Real Democracy Now!

Rethinking the relation between democracy and representation

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This is a first draft. Please note I am not a native speaker and this paper has not been edited yet.

2011 was a year of protest and revolt. Inspired by the Arab spring and awakened by the devastating social and political consequences of the financial crisis, millions of peoples took to the streets. In the West, the Occupy movement or Indignados drew attention upon themselves by occupying public squares for weeks and even months. In main stream media the demands of this movement were often characterized as too general, diffuse or unarticulated. Often it was considered to unclear what these movements stood for. However, one cannot fail to recognize that the Occupy movement or the Spanish Indignados clearly belonged to the left side of the political spectrum. The protesters chose capitalistic symbols such as Wall Street or the IMF as their targets and used the metaphor of the 1% versus the 99% in order to put class issues on the political agenda again.

The reason why the Occupy movement or the Indignados were characterized as movements without any clear demands has partly to do with their heterogeneous composition. Purely ideologically speaking it is quite easy to determine what belongs the left side of the political landscape, in practice however, the left is scattered among a variety of groups who often fail to collaborate or put forward a common program. Just like the counter-globalisation movement which peaked about ten years ago, Occupy (and other similar movements) can be considered as a 'movement of movements'. Autonomists, social democrats, communists, ecologists, unionists and a lot of independent citizens who are not connected to one or another organization all make part of this 'movement of movements'. However, besides this heterogeneous character of the movement, in both the counter-globalization movement and Occupy a silent hegemony of anarchist groups was noticeable. This hegemony was never translated in real leadership, but the form of the actions and the style of the movement was

clearly inspired by the anarchist tradition. In the case of Occupy the anarchist hegemony manifested itself most clearly in the way the movement tried to organize itself. There was a clear attempt to make decisions in strict horizontal and inclusive way by means of a system of assemblies which took place on the occupied squares (Quick guide on group dynamics in people's assemblies 2011).

From Madrid to New York and from Brussels to Athens, all assemblies followed the same general pattern. Regardless the subject treated within the assembly, almost always participants would form a circle in which every participant can alternately take the floor. While one participant speaks, others can express their consent or discontent towards what is said by means of making particular gestures with their hands. A gesture whereby both hands are twisting in the air expresses appreciation towards what is said, a gesture whereby both arms are crosses in an X indicates disapproval. There are also a series of other non-verbal gestures to indicate to the speaker that she goes off topic or that she exceeds the time attributed to every speaker. Of course, the more the amount of participants increases within a popular assembly, the more difficult it will become to come to decisions or to create consensus. Accordingly, when a critical number of participants is reached the assembly will be subdivided into smaller assemblies which facilitate group discussion and group decision. However, the decisions reached within these subassemblies must also be voted upon within a general assembly that unites all participants of different subassemblies (Quick guide on group dyanmics in people's assemblies 2011).

Choosing for such a process of decision making not only manifests the influence of anarchist and anti-autoritarian ideas on the movement, it also reflects one of the most important and often neglected incentives of Occupy: the reinvention of democracy itself. From this point considered, it is not surprising that the Spanish Indignados chose *Democracia Real Ya!* as their slogan. The assemblies cannot be considered as a mere instrument to structure and organize the movement, but also as an end in itself. It is an attempt to directly experiment with forms of democracy that enable full horizontal participation and the possibility of collective consensus. As a consequence, the Occupy movement or the Indignados cannot be considered as merely social movements. They are also political movements who want to reinvent democracy in direct confrontation with existing institutions.

In their attempt to reinvent democracy these movements are confronted with age-old theoretical problems connected with the concept of democracy. In this essay I want to focus on one such problem, namely the conceptual tension between representation and democracy. This tension is clearly present within the form of democracy advocated by the Occupy

movement. To the extent Occupy tries to implement a form of direct and horizontal democracy, they seem to be hostile to mechanisms of representation, because representation creates a verticality which irreconcilable with the intended horizontality (Gauthier 2011). Speaking or acting in name of somebody else makes it impossible to speak in one owns name and to express ones own grievances, wishes or interests. In other words, representation is the reverse of participation and that is why it cannot be tolerated as a way of organizing and structuring the movement. This seems to be the position which a lot of participants in the Occupy movement have (at least implicitly) embraced.

