PART 3

Phenomenologies of Injustice
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CHAPTER 6

Claims of the Affected

A functioning public sphere, the quality of discussion, accessibility, and the discursive structure of opinion- and will-formation: all of these could never entirely replace conventional procedures for decision-making and political representation. But they do tip the balance, from the concrete embodiment of sovereign will in persons, votes, and collectives to the procedural demands of communicative and decision-making processes. And this loosens the conceptual ties between democratic legitimacy and the familiar forms of state organization.

—Jürgen Habermas

The chapters in part 2 tracked the way in which strongly ontological interpretations of the political are used to sustain a priori models of proper politics and real democracy. These models underwrite laments about the postpolitical condition as well as excited declarations of the radical potential of dramatic protest events. From within this worldview, properly political events have no determinative content—they exceed given forms of expression and order. Political events occur when singularities that cannot be represented in current formations of political life make their presence felt. Across their variety, whether informed by readings of Spinoza or strands of Left-Heideggerian thought or post-Althusserian accounts of political subjectification, ontologies of the political make politics derivative of more fundamental forces of constitution and disruption.

Part 3 shifts away from this paradigm of political interpretation, and its attendant spatial and temporal imaginations, toward the further elaboration of an action-theoretic perspective. It picks up the issue with which chapter 2 ended, namely the question of where one might find theoretical resources for better understanding the proposition that democracy is an emergent form, the meaning of which arises in problematic situations of conflict. In the following three chapters I focus on the degree to which a sensitivity to the experience and articulation of felt senses of injustice has become central to the reconfiguration of the tradition of critical theory as a theory of radical democracy.
I am not recommending a revival of critical theory understood narrowly as a model for the critique of instrumental reason. I am, rather, thinking of critical theory as a living tradition of thought, which has been transformed into a theory of radical democracy and has also undergone a veritable spatial turn of its own. In tracing the ways in which ideas of affectedness, domination, and freedom are conceptualized across the work of various thinkers, part 3 brings into view the emergent understanding of political action that is shared across this living tradition, one that accords primacy to situated experiences of wrong that are articulated through practices of public claims-making.

The understanding of critical theory that I am making use of here is best captured by Seyla Benhabib's genealogy of two distinct but inseparable dimensions of critique. The first is an explanatory-diagnostic analysis of the sources of oppression, exploitation, and injustice in the world. The second is an anticipatory-utopian critique of existing norms and values. Crucially, this dimension also includes an assessment of the demands made by movements “and interprets their potential to lead toward a better and more humane society.”

The significance of this view of critical theory lies in the suggestion that being critical does not simply involve unmasking the operations of power. Nor is it enough to simply identify objective, systematic crisis tendencies or causes of injury or even to develop normative theories of justice or democracy. Critique should also inquire into how systematic processes generate experiences such as “suffering, humiliation, aggression, and injustice,” experiences that “in turn can lead to resistance, protest, and organized struggle.”

My argument for giving priority to injustice in theorizing democratic politics depends on working through the conceptual transformation of the principle of “all affected interests.” The idea that all those affected by a course of action should have some say in formulating decisions around that action is a basic feature of ordinary ways of talking about democracy: “What touches all should be decided by all.” It is also a more or less explicit principle in different traditions of democratic theory. It is implicit, for example, in the accounts of the political found in the work of writers such as Arendt, Wolin, and Lefort, for whom politics primarily concerns collectively shared matters of concern and action. It has informed the resurgence of participatory theories of democracy since the 1960s. It is the operative sense of democracy in recent work by social theorists such as Bruno Latour, who seek to extend democracy to a realm of non-human interests. And in deliberative and discursive theories of democracy, the all affected principle is translated into a set of broad-based practices of participation in publicly mediated communicative practices.

The all affected principle can be used, among other purposes, to call into question the legitimacy of territorial models of democracy; to assert the primacy of individual human rights as benchmarks of democratic governance; or to assert the extension of democracy to include non-human interests. The idea that “what
ever affects all must be agreed to by all” is a principle of consent and an intuitive norm of democratic legitimacy.\textsuperscript{5} It is often invoked as if it could serve as a kind of procedural rule for deciding exactly who makes up the political community. In this sense, it is presumed that being affected can be defined to discriminate between members of a political community and non-members. There are two ways in which the all affected idea is usually invoked to think about this sense of being affected. First, it can be applied on the basis that being affected varies from decision to decision, assuming that it is possible to delimit just who is actually affected on a case-by-case basis—an idea that can be either expansive or restrictive in its implications. Second, the idea can be applied by reference to an idea of those potentially affected, as in the case of environmentalist accounts of risk, suggesting the franchise be expanded to everyone and everything.

