

*Monitory Democracy?**

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This seminar paper proposes a fundamental revision of the way we think about democracy in our times. It pinpoints an epochal transformation that has been taking place in the contours and dynamics of representative democracy; it tables the claim that from roughly the mid-twentieth century representative democracy has begun to morph into a new historical form of ‘post-representative’ democracy; and the paper explores the fundamental implications of this change for democracy in the coming years. The overall thesis supposes that ‘end of history’ perspectives and maritime metaphors (Huntington’s ‘third wave’ of the sea simile has been the most influential) are too limited to grasp the epochal change - too bound to the surface of things, too preoccupied with continuities and aggregate data to notice that political tides have begun to run in entirely new directions. My claim is that our world is now living through an historic sea change, one that is taking us away from the old world of representative democracy towards a form of democracy with entirely different contours and dynamics.

It is hard to find an elegant name for this emergent form of democracy, let alone to describe and explain in a few words its workings and political implications. I choose to call it *monitory democracy*. It is a strange-sounding term, but the most exact for describing the great transformation that has been experienced by democracy since the end of World War Two, in countries otherwise as different as the United States and India, France and New Zealand.¹ My conjecture is that monitory democracy is a

¹ The adjective ‘monitory’ derived from the mediaeval *monitoria* [from *monere*, to warn]. It entered Middle English in the shape of *monitorie* and from there it wended its way into the modern English language in the mid-fifteenth century to refer to the process of giving or conveying a warning of an impending danger, or an admonition to someone to refrain from a specified course of action considered offensive. It was first used within the Church to refer to a letter or letters (known as ‘monitories’) sent by a bishop or a pope or an ecclesiastical court who acted in the capacity of a ‘monitor’. The family of words ‘monitor’, ‘monition’ and ‘monitory’ was soon used for more secular or this-worldly purposes. The monitor was one or that which admonishes others about their conduct. The word ‘monitor’ was also used in school settings to refer to a senior pupil expected to perform special duties, such as that of

new historical type of democracy, one that is defined by the multiplication and dispersal of many different power-monitoring and power-contesting mechanisms, both within the ‘domestic’ fields of government and civil society and beyond, in cross-border settings that were once dominated by empires, states and business organisations.

In terms of its contours and dynamics, monitory democracy is the most institutionally complex form of democracy yet. It is the *tertium quid*, the undefined and not fully formed successor of the earlier historical experiments with assembly-based and representative forms of democracy (these are examined in depth in my forthcoming *The Life and Death of Democracy*). In the name of ‘people’, ‘the public’, ‘public accountability’, ‘the people’ or ‘citizens’ - the terms are normally used interchangeably in our times - power-monitoring institutions spring up all over the place. Political parties and legislatures lose their grip on politics. Democracy is no longer simply a way of handling the power of elected governments by electoral and parliamentary means, and no longer a matter confined to territorial states. Gone are the days when democracy could be described (and in the next breath attacked) as ‘government by the unrestricted will of the majority’.¹ Whether in the field of local, national or supranational government, or in the power-ridden world of

keeping order, or (if the pupil was particularly bright or gifted) acting as a teacher to a junior class. A monitor also came to mean an early warning device; it was said as well to be a species of African and Australian and New Guinean lizard that was friendly to humans because it gave warning of the whereabouts of crocodiles. Still later, the word ‘monitor’ came to be associated with communication devices. It referred to a receiver, such as a speaker or a television screen, that is used to check the quality or content of an electronic transmission; and in the world of computing and computer science, a ‘monitor’ either refers to a video display or to a programme that observes, or supervises or controls the activities of other programmes. In more recent years, not unconnected with the emergence of monitory democracy, ‘to monitor’ became a commonplace verb to describe the process of systematically checking the content or quality of something, as when a city authority monitors the local drinking water for impurities, or a group of scientific experts monitors the population of an endangered species. Such usages seem to have inspired the theory of ‘monitorial democracy’ developed by the American scholar, Michael Schudson (interview, New York City, 4 December 2006). See his ‘Changing Concepts of Democracy’, *MIT Communications Forum* (8 May 1998) and the fuller version in *The Good Citizen: A History of American Public Life* (New York 1998), to which my account of monitory democracy is indebted.

non-governmental organisations, networks and contacts, some of them stretching down into the roots of everyday life and outwards, towards the four corners of the earth, those who exercise power are now routinely subject to public monitoring and public contestation and publicly revocable decisions. Whether or not this is a sustainable, historically irreversible development remains to be seen; like its two previous historical antecedents, it is not inevitable. But in the era of monitory democracy, the rules of democratic representation and public accountability and citizen participation are applied to a much wider range of settings than ever before. Their power relations consequently come to feel contingent, subject to public contestation, often through bitter battles, sometimes resulting in surprising victories for those who wish to humble power.

Proof of the general trend is found in the fact that all of the big issues of our times, including military intervention in Iraq, poverty reduction and global warming, have been generated not by political parties, elections, legislatures and governments, but principally by power-monitoring networks and organisations located outside, and running 'parallel' to and often against, the orthodox mechanisms of party-based representation. Further proof of the spread of power-scrutinising mechanisms - in effect, the attempted democratisation of many areas of life previously untouched by the hand of democracy - is displayed in the growing public concern with matters once thought to be non-political. The efforts to develop habitat conservation plans and alternative (non-carbon and non-nuclear) sources of energy, and the initiatives to ensure that the future development of nanotechnology and genetically-modified crops is governed publicly in the interests of the many, not the few - efforts to take democracy 'upstream' into the tributaries of scientific research and

technical development - provide other examples of the trend towards monitory democracy.² Whatever is thought of such experiments with fostering new forms of citizens' participation and representation, they undoubtedly pose challenges to uncontested rule by the few over the rest. Such rule is checked - if and when it is checked - not just by the actions of political parties, elections, politicians and parliaments, the mechanisms that were the beating heart of representative democracy. The abuse of power is countered as well by a whole host of new monitoring institutions that put politicians, parties and elected governments on their toes, greatly complicate their lives, and question their authority to act, sometimes bringing them into disgrace.