My first aim is to complicate this position. I want to do this by uncovering the fact that members of the Occupy movement direct themselves first and foremost against what came to be known as the 'standard account of representation' but not against representation as such. If one reduces representation to the standard account of representation, it is indeed somehow justified to speak about an antagonism between representation and participation. However, in the second section of this paper, I will defend the thesis that representation cannot be reduced to the standard account. Representation is a much more complex, widespread and multidimensional process. It is not only a way in which we the leadership of a particular collectivity is given shape, it also plays a necessary role in the coming about of the collectivity itself. In that sense, representation is unavoidable. In the third section of this paper I will argue that this also holds for the Occupy movement. The real question to be asked is not whether we can get rid of the notion of representation, but rather how we should deal with the unavoidability of representation in a democratic way. Although few to no attention is paid to such a question within Occupy, the way in which Occupy organizes itself is nevertheless an implicit answer to this question. Without really knowing it, the Occupy movement gives us a glimpse of what it entails to further democratize representation.

The standard account of political representation

Representation is far from an unambiguous term. Within political theory, however, the last decades some degree of consensus existed about what political representation is and how it should be understood. This consensus came to be known as the standard account of political representation. The author who contributed in a decisive way to the formulation of this standard account or model was undoubtedly Hannah Pitkin. In 1967 she published *The Concept of Representation*, a book which still counts as a point of reference for any scholar

studying political representation. According to Pitkin representation should be understood as a relation between represented and representative. Within this relation, the representative acts in the interest of the represented but at the same she is responsive towards wishes, objections and requests from the side of the represented (Pitkin 1967: 209). This form of representation is possible thanks to particular institutions such as universal suffrage, a parliamentary system, regularly organised elections and a public space characterized by freedom of expression and opinion (Pitkin 1967: 225 and Manin 1997: 6). As a consequence, the standard account of political representation emphasizes that political representation takes place within the specific institutional framework known as the nation state.

Of course, within the standard account different variations and further specifications remain possible. Within the context of this essay I want to highlight two important features of the standard account. Firstly, that representatives need to act *in the interest* of the represented and, secondly, that representation necessarily takes place within a specific *institutional context*. The premise on which the standard account falls back is that represented are not capable or ready to defend their own interests (mainly because of practical reasons) and that someone else must be able to portray herself as capable of doing so: professional politicians. In other words, in choosing their representatives citizens give a potential power to rule themselves out of hands in favour of representatives who rule them. In choosing their representatives, we authorize them to act in our name (Pitkin 1967: 43).

Authors such as Hardt and Negri draw the conclusion that modern, representative democracy unites two condradictory functions: it draws the people into the decision making process but at the same time creates a clear break between those who rule and those who are being ruled. Representation functions as a "disjunctive synthesis in that it simultaneously connects and cuts, attaches and separates (Hardt and Negri 2004: 241). This disjunctive synthesis cannot be considered as an incidental byproduct of representative democracy. The functioning of representative democracy falls back on the distinction between rulers and ruled, but at the same time puts forward the idea that the ruled should have some form of control (through the institution of regularly returning elections) on who rules and their decisions. The constant and necessary distinction between the rules and the ruled, however, prevents us from calling representative democracy a 'real democracy'. A real democracy, according to Hardt and Negri can only exist when there is no distinction between rulers and ruled.

Of course, certain mechanisms can be institutionalized in order to make the standard account of political representation more democratic. In this context Hardt and Negri take over

the Weberian distinction between ‘free representation’ and ‘instructed representation’. The difference between free and instructed representation has to do with the way in which a representative is either or not bound to the wishes and interests of her constituency. In case of instructed representation elections will take place more frequently and possibilities will be created to raise objections towards the representative or even to revoke a representative during her mandate. On top of that, it will be quite easy to present oneself as a candidate and to be involved in actual policy making. According to Hardt and Negri instructed representation is in any case a step in the direction of a more democratic and egalitarian political system. But it does not suffice. In order to get rid of the distinction between rulers and ruled, the very institution of representation itself needs to disappear. Hardt and Negri argue:

> “Such attempts [of instructed representation] can undoubtedly prove improve our contemporary political situation but they can never succeed in realizing the promise of modern democracy, the rule of everyone by everyone.” (Hardt and Negri 2004: 247)