In discussions of the all affected principle, the idea of being affected has political salience only insofar as it is related to a sense that members of a political community should be able to affect what happens to them. Here, what is often at stake is a determination of the scope of decision making and the types of influence through which a political community can exert control over decisions.

When both aspects—being affected and affecting—are taken into consideration, the all affected idea appears to be concerned with the question of who should exercise power (and how). It is an idea that can be invoked to define either the scope of membership or the scope of decisional power.\textsuperscript{6} Sometimes the all affected principle is used to justify enfranchising virtually everyone and everything. At other times it is used to justify disallowing the demos from making virtually any decisions.\textsuperscript{7}

This chapter traces the ways in which the double aspect of all-affectedness, in terms of both being affected and affecting, is worked through in different strands of political thought. In particular, I argue that the apparent paradox of enfranchising everyone or restricting democracy to a limited range of issues arises from a constricted, overly causal understanding of the idea of affectedness. This argument leads me to reformulate the idea of all-affectedness around a threefold distinction between having an interest, taking an interest, and having the capacity to affect actions. Critical engagements with the all affected principle tend to be concerned with the overly restrictive view of how deliberation over shared interests can and should take place. The way to escape the apparent dilemmas and puzzles raised by the idea of all affected interests is to both loosen and refine our understanding of affectedness. The first step in doing so is to attend more closely to the transformation of the norm of universalization in Habermas’s theory of communicative action and related strands of democratic theory—a transformation that turns the all affected idea into a norm of deliberative inclusion.

I will also consider how traditions of environmental political thought have been central to the revival of the idea of all affected interests in recent democratic theory. The idea of all affected interests is often invoked in this line of thought as
a kind of trump, so that the intuition that all affected parties should be included in democratic practices is used primarily to criticize the restrictions of so-called humanistic settlements. I contend that the more significant contribution of these traditions of environmental thought has been to draw into view the unavoidability of representation as a feature of any vision of radical democracy. In this spirit, James Tully argues that extending the all affected idea necessarily requires a view of democracy in which “at least some representatives will take up the responsibility for presenting the ethical considerations of care for all members in the web of life affected by the conflict in question.” In raising the question of representation anew in this way, the idea of all-affectedness appears not so much as a way of settling questions of inclusion but as a way of problematizing practices of delegation, speaking for others, and acting in the name of others.

Renewed consideration of the principle of all affected interests has also been particularly important in the reorientation of political theory around eminently geographical issues such as cosmopolitanism, environmentalism, global justice, and transnational migration. It appears to be an intuitively geographical principle, supporting the extension of democratic politics beyond the boundaries of inherited political communities associated with the modern nation-state. In the explicit geographical turn in recent political theory, as well in arguments for respatializing democratic theory in fields such as human geography and urban studies, there is an unstated assumption that social science can effectively track the causal chains of contemporary affectedness and might therefore inform the effective re-districting of democratic practices in more inclusive ways. The following three chapters challenge the objectivist, causal interpretation of the all affected principle that supports this type of geographical interpretation. Each chapter elaborates on aspects of the conceptual transformation of the all affected principle undertaken by thinkers working in a broad tradition of critical theories of deliberative democracy. I argue that that this transformation of the all affected principle opens a space for a form of inquiry focused on understanding the articulation of experiences of the injustice of domination through the processes of claims-making and public formation.

On Methodological Globalism

As already noted, the revival of interest in the all affected principle is associated with a heightened focus in democratic theory on issues of global justice and transnational democracy. The flowering of debates on these topics can be seen as an attempt by political theorists and political philosophers to engage with empirical social science debates, primarily those around the topic of globalization. Social science is presented as a field in which new social facts are revealed, to which political thought has to adjust. Social science is therefore restricted to a set of
merely descriptive tasks, so that critical insight is still reserved for styles of political theoretical and philosophical reflection.