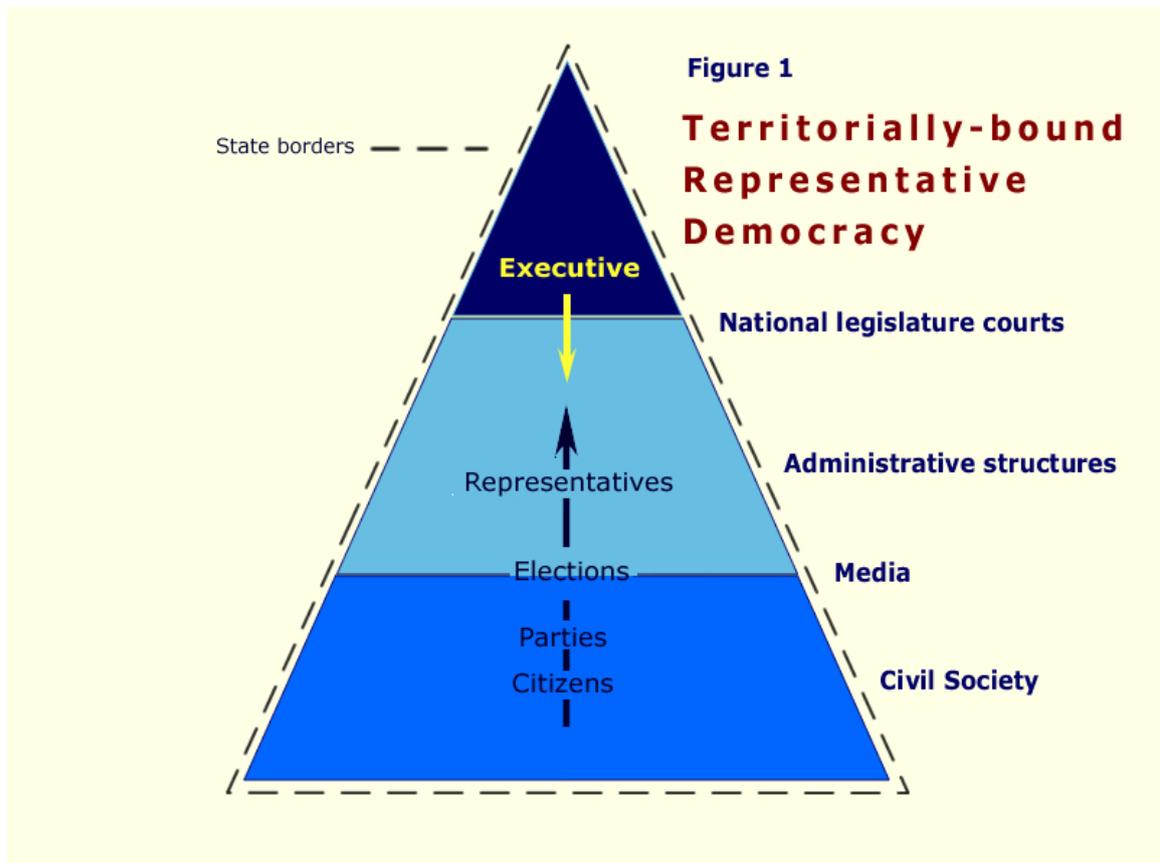
It is important to note that monitory democracy does not dispense with questions of suffrage, or voting in national or local elections. It is not yet an age that has settled once and for all the issue of who is entitled to vote, and under which conditions (think of the emerging legal and political controversies about who owns the software of unreliable electronic voting machines). In fact, some people, for instance felons, have their votes withdrawn; others, including diasporas, minority language speakers, the disabled and people with low literacy and numeracy skills, are disadvantaged by secret ballot elections; still other constituencies, such as women, young people and the biosphere, are either poorly represented, or they are not represented at all. Struggles to open up and improve the quality of electoral and legislative representation are by no means finished. And yet in the epoch of monitory democracy, these struggles that once tugged and tore whole societies apart have lost their centrality. A brand new issue begins to surface. The old question that racked the age of representative democracy - *who* is entitled to vote and *when* - is compounded and complicated by a question for which there are still no

easy answers: *where* are people entitled to vote, for *whom* and through which representative means?

Possible misunderstandings must be scotched here. The age of monitory democracy must *not* be understood as an age that recaptures the (imagined) spirit and institutions of assembly-based democracy. It is true that many of today's champions of 'deep' or 'quality' democracy speak as if they were Greeks, as if the prime political task in matters of democracy is (to quote Archon Fung and Erik Olin Wright) to enhance 'the commitment and capacities of ordinary people to make sensible decisions through reasoned deliberation and empowered because they attempt to tie action to discussion'.³ The reality is otherwise, in that *all* of the new experiments and struggles in defence of citizens' empowerment rely inevitably on *representation*; they are simply not understandable as efforts to bring about greater political authenticity and immediacy, in effect by permanently closing the gaps between representatives and the represented, as if citizens could find their true selves and express themselves within a unified political community no longer burdened by misunderstanding and misgovernment. Monitory democracy rather thrives on representation. It depends continuously on political processes that involve the staging by actors of manoeuvres and making of claims that are directed at others within institutional settings that are mediated by languages and shaped constantly by communication media and its dramaturgical rules. Elected and unelected representatives constantly make efforts to define and determine who gets what, when and how, but the represented, using a variety of tools, ensure that the results are rarely as the representatives intended, or wanted. Taking advantage of various power-scrutinising devices, especially communication media, the represented keep tabs on their representatives by using tactics of public

criticism and by making demands for their removal from office – sometimes with surprising success.

There is another possible misunderstanding that must be avoided. In the age of monitory democracy, textbook types of representative democracy do not simply disappear. Since 1945, party-based democracy has made a big comeback, tricking people into thinking that nothing has changed, except for a large global leap in the number of representative democracies. After the widespread collapse and near extinction of democracy during the first half of the twentieth century, it is indeed true that most parts of the world have become familiar with its basic governing institutions. Conventional party-centred forms of representation do not wither away. Millions of people have grown accustomed to competition among political parties, periodic elections, the limited-term holding of political office and the right of citizens to assemble in public to make their views known to their representatives in legislatures and executives, all of this operating within the container of the territorial state (figure 1). In some contexts, conventional representative democracy has taken root for the first time; while in other milieux, especially those where its conventional mechanisms were well embedded in the political system, experiments are now being conducted in their refurbishment, for instance by introducing primary elections into political parties, tightening restrictions on campaign fund-raising and spending, changing the rules of the electoral game, and by improving voting facilities for disabled citizens.



New Monitory Institutions

For all these reasons, it seemed perfectly reasonable for Huntington and others to speak of the spectacular rebirth of representative democracy in recent decades as a ‘third wave’. Enter the age of monitory democracy: a brand new historical form of democracy that operates in ways greatly at variance with textbook accounts of ‘representative’ or ‘liberal’ or ‘parliamentary’ democracy, as it is still most often called. In the dawning age of monitory democracy, democracy has begun to be practised and pursued differently. 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. But slowly and surely, the whole architecture of democracy has begun fundamentally to change. So too has the meaning of democracy. No longer synonymous with self-government by an assembly

of male citizens (as in the Greek city states), or with party-based government guided by the will of a majority, democracy comes to mean a way of life and a mode of governing in which nobody rules.⁴

At first, the emerging contours of monitory democracy went unrecognised by most human eyes. Many people sensed that something had changed, but only with the passing of time did it become possible to spot the novelties. Here is one striking clue: the age of monitory democracy has witnessed the birth of nearly one hundred new types of power-scrutinising institutions unknown to previous democrats. As we shall see, defenders of these inventions often speak of their importance in solving a basic problem facing contemporary democracies: the problem of promoting the unfinished business of democracy, of finding new ways of democratic living for little people in big and complex societies in which substantial numbers of citizens believe that politicians are not easily trusted, and in which governments are often accused of being out of touch with citizens, or simply unwilling to deal with their concerns and problems. In response to such concerns, the new power-scrutinising inventions have the effect of breaking the grip of numbers (associated with the majority rule principle of representative democracy) and making room for opinions and ways of life that have a felt *intensity*. These inventions raise the level and quality of public monitoring of power, often for the first time in many new and different areas of life, including power relationships ‘beneath’ and ‘beyond’ the institutions of territorial states.

Little wonder that these inventions have changed the language of contemporary politics. They prompt much talk of ‘empowered participatory governance’ and of ‘stakeholders’ and of ‘deliberative democracy’; and they nurture the unprecedented spread of a culture of

voting into many walks of life. Monitory democracy is the age of surveys, focus groups, deliberative polling, online petitions and audience and customer voting. Whether intended or not, the spreading culture of voting, backed by the new mechanisms for monitoring power, has the effect of offsetting and often interrupting the soliloquies of parties and politicians and parliaments. The new power-scrutinising innovations nurture processes that enfranchise many more citizens' voices, often by means of *unelected representatives*, or what Americans sometimes call 'bully pulpits'. The number and range of monitory institutions so greatly increase that they point to a world where the old rule of 'one person, one vote, one representative' is replaced with a new principle: 'one person, many interests, many voices, many votes, many representatives'.