A similar rejection of the standard account of representation can be noticed in the case of the Occupy movement and the Indignados. In the manifesto of the Spanish Indignados for example, the lack of representativity of the political elite is highlighted. According to the Spanish Inidignados, representatives no longer listen to the wishes and complaints of their constituencies. They are unable to protect the people against the anti-democratic economic powers that be (Manifesto 2011). If, starting from the logic of this critique, the Indignados would opt to promote other possible representatives, they would stay within the logic of the standard account. However, the Indignados refuse to push forward alternative candidates and to play the game of representative democracy. Just like Hardt and Negri, and under the influence of anarchist and autonomist ideas, they reject the institution of representation altogether. The strongest manifestation of this tendency is the sustained refusal from the side of the Indignados to collaborate with institutionalized parties or unions. Instead the Indignados want to re-unite the people beyond traditional and ‘artificial’ cleavages of traditional politics. The ultimate goal of the Spanish Indignados is government by and for the people in which the distinction between rulers and ruled is cancelled. Hardt and Negri, publically announced they fully support the anti-representational and democratic experiments from the movements (Hardt and Negri 2011)

However, sometimes Negri and Hardt seem to weaken their anti-representational stand. In *Multide*, for example, we can read a clear hesitation about whether representation can be totally rejected or only partially:

> "There is no longer any possibility of going back to modern models of representation to create a democratic order. We need to invent different forms of representation or perhaps new forms of democracy that go beyond representation." (Hardt and Negri 2004, 255)

There seems to be one certainty left: the standard account of political representation (or what Negri and Hardt call 'modern representation') is rejected because it irreconcilable with the democratic ideal of government by and for the people. This is also the common ground between Hardt and Negri and protest movements such as Occupy. However, the last quote seems to further complicate things on two important points. Firstly, the authors seem to doubt whether we can get beyond representation. They speak about new forms of democratic organisation which *may* be able to transcend representation. The question to be asked here is whether this is indeed possible. Are there forms of (democratic) organization which are able to surpass any mechanism of representation? Secondly, and highly related with the first point, Hardt and Negri seem to insinuate that the standard account of representation (or modern representation as they call it) is only one of the ways in which representation can be organized or institutionalized. The idea behind it is that we should broaden our concept of representation. The question remains however, how such a broadening of the concept of representation should be thought of and how this potential broadening can contribute to more democratic forms of representation. As I will try to make clear in the rest of this essay, both questions refer to one and the same answer.

The unavoidability of representation

Those who defend the standard account and the radical democratic opponents of institutionalized representation (such as Hardt and Negri or the Indignados) share the same basic assumption. Both positions start somehow from the idea that collectivities, their wishes and interests are given to us before any process of representation (Saward 2006, 300; 2010, 63; Disch 2011). The difference between radical democrats and defenders of the standard

account is that the latter will defend the idea that representatives are (better) capable of defending the interests of the represented than the represented themselves. In contrast, radical democrats will state that nobody but the represented themselves are best capable of defending their own interests. This classical dichotomy between direct democracy and representative democracy is, however, hard to uphold in confrontation with contemporary philosophical insights. Under influence of post-structuralism, the idea emerged that the represented do not preexist representation, but that representation (or the signifier) constitutes the represented (or the signified) (Stavrakakis 2002: 53). One of the first philosophers who fully acknowledged the political importance of this insight was Claude Lefort.

At the end of the 1940's Lefort was one of the founders of the group *Socialisme ou Barbarie* which had as a mission to give the proletariat its own voice in order to defend its neglected interests and to become aware of its revolutionary potential. *Socialisme ou Barbarie* wanted to offer a platform in order for the proletariat to express itself in an authentic way, besides the established institutions such as parties and trade unions. In that sense, the young Lefort was strongly opposed to the classical forms of representation, just like the Indignados are today. Throughout the fifties, however, Lefort became more critical with regard to the original objective of *Socialisme ou Barbarie* – an attitude which would eventually lead to a break with *Socialisme ou Barbarie* in 1958. Lefort's critique was directed towards the idea that the *true* interests of the proletariat or a form of authentic proletarian experience could ever be found. Such a quest would necessarily fail according to Lefort because every attempt to express the original proletarian interest will always be an interpretation, and thus a deformation of it. The crux of the matter is: there is no beyond this interpretation or deformation. In other words, there is no beyond representation (Geenens 2008: 180-181).

