

## INTRODUCTION

### The Pluriverse of Democracies

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This volume on the study of multiple democracies critically and constructively began in a workshop hosted by the Cedar Trees Institute (CTI) and the Centre for Global Studies at the University of Victoria on unceded Lekwungen territory, Victoria, British Columbia, on March 21–22, 2019. After the presentations and discussions at the workshop, the participants rewrote their presentations into chapters in the course of correspondence and conversation over the following year. The volume editors assembled and edited the chapters. To understand fully the chapters and their interconnections, it is helpful to begin with the preliminary sketch of the pluriverse of democracies that we distributed to participants prior to the workshop. We then revised and rearranged it as the dialogue and writing progressed.

#### A PRELIMINARY SKETCH OF FIVE MODES OF DEMOCRACY AND THEIR DIALOGICAL ELUCIDATION

The field of democracy and democratization is disclosed in a wide variety of ways in both practice and theory. Our approach, in the workshop and in this volume, is to disclose the field as consisting of at least five overlapping and crisscrossing modes or families of democracy and democratization. Accordingly, citizens and researchers disclose the field of democracy in diverse ways, depending on the family of democracy they foreground and the mode of engagement they practice.

Indigenous forms of community-based (and networked) democracies throughout the world of more than 600 million Indigenous people comprise the first mode of democracy. These are the oldest family of democracies on the planet. Indigenous people are regenerating them today through the exercise of their rights of self-determination in accord with their own understanding of this concept and their Indigenous legal orders, as well as in partnership with the

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In addition, over many centuries, Indigenous peoples have attempted to develop transformative, decolonizing relationships of democratic treaty federalism with settler colonial states. The workshop was held at the University of Victoria because it is a leading center for the study of Indigenous democracies.

Representative democracies within modern states comprise a second mode of democracy. These representative governments in all their varieties comprise the major family of democracy on the planet. State-centered democracies and the crises they are undergoing are of course the major focus of research on democracies today. We are concerned to give them due attention. Yet, we also aim to explore other existing modes of democracy and, most importantly, study them from their distinct ways of knowing and acting, rather than from the limited perspective of state-centered representative democracy and its theories.

Democracy “beyond the state” is a third mode of democracy. We divide this part into two subsections: (1) the democratization or failure of democratization (both the “deficit” and “disconnect” problems) and their consequences for institutions of the European Union, global governance, global law, international relations, democratizing the United Nations, and so on; and (2) the diverse ways in which citizens engage in democratic practices of contestation and interaction with global institutions of various kinds.

The fourth family of democracies consists of the multiple forms of community-based, self-organizing and self-governing (“cooperative”), direct or participatory democracies and their global networks around the world. As in two classic cases of “assembly democracies” – Potlatch democracy and Athenian democracy – the members are both citizens and governors. The people themselves (*demos*) exercise political power (*kratos*). Today these community-based democracies also tend to provide the basis of democratic practices of nonviolent resistance to and transformation of unjust relationships and social systems: participatory democratic democratization. The Gandhian tradition of democratic self-government (*swaraj*) and democratic contestation and transformation (*Satyagraha*) and the African-American beloved community tradition associated with Martin Luther King Jr. are well-known examples of this diverse global family of democracies.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John Restakis, *Humanizing the Economy: Co-Operatives in the Age of Capital* (Gabriola Island: New Society, 2010) estimates that about 800 million people are involved to some extent in these direct democratic communities of practice. See, for example, Mark Engler and Paul Engler, *This Is an Uprising: How Nonviolent Revolt Is Shaping the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Nation Books, 2016); Isabelle Ferreras, Julie Battilana, Dominique Méda, and 3,000 others, “Democratizing Work,” *Il Manifesto*, May 15, 2020, <https://global.ilmanifesto.it/democratizing-work>; Joe Parker, *Democracy Beyond the Nation State* (New York and London: Routledge, 2017); Boaventura de Sousa Santos and Cesar A. Rodriguez-Garavito, eds., *Law and Globalization from Below: Towards a Cosmopolitan Legality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); James Tully, *On Global Citizenship: James Tully in Dialogue* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014).

These four general modes of democracy are located within, conditioned by, and reciprocally condition other powerful nondemocratic social, economic, and military systems. This assemblage of complex global systems – of democratic *and* nondemocratic social, economic, and military-industrial systems – generates horrendous inequalities in the individual and collective well-being of humans and their communities. These inequalities obstruct and undermine the conditions of democratic relationships within and across these modes of democracy. Moreover, the assemblage of global systems exploits, degrades, and destroys the ecosystems and earth systems on which all life on earth depends. We have known since the 1970s that this gives rise to complex, interdependent, and cascading crises of democratic, social, ecological, and earth systems. We call these the “Gaia crises” for shorthand.<sup>2</sup> The generic democratic crisis across all four democratic families is the incapacity or gridlock of democracies to cooperate in responding effectively to the Gaia crises.<sup>3</sup>

The Gaia crises bring to human awareness a fifth mode of democracy: Gaia or earth democracy. *Homo sapiens* and their systems are interdependent members of symbiotic ecological and earth systems that have sustained and complexified life for more than 3.8 billion years. These life systems are symbiotic and cyclical in the virtuous or cooperative sense that they reciprocally sustain themselves in ways that cosustain the interdependent life systems on which they codepend. They exercise the power or animacy of life-sustaining-life (*anima mundi*) themselves without a ruler (the Gaia hypothesis). These complex cooperative systems are often far from equilibrium and often tip over into unsustainable vicious systems. Yet, they also have the capacities to transform vicious systems into sustainable systems by means of cooperative ecological succession, either before or after collapse, as has happened many times in the past. This living Gaia democracy is primary in the sense that it is the ground of being and well-being of all other forms of democracy and their members. *Homo sapiens* are thus “plain members and citizens” of Gaia democracy with responsibilities to care for and sustain the biodiverse life systems that sustain them, as Aldo Leopold famously argued in 1949.<sup>4</sup> How do the members of the other four families of democracy respond to the Gaia crises and integrate in and with Gaia democracy?<sup>5</sup>

One central theme is the ways in which the five modes of democracy and their distinctive activities relate to one another, for better or worse. These relationships

<sup>2</sup> See Mark Lynas, *One Final Warning: Six Degrees of Climate Emergency* (London: 4th Estate, 2020).