Caution needs to be exercised in understanding the novel methods of restraining power, which are certainly not cut from the same cloth. For a start, the new monitory inventions are not exclusively 'American' or 'British' or 'Western' or 'OECD' products. Among their more remarkable features is their rapid diffusion around the globe, from all points on the globe. They mushroom in a wide variety of different settings and there are even signs, for the first time in the history of democracy, of a growing awareness of the added value of the art of invention - as if the democratic ability to invent is itself the most valuable invention. Symptomatic of this trend is the way visionary proposals for new ways of handling and taming power multiply. A case in point is the recent Council of Europe's 'Green Paper' list of 29 suggested reforms, covering such innovations as voting rights for denizens, democracy kiosks, online deliberation schemes, 'yellow cards' for legislatures, citizenship mentors and guardians to monitor the guardians.⁵

Monitory mechanisms operate in different ways on several different fronts. Some scrutinise power primarily at the level of *citizens' inputs* to government or civil society; others are preoccupied with monitoring and contesting *policy throughputs*; still others concentrate on scrutinising *policy outputs* produced by governmental or non-governmental organisations. Monitory mechanisms also come in many different shapes and sizes, and operate on various spatial scales, ranging from 'just round the corner' bodies with merely local footprints to global networks aimed at keeping tabs on those who exercise power over great distances. Given all this variability, it should not be surprising that a quick short list of inventions looks - at first sight, to the untrained eye - to be a higgledy-piggledy collection of different practices that resemble something of a magpie's nest of randomly collected items. The list includes citizen juries, advisory boards, bioregional assemblies, participatory budgeting and focus groups. There are think tanks, consensus conferences, teach-ins, local community consultation schemes, formal participatory decision making exercises and open houses (developed for instance in the field of architecture) that offer information and advisory and advocacy services, archive and research facilities and opportunities for professional networking. Democratic audits and global associations of parliamentarians against corruption and constitutional safaris (famously used by the drafters of the new South African constitution to examine best practice elsewhere⁶) are on the list. So too are official public enquiries, online chat rooms, auditors' reports, online petitions and citizens' assemblies. Included as well are consumer testing agencies and consumer councils, democracy clubs and democracy cafés, public vigils and peaceful sieges, summits and global watchdog organisations set up to bring greater public accountability to business and other civil society bodies. The list of innovations extends to deliberative polls, boards of

accountancy, independent (religious) courts, experts councils (such as the ‘Five Wise Men’ of the Council of Economic Advisers in Germany), independent public reports and ‘scorecards’, public planning exercises, public consultations, social forums, weblogs, electronic civil disobedience and websites dedicated to monitoring the abuse of power (such as Bully OnLine, a UK-based initiative that aims to tackle workplace bullying and related issues). And the list of new inventions includes self-selected opinion polls (‘SLOPs’) and unofficial ballots (text-messaged straw polls, for instance), international treaties and criminal courts, public interest litigation, global social forums and the tendency of increasing numbers of non-governmental organisations to adopt written constitutions, with an elected component.

This disjointed and potentially confusing list of inventions demands clear-headed thinking, if only to grasp from the outset three qualities that they have in common. The new institutions of monitory democracy are defined first of all by their commitment to providing publics with a *diversity of viewpoints* and *high levels of information* about the exercise of power in various governmental and non-governmental organisations; monitory institutions are in this sense (to scotch a possible misunderstanding) definitely different than surveillance mechanisms that operate in secret, for private purposes. Monitory mechanisms are geared as well to the *effective public definition, public scrutiny and public enforcement* of standards and rules for preventing corrupt or improper behaviour by those responsible for making decisions in a wide variety of settings. The new institutions of monitory democracy are also defined by their overall commitment to *enhancing the ‘representativeness’ of representatives* and *increasing the diversity and influence of citizens’ ‘voices’ and choices* in decisions that affect their lives.

It is true that all three functions played a vital role, if on a much more restricted scale, during the era of representative democracy. General elections, political party competition and parliamentary oversight were supposed to perform exactly these functions. What is historically unique about the age of monitory democracy is the manner in which these same principles are deployed and defended in *all fields of social and political life* by a whole host of *non-party, non-electoral and non-parliamentary bodies* operating within and underneath and *beyond* the boundaries of territorial states.

While some of the new mechanisms of monitory democracy have tributaries stretching back into earlier times, all of them have come to play a visible role in actually existing democracies only after 1945. Let us pause to ask why this is so. What caused the basic mutation within the world of representative democracy? How can the birth of monitory democracy be explained?

The motives behind these inventions are undoubtedly varied and complex; generalisations are as difficult as they are perilous. But one thing is certain: the new type of democracy has had both its causes and causers. Monitory democracy is not a monogenic matter - a living thing hatched from a single cell. It is rather the resultant of many forces. As in the two earlier phases of democracy, detailed in my forthcoming *The Life and Death of Democracy*, untiring moral vision and courage of citizens and public-spirited leaders has proved important. Personal ambition, monkey business, power games and the quest for more effective or cheaper government - and government eager to offload blame onto others for policy disappointments and failures - have all played their part. So too

have conservative instincts, radical demands, geopolitical considerations and market pressures. New communication media and public credibility and opportunities for building 'social capital' - cultivating the connections and skills among people at the local and regional levels - and the lure of winning power or revenue growth from the provision of outsourced government services has strongly motivated some organisations, especially NGOs, to push for stronger monitory institutions. Unintended consequences and plain good luck have also played their part in the early history of monitory democracy. Not unimportant as well has been a factor famously outlined by Tocqueville: the contagious force of the belief among citizens and their representatives that the removal of particular grievances enables other grievances to be addressed, and resolved.⁷

All these forces have conspired to push actually existing democracies in the direction of monitory democracy. But one word above all describes the principal trigger of this new era of democracy: war. In the history of democracy, random and organised violence, war and the pity and suffering of war have often been the midwife of new democratic institutions. The same rule certainly applied to the first half of the twentieth century, the most murderous ever recorded in human history. Two global wars plus other kinds of terrible cruelty shattered old structures of security, sparked pushing and shoving and elbowing for power, as well as unleashed angry popular energies that fed major upheavals - revolutions usually in the name of 'the people' against power-sharing democracy. Bolshevism and Stalinism in Russia, Fascism in Italy, Nazism in Germany and military imperialism in Japan were effectively twisted and perverted mutations of democracy, understood as popular sovereignty. These were regimes whose leaders often

acknowledged that ‘the people’ were entitled to mount the stage of history – regimes whose hirelings then set about muzzling and maiming and murdering both their opponents and their supporters. Western democracy was denounced as parliamentary dithering and muddling, as liberal perplexity, bourgeois hypocrisy and military cowardice. A third of the way into the twentieth century, democracy was on its knees. It seemed rudderless, spiritless, paralysed, doomed. By 1941, when many observers had concluded that dictatorship and totalitarianism were the future, only a dozen democracies remained on the face of the earth.

It was exactly the possibility of annihilation – the 50/50 chance that democracy would join the poor dodo of Mauritius and the people and forests of Easter Island in the land of extinction - that galvanised minds and gritted determinations to do something both about the awful destruction produced by war, and the dictatorships and totalitarian regimes spawned by those wars. The great cataclysms that culminated in World War Two demonstrated to many people the naïveté of the old formula, according to which people should obey their governments because their rulers protected their lives and possessions. The devastating upheavals of the period proved that this protection-obedience formula was unworkable, that in various countries long-standing pacts between rulers and ruled had been so violated that rulers could no longer be trusted to rule. The problem, in other words, was no longer the mobbish behaviour of ‘the people’, as critics of democracy had insisted from the time of Plato and Thucydides. The most terrible events of the first half of the twentieth century proved to many people that mobbishness had its true source in thuggish leaders skilled in the arts of manipulating ‘the people’. That being so, the problem was no longer the mob and mob rule. Ruling itself was the problem.

