy governance, to put the same point slightly differently, leads to fuzzy accountability. And yet to counter this dilemma through the creation of ever tighter accountability networks risks producing the 'problem of many eyes' whereby organisational and systemic efficiencies become reduced by the need of actors to constantly account for their behaviour to numerous account-demanding bodies rather than concentrating on their core tasks. This focus on what Jonathan Koppell terms 'multiple accountabilities disorder' takes us straight back to the core focus of Birch's *Representative and Responsible* on how to balance the need to offset governing capacity or competence with some degree of representative engagement or scrutiny.

And yet to take this forward, Hendriks (2009:693) observes, 'representative claims are rarely explicit in governance networks', and 'meanings of … representation tend to be celebrated in the abstract but are difficult to pin down in the concrete'. What this indicates is that the traditional link between the electoral mandate and political legitimacy appears to have evolved to the extent that claims to non-electoral legitimacy are frequently deployed or claimed by politicians and decision-makers on the basis of identity, function, expertise or some notion of non-territorial or 'constructed' communities (as seen in the work of Sørensen and Torfing 2007; Hendricks 2009; Nissen 2014; Chapman and Lowndes 2014). This research also reveals the way in which multiple meanings are attached to 'representation' in the practice of governance, not all of which are inclusionary in a democratic sense (see Nissen 2014:41; Hendricks 2009:707-8). Placed within the context of Birch's work it could be argued that the 'essentially contested' nature of the concepts of representation and responsibility – a complexity that Birch attempted to unravel - has augmented exactly as a result of broader socio-economic and technological shifts in society. To suggest that an 'accountability gap' or 'democratic deficit' (see Papadopoulos, 2014) has been created by the government-governance transition may well have some validity when viewed through the lens of traditional governmental or democratic assumptions. But does this remain actually remain valid? Hendricks (2009:710) suggests that it may be 'unrealistic to expect that governance networks replicate the kind of representation and accountability we associate with electoral democracy'. The challenge for Birch when viewed through a modern lens is that, as Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks have emphasized in relation to distributed public governance (or what they call 'Type II' governance), is that a large amount of public governance now rests upon a quite different set of almost post-democratic market-based assumptions.

The link, however, from Hooghe and Marks back into Birch's analysis is provided by his dissection of the 'ambiguous' concept of responsibility and, more specifically, his focus on the idea that 'to be responsible' could be correlated with 'wise policy, whether or not what they do meets with immediate approval of the public' (1964:18; discussion in Part I above). Paradoxically, being 'responsible' from this specific interpretation might actually reject populist pressures or short-term demands in favour of a more 'evidence based' long-term strategy that can only be achieved within a democracy through a process of depoliticization (discussed above). As such, the analysis of network governance, as this sub-section has illustrated, can be directly related to a set of core arguments and themes that were first promoted in Birch's *Representative and Responsible*. It was a book about network governance that did not use the term network governance and yet, to push the analysis to a deeper level, the danger of this review of network governance is that it risks over-emphasizing the 'hollowing out' or evisceration of the state and under-emphasizing the continuing role and capacity of the state (see Jacobsson *et al.* 2015). Indeed, it is possible to trace the emergence of a 'counter-governance' phase of scholarship that emphasizes not only the 'filling in of the hollowing out' through the creation of new tools, methods or strategies but more fundamentally acknowledges the manner in which governance takes place 'in the shadow of hierarchy' (????). This leads into a discussion of meta-governance and how it connects with Birch's work.

ii. Meta-Governance [600 words]

Just as representativeness and responsibility are expected to co-exist in parallel within Birch's thesis so the concept of meta-governance has evolved as part of a wider recognition that there has been no simple unidirectional shift from government to governance, instead government and governance coexist. In this sense both the representative/responsible nexus and the government/governance nexus reflect the existence of a situation of mutual dependency (i.e. representative processes legitimate and sustain the exercise of power, just as the institutions of government shape, direct and sustain the architecture of governance). It is for this reason that Fawcett and Daugbjerg (2012:202) state that effective meta-governance is 'about generating governance arrangements that deliver adequate levels of input and output legitimacy'. The notions of 'effective' and 'adequate' levels of legitimacy take us back to Birch's initial emphasis on the multi-dimensional nature of representation and responsibility within a political context but the key insight here is that whether viewed as 'the government of governance' (????) or 'the governance of governance' (????) meta-governance 'heralds the return of the state by reinventing the governing role' (Bevir 2014:31). Meta-governance therefore focuses on the manner in which elected politicians and governmental structures still wield significant resources in terms of setting the ground rules and parameters within which network governance emerges and operates. The ultimate display of this residual capacity is revealed when governments respond to specific crises or failures by pulling functions, powers and responsibilities back into governmental structures (for a case study see ????).