<sup>3</sup> See David Held, Chapter 16, this volume.

<sup>4</sup> Aldo Leopold, “The Land Ethic,” in *A Sand County Almanac: With Essays on Conservation from Round River* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966), 239–40.

<sup>5</sup> For this way of approaching the Gaia crises, see Akeel Bilgrami, ed., *Nature and Value* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020); James Tully, “Reconciliation Here on Earth,” in *Resurgence and Reconciliation: Indigenous-Settler Relations and Earth Teachings*, eds. Michael Asch, John Borrows, and James Tully (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018), 83–131.

are not well understood because our disciplinary and everyday ways of perceiving the field tend to treat the various forms of democracy in isolation from one another. When they are studied together, they are often pictured as in oppositional and/or hegemon–subaltern relationships. If the entangled, crisscrossing, and overlapping relationships enacted among them and the larger social systems are disclosed and discussed, we would be able to examine the challenges and possibilities of finding ways for these families of democracy to *coordinate and cooperate* as equals (‘democratic integration’) in addressing and transforming the local and global systemic causes of the Gaia crises and other crises. It may be that this kind of transformative democratic integration among democratic families (‘joining hands’) could overcome what is called in the literature the “dysfunctionality,” “hollowing out,” “gridlock,” “antagonistic self-destruction,” “authoritarian supersession,” or “death of democracy.”

#### INTRODUCTION TO THE SIX SECTIONS OF DEMOCRATIC MULTIPLICITY

All the topics set out in the preliminary sketch of the pluriverse of democracies were discussed at the workshop and the virtual dialogues during the writing of the chapters. We rearranged the five families of democracy so their crisscrossing and overlapping relationships are clearer and we added a first section on democratic ethos. The chapters focus critically on the strengths and weaknesses of the different modes of democracy, and on their relationships with each other. As a result, the chapters seek to expose the underlying causes of the democratic crises and the pathways to address and transform them, both within specific democracies and then with democratic relations of coordination and cooperation among them. This is how it should be. We cannot begin to think about genuinely democratic coordination of different modes of democracy until we have learned to listen to and understand how democracy and coordination are articulated, understood, and enacted by different demoi and those affected by them. This basic democratic norm of *audi alteram partem* (always listen to the other side) enables us to avoid and challenge the tendency to take one mode of democracy as the dominant mode of action-coordination under which all others are disclosed and subalternized. These comparative and critical democratic dialogues of all affected are the groundwork of and for the transformative kind of democratic coordination and cooperation we call “joining hands.”<sup>6</sup> They enact democratization by democratic means.<sup>7</sup> In joining hands democratically, they

<sup>6</sup> For practices of joining hands, see Ouziel, Chapter 20. For an insightful historical Marxist study of how the global “precariat” could join hands democratically, see Mike Davis, *Old Gods New Enigmas: Marx’s Lost Theory* (London: Verso, 2020).

<sup>7</sup> Compare Edward Said, “A Method for Thinking about Just Peace,” in *What Is a Just Peace?*, eds. Pierre Allan and Alexis Keller (Oxford: Oxford Scholarship Online, 2006), 176–94, <https://doi.org/10.1093/o199275351.001.0001>.

connect with the animating democratic spirit or power of cooperating and contesting with and for one another that sustains democratic communities. Aristotle called this democratic spirit *philia* (friendship). In response to the ecological crisis in 1976, Eric Fromm renamed and extended it to *biophilia* (the animacy of Gaia democracy).<sup>8</sup>

The Foreword by John Borrows presents a perspicuous representation of the guiding spirit of the volume from his Anishinaabeg perspective. Mutually sustainable and ecosocially just democracies should be grounded in relationships of self and other codetermination with each other and the living earth.

The chapters are arranged in six parts. Part I consists of surveys of the democratic ethical capabilities, virtues, character formation, and ethos of being free and equal citizens and governors reasoning and exercising powers of cogovernance with each other in various families of democracy. This complex democratic ethos is derived from the basic Athenian definition of democracy as bringing a people (*demos*) into being and carrying it on by organizing and exercising the powers of governance and citizenship (*kratos*) by, with, and for each other. It is based on the Aristotelian, Arendtian, and Gandhian premise that healthy and sustainable pragmatic representative democracies are grounded in and grow out of healthy and sustainable everyday participatory democratic relationships in which citizens acquire the democratic ethical skills of interaction through trial-and-error practice and guidance by exemplary citizens. This ethical self-formation (*ethos*) consists in the cultivation of democratic relationships with oneself (inner freedom), other humans, and the living earth. These skills or virtues comprise the difficult nonviolent arts of persuasion by means of words and deeds that enable humans to control their anger and knee-jerk reactions and come to understand and trust one another through dialogue. They disagree and agree, contest and cooperate, resolve conflicts, reconcile, and begin again.<sup>9</sup> This way of being democratic contrasts with the recourse to force, the imposition of ruler/ruled relationships (*arche*) of other forms of government, the creation of us/them relationships, the escalating campaigns and competitions of and for power-over, and thus the undermining of democratic relationships of power with, by, and for one another.

These civic virtues of being democratic are the seeds of healthy participatory and representative democracies. They are thus of crucial importance to the growth and well-being of democracies because they bring to light by contrast

<sup>8</sup> See Eric Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1973); James Tully, "Life Sustains Life 2," in *Nature and Value*, ed. Bilgrami, 181–204; Kara Rogers, "Biophilia Hypothesis," in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, [www.britannica.com/science/biophilia-hypothesis](http://www.britannica.com/science/biophilia-hypothesis).