One recurring reference point for debates on global issues in political theory and political philosophy is Ulrich Beck’s social theory of globalization, according to which reflexive action is an increasingly common feature of an ever widening range of social fields. Beck presents globalization as the deepening and extension of reflexive modernization, in a narrative that sees identities and solidarities becoming increasingly detached from forms of social integration once dependent on bounded territorialization. The breakout of geography in debates about topics such as cosmopolitanism or global justice is, then, a response to the specific forms of “methodological nationalism” that have shaped political theory and political philosophy. The social facts of economic globalization and global interconnectivity are seen to promise more expansive and pluralist solidarities and loyalties, ones that have the potential to serve as the basis for forms of autonomy that might be able to exert some democratic leverage over global economic processes. Discussions about globalization and democracy often presume that the global expansion of economic activities threatens, undermines, or reduces the capacities of states. In this way of framing issues, space is understood primarily by reference to a bordered conception of substantive places, exclusions, and enclosure. The teleological endpoint of forms of normative analysis that combine a distaste for expressions of nationalism with empirical claims about the decline of the nation-state as an agent of economic coordination and social integration is a persistent tendency toward what I will call “methodological globalism.”

The most explicit example of the idea of all affected interests being deployed to support a globalist image of political life is found in David Held’s theory of democracy. Held argues that it is often assumed that democracy is based primarily on the principle of consent. Elections are often seen as the mechanisms through which the voluntary approval of members of a bounded territorial state has been sought and secured. For Held, this model becomes problematic in the face of the facts of global interconnectedness. He argues that in an increasingly globalized world, people may be excluded from participation in decisions that affect them by the territorial organization of democratic politics. Held invokes the principle of all affected interests to call into question the legitimacy of territorial models of democracy: “Territorial boundaries demarcate the basis on which individuals are included in and excluded from participation in decisions affecting their lives (however limited the participation might be) but the outcomes of these decisions often ‘stretch’ beyond national frontiers.” Held appeals here to the all affected principle as a kind of counterfactual principle in order to develop a model of democracy that is centered on the principle of autonomy. According to this model, the primary democratic value is the idea that “people should enjoy equal rights and obligations in the political framework which shapes their lives and opportunities.”
Held’s reconfiguration of democratic theory around a series of scalar models—from city-state to nation-state to globalized world—is just one example of how the problem of establishing the identity of the people has come out of the shadows of modern democratic theory.\(^\text{16}\) Held’s argument exemplifies a more general theme in discussions of the political significance of globalization, which are characterized by the recurring claim that borders and boundaries have become problematic empirically and therefore normatively too. One could trace the same theme across debates about economic globalization, environmental futures, international migration, urbanization, and other issues in which the spatial and temporal assumptions of democratic theory have been challenged. And a prevalent image of space is at work in these debates. They often rely on an image of the enclosed spaces of nation-states or cultural communities, so that the almost natural-seeming disembedding force of spatial extension dubbed “globalization” is presented as facilitating the lifting of artificial restrictions and parochialisms associated with such arrangements.

The contrast between enclosure and extension that defines the methodological globalism of contemporary political thought was, ironically perhaps, given significant impetus by John Rawls’s consideration of whether the principles of distributive justice worked out in his *A Theory of Justice* should be applied beyond the confines of the nation-state.\(^\text{17}\) Some writers have sought to develop Rawls’s approach in this global direction despite his own reservations, arguing that it is indeed both plausible and imperative to extend and revise the scope of application of principles of egalitarian justice beyond the nation-state. Chief among those making the case for thinking in terms of a “global basic structure” is Thomas Pogge. Pogge’s argument with Rawls is, however, not just about the appropriate scope of application of principles of justice. He argues that Rawls’s way of reasoning about obligations to those less fortunate than oneself from the perspective of a potential helper is not actually appropriate to questions of global justice. What is required is an acknowledgement that “we” in the West stand in the position of supporters and beneficiaries of global institutional systems that contribute to the impoverishment and disenfranchisement of distant others.\(^\text{18}\) Pogge’s point is that questions of global responsibility are not merely matters of personal morality. They are primarily issues of equality and justice, and on these grounds he explicitly proposes an egalitarian law of the peoples, against Rawls’s objections about such a global vision.