The concept of the 'shadow of hierarchy' has been invoked in governance studies to acknowledge the capacity of the state (in its electoral representative, governmental institutional form) to effect, explicitly or implicitly, a legislative or regulatory framework for network activity. This 'shadow' hangs over network participants to the extent that structures exist that are consciously designed to emphasise the common good above forms of self-interest. As such, 'a functioning shadow of hierarchy not only serves to increase the effectiveness of governance involving non-state actors' Borzel and Risse (2010, 116) but also provides a 'horizon of legitimacy'. It was exactly this chain of delegation running from the public through to elected politicians and through them to the outer tentacles of the state (and back again) that Birch's *Representative and Responsible* sought to expose and explore in both empirical and theoretical ways. Legitimacy formed the buckle, lynchpin or nexus between representative and responsible government and this basic assumptions remains crucial in contemporary analyses of democratic governance. What has changed in the intervening fifty years is not so much the centrality of

Birch's focus but the size, shape and fragmentation of the modern state in terms of both breadth and depth (examined in the literature on network governance) and this has led to a growing recognition, frequently drawing on Birch's *Representative and Responsible*, of the importance of legitimation afforded by electoral representative processes in the practice of network governance (for a longer-term perspective see Judge 1990, 1993, 2005, 2014). Indeed, there are now calls for a 'new democratic governance model' in which 'traditional forms of representative government are [more explicitly] linked to collaborative arenas of governance and innovation through the meta-governance exercised by elected politicians and public managers' (Torfing 2014:64). What this 'new democratic governance model' might look like and how it would deal with the representative/responsible nexus that Birch focused upon is discussed in Part IV (below) but to some extent this discussion can only begin by recognising the interconnected and embedded nature of contemporary governance. It is for this reason that the next section focuses on global governance.

iii. Global Governance [1,000 words]

Notions of multi-level governance have been deemed to 'represent a transnational version of the familiar network ideas employed to understand the domestic level of governance' (Peters and Pierre 2004:81). In this version, sub-national, national, transnational and global governance networks are intermeshed in interactive matrices, increasingly propelled by instantaneous digital communication, which challenge traditional models of state-delimited representative democracy. Certainly, a complex pattern of transnational institutional interconnectedness is evident in the activities of international policy-making forums such as the United Nations, World Trade Organisation, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Group of Eight (G8) or Group of Twenty (G20), and international regulatory agencies; the informal deliberative forum of international elites of the World Economic Forum; and the emergence of international legal institutions associated with 'cosmopolitan law' (on human rights, the environment, and the conduct of war). Moreover, the emergence of a global or transnational civil society has been discerned in the rapid spread of international non-governmental organisations (sometimes referred to as social movement organisations), and international social movements). These interrelated developments, of exponential increases in socio-economic transactions across state borders and associated transnational governance responses, leads to 'an increasing incongruence between social and political spaces' (Lavenex 2013:107).

Out of this spatial incongruence arises a further political incongruence that as network governance at supra-state levels comes to replicate the 'post-representative' tendencies at state level (i.e. the privileging of non-electoral representation, non-majoritarian institutions and output legitimation over electoral representation, majoritarian institutions and input legitimacy) there is an amplification of calls for the 'democratisation' of global governance. Put in the context of Birch's *Representative and Responsible,* the architecture of transnational and global governance has predominantly been constructed on the logic of responsible governance (i.e. strong, stable, insulated, distant, elite, etc.) rather than representative governance. This presents at least three dilemmas. First, calls for the democratisation of global governance are to some extent undermined by the rise in anti-politics and democratic disengagement at the national level. And yet (and secondly) while governance has become increasingly multi-layered and transnational, political representation and democratic legitimation have remained rooted in the practice of nation-states. This flows into a discursive and ideational deficiency in the sense of the design and promotion of alternative visions or structures for securing democracy, in general, and an appropriate balance between representative and responsibility, in particular. Even if such a 'vision' could be agreed (thirdly) the up-scaling or implementation of any new 'model of democracy' would be difficult in the absence of any system of 'meta-governance of multi-level governance' (Torfing et al. 2012:96). Global representative assemblies could, for example, recognise the 'importance of non-territorially bounded political communities composed of individuals with common interests' as Archibugi and Held have suggested (2011:448). They might also reflect the growing importance of a global civil society above and beyond national civil societies (see Kuper

2004:122-7) and draw-upon non-electoral forms of political legitimacy. But as David Judge (2014:180-3) has argued, even if established these institutions of global democracy were established they would in all likelihood be treated as 'inferior' or 'secondary' to electorally mandated legitimacy of state-based institutions.