<sup>9</sup> For the importance of ethics in Indigenous law and governance, see John Borrows, *Law's Indigenous Ethics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019).

the following three crises of contemporary representative democracies. The first is the marginalization of everyday participatory democratic relationships in modern societies and the dominance of unequal and undemocratic ruler/ruled relationships across the public and private spheres. As a result, most citizens do not acquire the basic democratic virtues and ethos. The second is the resulting disconnection or alienation of representative governments from ongoing, participatory democratic relationships of consultation and accountability with all affected – engaged democratic citizens – and thus the rise of increasingly nondemocratic relationships over, rather than with, the governed. Third, even within representative political parties, campaigns, and institutions, gaining a majority or plurality and imposing a solution is much more common than trying to “work across the aisle” to reach agreements among free and equal partners. As we know from contemporary history, this kind of political power over others becomes concentrated in the hands of elites, authoritarian movements capture democratic institutions, the iron law of competing oligarchies becomes the norm, and politics resembles war by other means.<sup>10</sup>

The democratic virtues explicated by Laden, Owen, and Thomassen also initiate the internal and circular relationship between means and ends in politics. Nondemocratic means bring about nondemocratic ends, whereas participatory democratic means bring about democratic ends. They are autotelic.<sup>11</sup> If this is correct, then the response to these democratic crises is to democratize representative democracy by democratizing our everyday relationships across public and private spheres, and, in so doing, generate transformative cycles of democratic succession and transformation. This is what we call “democratic democratization.” This structure of argument explains why the cultivation of culturally diverse democratic ethics is primary. It appears to be the condition of overcoming the three crises of representative democracies and building networks of democratic coordination, cooperation, contestation, and conflict resolution in response to the gridlocked problems of

<sup>10</sup> See John Keane, *The New Despotism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2020); Tarik Kochi, “The End of Global Constitutionalism and Rise of Antidemocratic Politics,” *Global Society* 34, no. 4 (2020): 487–507, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13600826.2020.1749037>.

<sup>11</sup> Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. tested the truth of the thesis that means configure ends in practice and in their writings. Dennis Dalton, Joan Bondurant, Hannah Arendt, and Richard Gregg presented the classic theoretical defenses of it and the challenge it presents to Western political theory and practice, based as it is on the thesis that violent and non-democratic means are necessary to establish order (the rabble hypothesis that humans are incapable of self-organization and governance without an armed master), and these violent means somehow lead to peace and democracy in some distant future to come. See Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1970); Richard Bartlett Gregg, *The Power of Nonviolence*, ed. James Tully (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Joan V. Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence: The Gandhian Philosophy of Conflict*, rev. ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); Dennis Dalton, *Mahatma Gandhi: Nonviolent Power in Action* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

pandemics, climate change, ecocide, inequality, racism, poverty, homelessness, and war.

Schematically, this participatory response to democratic crises appears to consist in two major phases articulated in different ways in the five families of democracies and in different subject positions within them. As noted, the first phase of “constructive programs” involves the cultivation of democratic ethics and relationships here and now, and thus a corresponding noncooperation with nondemocratic relationships – a stance illustrated, for example, in the “democratize work” movement. On this participatory democratic groundwork, the second phase engages with and seeks to transform nondemocratic and antidemocratic governance relationships and their members into democratic relationships by democratic means. These diverse practices of transformative democratization usually involve “two-handed” or dialectical approaches.

On the one hand, democratic citizens speak and assert truthfully to the powers-that-be of the specific injustice of the relationship in question, as they see it, by means of their nonviolent words and deeds. Simultaneously, on the other hand, they offer to listen reciprocally to their opponents and enter into democratic dialogues and negotiations oriented to reconciliation. That is, they treat their opponents and bystanders as free and equal citizens with the capacity to learn from others and come to see the superiority of democratic means of conflict resolution and eventual cooperation in a coauthored relationship. The specific pragmatic reconciliation they reach is always open to further contestation in the future by all affected. The crucial democratic feature is not the specific agreement, which is always provisional, but the intersubjective, trustworthy democratic skill-set and means of nonviolent conflict and conflict resolution they acquire through participation in the process.

This democratic mode of democratization from below is qualitatively different from the dominant top-down and coercive modes of global democratization and conflict resolution that are a major cause of the gridlock crisis we face today.<sup>12</sup> Yet, it is alive and well in the local and global traditions of participatory democracy. It is important to realize that these techniques exist in everyday disputes and dispute resolutions among friends and neighbors before they are extended to alternative dispute resolution practices and truth and reconciliation commissions. In the West, they came to prominence with the Athenian democratic practice of speaking truth to power (*parrhesia*) with the aim of initiating a transformative democratic dialogue with the powerful (*parrhesiastic* pact). In India, it is associated with the Gandhian practice of *Satyagraha* on the basis of local constructive programs (*swaraj*). In the United States, it is associated with Rosa Parks, Jo Ann Gibson Robinson, Martin

<sup>12</sup> See, for example, Morefield, Chapter 7, and Held, Chapter 16, this volume, and Vijayashri Sripati, *Constitution-Making under UN Auspices: Fostering Dependency in Sovereign Lands* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).



Luther King Jr., John Lewis, and the African-American beloved community tradition, as well as with César Chavez's tradition of common sense nonviolence. In Africa, it is associated with Kwame Nkrumah's positive action program, Nelson Mandela, and the Ubuntu tradition. Engaged Buddhist traditions of nonviolent protest and reconciliation are practiced worldwide. Europeans also have distinctive traditions. Indigenous peoples have their long-standing traditions of nonviolent conflict resolution by treaty negotiations and other methods.<sup>13</sup>

There are three reasons to take these traditions and practices of democratization by participatory democratic means seriously. The first is that they always take the other as an end in themselves to be treated as a free and equal democratic citizen, never as a means to be treated as a thing to be ruled by force. As Martin Luther King Jr. put it, it is the method appropriate for people "in this country [the United States] and throughout the world, who are seeking ways of achieving full social, personal and political freedom in a manner consistent with human dignity" because it enacts what it demands.<sup>14</sup> Second, if the constitutive relation between means and ends is correct, then nonviolent democracy is the *way* to local and global peace and democracy. The continuation of democratization by force and authoritarian rule will lead to more of the cycles of violence, counterviolence, and noncooperation that Held describes in Chapter 16. As King put it at the beginning of the age of nuclear weapons and conventional weapons of mass destruction: "Today the choice is no longer between violence and nonviolence. It is either nonviolence or nonexistence."<sup>15</sup> Third, the recourse to arms and relations of coercive power-over others to resolve disputes has boomerang effects on all social relationships throughout the "world house," as we see in the present. Again, as King argued in 1967, the choice is thus between violent domestic and international "chaos" or nonviolent "community."<sup>16</sup>