This critique took shape in the essay "Démocratie réelle et representation démocratique". In this essay Lefort heavily criticizes the idea that unions will ever be able to represent the workers' true interests. Lefort warns his readers that it is also a complete illusion to think of an original, authentic community of workers whose interests can be perfectly represented. The interests of the proletariat and even the proletariat itself do not exist despite of the existing representations of it, but thanks to these very representations. What unions and their leaders do is creating certain representations of what the interests of the workers are within a given context. This is no form of betrayal towards the workers, rather is an attempt to evoke the community of workers itself in order to emancipate this community (Lefort 1963: 23-25).

The aim of the essay "Démocratie réelle et representation démocratique" is to show how a collectivity can only exist by grace of a representation of itself as collectivity. There is no authentic 'we', pre-existing a process of interpretation or representation. A 'we' always needs to be represented as a 'we' in order to be a collectivity and to act in a collective way. In other words, the representation of a 'we' is constitutive for the group or the collective. As a consequence, representation is unavoidable when it comes to the constitution of groups or collective identities (Lefort 1986: 188). Starting from this insight, we can see where the doubt of Hardt and Negri comes from. However, stating that representation is unavoidable does not indicate that we should embrace the standard model of political representation. On the contrary, what Lefort shows is that we should revise the standard model because the latter starts from the idea that constituencies pre-exist acts of representation. Representation is thus both unavoidable and irreducible to the standard model.

In line with Lefort, Frank Ankersmit has emphasized the constitutive nature of representation. According to Ankersmit, the representative must be conceived of as a creative actor who has a lot in common with the artist. A representative is somebody who discloses reality, more than reflecting it. It follows that it is difficult to evaluate representations in terms of epistemological categories such as 'right' or 'wrong' – as some followers of the standard model try to do[1] (Ankersmit 1996: 23). Representations are, like pieces of art, do not reflect reality but rather enable us to experience reality from a particular perspective. Merleau-Ponty expresses this idea quite accurately when he states that "The painter or the politician moulds others much more often than he follows them. The public he aims at is not given; it is precisely the one which his works will elicit […]" (Merleau-Ponty 1964: 74)

Underscoring the aesthetic and constitutive dimension of representation at the same time reveals the partial and selective nature of any act of representation. A representation is always an interpretation of reality and never falls together with reality itself. It opens the world from a certain perspective, but the world can never be totally reduced to that perspective. In other words, there is always an aesthetic gap between representation and reality (Ankersmit 1996: 39). For Lefort this gap is an irreducible gap between the symbolic and the real. The symbolic should be understood here as the network of representations through which the world is given is, the real is that which escapes every representation and therefore betrays the particularity and contingency of every representation (Lefort 1969: 43; 1986: 194).

[1] Voetnoot Pitkin

The gap between the symbolic and the real reveals how every representation bears the seed of potential conflict within itself. The extent to which a representation never falls together with what it constitutes, is also the extent to which a representation remains contestable. For example, the fact that workers are only partly able to recognize themselves in the representations offered by the leaders of the union, also enables them to contest the particular representation offered by the leaders. It does not follow that the workers have a clear image of themselves or their interests. The possible contestation must be regarded as a reaction to a failed representation. Out of failed representations new and competing representations start to exist (Latour 2003: 149). Because every representation fails up to a certain extent, the possibility of conflict and protest is unavoidable. That is why Lefort speaks about an irreducible antagonism between the leaders of the union and the workers. In his later work, Lefort will call this the original division which manifests itself within every collectivity (Lefort 1972: 433).

Impossible horizontality

When we start from the idea that representation is an unavoidable and necessary mechanism in the coming about of collectivities and their interests, we must also rethink the practices and ideals from the Indignados. The idea that collectivities constitute themselves on a horizontal and consensual basis, is quite hard to maintain if representation becomes the mechanism through which groups are constituted. This manifests itself already in the process of how these social movements got their name. In Southern Europe the new social movements were called 'Indignados'. This name is originative from Stéphane Hessels pamphlet *Indignez-Vous* and was used by journalists, opinion makers and activists themselves to denominate the new social movements (Hessel 2010). A similar process took place in the United States where protesters in Wall Street pretty soon used as a name and slogan 'the 99%' or 'we are the 99%'. Also in this case, the origin of this name and slogan needs to be located outside the movement. It was Joseph Stiglitz's essay *Of the 1%, by the 1% and for the 1%*, published in may 2011 in Vanity Fair which introduced the famous distinction between the 1% and the 99% (Stiglitz 2011).