There is, however, a more basic element at play here that once again re-focuses our attention on Birch's *Representative and Responsible* and that is *the politics of democratisation* within global governance. As Alastair Roberts' *The Logic of Discipline* (2010) illustrates, the architecture of global governance has become infused with what he terms 'the logic of discipline'. This 'logic' promotes a very technocratic and narrow view of politics and wherever possible the depoliticisation of democracy in order to maximise economic efficiency and the role of markets. This 'hands off' approach to public policy helps explain (returning to notions of network governance) not just the mergence of fuzzy governance but also fuzzy accountability and when viewed through the lens of Birch's framework the 'logic of discipline' is synonymous with an almost complete focus on 'responsibility' rather than representation. This leads into some of the broader 'end of politics' narratives that are associated with the work of Carl Boggs (and others) and will be discussed below but one final empirical example of the contemporary relevance of Birch's scholarship that flows out of this section's focus on trans-national and global governance has to be some comment on the European Union. In essence the EU provides a perfect case that sits at the intersection of national and global debates and has its roots in the simple fact that it was born our of a desire to prevent war rather than to promote democracy. The European Coal and Steel Community (established in 1951) was inspired by a variant of the 'logic of discipline' model whereby the national discretion of nation states to wage war would be severely restricted by international agreements. Responsible governance in the sense of peaceful and stable co-existence between nation states was placed above representative governance and it was – to paraphrase Roberts – a rule-based approach to limiting politicians' ability to embark on reckless military schemes. The gradual evolution in the breadth of policy areas and the institutional fabric of the EU since the middle of the twentieth century largely retained this technocratic emphasis with debates concerning the need to shift the balance between representativeness and responsibility only emerging relatively recently, and notably in the wake of the global financial crisis. Birch's nexus between representation and responsible government therefore goes to the heart of the current debate about the future of the UK and is for this reason ubiquitous in the field of European studies. Myrto Tsakatika's *Political Responsibility in the European Union*, for example, draws upon Birch's work to suggest that 'It would seem…that Monnet's conception of legitimate governance, on the one hand, strongly requires the qualities of political responsibility, but on the other hand, is incomplete with what are generally understood to be the institutional features of responsibility' (2008, 30-31). The emphasis on 'generally understood' raises a host of questions concerning the legitimation of power and has in the European context been challenged by scholars such as Andrew Moravcsik as part of a reassessment of legitimacy and how it is conceived in the EU. Such a reassessment would dovetail with the ideas and arguments of Birch, notably in relation to his identification of democratic incongruities. It is away from a focus on governance and towards a focus on democracy that we now turn.

IV. DEMOCRACY, REPRESENTATION & RESPONSIBILITY

The relationship between representation and responsibility is also an intrinsic part of Keane's 'fundamental revision of the way we think about representation and democracy in our times' (2011:212). This revision starts from the premise that there has been 'an historic sea change'; and that 'from roughly the mid-twentieth century representative democracy began to morph into a new historical form of "post-parliamentary democracy"' (2011:212). This new form was 'monitory democracy'. A form in which the rapid, almost exponential growth of extra-parliamentary, power-scrutinising mechanisms – combined with the growth of 'multi-media