Part II turns to analyses of the crises of the dominant form of democracy: state-centered representative democracy. These include noncooperation, concentration of power in competing elites, the rise of authoritarian rule, right and left populism, and the deepening, class, race, education, rural versus urban, gender, and intersectional divisions within the people, as well as deepening inequalities among nation-states. Schmidtke presents a case study of the disconnection between representative and participatory

<sup>13</sup> For an introduction, see Engler and Engler, *This Is an Uprising*; Robert A. Williams Jr., *Linking Arms Together: American Indian Treaty Visions of Law and Peace 1600–1800* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Gregg, *The Power of Nonviolence*; Kurt Schock, *Civil Resistance Today* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015); War Resister's International, *Handbook for Nonviolent Campaigns*, 2nd ed. (2014), <http://wri-irg.org/pubs/NonviolenceHandbook>.

<sup>14</sup> Martin Luther King Jr., "Foreword," in Gregg, *The Power of Nonviolence*, pp. 13–15.

<sup>15</sup> Martin Luther King Jr., *Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story*, rev. ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 2010), 221.

<sup>16</sup> Martin Luther King Jr., *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2010).



democracy. Santos delineates the main features of the emergence of authoritarian rule from within representative democracy in the case of Brazil. Mouffe explains the rise and central features of right and left populism in response to the democratic crises. Morefield explicates the limitations of the main responses to the crises and lays down the path to the participatory responses of Part III. Notwithstanding their diversity, a common theme unites these chapters. Participatory democracy and representative democracy are not two independent and opposed ways of relating to one another, as is often presupposed. Rather, our complex and crises-ridden present is composed of the entanglement of these two modes of relationships in all areas of society. Most social relationships that govern our conduct exhibit elements of both. These chapters guide us through the tangled relationships and point toward ways of differently situated citizens joining hands and working together to transform them.

The engaged authors of Part III explore areas of the rapidly growing world of new and creative forms of participatory democracy. Forman takes us beyond the walls of representative democracies to cross-border communities of practices and to networks from the local to the global. Nelems moves beyond the human/nature divide to participation in Gaia-centered democracies and their systemic and cyclical features. Celikates investigates the creativity, indeterminacy, and self-reflexivity of participatory democracy that is often overlooked by the conventional ways of describing and studying these movements. These chapters shine critical light on the crises of democracies, borders, racism, poverty, social capital, climate change, and ecological destruction, on the one hand, and on the multiplicity of place- and earth-based responses to them, on the other.<sup>17</sup>

Part IV is an introduction to the vast world of Indigenous democracies today.<sup>18</sup> It begins with a concrete example of Indigenous (Gitksan) democracy “on its own terms” by Napoleon, so it is not redescribed and subsumed in the terms of Western democracies. Nichols explains the crucial importance of critical histories of the relationships between settler colonial states and Indigenous peoples for the success of decolonization movements. The following chapters by Swain and Henderson investigate the difficulties and possibilities of engaged settler citizens entering into democratic allyship relations with Indigenous citizens and governments in confronting social and ecological crises on the ground and in representative institutions. In the final chapter in the part, Webber explicates important lessons that democrats can learn from Indigenous (Gitksan) democracy today.

<sup>17</sup> For a complementary engaged study of the exemplary participatory democratic 15M movement in Spain, see Pablo Ouziel, *Democracy Here and Now: The Exemplary Case of Spain* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2022).

<sup>18</sup> For an introduction to this field, see Asch, Borrows, and Tully, eds., *Resurgence and Reconciliation*.

Part V begins with a brief synopsis of Held's classic description of multiple crises of the global system of unequal representative democratic states in terms of systemic and self-reinforcing noncooperation or "gridlock" at the international level. The two following chapters take up the challenge of unlocking gridlock by practices of democracy beyond the state: in international law and international relations, multinational federations, and Indigenous–non-Indigenous federations. Wiener presents a general theory of cycles of contestation for international law and relations, whereas Cherry develops an analysis of democratic negotiation among a multiplicity of democracies.

Part VI contains two chapters on democratic integration among diverse democracies. In the first, Tully explores the family of Gaia or Earth democracy. He develops the theme first introduced by Borrows in the Foreword. For the integration of democratic multiplicity to be socially and ecologically just and cosustainable, democratic citizens and governors need to learn how to be plain members and responsible active citizens of the biodiverse relationships of the living earth that sustain all life ("eco-democratic integration"). In the final chapter, Ouziel shows how the diverse democratic citizens of each and every chapter can work together in context-specific, integrative relationships of democratic cooperation and contestation. These are relationships of democratic "joining hands" or integration. He illustrates that they are not only possible, but actual, here and now, in the local and global field of democratic diversity. The further growth of these action-coordination relationships has the potential to generate and integrate robust democracies with the capacity to respond to our ecosocial crises and cocreate a sustainable, democratic future.

## OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS

### Part I: Democratic Ethos

#### *Chapter 1: How Democracy Doesn't End*

In "How Democracy Doesn't End," Anthony Laden draws a contrast between two approaches to thinking about democracy – what he calls "pictures." The first, perhaps more familiar one, pictures democracy as an institutional form that allows a collective to rule itself legitimately. The second picture conceives of democracy as a social form in which people work out together the terms by which they live together. Despite their apparent similarities, so described, Laden argues that each picture makes salient a different set of issues and concerns and thus which picture we work within will shape how we think about democracy. In particular, the first, institutional picture, leads us to think about a series of boundary-setting questions, and a concern that the boundaries of the collective and its institutions are well-established. As Laden puts it, this picture treats democracy as "closed." In contrast, the second picture treats the mechanisms by

which people live together in a way that always remains open to challenge and criticism as fundamental to democracy; democracy is thus pictured here as “open.” One attractive feature of the picture of democracy as open is that it makes democratic living together an open-ended and thus ongoing practice – one that doesn’t come to an end, either with its successes or with its failures.