That problem stood at the centre of an important - unfortunately little studied - batch of political reflections on democracy in the years immediately after 1945.⁸ The intellectual roots of monitory democracy are traceable to this period. They are evident, for instance, in the contributions of figures otherwise as different as Thomas Mann, Sidney Hook, Jacques Maritain, and most strikingly in a work that soon became a classic, Reinhold Niebuhr's *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness*. There is no space here to subject these contributions to detailed examination. It suffices to point to their common themes. Each voiced fears that the narrow escape of parliamentary democracy from the clutches of war and totalitarianism might just be a temporary reprieve. Each pointed out that among the vital lessons provided by recent historical experience was that the mechanisms of majority-rule democracy could be utterly corrupted, sometimes to the point where they were used by the enemies of democracy, in the name of the 'sovereign people', to destroy the plural freedoms and political equality for which democracy supposedly stood. Deeply worried, each author called for new remedies for the maladies of representative democracy, beginning with the abandonment of sentimental optimism. Opinions here divided, but each author restated his or her support for a new form of democracy, one whose spirit and institutions are infused with a robust commitment to handling the devil of unaccountable power. Niebuhr provided a weighty summary of the case for renewal and transformation. 'The perils of uncontrolled power are perennial reminders of the virtues of a democratic society', he wrote. 'But modern democracy requires a more realistic philosophical and religious basis, not only in order to anticipate and understand the perils to which it is exposed, but also to give it a more persuasive justification.' He concluded with words that became famous:

‘Man’s capacity for justice makes democracy possible; but man’s inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary.’⁹

Rethinking Democracy

From what we now know about the context, all odds were against this line of political rethinking and the democratic renaissance it spawned. The renaissance did not have to happen - yet it happened, with surprising results. The efforts invested in rebuilding and refurbishing democracy produced definite innovations - in the form of dozens of new institutions that arguably demand a change of overall thinking in the way we regard democracy.

It is odd that the emergence of monitory democracy has had so few analysts and historians. Since the end of World War Two, certainly, there has been no shortage of political scientists who have busied themselves with such matters as voting statistics, party policies, multi-level ‘governance’ and the effects of media campaigning upon parties and governments. But much of what they wrote neglects the historicity of our times. The recent past is treated as dead ground. Things have not been helped by an over-concentration on the recent round of government-initiated citizen’s commissions, audits, partnerships and patients panels, as if these are the alpha and omega of new democratic inventions, which they most certainly are not. There are some scholarly exceptions to this trend – Geoff Mulgan and Graham Smith in the United Kingdom, Claus Offe in Germany, Archon Fung and Michael Schudson in the United States, and Bruno Latour and Pierre Rosanvallon in France, for instance¹⁰ - but in fact very few observers have taken a step back, watched and thought creatively about what is going on in actually existing

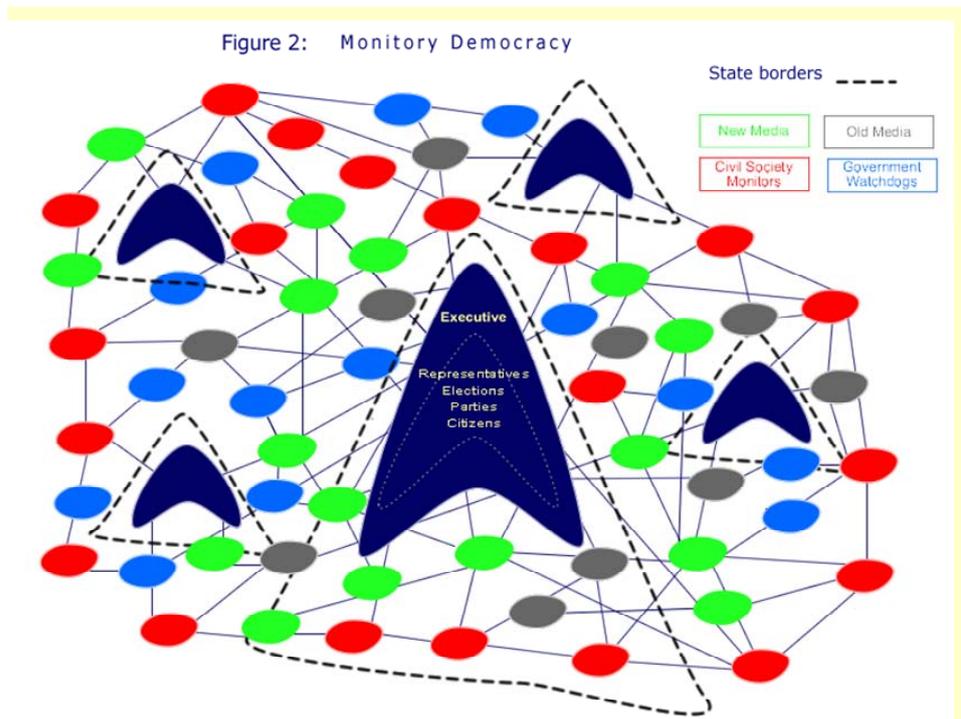
democracies. It is as if democracies have been sleepwalking their way into the future. Nobody has seemed prepared to make the headshift, or the almighty wrestle with words and meanings, that is required. It looks as if actually existing democracies treat these inventions like orphans, born into a neglectful world that seems not to understand their long-term significance.

Political Geography

So what is the theoretical and political significance of the growth of monitory institutions? Several fruitful generalisations can be drawn, beginning with the most obvious point: during the decades after 1945 representative democracy in textbook form has yielded to a much more complex pattern of interaction – *political geography* - of democratic institutions. Once upon a time, in the era of representative democracy, the thing called democracy had a rather simple political geography. Within the confines of any given state, democracy meant (as a citizen) following an election campaign and on the great day of reckoning turning out to vote for a party or independent candidate. He - it was almost always men - was someone local and known to the community, a local shopkeeper or professional or someone in business or a trade unionist, for instance. Then came democracy's great ceremonial, the pause of deliberation, the calm of momentary reflection, the catharsis of ticking and crossing, before the storm of result. 'Universal peace is declared', was the sarcastic way the nineteenth-century English woman novelist George Eliot (1819-80) put it, 'and the foxes have a sincere interest in prolonging the lives of the poultry'. Her American contemporary, Walt Whitman (1819-1892), spoke of the pivotal function of polling day much more positively, as the great 'choosing day', the 'powerfullest scene', a 'swordless conflict'

mightier than Niagara Falls or the Mississippi River or the geysers of Yosemite, a 'still small voice vibrating', a time for 'the peaceful choice of all', a passing moment of suspended animation when 'the heart pants, life glows.'¹¹ If blessed with enough votes, the local representative joined a small and privileged circle of legislators, whose job was to stay in line with party policy, support or oppose a government that used its majority in the legislature to pass laws and to monitor their implementation and administration, hopefully with results that pleased as many of the represented as possible. At the end of a limited stint as legislator, buck passing stopped. Foxes and poultry fell quiet. It was time once again for the swordless conflict of the great choosing day. The representative either stepped down, into retirement, or faced the music of re-election.

This is of course a simplified sketch of the role of elections, but it serves the purpose of highlighting the different, much more complex political geography of monitory democracy. Just as representative democracies preserved assemblies, so monitory democracies does not dispense with legislatures, political parties and elections, which (to the contrary) are often bitterly fought and closely contested. But such is the growing variety of interlaced, power-monitoring mechanisms that democrats from earlier times, if catapulted into the new world of monitory democracy, would find it hard to understand, let alone to recognise themselves in, what is happening.