saturated societies', symbolised by the communicative plenitude and possibilities of the internet – produced a latticed, networked pattern of power monitoring. The distinctiveness of monitory democracy for Keane (2009:695 original emphasis) was thus to be found in: 'the way *all fields of social and political life* come to be scrutinised, not just by the standard machinery of representative democracy but a whole host of *non-party, extra-parliamentary and often unelected bodies*, operating within and underneath and beyond the boundaries of territorial states'. Such was the degree of difference and complexity of this new democracy that it 'demands a headshift, a break with conventional thinking' to encompass the growth of new types of extra-parliamentary, power-scrutinising institutions 'unknown to previous democrats' (2011:213). Indeed, Keane identifies over 100 such institutions that have developed since 1945. Although diverse and disjointed these new monitory institutions are defined 'by their overall commitment to strengthening the diversity and influence of citizens' voices and choices in decisions that affect their lives – *regardless of the outcome of elections*' (Keane 2009:693; 2011:216 emphasis added). In particular, they are concerned to scrutinise and control the activities of decision-makers (in both public and private organisations, and electoral and non-electoral institutions). Nonetheless, while Keane is adamant that monitory democracy 'operates in ways greatly at variance with textbook accounts of "representative", "liberal" or "parliamentary democracy"' (Keane 2009:706; 2011:221), he insists, repeatedly, that 'conventional party-centred forms of representation do not wither away' (2011:220); 'institutions like periodic elections, multi-party competition and the right of citizens to voice their public approval or disapproval of legislation remain familiar fixtures in the life of democracies' (Keane 2009:706); and, that 'monitory democracy in fact thrives on representation' (2011:220).

For Keane, therefore, the increase in political accountability in the profusion of power-scrutinising mechanisms does not stand in an antagonistic relationship to the governing capacity of elected representatives Yet, his critics fear that in practice 'power is being siphoned away from the traditional institutions of representative democracy (that were at least mandated and legitimized through electoral mechanisms) and transferred to a new activist elite' (Flinders 2011:609). In this critical view, monitory democracy is thus 'something to *fear* rather than celebrate' (Flinders 2011:608 original emphasis). The specific fear is that the politicisation of accountability through the activities of monitory institutions serves to eviscerate public trust and confidence in elected politicians and electoral representative processes.

The end of representative politics?

The question mark in the heading above has been added to the title of Simon Tormey's book *The end of representative politics* (2015). The significance of this punctuational addition is that for Tormey it appears, initially at least, not to be needed: the end of representative politics isn't in question, it isn't nigh, it is already here. A closer reading of Tormey's book reveals, however, that he is not so much concerned with 'endism' as with demonstrating that the 'paradigm of representative politics', and the 'aura of representation', is waning (Tormey 2015:8). In other words he rapidly adds a metaphorical question mark to his bold title. Indeed, in situating his analysis in the realm of 'post-representation', rather than the broader frames of 'monitory democracy' or 'post-democracy', this enables him to claim that the prefix 'post' serves as 'a useful marker, that is, as indicating not the redundancy of the object in question, so much as its querying. … less a passing of representation, and more an incipient problematization that evinces dissatisfaction but without presupposing the acceptance of a clear break or alternative' (2015:9).

In order to reach this conclusion Tormey starts from two basic propositions. First, that representative politics is a 'vertical' mode of politics – '[s]omeone at the "top" represents those below' – whereas 'the new emergent styles of politics are often "horizontal", which is to say that they are often leaderless, "bottom up" movements or initiatives' (2015:9). Second, representative politics and representative democracy should be treated as 'discrete objects of historical inquiry' (2015:11). In the event, this distinction is superseded by another dualism: between 'political representation' and 'representative politics'. On the one hand, 'political representation' is associated with 'modernity' and the rise of the nation state (2015:39-46), where representation

implied a process of *re-presenting* the collective will, and where the introduction of elections 'implied above all else that those doing the representing were now accountable in some direct fashion to the populace' (2015:46). On the other hand, 'representative politics' is the preserve of political parties and associated with a changed dynamic, brought about in the 18th and 19th centuries through competitive elections and the widening of voting rights (2015:48). And party-based competition is still the dominant form that representative politics takes in most contemporary democracies (2015:54).

Ultimately, and 'inevitably' in Tormey's view, both 'representation' and 'representative politics' result in a political division of labour where 'some will rule or govern, and others will follow' (2015:57). A disjuncture is thus identified at the heart of representative politics where the represented 'cannot govern, manage, lead itself' and so 'must be governed, managed, led' by representatives (2015:58). But having identified an 'inevitable' link between representative politics as governing and ruling, Tormey almost immediately back-peddles in his acknowledgement that 'governing, and even less ruling, is not the same as representing' (2015:79). But no positive exposition of what constitutes representation, or how it is constituted subsequently flows from this negative acknowledgment. In specifying a disjuncture, an antagonism, between represented and representatives Tormey effectively excludes from his analysis most of the contemporary reconceptualistions of representation – of descriptive representation, claims-based representation, and most forms of non-electoral representation – all of which operate within the 'paradigm' of representation, and all of which inhere connection (rather than disjuncture) and authorisation (rather than 'resistance' (2015:60)) at the centre of representation.