What should be striking, is that both in the US and in Europe, the movement did not decide upon it's own name. There was no system of assemblies through which a proposition for a name was somehow ratified. Rather the name came from outside the movement. There

was someone – in this case Stiglitz or Hessel – who *gave* it its name. At the same time, however, the unity and identity of the movement depended up to a large extent on these names. We can thus draw the paradoxical conclusion that what determines the unity of the movement – the name of the movement – falls outside the power of the movement. The proposed autonomy of the movement, the idea of horizontal decision making model is difficult to uphold when we look at how the process of naming comes about. This paradox shows clear correspondence with what Lefort wrote about the union and the proletariat. Just as proletarians can only see themselves as unity by means of certain representations given by the union leaders, the Indignados can only perceive of themselves as a unity with certain shared interests by grace of a representation which comes from 'outside'. In other words, representation introduces a certain verticality and exteriority. In case of the Indignados, the name functions as a representation which is constitutive for the movement. The signifier 'Indignados' stands for a shared dissatisfaction with the current economic and political system, yet at the same time it constitutes, articulates and reproduces this dissatisfaction. The unity and identity of the movement is therefore not dependent from itself, but from a representation which is exterior to the movement.

In the case Occupy and the Indignados this exteriority needs to be taken quite literally because at least some part of the name has an external origin. However, one can discuss this thesis by pointing to the fact that at least another part of the names given to the movement – such as 'Occupy' – seem to come from the movement itself. The same holds for the mode of organization and forms action which characterize the movement. No external intellectuals were needed for that. Yet, these objections do not permit us to speak of a horizontally structured movement freed from any mechanism of representation. On the contrary, to the extent certain representations or forms of organization will start to exist within the movements, an undeniable verticality, externality and potential conflict will start to exist within the movement. It would take me too far to discuss this process for any name giving process within the movement. It suffices to reconstruct the course of a people's assembly in order to see how mechanisms of representation function within the movement.

I described already the way in which an assembly functions and which purposes it is supposed to serve. However, if we accept the constitutive nature of representation, the assembly seems to get an other, extra function which is fundamental for the movement. The assembly is one of the ways in which the movement represents itself to itself (and to the larger audience) (Castiglione and Warren 2006: 13). The assemblies "enable the community to see itself and to understand itself, to catch itself in images and thoughts. This happens by means

of reflecting the representation from itself to itself, by giving her a stage on which her multiform and moving reality becomes objectified in the eyes of its members and which makes her [the community] readable for its members." (Gauchet 2006: 121) Assemblies are thus not merely decision-making bodies, they also enable the community to make itself visible to itself. But exactly this process creates a verticality on the spot where horizontality was supposed to rule, and creates conflict where consensus was supposed to reign. The simple fact that a group is never able to address itself to itself as a totality, but that *someone* needs to address the group in its totality already points to the verticality which makes total horizontality impossible. The verticality manifests itself in the simple fact that the moment one addresses the group, a distinction is made between the one who speaks and the ones who are spoken to, between somebody who plays an active role and a more or less passive audience. Starting from this analysis it seems quite difficult to maintain the idea that all decisions are taken by consensus. In practice a rather primitive majority principle seems to be practiced. When a particular proposal is able to evoke enough waving hands, it will be accepted. As a consequence, there will always be a minority which is not able to really agree with the accepted proposals or the circulating representations of the group. Seen from this perspective, it becomes clear how representation both unites and divides groups. The presupposed, horizontal model of consensus in the assemblies ends up in an unavoidable, double verticality and potential conflictuality: the one between speaker and audience and among the public itself.

With these insights the project of a direct democracy beyond representation seems hard to maintain. However, this does not imply we should simply return to the standard model of political representation, but it does mean that the inequalities in power present within the standard model are much more fundamental than the Indignados are willing to accept. Nevertheless, I assume that the Indignados can contribute to a more democratic interpretation and configuration of representation. I will elaborate upon this idea in the last section of this paper.