***Chapter 2: Democracy, Boundaries, and Respect***

This chapter focuses on the relationship between democracy, boundaries, and respect in terms of the distinction between civil and civic pictures of democracy – a distinction which can be initially glossed as that between democracy as a particular mode of civil order or constituted authority and democracy as a specific mode of civic agency or constituting power. David Owen argues that this focus can help to clarify some conceptual tensions in democratic theory concerning the boundary problem as it stands in relation to democratization. It can serve as a way of reminding us of the priority of citizenship as a political practice before citizenship as a legal status and the salience of that priority for reflecting on contemporary problems of democracy.

***Chapter 3: Democracy in a Provisional Key***

Drawing on the work of Jacques Derrida, this chapter argues that we should think about democracy in a provisional key. Democracy is provisional because it puts itself into question. It does so when we take the question “what is democracy?” to be part of democracy, which means that we must ask “what is the demos?” and “what is rule?” We end up with a conception of democracy whereby the people is at once prior to and a result of the rule of the people, and so we never arrive at a final answer to the questions “who is the demos?” and “what is rule?” Treating democracy as provisional does not necessarily solve major challenges such as the environmental crisis and inequality, but it allows us to approach these challenges from a new and more fruitful angle. Lasse Thomassen discusses this with particular attention to current debates about the climate crisis.

**Part II: Representative Democracies**

***Chapter 4: Democracy and Community: Exploring a Contested Link in Light of the Populist Resurgence***

A central force propelling contemporary right-wing populist parties is their ability to offer a strong and emotionally charged sense of community. The nationalist rhetoric and promise to represent the genuine ‘voice of the people’ are constitutive elements in the populist political mobilization. Yet, the nationalist plea to re-establish the sovereign rights of a national community is rarely based on a democratic, participatory empowerment of the people in whose interests populist leaders claim to speak. Against the background of the populist surge in Western democracies, this chapter has two objectives: First, it

explores the link between democracy and community from a theoretical perspective, arguing that democratic self-governance is indeed reliant on a substantial, functionally and procedurally pertinent sense of communal existence and shared collective identity. In this respect, the chapter focuses on how the growing emphasis on individual rights and entitlements has overshadowed the constitutive role of community for the viability of democratic praxis. Second, the chapter demonstrates empirically how locally based communities can produce a social infrastructure that is essential for modes of engaged citizenship and revitalized democratic practices.<sup>19</sup>

***Chapter 5: Democracies Can Perish Democratically Too: Brazilian Democracy on Edge***

Liberal democratic elites facilitated the rise of an unequal, multilateral neoliberal economic order, nationally and globally, over the last seventy years. Authoritarian and right populist parties then found ways to gain political power by democratic means in several states and to accelerate a more state-centered and competitive form of neoliberal globalization. Boaventura de Sousa Santos carefully analyzes the major components of the transition to authoritarian rule in the classic case of Brazil. He draws general lessons from this case study and suggests ways of democratic resistance to this trend in Brazil and other states.

***Chapter 6: Agonistic Representative Democracy in Europe***

This chapter takes the form of an interview with Chantal Mouffe by Pablo Ouziel. In the course of thirteen questions and answers, it ranges over the main substance and central features of Mouffe's complex democratic thought. After exploring the complex theoretical grounding of Mouffe's engagement with and contribution to democratic theory, it explores the implications of her approach for addressing the current conjuncture, which she calls a postdemocracy age. She presents her arguments for a left populist response to dominant forms of right-wing populism and neoliberalism in Europe and diagnoses the role of right populism through the example of Brexit.

***Chapter 7: For a Politics of Exile: Criticism in an Era of Global Liberal Decline***

The Brexit vote, the election of Donald Trump, and the rise of anti-immigrant, white nationalist political movements throughout Europe have led to considerable handwringing among both liberals and leftists about the future of liberal democracy. For supporters of "the liberal world order" like John Ikenberry, these developments suggest that now is the time for liberal societies to double-down on the core values that make us "who we are." For left Schmittians like Chantal Mouffe, the rightward shift demands a left populist

<sup>19</sup> Compare Kochi, "The End of Global Constitutionalism."

reassertion of “the people,” sharply contrasted with a reactionary enemy. This chapter argues that both of these responses are deeply misguided insofar as they reinstate imperialist forms of liberal disavowal and deflection, and thus fail to address the core issues behind the resurgence of the right in our era.

Instead, Jeanne Morefield maintains that a truly democratic response to the crisis of liberal democracy requires citizens in the global North to embrace a radically reflective, deconstructive subjectivity that relentlessly calls into question the historical and contemporary shape of “the people” under consideration. To develop this subjective perspective, the paper draws upon Edward Said’s notion of exilic criticism and compares it with contemporary liberal cosmopolitanism and left populism. Morefield explores the way this unhoused, unstable perspective enables contrapuntal engagement with those histories of imperialism, settler colonialism, and racialized logics of extraction and dispossession that went into the creation of modern liberal democratic states in the first place. Ultimately, she argues, it is only by reflecting on this constitutive history that citizens in the global North can create the kind of solidaristic, compassionate, and authentically democratic practices necessary to fight the rise of white nationalism and the decline of liberal democracy on a global scale.

### **Part III: Local/Global Participatory Democracies**

#### ***Chapter 8: Unwalling Citizenship***

How can political theory be more practical, responsive, and projective in its solidarity with people struggling against injustice? Drawing inspiration from Albert Hirschman’s work on bottom-up development in mid-century Latin America, Fonna Forman explores the epistemic challenges and theoretical and emancipatory possibilities of “coproducing” knowledge and civic strategies with communities who are navigating unjust asylum and migration policies at the US–Mexico border. Blurring the line between research and activism, she describes a way of doing political theory that is “grounded” through horizontal practices of engagement, in which the theorist accompanies struggle, and seeks dialogue with people and groups who are receptive to collaborative thinking and civic action. She likens this work to a curatorial activity, through which the theorist weaves unique capacities and experiences into a richer account of struggle.