Moreover, in associating representative politics with 'structures and practices built on a "vertical" basis' (2015:77) the notion of hierarchy ('representatives *over* represented' (2015:77 emphasis added)) is embedded in, what Tormey calls, the metanarrative of representation. And it is this metanarrative that has come to be questioned in recent decades. According to Tormey (2015:83 original emphasis), we no longer believe that 'our interests are best served if some represent and everyone else is represented. We are becoming *unrepresentable*'. In which case, Tormey sets himself the task of envisaging a 'democracy of the unrepresentable' (2015:104) by extrapolating trends already apparent in representative democracies. Such a system would privilege 'horizontal organizations', such as alliances, coalitions, networks, affinity groups, and 'non-organising' or 'auto-organising' groups (2015:94), and be energised both by the individualisation of politics and the mobilising potential of social media. The problem, however, with notions of a politics of the *unrepresentable* and of *anti-representative representation* is that they are defined in contradistinction to a politics of hierarchy and linearity (2015:131-2), which for Tormey characterises representative politics. Yet, as noted earlier in this article, one of the major advances in the reconceptualisation of representation is the recognition of an economy of non-linear, non-hierarchical, non-electoral, and often non-state based, representative claims. Although Tormey (2015:57,129) is aware of the possibility of representative claims being articulated within and outside of the formal system of representation, his stipulated meaning of representative politics effectively ignores such claims-making. The significance of this for the present discussion is, as Keane (2015) points out:

> [The] trouble is that the new 'immediate or non-mediated politics' forms of democratic politics [Tormey] has in mind are everywhere, and without exception, instances of representative politics. Their lack of structure and formal leadership and avowed rejection of representation … are only apparent. Their reliance upon mechanisms of representation is too often disguised, or denied. Truth is they rely upon mechanisms of representation, if by that word is meant what the earliest champions of representative democracy meant: acting on behalf of others, in their name, subject to their consent.

So where are we now? More representation, more responsibility, but less 'and'?

In making the pronouncement that 'a representative system enables a government to be responsible' Birch (1964:21) maintained that public demands could be expressed, modified and conveyed to government (including the 'opinions of inarticulate and unorganised citizens'), while

at the same time this system provided 'a way of bridging the gulf between the policies a government would follow if it responded to the varying day-to-day expressions of public opinion and those it must follow if its policies are to be coherent and mutually consistent'. In this sense 'representation' was conceptually linked, in a mutually beneficial systemic relationship, with 'responsibility' by the grammatical conjunction 'and'. Birch also maintained that this was a conjunction rooted in electoral processes and governing legitimacy derived from those processes. Yet, Birch was clear that it was possible to conceive of representation beyond elections, and to examine responsibility beyond formal representative institutions. He was equally clear that political practice might diverge in many significant ways from the mutually beneficial conjunction derived from idealised theories of representative *and* responsible government (Birch 1964:65, 80).

More representation

So our fundamental task is now to decide whether the conceptual and practical conjunction of representation with responsibility still holds in the 21st century. The preceding discussion has revealed that there is now 'more' representation. Conceptually there has been an expansion beyond elections and beyond principal-agent notions. The idea that representation is constitutive, and that representation is a process of claim-making, leads to recognition of the sheer scope and variability of the concept. In the words of Saward (2014: 725), one of the most influential contemporary 'reconceptualisers' of representation, 'it is a protean phenomenon that can be formal and informal, electoral and nonelectoral, national and transnational, potentially happening in multiple spaces and possessing many guises'. Political representation thus comes to be conceived as an 'economy of claim-making' encompassing organised interest groups, advocacy organisations, social movements, identity groups, expert individuals and associations, surrogates or self-authorised representatives, demonstrators, protest groups, and stakeholders. This 'economy' operates both within and beyond the state. 'Beyond' in both a territorial sense (at regional, international and global levels) and an institutional sense (within civil society and governance networks). Indeed, according to Urbinati and Warren (2008:404), there is 'no discrete domain of institutional processes' encompassing self-authorised representation as it stands as 'a representative phenomenon in its own right'.