Let us imagine for a moment, as if from an aerial satellite, the contours of the new democracy. We would see that its institutions are much less centred on elections and no longer confined to the territorial state (see figure 2). Their appearance is highly complex, much messier and untidier than textbooks suppose. The vertical ‘depth’ and horizontal ‘reach’ of monitory institutions is certainly impressive. If the number of levels within any hierarchy of institutions is a measure of its ‘depth’, and if the number of units located within each of these levels is called its ‘span’ or ‘width’, then monitory democracy is the *deepest and widest* system of democracy ever known. The political geography of mechanisms like audit commissions, citizens’ assemblies, web-based think tanks, local assemblies, regional parliaments, summits and global watchdog organisations defies simple-minded descriptions. So too does the political geography of the wider constellation of power-checking and power-disputing mechanisms in which they are embedded – bodies like citizen assemblies and juries, audit and integrity commissions and many other

watchdog organisations set up to bring greater public accountability to business and other civil society bodies.

The point about political geography can be put more abstractly: the mechanisms of monitory democracy resemble self-assertive units in a multi-nested complex of power-monitoring bodies that extend deep inside and well beyond the boundaries of many territorial states. The latticed patterns fudge the distinction between ‘domestic’ and ‘foreign’, the ‘local’ and the ‘global’. Like other types of institutions, such as business and universities, democracy too is caught up in a process of ‘glocalisation’. That means that the various units that specialise in the business of monitoring power are dynamically inter-related, to the point where each functions simultaneously as both part and whole of the overall system. In the age of cross-border, monitory democracy, parts and wholes in an absolute sense do not exist. The units of monitory democracy are better described as sub-wholes that have a striking resemblance to the ‘holons’ famously described by the Hungarian polymath Arthur Koestler. These units are simultaneously self-regarding and self-asserting entities that contribute to, and are affected and pushed and pulled by, other entities elsewhere in a multi-lateral system in which all entities play a part.

Viral Politics

It is important to caution against drawing simple-minded political conclusions about these trends. Nobody should be kidded into thinking that the multi-nodal world of democratic institutions is a level playing field - a paradise of equality of opportunity among all the parts of the dynamic whole. The truth is otherwise: by force of capital funding and

membership and skilful administration, some holons are more equal than others, some of them considerably more so. The power-monitoring, power-checking functions of a local government assembly in Botswana or, say, a local anti-racism summit in Denmark pale by comparison with the muscles flexed within the United States Congress, or a report delivered by Transparency International, or a debate within the United Nations Security Council. The point is that the sub-wholes or component parts of the system of post-representative democracy resemble a pile of stacked and oddly shaped Chinese boxes, each fitting inside the next larger one. The configuration is a hierarchy. Monitory democracy is no egalitarian paradise on earth. But it is nevertheless wrong - mildly ridiculous, in fact - to describe the dynamics of the new democracy as a power-hungry hierarchy of monitory institutions that ultimately work against the interests of citizens, by entombing them within a new pyramid of oligarchy. Looked on 'vertically', as if with an eagle's eye, this hierarchy is in permanent flux – a restless and unstable complex of different interacting institutions, permanently pushing and pulling, heaving and straining, sometimes working together, at other times in opposition to one another.

So while the power of the various units of monitory democracy is unevenly distributed, their dynamics are not describable using the comparatively simple spatial metaphors inherited from the age of representative democracy. Talk of the 'sovereignty' of parliament, or of 'local' versus 'central' government, or of tussles between 'pressure groups', political parties and governments, is just too simple. In terms of political geometry, the system of monitory democracy is something new. It is neither some kind of confederacy, nor a federation nor an empire. It is other and different: a complex web of differently-sized and more or

less interdependent bodies that have the effect of continuously stirring up questions about who gets what, when and how, as well as holding publicly responsible those who exercise power, wherever they are situated. For this reason, monitory democracies are richly conflicted. Politics does not wither away. Everything is never straightforwardly ok.

From its origins in the ancient assemblies of Syria-Mesopotamia, democracy has always cut across and cut through habit and prejudice and hierarchies of power. It has stirred up the sense that people can shape and re-shape their lives as equals, and not surprisingly it has brought permanent commotion into the world. In the era of monitory democracy, the constant public scrutiny of power by a host of differently sized monitory bodies with footprints large and small proves that it is the most energetic and dynamic form of democracy ever. It must nevertheless be admitted that there remains widespread lack of clarity, and a good deal of controversy, about how to judge the quality of power monitoring that goes on; there are consequently bodies (like the Democratic Audit network, the International Association for Public Participation and the Global Accountability Project) that specialise in publicising sliding-scale lists of criteria for evaluating the degree of ‘representativeness’ and public participation of governmental and sub-governmental organisations. Their work needs to be praised, if only for reminding people that public contestations of power do not take place on a flat plane. Questions are certainly directed at governments on a wide range of matters, extending from their human rights records, their energy production plans to the quality of the drinking water of their cities. Private companies are grilled about their services and products, their investment plans, how they treat their employees, and the size of their impact upon the biosphere. Questions are raised about which SUVs are most likely to roll over, and

which companies retail the worst fast food, and which are the biggest polluters. Various watchdogs and guide dogs and barking dogs are constantly on the job, pressing for greater public accountability of those who exercise power. When they do their job well, there are various positive effects, such as greater openness and justice within markets, the general enrichment of public deliberation and the empowerment of citizens through meaningful schemes of participation. But such monitoring is also often ineffective, or proves to be counterproductive. Campaigns misfire or are poorly targeted; power wielders cleverly find loopholes and ways of rebutting or simply ignoring their opponents. And, sometimes, large numbers of citizens find the monitoring strategies of organisations incomplete, or incomprehensible, or simply irrelevant to their lives as consumers, workers, parents, community residents and citizens.¹²

Yet, despite everything, the political dynamics and ‘feel’ of monitoring democracies is very different from their representative democracy predecessors. Politics in the age of monitoring democracy has a definite ‘viral’ quality about it. The power controversies stirred up by monitoring mechanisms follow unexpected paths and reach surprising destinations. Groups of experts and bloggers at their desks often manage, against considerable odds, to embarrass publicly politicians, parties, parliaments and whole governments. Power-monitoring bodies like Human Rights Watch or Amnesty International regularly do the same. That the sub-wholes can produce such power reversals within and above and below themselves is usually because other units elsewhere pitch in; within the overall order, these auxiliary bodies provide significant help or at least a few cents’ worth of assistance to their supporters. Think for a moment about any current public controversy that attracts widespread attention far

beyond its original site: news about its contours and commentaries and opinions about its significance are typically relayed by many power-monitoring organisations, large, medium and small. In the world of monitory democracy, that kind of latticed - viral, networked - pattern is typical, not exceptional. It has profound implications for the state-framed institutions of the old representative democracy, which find themselves more and more enmeshed in 'sticky' webs of power-scrutinising institutions that often hit their target, sometimes from long distances, often by means of boomerang effects.