Her case study is the UCSD Community Stations, a network of civic spaces located in four neighborhoods on both sides of the border wall at Tijuana–San Diego that she and partner Teddy Cruz designed in partnership with grassroots agencies for long-term collaborative work. Here, university researchers and residents assemble as partners to share knowledges, and coproduce new narratives, strategies, alliances, and projects. A key activity is designing civic tools to expose the complex histories and mechanisms of political power and

injustice, too often hidden within official accounts of the border region, and to render them more accessible.

Forman's critical work on borders and citizenship is grounded in these practices of engagement. Citizenship itself is a fluid, performative concept – an experience of belonging that emerges through shared practices of living, surviving, and transgressing together in a disrupted civic space. While her work prioritizes local civic identity and action, she and her partners also seek to develop broader solidarities by developing “elastic” cultural experiments and civic “stretching” imaginaries that “nest” local conflict in incrementally broader spheres of circulation and interdependence, enabling people to understand themselves as part of larger spatial systems that contain the injustices they face. Her chapter concludes by illustrating this nested scaffold, which expands from the border neighborhoods where she works to the border bioregion, where belonging is oriented around social and environmental ecologies shared by the United States and Mexico, and ultimately to a speculative global border she calls “the Political Equator,” which links border zones across the world.

*Chapter 9: Other Wise Democracies: What the Tree Canopies Know*

Just as certain human lifeways are making life on earth unsustainable, intensifying social and political polarizations are rendering genuine democratic dialogue less and less tenable in the West. The growing polarizations point to an ontological rift between two distinct worldviews that are gaining momentum in the West: an individualist, anthropocentric, us/them worldview up/rooted in a logic of disconnect and separation; and an interconnected, ecocentric, relational worldview of Intrabeing with all, including the nonhuman. In this chapter, Rebecca Nelems argues that the underlying morbidity facing democracy today can be located in the ways it reproduces an individualist ontology to undemocratizing effects. Viewed through this lens, the growing backlashes against democracy appear as a symptom, not a cause, of democracy's crisis – though both must be addressed. Notwithstanding, possible protective factors are also already in our midst. The boundaries and enactments of representative democracies have long been troubled, stretched and shaped by democratizing processes and movements that reference an ontology of intrabeing. The horizons and possibilities for other/wise democracies beyond the bounds of individualism are not only possible, they already are.

Nelems argues that how actors, institutions, and governments within representative democracies engage with these distinct worldviews urgently matters – not just in terms of significance, but also with respect to what kinds of democracy are materialistically enacted in the world. However, if “the means sow the seeds of the end,” framing differences as antagonistic, competitive polarities re-enacts the same individualist us/them worldview that underpins the undemocratizing processes. She proposes the “ecocycle,” as understood

within the living ecosystems of tree canopies, as a relational model of Intrabeing through which we might re-examine and reimagine both democratizing and undemocratizing processes. The ecocycle's two "traps" of poverty and rigidity offer critical insights into the points of connect and disconnect between these processes, as well as the relationship between the lifeways they generate. In their porous, dynamic, entangled, and grounded relationality, tree canopies offer pathways by which the roots of a constellation of democracies might be deparochialized, with a view to leveraging the transformative potential of other/wise democracies.

### ***Chapter 10: Democratizing Revolution: Self-Reflexivity and Self-Limitation Beyond Liberalism***

In order to understand the revolutionary potential of democracy, Robin Celikates argues that we need to move beyond homogenizing and nationalist-populist understandings of both revolution and democracy, as well as the notions of popular sovereignty and constituent power that often underlie them. One way to avoid reproducing the exclusions and hierarchies that continue to haunt many attempts to reactivate radical politics today, especially in the register of hegemony, is to pluralize the idea and practice of democratic revolution itself and to look for ways to preserve its internal heterogeneity and ambivalence against the urge of homogenizing its subject, to keep its open-ended character open against the temptations of closure, and to defend the revolutionary and democratic potential of marginalized people against hierarchizing reinscriptions of what counts as properly political or revolutionary.

Preserving both the indeterminacy and the self-reflexivity of democratic practices will not only allow for a more adequate understanding of past revolutions and their ambiguities, but also for a fuller comprehension of the democratic potential and risks of revolutionary action in the present. A radical-democratic and revolutionary remaking of the demos needs to start from those political struggles – most importantly for Celikates' argument, struggles by migrants and Indigenous communities – that call for a radical revision, pluralization, and deterritorialization of the demos, of peoplehood, and of its internal and external borders, all in ways that deeply unsettle the existing terms of the struggle for hegemony rather than making a move within its narrowly nationalist-populist confines.

## **Part IV: Indigenous Democracies**

### ***Chapter 11: Gitksan Democracy: On Its Own Terms***

Democracy is generally understood and discussed as operating within a state and applying to those people within it. How might we conceive of democracy within nonstate societies, such as historic Indigenous societies? In this chapter, Val Napoleon first demonstrates how current negotiations between Gitksan



communities located in northwestern British Columbia and the Canadian government are, in effect, a form of abyssal thinking and, as such, operate to further undermine Gitxsan distributive democracy and governance. Secondly, she examines one exemplar of Indigenous democracy: that of the historic and the present-day Gitxsan society. Finally, Napoleon applies Lon Fuller's account of legalities and relationships to expand how we think about law and governances in Gitxsan society and, by extrapolation, in other Indigenous societies. These explorations work to create another method and an accompanying grammar to analyze contemporary forms of Indigenous governance and some of the arising issues.

