

UTKU B. DEMIR

PAPER DRAFT

Political representation is in its overly simplified form, involves a principal-agent relationship where representatives stand for and act on behalf of the represented, usually on a territorial basis. It is a specific operationalisation of the power deployment. Risking loss of generality by oversimplification, the political representation has been defined as the delegation of the authority from a specific group to a political entity, either a representant or an organisation in the fundamental literature about representation. As any utilisation of power, the representation immediately immediately relates to the question of legitimacy. In its most classical understanding in the context of electoral democracy, the legitimacy of the representation is *established* by a strictly defined authorisation process and a framework of accountability (Pitkin 1967). Yet, even in this seemingly unidirectional transfer of power from constituency to representative, still, the authorisation, the legitimacy of the source of the power, and the question of the responsibilities of the one to exercise the power to the source of the power (both in terms of constituency, and the whole society) is a subject to a broad discussion (see e.g.; Kelsen 2017; Pitkin 1967).

However, elective representation does not exhaust all forms of democratic representation (Saward 2009), nor does a unidirectional authorisation process adequately explain the nature of the relationship between representatives and their constituencies. The constructivist turn (Disch, Van De Sande, and Urbinati 2019) in the theory of the political representation reminds us the dynamic and fluid nature of political representation, contrary to the view it as a static and predetermined and delegational relationship between representatives and the represented. In constructivist perspective, representation is an active, ongoing process of creation and negotiation. Representatives do not merely act on behalf of pre-existing groups with established interests and identities; rather, they play a crucial role in shaping and defining those interests and identities through their representational activities (ibid. 21ff). Although the discussion around the constructivist turn is often not unified in its definition, it is generally agreed that the identity, interests, or preferences of the represented are not predetermined but are shaped¹ by the representatives.

¹ Alternatively, *extracted*.

Representation is deployed in a much broader landscape than just the electoral realm, which necessitates a significant demystification process; this has been precipitated by the large-scale transformations that democracies have undergone (Wolkenstein 2024, 278f).

The constructivist turn, however, is not merely an observation of a shift in political representation. It represents a discovery that the manifestation of power is itself subject to ongoing negotiation and contestation, continually reshaped by both discursive and non-

discursive practices. It is claimed that the constructivist element in representation is never absent. The constructivist perspective initiates a discussion about the operation of power in representation and builds a new theoretical framework to examine contemporary movements. Using the terms of Foucault's Power/Knowledge nexus, in the social realm, power is never completely concentrated in a specific point, nor is it ever a unidirectional process (Foucault 1980).

Helene Landemore's (Landemore 2020) main critique of the liberal democracy addresses the systemic discrimination caused by the electoral processes.

Following Wolkenstein's (Wolkenstein 2024) critique on Landemore's theory stands on foremost the functions of political parties in electoral processes. Political parties are still leading the construction and signification of the primary conflict lines in society

Hardt and Negri's (Hardt and Negri 2017) focus especially lies on the question "if a non-sovereign (construction of) representation" is possible.

Gezi Protests

RQ: *How is the representative institutionalisation (or the lack thereof) in Gezi Movement ² to be understood in the context of public deliberation?*

Why Gezi?

- Relatively spontaneous formation
- Pluralist participation
- Defence of a *public thing*
- Heavy involvement of riot police
- No clear collective representation (unless the committee selected by the government)
- Unrepresentative claims
- Anti-representative claims
- Non-partisan claim
- Different forms of action
- Collapsed movement
- Arguably living *public things* launched during the protests

² The case to analyse is currently the Gezi Protests, however this element can be expanded or changed if other/more adequate research objects emerge.

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