Communicative Abundance

Some hard-nosed, self-styled proponents of state 'sovereignty' react to monitory democracy with cries of dismay. Lovers of power whose hearts are close to earlier figures like Thomas Hobbes and Carl Schmitt, they worry their heads about its self-destructive tendencies – its propensity to blur and fudge basic questions about who or which institution has the final say, the power to decide things in a tight corner, when push comes to shove. A softer version of the same kind of blast against monitory democracy comes from within the ranks of the new twenty-first century enemies of democracy.¹³

Their criticisms of political division and 'democratic sabotage' (the words of Australia's ex-Prime Minister, John Howard) in the name of an imaginary 'people' entirely miss the mark, if only because monitory democracy contains plenty of mechanisms for stitching and binding together individuals and groups and institutions. For all its public conflicts, monitory democracy is not 'anarchy'. It contains plenty of bonding and bridging devices that bring a measure of coherence to

political life. That is the functional effect of such traditional devices as freedom of speech and assembly, peaceful bargaining and civil compromise ('bipartisanship' it is called in the United States); it is also the effect of the growth of the new arts of what is called 'networked governance' – the knack of combining and co-ordinating complex decisions across a variety of potentially conflicting organisations. Important as well are procedures of law, such as the reliance upon processes of judicial review, and the growing resort to 'non-political' regulatory institutions, like electoral commissions and central banks, whose stated purpose is to define and to protect the rules of the game from predators and enemies.

Then there are the vital forces of communication media. No account of monitory democracy and its powerful mechanisms of handling and moderating conflict would be complete without taking into account the mediation of power and conflict by the institutions of communication. The growth of monitory democracy is tied closely to the growth of media-saturated societies – societies in which all institutions operate within fields of media defined by 'communicative abundance'.¹⁴

In the age of monitory democracy, it should not be surprising that the old utopia of shedding light on power - pushing, for instance, towards 'freedom of information' and 'government in the sunshine' and greater 'transparency' - strongly motivates journalists, citizens, lawyers, judges, NGOs and others. Power that escapes public scrutiny - crypto-government or 'government by moonlight' - continues to weigh down hard on the heads of the citizens of monitory democracy. That is why corruption scandals and public objections to state secrets are commonplace. There seems to be no end to them, and some of the

scandals rumble like earthquakes beneath the feet of whole governments. Some have already become legendary, like the uproar caused by the inadvertent discovery of evidence of a series of burglaries of the Democratic Party National Committee headquarters in the Watergate Hotel in Washington D.C., and the subsequent snowballing of events that became the Watergate affair that resulted in threats of impeachment and the eventual resignation (in August 1974) of President Nixon in the United States. Other big scandals have include the rumpus in the early 1990s within Spanish politics triggered by a government auditors' report that confirmed that two senior Socialist Party officials had operated front companies known as Filesa and Time Export, and that they had been paid some 1 billion pesetas for consultancy services that were never rendered (it was called the Filesa Affair). Then there was the nation-wide investigation by Italian police and judges of the extensive system of political corruption dubbed 'bribesville' (*Tangentopoli*), the so-called *mani pulite* (Italian for clean hands) campaign that led to the disappearance of many political parties and the suicide of some politicians and industry leaders after their crimes were exposed. There was as well the resignation of the French foreign minister and the admission by the French president on television that agents of the French secret service (DGSE) were responsible for the murder, in July 1985, of a Greenpeace activist and the bombing of their support vessel, the Rainbow Warrior, a boat that had been due to lead a flotilla of yachts to protest against French nuclear testing at Mururoa Atoll in the Pacific Ocean. And not to be forgotten were the whopping lies about the existence of 'weapons of mass destruction' spun by the defenders of the disastrous military invasion of Iraq in the early years of the twenty-first century.

These and other ‘-gate’ scandals show that the political dirty business of dragging power from the shadows and flinging it into the blazing halogen of publicity remains important in the era of monitory democracy. But compared with the era of representative democracy, when print and limited spectrum audio-visual media were much more closely aligned with political parties, public scrutiny and controversies about secret power grows qualitatively more frequent, to the point where it seems as if no organisation within the fields of government or social life is immune from exposure. The change has been shaped by a variety of forces, including of course the invention of scores of power-scrutinising institutions, a few handfuls of which have been named above. But technical factors, such as electronic memory, tighter channel spacing, new frequency allocation, direct satellite broadcasting, digital tuning, and new compression techniques, have certainly played their part as well. Chief among these technical factors is the invention and deployment of cable- and satellite-linked, computerized communications, which from the end of the 1960s began to effect both product and process innovations in virtually every field of media.

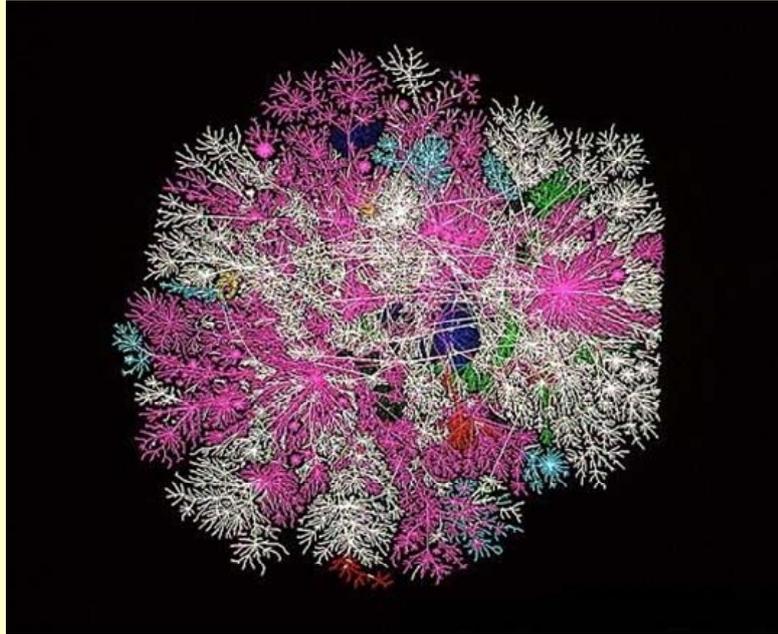


Figure 3: Computer graphic of global internet traffic. Each line represents the path of sample data sent out to one of 20,000 pre-selected locations using a system called *Skitter*. The lines are colour-coded to show the nationality of that part of the internet, for example: USA (pink), UK (dark blue), Italy (light blue), Sweden (light green) and white (unknown). From an image prepared by the Cooperative Association for Internet Data Analysis, University of California, USA

Monitory democracy and computerised media networks are conjoined twins. The birth of monitory democracy has been helped by the overcoming of the age of scarcity and the emergence of a new galaxy of media defined by communicative abundance. Symbolised by the Internet (figure 3), this is a world of overlapping and interacting media devices driven by the integration of texts, sounds and images, all interacting within the same system from multiple user points, in chosen time, either real or delayed, within modularized and ultimately global networks that are affordable and accessible to many millions of people scattered across the globe.

Many of the institutions caught up in the business of scrutinising power rely heavily on their access to the new galaxy of communicative

abundance. Monitory democracy would otherwise be unthinkable, let alone practicable. To say this is not to suppose that computer-linked communications networks form the basis of a brand new utopian world, a carnival of ‘virtual communities’ homesteading on the electronic frontier, a ‘cyber-revolution’ that yields pure transparency and equal access of all citizens to all media, anywhere and at any time. There was much hype of this kind, strongly evident for instance in the Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace (1996), a document drawn up by the self-styled cyber-revolutionary John Perry Barlow, the former lyricist of a famous rock band known as the Grateful Dead and subsequent campaign manager for the infamous American vice-president Dick Cheney. The Declaration proclaimed the end of the old world of representation within territorial states. Making hype seem profound, it supposed that computer-linked networks were ‘creating a world that all may enter without privilege or prejudice accorded by race, economic power, military force, or station of birth.’ Barlow claimed that the advent of communicative abundance heralded nothing short of ‘a new social space, global and antisovereign, within which anybody, anywhere can express to the rest of humanity whatever he or she believes without fear. There is in these new media,’ he concluded, ‘a foreshadowing of the intellectual and economic liberty that might undo all the authoritarian powers on earth.’¹⁵