***Chapter 12: Democratic Futures and the Problem of Settler States: An Essay on the Conceptual Demands of Democracy and the Need for Political Histories of Membership***

All states are riven by political histories of the exclusion and oppression of so-called “minorities” and “aliens.” Where the uniqueness of the settler states begins to show is in terms of degree. That is, while all states deal with conflicts arising from issues of membership (e.g. secession movements, overlapping claims to territory by neighboring states), within settler states the entirety of their claim to territory rests on the legal exclusion and/or diminishment of Indigenous peoples. This difference of degree is particularly important when we are trying to get a sense of what the future of democracy could be at this particular moment in history. This importance is due to the fact that settler states face a strongly amplified version of the problem of membership, and this puts the formal presumptions of the nation-state (as the modular combination of a singular “people” and a bounded territory) under immense pressure. As a result of this unique degree of pressure on the question of membership, settler states have developed extensive and complicated legal and political structures to meet this challenge.

This means that the political histories of membership in settler states offer us a unique opportunity to gain some insight into the future of democracy in nation-states. Or, put somewhat differently, the intense pressures on the question of membership in settler states have produced something like a core sample of the political climate of Western modernity. In this way, Nichols proposes that one of our best chances to find something meaningful to say about the future of democracy now is to begin the work of writing the political histories of membership in settler states. These histories cannot serve as prediction machines for the future of democracy (this can only ever be the territory of prophets, seers, and charlatans), but they can provide us with concrete examples of situations where the presuppositions of membership in nation-states are exposed and contradicted by the demands of factual situations. In this chapter Nichols elaborates on what he means by a “political history of membership” and uses it to interpret *R. v. Sparrow* and the *Reference*

*re Secession of Quebec* as cases within a political history of membership in Canada.

**Chapter 13: *Cracking the Settler Colonial Concrete: Theorizing Engagements with Indigenous Resurgence through the Politics from Below***

Stacie Swain's chapter contends that the movement of wild salmon through waterways helps to make visible the web of relationships that connect Indigenous resurgence movements and those who support them within Kwakwaka'wakw, Secwépemc, and Coast Salish territories in the Pacific Northwest. Throughout these territories, migratory salmon return to their headwaters each year to spawn. Along their route, salmon face difficulties created by settler colonialism and the infrastructure of capitalism: open-net fish farms, increased tanker traffic, and pipeline construction. These difficulties, which also create conflicts within Canadian society, can be understood through a spatial conceptualization of settler colonialism in which logics of containment not only attempt to redefine the lands and waters but also subjectivate both Indigenous peoples and settlers within colonial and capitalist relations that foster disconnection.

Too often, she argues, these relations can seem permanent or inevitable. In contrast, Swain shows how we can think differently about relations by using a place-centered and bottom-up methodology inspired by John Borrows' physical philosophy and Heidi Stark and Gina Starblanket's thoughts on relationality. This account draws on personal narrative and critical reflection upon her own involvement, as a settler graduate student and activist working with Kwakwaka'wakw, Secwépemc, and Coast Salish resurgence movements. She describes how Indigenous movements such as the Swanson Occupation, the Matriarch Camp, and the Tiny House Warriors understand wild salmon as relatives within their respective nation-based kinship and governance systems. These movements not only defend salmon as such, but sometimes also invite others to act alongside them. In doing so, these movements open up the possibility for both settlers and Indigenous peoples from other territories to act in accordance with localized Indigenous legal and political orders. This chapter thus contributes a fluid yet grounded perspective to the literature on community-based and participatory democracies, particularly those concerned with how Indigenous and non-Indigenous people can enact mutually beneficial relations and responsibilities to each other and the places we inhabit.

**Chapter 14: *Like a Brick Through the Overton Window: Reorienting Our Politics, from the House of Commons to the Tiny House***

On June 18, 2019, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau reapproved the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion. If completed, this project promises to massively expand both the production and the distribution of diluted bitumen from Alberta's tar sands. Trudeau's commitment to this project comes in spite of his global reputation as a progressive legislator and climate warrior, and in

stark contrast to his commitments toward “reconciliation” with the Indigenous nations of North America, many of whom have staunchly opposed this project. Indeed, on the same day as Trudeau reapproved the pipeline, a display of counterhegemonic-hegemonic solidarity occurred. Representatives from the Tsleil-Waututh, Squamish, and Musqueam nations, alongside elected officials from the City of Vancouver and the Grand Chief of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, stood together to redouble their commitment to protecting a coastal ecosystem which they and their communities all share and on which they all depend for survival. Days later, on June 22nd, there was yet another display of resistance to Trudeau’s policies, this time in the form of a nearly 20 kilometer march up the length of the Saanich Peninsula, at the head of which was towed a Tiny House. Destined for Secwépemcū’ecw, in the interior of British Columbia, this Tiny House was pulled along by a grassroots coalition of Indigenous leaders from throughout the region and headwaters of the Salish Sea and their settler allies. These displays of resistance represent not merely a redoubling of a fight in the courts or legislatures, but the drawing of a frontline of resistance and a commitment of solidarity that extends from Metulia/Victoria all the way to the homelands of the Secwépemc nations.

Phil Henderson’s chapter begins with this series of events as a vantage point from which to interrogate what Martin Lukas has named “the Trudeau Formula.” In his recent book of the same name, Lukas argues that Prime Minister Trudeau mobilizes the language of social justice and, in particular, of “reconciliation,” even as his policies evacuate that rhetoric of nearly all its substance. Positioning this formula as a core imperative of liberal democratic institutions, Henderson considers at length the manner in which Trudeau’s pantomiming of social justice rhetoric serves to close the so-called “Overton window” of political possibility in Canada today, while also suggesting that counterhegemonic and grassroots responses offer the potential of a renewed and reinvigorated radical imagination.

***Chapter 15: Governing Ourselves: Reflections on Reinvigorating Democracy Stimulated by Gitxsan Governance***

This chapter describes the nature and functioning of citizenship (or its equivalent) in nonstate societies, focusing specifically on the Gitxsan societies of northwestern British Columbia. It examines how their nonstate character is reflected in understandings of members’ public roles and responsibilities in which lateral relationships count more than hierarchical relationships, kinship plays an essential structuring role, each member is a custodian of their legal culture, and governance and law are continually affirmed, sustained, interpreted, and applied through acts of mutual recognition and affirmation. This comparison leads one to ask whether comparable lateral relations exist in attenuated form in state-structured societies, to inquire into the value of building upon these remnants and extending them in democratic self-organization, and to reflect upon how practically they might be reinvented to

revitalize democratic engagement. While the chapter takes seriously lessons from nonstate social organization and argues that we should look for and valorize the nonstate mechanisms that persist within state-structured societies, it does not contend that nonstate forms alone are sufficient for our current predicament. Our challenge, Jeremy Webber proposes, is how to reinstill the reality of citizens' responsibility, stewardship, and agency, while nevertheless enabling the possibility of large-scale democratic decision-making.