While notions of claim-making have certainly widened the focus of the theorisation of representation, reservations have been expressed about the empirical utility of a claim-making perspective (see for example de Wilde 2013; Lord and Pollak 2013; Hendriks 2009). Nonetheless, conceptualisations of claim-making and non-electoral representation have been invaluable in reminding analysts of the systemic, constitutive and process elements of representation beyond elections. An essential part of this remembrance has been an acknowledgment that partial or partisan aggregations are 'neither optional nor accidental' (Urbinati 2006:227) to conceptions of political representation. Moreover the empirical significance of such 'aggregations' has been mapped in their proliferation and their steady infusion into the practice representative politics. There are simply more of them: more partial claims makers, more parties, more groups. If the essence of non-electoral representation is, as Saward argues, a claim to represent the interests of a specified group, then such partial claims have become more embedded in contemporary representative economies of claims. Thus, beyond electoral representation there is now, to misquote Urbinati (2006:225), a 'surplus' of representative politics. We will return to what Urbinati actually meant below, but here we will simply note that the conceptual scope and empirical range of representation has expanded significantly in the decades since Birch was writing.

Moreover, in this intervening period, electoral representation itself has also witnessed an 'expansion': quantitatively in terms of the number of elections, and qualitatively in terms of the normative claims made for the representative inclusion of previously unrepresented or underrepresented groups – most notably women and ethnic minorities – from state decision making, and in terms of the changing profiles of party competition. Taking this last point first. Traditionally party competition has been conceived in terms not only of articulating claims but also of aggregating claims (rooted in identifiable social, political or ideological collectivities); and

this conception has come under challenge from simultaneous processes of individualisation, mediatisation and globalisation (van Biezen 2014:187). Nonetheless, party competition has not diminished ineluctably but rather has expanded. 'New' parties have emerged to contest elections on non-aggregative platforms with non-governmental aspirations and often with 'anti-' orientations. These take the forms, variously, of pop-up parties, micro-parties, populist parties, anti-representative parties, anti-system parties, and are loosely categorised as 'protest parties' (Tormey 2015:139). The new parties may pose problems for governing parties and for representative government, but they still serve to inject more representative claims into the representative system.

There has also been a quantitative expansion of the 'electoral marketplace' in many representative systems. This has particularly been the case in EU states where simultaneous institutional regionalisation and Europeanisation have generated more voting opportunities for more representative institutions at more levels of governance (Dalton and Gray 2003:27-35). Similarly, the numbers of 'electoral consumers' have increased with incremental reductions in the age of voting in many states since 1964. Alongside this quantitative expansion there have also been moves towards qualitative enhancement of the representative process through recognition of the descriptive claims of previously underrepresented social and identity groups, and practical programmes to increase their presence in public representative institutions (see Hughes et al. 2015; Krook and Zetterberg 2014; Krook and Norris 2014 xx; Bird 2014; xx).

More responsibility

Correspondingly, there is 'more' political responsibility; or, more accurately, there is more public accountability in Birch's third sense of the word. Accountability mechanisms, noted earlier – audit institutions and auditing (value for money, performance auditing, efficiency auditing), performance reporting, independent regulators, transparency mechanisms, watchdog journalism – have proliferated. In particular, Keane's notion of 'monitory democracy' celebrates the way in which 'power-monitoring' and 'power-controlling' devices have extended throughout the modern state and civil society. 'These watchdog and guide-dog and barking-dog inventions are changing … the political dynamics of many democracies, which no longer bear much resemblance to textbook models of representative democracy' (Keane 2009:xxvii). For Keane this is essentially change in a positive direction, the scrutiny of power by a multitude of monitory bodies makes it 'the most energetic, most dynamic form of democracy ever' (2009:743). Monitory democracy is 'something other and different' with profound implications for 'state-framed institutions of the old representative democracy' (2011:233). Yet, in Keane's conception of monitory democracy electoral institutions, as noted above, do not disappear; the monitoring mechanisms inscribed in civil society are seen as supplements to electoral representation, even if their intent is to 'greatly complicate, and sometimes wrong foot, the lives of politicians, parties, legislatures and government's (2009:xxvii). In essence, in this view, there is no such thing as too much accountability.