Strong caution is counselled in the face of such utopian extravagance, not least because the new age of communicative abundance is unstable, even self-contradictory, for instance in the widening power gaps between the communication rich and poor, who seem almost unneeded as communicators or consumers. The communication divide between media rich and media poor citizens is a permanent blight on all monitory democracies; it contradicts its basic principle that all citizens equally are

entitled to communicate their opinions and to give those who exercised power a hard time, if and when necessary. But despite that contradiction there are undeniably new things stirring inside the swirling galaxy of communicative abundance. Especially striking is the way that the realms of 'private life' and 'privacy' and power brokering 'in private' have been put on the defensive. From the point of view of monitory democracy, that is no bad thing in itself. Every nook and cranny of life becomes the potential target of 'publicity'; monitory democracy witnesses the final withering away of the private space behind closed doors as well as the intimate 'world of everyday life' (as the Moravian philosopher Edmund Husserl famously once described it). Things that happen in private, including routine daily acts such as sleeping, eating, sexual intercourse, dressing, and household arrangements, are less and less based on unthinking habit, on unquestioned, taken-for-granted certainties about the 'normal' ways of the private world. In the era of communicative abundance, no intimate or 'secretive' topic is protected from media coverage and politicisation; the more 'private' it is, the more 'publicity' it seems to get.

Nothing is sacrosanct – not even the efforts of those who try to rebuild the sacrosanct. The art of making a public spectacle of private life for political purposes now happens on a geographic scale and with a democratic intensity that past generations could never have imagined, let alone grasped or accepted. With the click of a camera or the flick of a switch, the world of the private can suddenly be made public. Everything from the bedroom to the boardroom, the bureaucracy and the battlefield, seems to be up for media grabs. This is the age in which so-called reality-TV might well cut from an afternoon children's programme (say) to a man on a freeway setting his truck ablaze before turning his shotgun on

the police, and then himself, live, courtesy of a news helicopter and a satellite uplink; it is the age in which Sony hand-held cameras are used by off-air reporters, known as ‘embeds’, to file ongoing videos and blogs featuring election candidates live, unplugged and unscripted; and it is an age in which soldiers in war zones are shown to have raped women, terrorised children, and tortured civilians. This is as well an age in which the private lives of politicians and other celebrities, their romances, parties, health, drug habits, quarrels and divorces, are the interest and fantasy objects of millions of people. Thanks to talk shows and other media programmes, there is also an endless procession of ‘ordinary people’ talking publicly about their private fears, hopes and expectations, and what turns them on and off. Some of them are even lucky enough to be transformed into media celebrities, thanks to simulated elections, in which audiences are granted a ‘vote’ by media companies and urged to lodge their preference for the future star of their choice by teletext, the Internet, or by mobile telephone.

Helped along by red-blooded investigative journalism, the culture of communicative abundance cuts like a knife into family life, private wealth, market forces, secret power struggles, and intimate biological events like birth and death. There is of course no shortage of organised efforts by the powerful to manipulate people beneath them. But in the age of monitory democracy, bossy power can no longer hide comfortably behind private masks; power relations everywhere are subjected to ‘publicity’, to organised efforts by some, with the help of media, to tell others - publics of various sizes - about matters that had previously been hidden away, ‘in private’. This process of de-naturing of power is thoroughly consonant with the power-scrutinising spirit of monitory democracy, and it is greatly reinforced not only by the huge variety of

forms and modes of communication, a growing number of them (multi-purpose mobile phones, digital cameras, video recorders, the internet) being available cheaply to individuals and groups and organisations. Communicative abundance also multiplies the genres of legitimate publicly available programming, information, and storytelling. News, chat shows, political oratory, bitter legal spats, comedy, infotainment, drama, music, advertising, blogs - all of this and much more constantly clamour and jostle for public attention. In this way, communicative abundance has the effect of heightening people's sense of the contingency of prevailing power relationships. It promotes something of a 'Gestalt switch' of perception. The metaphysical idea of an objective, out-there-at-a-distance 'reality' is weakened. The spreading culture of 'real virtuality' (the phrase coined by the respected sociologist, Manuel Castells¹⁶) contradicts the presumption that factual reality is stubborn, and that 'factual truth' is superior to power. 'Reality', including the 'reality' of the powerful, comes to be understood as always 'produced reality', a matter of interpretation.

Message-saturated societies, backed up by monitory institutions, constantly remind citizens that their lives are shaped by contestable deeds within a galaxy of communication whose vast expanse ensures that all messages are subject constantly to what I have elsewhere called the Rule of Indeterminacy. Within the age of communicative abundance, it is as if all mediated opinions are flung constantly into a swirling cyclotron, a container filled with high-density messages. Whether a message makes its way through the cyclotron to its intended receivers, and whether they accept its intended meaning, without contradiction by others' messages and counter-messages, is never entirely predictable. Even the most powerful groups and individuals have to accept the contingency of

outcomes. The price to be paid for a media message is not just money and influence. It is acceptance of the fact that the world of mediated communication is multi-semantic and semantically slippery, full of overlapping, sometimes colliding, messages whose meaning is always in the last instance unpredictably determined by the receivers and interpreters of messages. Thanks to the overlap of communicative abundance and power monitoring institutions, the powerful become permanently vulnerable to the power of the powerless.

There is admittedly nothing automatic about any of this. Communication is constantly the subject of negotiation, compromise and power conflicts, in a phrase, a matter of politics. Communicative abundance for that reason does not somehow automatically ensure the triumph of the institutions and spirit of monitory democracy. It sometimes has effects that are harmful for democracy. In some quarters, for instance, media saturation triggers citizens' inattention to events. While they are expected as good citizens to keep their eyes on affairs outside their immediate household and neighbourhood, more than a few find it ever harder to pay attention to the media's vast outpourings. Profusion breeds confusion. There are times, for instance when voters are so pelted with a hail of election advertisements on prime-time television that they react frostily. Disaffected, they get up from their sofas, leave their living rooms, change channels, or mute, concluding with a heavy sigh that the less you know, the better off you are. It is only a few steps from there to something more perverse: the unwitting promotion of a culture of unthinking indifference. The Rule of Indeterminacy certainly governs the world of mediated communication, but one of its more perverse effects is to encourage individuals to float cynically upon the swirling tides and waves and eddies of fashion - to change their minds, to speak and act flippantly, to

embrace or even celebrate opposites, to bid farewell to veracity, to slip into the arms of what some rightly call bullshit.¹⁷

Unthinking indifference is indeed a threat to monitory democracy. By encouraging individuals and whole groups to sink into themselves and carelessly to snub the world about them, it has highly corrosive effects on citizens' abilities to monitor the power relationships of their governments and societies. Yet the key point here is worth repeating: there is no necessary outcome of this kind. For there are strong indications that communicative abundance, understood as a trend that could be acted upon and taken advantage of politically, is on balance an ally of monitory democracy. Communicative abundance nudges and broadens horizons. It brings to life citizens' sense of pluralism. It tutors their grasp of the complexity and contingency of their worlds. Communicative abundance 'bites' deeply into their lives in another sense. It prods them into taking greater responsibility for how and when they communicate, and for what purpose. The days when children were compulsorily bathed and scrubbed behind the ears, sat down in their dressing gowns prior to going to bed, and required to listen to radio or television programmes with their families - these days of representative democracy and mass entertainment are over. So, too, are the days when millions of fearful or revengeful people, huddled together as masses in the shadows of totalitarian power, found the skilfully orchestrated radio and film performances of demagogic leaders fascinating.