## Part V: International/Global Democracies

### *Chapter 16: The Overlapping Crises of Democracy, Globalization, and Global Governance*

David Held submitted this succinct synopsis of the paper he planned to discuss at the Workshop. He died before the Workshop took place. Held was a world authority on globalization and democratization. He made an unparalleled contribution to these two topics over the last forty years. His premature death is a huge loss to all of us who have learned so much from him and all those who will continue to learn from his scholarship for generations to come.<sup>20</sup>

Held's contribution is a precise summary of the crisis of democracy that he and his coauthors have described at length in *Gridlock: Why Global Cooperation Is Failing When We Need It Most* (2013) and *Beyond Gridlock* (2017). His argument is that the global system of representative democratic states is now locked in a vicious cycle ("gridlock"). While it was initially a virtuous system after World War II, it produced a set of processes that transformed democratic globalization into a vicious system. He gives four reasons for this. The system now undermines democratic cooperation and freezes problem-solving capacity. He describes this gridlocked system in terms of four self-reinforcing stages of noncooperation. This is a "crisis of democracy, as the politics of compromise and accommodation gives way to populism and authoritarianism." In the conclusion, he cautions that we are heading down a path that is similar in several respects to the 1930s. He does not discuss ways forward in this brief chapter, but he does so in *Beyond Gridlock*. It is a testament to the continuing importance of David's work that the chapters in this volume address gridlock and possible paths forward, albeit in their distinctive ways.

### *Chapter 17: The Contested Freedom of the Moderns: Conceiving Norm Contestation as the "Glue" for Reordering the Globalized World*

Arguing from an International Relations (IR) theoretical standpoint, Antje Wiener engages cultural multiplicity as both a challenge and a resource for addressing democratic legitimacy in global society. The argument brings long-standing

<sup>20</sup> See in particular his classic account of the nine models of democracy within the Western tradition: David Held, *Models of Democracy*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006).

propositions about cultural diversity in the public philosophy literature to bear in IR theory. It centers on Tully's observation that "different practices of reasoning-with-others are grounded in *distinctive customary local knowledges*, repertoires of practical skills, genres of argumentation and tacit ways of relating to one another. These culturally and historically diverse genres of practical know-how or *savoir-faire* (*metis* in Greek) are the *intersubjective bases of culturally diverse practices of deliberation*."<sup>21</sup> To account for and evaluate practices of cultural diversity in global society, the chapter presents a "cycle-grid model" to study normative change with reference to the distinct practices of contestation and validation. The chapter elaborates this argument in more detail in three sections. The first section recalls Tully's argument about the "unfreedom of the moderns" and the lack of accounting for cultural diversity as a potential resource to enhance democratic legitimacy based on a practice-based approach to norm(ative) change. The second section turns to the practices of contestation and validation to illustrate how this practice-based approach may be applied to counter the unfreedom of the moderns in global society. The third section concludes with guiding research assumptions for a more pluralistic and diversity-aware IR theory in light of the turn toward "multiplicity."

### **Chapter 18: Conditional Authority and Democratic Legitimacy in Pluralist Space**

This chapter explores how different democratic traditions, each with its own institutions, interact with one another. Drawing on two very different examples – the relationship between the EU and its member states, and the relationship between Indigenous peoples and early settlers – Keith Cherry argues that surprisingly similar mechanisms can be observed in very different contexts. Focusing on one such similarity, he shows how actors in both cases have turned to forms of conditional authority wherein each actor recognizes the legitimacy and autonomy of the other subject to certain substantive conditions. As a result, each actor must satisfy multiple distinct, even strongly divergent, standards of legitimacy in order to maintain effective authority. This practice allows multiple different conceptions of democracy to shape public action without establishing a hierarchy between them or synthesizing their differences.

## **Part VI: Joining Hands: Eco-Democratic Integration**

### **Chapter 19: On Gaia Democracies**

This chapter argues that to respond effectively to the climate and sustainability crises, humans have to think and act as plain members and citizens of democracies with other living beings and within the webs of life that sustain

<sup>21</sup> James Tully, "The Unfreedom of the Moderns," in *Public Philosophy in a New Key*, vol. 2, *Imperialism and Civic Freedom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 116. The word "metis" is italicized in the original text; other italics are Wiener's own emphasis.

all life on earth. James Tully calls these Gaia democracies. He examines two families or traditions of Gaia democracies. The first are Indigenous democracies akin to the ones John Borrows discusses in the Foreword. The second are recent participatory democracies that are oriented to learning from and modeling their democratic practices on the way in which life systems sustain themselves cyclically and regeneratively. He then examines the vicious and unsustainable global social systems that are the nonlinear causes of the cascading sustainability crises. He argues that the dominant model of representative democracy is subject to these unsustainable systems and unable to respond effectively to the crises. In the final section, he suggests how the growth and integration of Gaia democracies locally and globally can respond effectively to the ecological and social crises by means of democratic ecosocial succession.

*Chapter 20: Democracies Joining Hands in the Here and Now*

Pablo Ouziel offers his reflections on the workshop and the volume. He describes the development of some of the main themes. Next, he presents six distinct types of working relationships among democratic citizens that he first developed in his research with citizens involved in the 15 M movement in Spain. Then, he shows the presence of these six 'joining hands' relationships in the various chapters. This exercise enables us to see the connections and modes of democratic coordination that are both possible and actual among the diversity of ways of being democratic citizens explicated in the volume. These modes of action-coordination and networking are constitutive features of cogenerating socially and ecologically sustainable democracies.