Contestation, representation and democracy

At the end of "Démocratie réelle et representation démocratique" Lefort makes an important suggestion: instead of focusing on the failed attempts to get rid of division, we should pay more attention to the different forms of contestation provoked by the original division. The

message which Lefort tries give is that imbalances in power relations are inevitable and that the democratic moment should be situated in the possibility to contest existing imbalances of power (Lefort 1963: 27). What we witness here is shift from participation to contestation as the distinctive characteristic of a democratic organization. This is also an idea which comes back in some of the later works of Lefort in which he states that the distinctive characteristic of the democratic regime is that it tolerates and stimulates conflict and contestation by institutionalizing it (up to a certain extent). Within democracy, every decision is in principle revocable and contestable. A never ending discussion takes place about what the law is and how it should be imposed. As such, the democratic regime is charachterized by a restless movement (Lefort 1992b: 21, 45, 47). More than a certain set of institutions, democracy is this constant flow of contestations. It is from this perspective that Derrida states that democracy is always *à venir* (Derrida 1994: 81). Democracy constantly reshapes itself and, as such, never falls together with itself.

Miguel Abensour, a pupil of Lefort, radicalized this insight. He attributed a 'savage ' character to democracy. According to Abensour, democracy has an untamable character and it needs to cherish this character in order to remain democratic. The metaphor used by Abensour in order to illustrate this point is that of the wildcat strike. The extent to which 'savage' actions such as the wildcat strike remain possible, is also the extent to which democracy itself remains possible. Abensour thus returns to the initial intuition present in Lefort's "Démocratie réelle et representation démocratique". Since in this essay the idea is present that unions can only be democratic if they allow a certain kind of division and room for contestation between workers and those who represent the workers. The wildcat strike can considered to be the symbol of this division.

The democratic character of democracy is situated in the possibility of conflict and contestation. An undemocratic organization will not be devoid of any conflict or contestation (that is impossible for the reasons pointed at above), but it will try to violently oppress any form of contestation or conflict. If we look from this angle to the practices of the Indignados and Occupy, we cannot but conclude that these movements are democratic and even try radicalize democracy. However, democracy is not radicalized by letting everybody have an equal share in power, but by creating a large space through which a maximum of internal contestation is possible. Although assemblies are presented as tools to create consensus, they are not in practice. They are above all spaces wherein discussion and contestation are possible in a public and transparent way. Within these assemblies one cannot escape mechanisms of representation which create internal divisions, however, they do create room to openly show

and discuss these divisions. Public assemblies such as those of the Indignados and Occupy are spaces of contestation and representation. Therefore, they are democratic spaces.

We can now return to the questions which I raised with regard to Hardt and Negri's attitude towards representation. The first question asked was whether we could get beyond any form of representation. As I have already made clear, this is utterly impossible. The second question dealt with the possibility of more democratic forms of representation. This question can be answered affirmatively. It is my thesis that the practices of the Indignados and Occupy point into the direction of a form of representation which is closer to the democratic ideal than the standard model of political representation. Representation can be further democratized by allowing more space for contestation. At first glance, this idea seems to come close to the previous discussed concept of instructed representation. But the resemblance her is only superficial. The idea of instructed representation situates itself completely within the logic of the standard model which portrays the representative as acting in the interest of the represented. As indicated above, this model is hard to defend. An act of representation should be understood as constitutive for what is represented. The practice of assemblies points us to the fact that what is represented is the product of a constant interplay between representation and contestation; while instructed representation presupposes somehow the idea of interests preceding the act of representation. Instructed representation situates itself within another logic than representation as contestation.

The way in which the Indignados deal with representation and contestation stands in strong opposition with the way in which political representation is thought of within the European political realm. In the wake of the European debt crisis we witness more and more technocratic tendencies in which (economic) interests are portrayed as purely objective and uncontestable. This is, from a democratic perspective, very problematic and Lefort himself also warned us for this tendency (Lefort 2007: 939, 946). Seen from the issue of representation, the technocratic evolution signifies a de-democratization of the existing forms of institutionalized representation. Although board members of supranational institutions such as the IMF, the European Commission or the European Council claim to represent the people by acting in their interest, they are far from exposed to even indirect modes of contestation such as elections. Hereby the responsiveness of the represented is minimalized or even denied. It is the exact opposite of what happens during the assemblies of the Indignados. Maybe the true relevance of movements such as the the Indignados must be situated in their attempt to redefine the essence of democracy and – in a more implicit way – democratic

representation. At the same time, however, they reveal how far existing politics has drifted from this ideal.

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