In the media-saturated age of monitory democracy, individuals, groups and whole societies are forced to reckon with the possibility that if they were constantly required to involve themselves fully in the multiple outputs of the media, then they would quickly go mad. They are

encouraged to see, conversely, that if they try to escape the great complexity of the world by behaving like ostriches, abjuring action and burying their heads in the sands of ignorance, then chances are high that they will either be uprooted by the claws of pompous ways of life hungry for power; or that they will be blown away by the unpredictable and punishing storms of events that most people called life. So the citizens of monitory democracies are confronted with an alternative: learning the lesson that flesh and blood mortals never know automatically or in advance what is to be done, that life requires decisions and decisions require judgments, and that the learned capacity of citizens to keep an eye on both power and its representatives, and to choose courses of action by making up their own minds in public, is the kith and kin of monitory democracy.

NOTES

¹ The birth of monitory democracy called radically into question the bitter attacks on majority-rule, representative democracy by market liberals, notably Friedrich von Hayek. In his well-known and influential *Law, Legislation and Liberty: The Political Order of a Free People* (London and Henley 1979), von Hayek, a self-proclaimed lover of 'liberty', declared: 'I must frankly admit that *if* democracy is taken to mean government by the unrestricted will of the majority I am not a democrat, and even regard such government as pernicious and in the long run unworkable' (p. 39). The basic purpose of government, he reasoned, is the creation of 'a framework within which individuals and groups can successfully pursue their respective aims, and sometimes to use its coercive powers of raising revenue to provide services which for one reason or other the market cannot supply' (p. 139). That being so, the most urgent task of the age was to defend free markets and limited constitutional government - von Hayek called it 'demarchy' - against the corrupting effects of the party-driven process of buying votes during elections, a process that leads inevitably to the triumph of bloated government ('totalitarian democracy' and 'plebiscitary dictatorship' he variously called it) that crushes individual freedom and the respect for constitutional laws designed to restrain the exercise of governmental power. Von Hayek's insistence that representative democracy must be restrained so that democracy can be protected from its own worst tendencies arguably placed much too much faith in the spontaneous freedoms allegedly generated by markets. It supposed rather too readily that constitutional mechanisms could be relied upon to have self-restraining effects upon the power and scope of government. There is as well the suspicion that 'demarchy' would in practice quickly degenerate into a species of state authoritarianism. Von Hayek was fond of proposing (see *ibid.*, p. 113) a bicameral system of government regulated principally by an assembly charged with the task of defining and protecting the constitutional framework. The assembly members would comprise men and women aged between 45 and 60, elected as representatives for a fifteen-year term by voters who cast their ballots for a representative of their choice only once in their lives, in the calendar year in which they reached the age of 45. Quite aside from numerous technical objections to the whole proposal for an assembly that resembled a senate of the wise, Von Hayek never made clear exactly how public support could freely be won for constitutional rule by an elite based on such a restricted franchise. These and other

criticisms of his attack on democracy have been well developed by others elsewhere. Here, the fundamental objection to von Hayek's reasoning is quite different, and more elementary. It is an empirical objection: that von Hayek failed to spot the growth of monitory democracy, with its scores of new *non-market* and *extra-constitutional* mechanisms designed to monitor and make publicly accountable exercises of power, not only in the field of domestic and cross-border government but also in the local, regional and global fields of markets and other civil society institutions.

² Karin Gavelin and Richard Wilson with Robert Doubleday, *Democratic Technologies? The Final report of the Nanotechnology Engagement Group (NEG)* (London 2007).

³ Archon Fung and Erik Olin Wright, 'Thinking about Empowered Participatory Governance', in Archon Fung and Erik Olin Wright, *Deepening Democracy. Institutional Innovations in Empowered Participatory Governance* (London and New York 2003), p. 5

⁴ John Keane, 'Humble Democracy', http://www.johnkeane.net/essays/essay_rule_of_nobody.htm

⁵ A Green Paper for the Council of Europe, *The Future of Democracy in Europe. Trends, Analyses and Reforms* (Strasbourg, 2004).

⁶ Interesting accounts of the safari include Francois Venter, 'Different Types of Federalism', *Democracy in Action*, volume 8, 5 (31 August 1994); Saleem Badat, 'For(u)ming the Future', *Democracy in Action*, volume 8, 3 (31 May 1994); and Christina Murray, 'Food for Thought in Hungary', *Democracy in Action*, volume 8, 3 (31 May 1994).

⁷ Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, p : 'Patiently endured so long as it seemed beyond redress, a grievance comes to appear intolerable once the possibility of removing it crosses men's minds. For the mere fact that certain abuses have been remedied draws attention to others, and they now appear more galling; people may suffer less, but their sensibility is excited.'

⁸ The early years after World War Two witnessed many initiatives and new lines of thinking about the future of democracy within a global context. See for instance Thomas Mann, *Goethe and Democracy* (Washington, DC., 1949); Harold Laski et.al., *The Future of Democracy* (London 1946); Albert Camus, *Neither Victims nor Executioners* (Chicago 1972 [first published in the autumn 1946 issues of *Combat*]); Pope Pius XII, *Democracy and Peace* (London 1945); and A.D. Lindsay, *Democracy in the World Today* (London 1945), which discusses the claim (first made by E.H. Carr) that it was Stalin of all people who placed 'democracy' in the forefront of Allied war aims by describing (in a radio broadcast of July 3, 1941) the Soviet war against Hitler as 'merged with the struggle of the peoples of Europe and America for independence and democratic liberties'.

⁹ Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness. A Vindication of Democracy and a Critique of its Traditional Defenders* (London 1945), p. vi.

¹⁰ See the stimulating reflections of Bruno Latour, 'From Realpolitik to Dingpolitik or How to Make Things Public', in Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel (eds.), *Making Things Public: Atmospheres of Democracy* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London 2005), pp. 14-41; Geoff Mulgan, 'The Remaking of Democracy', in Richard Wilson (ed.), *Post Party Politics* (London 2006), pp. 13-19; Claus Offe (ed.), *Demokratisierung der Demokratie. Diagnosen und Reformvorschläge* (Frankfurt am Main, 2003); Pierre Rosanvallon, *Democracy Past and Future* (New York 2006); Michael Schudson, *The Good Citizen* (New York 1998); Archon Fung and Erik Olin Wright, *Deepening Democracy. Institutional Innovations in Empowered Participatory Governance* (London and New York 2003); and Graham Smith, *Beyond the Ballot: 57 Democratic Innovations* (London 2005).

¹¹ George Eliot, *Felix Holt* (London 1866), chapter 5; Walt Whitman, 'Election Day, November 1884'

¹² Archon Fung, Mary Graham and David Weil, *Full Disclosure: The Perils and Promise of Transparency* (Cambridge and New York 2007).

¹³ See my 'Twenty-First Century Enemies of Democracy', www.johnkeane.net/media/videoaudiohtm/audio/jk_sydneyforum_keane_lecture11102007.html

¹⁴ The following section draws upon John Keane, 'Public Life in the Era of Communicative Abundance', *Canadian Journal of Communication*, volume 24 (1999), pp. 165-178, which contains a full list of references; John Keane, *The Media and Democracy* (Cambridge 1991); John Keane, 'Structural Transformations of the Public Sphere', *Communication Review*, 1, 1 (1995), pp. 1-22; and John Keane, 'Journalism and Democracy Across Borders', in Geneva Overholser and Kathleen Hall Jamieson (eds.), *Institutions of American Democracy: The Press* (Oxford and New York 2005), pp. 92-114.

¹⁵ John Perry Barlow, 'A Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace', Electronic Frontier Foundation, February 8, 1996, <http://www.eff.org/~barlow/Declaration-Final.html>

¹⁶ Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society* (Oxford 1996), chapter 5.

¹⁷ Harry G. Frankfurt, *On Bullshit* (Princeton and Oxford 2005).