V. NEITHER REPRESENTATIVE NOR RESPONSIBLE

The paradox of 'more' representation and 'more' responsibility, as calibrated above, is that when conjoined they appear to have resulted in a diminution (a 'lessening') of 'representative *and* responsible government' as presented by Birch. It has become something of a truism amongst political scientists that representative politics 'is failing to engage'. Evidence of citizen distrust, disconnect, disengagement, and disappointment with the institutions of representative government continues to fuel discussions of the 'crisis of representative politics'. Even when citizens are deemed to be 'engaged' – through other modes of representation beyond elections in a broader economy of claims – the prognosis for electoral representation may still appear to be pathological.

If non-electoral representation (and, more broadly, direct 'democratic innovations') constitute a response to the perceived deficiencies of an aggregative representative system and a search for a more legitimate political order, then rooting that order in an existing electoral representative frame holds the potential to generate fundamental conceptual and practical incongruities. Not the least of these incongruities is the need to reconcile the unregulated economy of non-electoral representative claims (and unmediated modes of participation) with the regulation and mediation of electoral representative processes and institutions. Equally, the perceived legitimacy of democratic innovative institutions – rooted primarily in non-electoral legitimation claims – stand in a dialectical and incongruous relationship with the legitimation claims stemming from electoral representative institutions. A 'surplus of politics' generated by non-electoral representative claims is thus different to a 'surplus of politics' in Urbinati's (2006:225) original meaning. For her such a surplus is related to the electoral sanctioning by citizens of the 'deeds and promises of candidate and representatives'. More particularly:

> Representation makes politics into a continuum by binding short yes/no politics [of elections] to longer-term interelectoral cycles. Moreover, it provides for a further connection: that between the informal deliberation citizens activate within civil society through their direct political and multifarious forms of presence and the formal deliberation of representatives within state institutions. (Urbinati 2006:225-6)

Whereas Urbinati's conception of electorally-based representation is one that produces a 'surplus of politics' and emphasises processes of 'uniting' and 'connection', most other perspectives examined above (non-electoral, descriptive, claims-making, governance, monitory democracy and post-representation) identify an alternative conception of 'surplus' – in representative and accountability processes that emphasise fragmentation, dislocation, individualisation, and difference. Most of them, in their various ways, identify some form of relationship between representation and responsibility/accountability (see Urbinati and Warren 2009:404-5; Montanaro 2012:1101-4; Saward, 2010:165; Jones 2014:194-7; Tormey 2015:127,141-2). But the relationship is often tenuous and tangential; both in its conceptual specification and in its practical realisation; 'more' representation or 'more' responsibility become panaceas in themselves: it appears sufficient merely to claim that one will supplement the other.

Yet if, as noted earlier, 'representation is accountability' then political representation assumes a dynamic process of combined authorisation and responsibility in decision-making. As Alonso et al. (2011:7) argue: 'Representation – ideally conceived – is an act of delegation whereby the represented grant representatives the task of defending their interests, all the while insisting that they remain directly accountable to the representatives for their actions'. In a system of 'representative and responsible government', as described by Birch, elections provide recurring opportunities where the represented assent to being represented – whether assent is based upon prospective or retrospective judgements of representatives' performance, or both. In other words, electoral representation does double duty of linking responsiveness to responsibility and accountability to representation. Yet, in seeking to question traditional views of electoral representation and political responsibility – by 'enhancing the complex ecology' of what constitutes representation and accountability, by seeking to 'add to', 'to extend', to make democracy more representative or more accountable – reconceptualistions and reconfigurations of representation and responsibility (in isolation from each other) run the risk of missing their inextricable connection in a democratic system of government.

Dubnik's (2011:712) observation on accountability provides a metaphorical point of punctuation on which to end this article. He argued that 'any effort to enhance accountability also alters accountability'. This can be extended further to 'any effort to enhance representation also alters representation'. In both cases enhancement involves disruptions and alterations of existing relationships. In this article we have examined how the 'enhancement' of representation and accountability has been conceived and activated. And this provides an endpoint, a metaphorical full stop to our discussion. But equally what is needed is a metaphorical hyphen: consideration of

how these 'changed', 'enhanced' relationships impact on each other, on how conceptual rethinking in each area needs to be matched by a reconceptualisation of how representation and responsibility connect, or may reconnect, with each other, and in what respects 'a representative system [still] enables a government to be responsible'. The importance of the conjunction 'and' needs both to be remembered and to be investigated seriously in analysing the 'new orthodoxies' of non-electoral, governance, monitory, and post-representative systems. Recognising the importance of this conjunction is the lasting legacy bequeathed by Birch.

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