Debates about global egalitarianism rely on a contrast between (national) spaces of enclosure and (global) spaces of extension. The same contrast can be found in related debates about whether the egalitarian aspirations asserted by advocates of global justice are consistent with equally compelling principles of democratic self-government. Sometimes critics of the egalitarian view invoke communitarian visions of the requirements of shared cultures or values against the egalitarian telos of a global image of political community.\(^\text{19}\) But the more compelling argument has a more democratic inflection. Seyla Benhabib suggests that
arguments in favor of global redistributive justice or global egalitarianism like those Pogge proposes tend to be monological in their mode of reasoning: they deduce principles applicable everywhere without considering their compatibility with principles of democratic self-governance in existing political communities. The universal egalitarian principles Pogge proposes, she suggests, are therefore not straightforwardly aligned with democratic principles. Nancy Fraser makes much the same argument against what she calls the “dogmas of egalitarianism,” pointing to the tendency to derive principles of global justice or global democracy from the facts of widely shared implication in globalized chains of affected interest. Fraser’s argument is that epistemological claims about vulnerability and interdependence cannot be settled by “normal science.” What is required is a wide-ranging practice of reasoning “in which argument shifts back and forth among different levels and kinds of questions, some evidentiary, some interpretative, some normative, some historical, some conceptual.”

For both Benhabib and Fraser, principles of justice must be interpreted dialogically, in the give-and-take of democratic forms of deliberation. They belong to a broader tradition of thinking in which theorizing dialogically about normative questions necessarily transforms theories of justice into theories of “democratic justice.” In this view, issues of justice are intimately related to patterns of inclusion in effective and legitimate democratic forums. The feminist critique of monological forms of reasoning in political thought is a key reference point for the discussion in the following chapters. It raises, of course, further questions about how to conceptualize practices of dialogue. But I will argue that the significance of this critique also lies in opening up to question the adequacy of a simple spatial contrast between closed boundaries and extensive spatialities of porosity, circulation, and flow.

As I argued in chapter 1, attending to the specific understandings of space at work in political theories is no doubt important. But my intention is not to dismiss these strands of thought for having a flawed spatial ontology. We should resist the temptation to ontologize about space just as much as we should resist the temptation to ontologize about the political. The shift to strongly dialogical forms of reasoning found in theories of democratic justice certainly challenges the conventions of theory formation characteristic of methodological globalism; it should also challenge the conventions of criticism found in traditions concerned with theorizing alternative political or spatial ontologies. With this thought in mind, we might reflect a little further about what all this talk of borders and boundaries is really doing for these traditions of thought. In doing so, we might notice, for example, that both Pogge, in his criticism of Rawls, and Benhabib and Fraser, in their criticism of egalitarianism theories, invoke spatial figures of enclosure and extension in the course of arguments about the forms of reasoning appropriate for addressing normative issues of justice and democracy.

Debates about the significance of globalization for the meaning and scope of
human rights, the meaning of cultural difference and pluralism, and the source of transnational democratic legitimacy are all transpositions of older debates between liberalism and communitarianism. These debates often focused on the degree to which cultural solidarity is a legitimate consideration in determining membership of a democratic community or whether universal rights of individuals as persons undermine this model of legitimacy. The explicit spatialization of debates about issues of membership, exclusion, mobility, and distanciation in determining the meaning of rights and obligations should not, however, be seen simply as a “scaling-up” of those earlier debates over liberalism and communitarianism. In fact, the spatial grammar in and through which these issues are now discussed serves as the medium for a recurrent methodological operation undertaken by democratic theorists. Across these debates, globalization is the preconstructed real-world referent that justifies what Jean Cohen calls the “disaggregation” of key concepts of democratic theory. In Cohen’s own work, for example, she invokes globalization to question the assumption “that the various dimensions of the citizenship principle must be aggregated into a uniform bundle of rights and protected by the same political instance: the national state.” Cohen in turn calls for “the partial disaggregation of the various components of the citizenship principle.” She suggests that the ideal of citizenship actually has three components: a political principle of democracy, a juridical status of legal personhood, and forms of membership. These need to be detached from the ideal of exclusive state sovereignty in favor of “a disaggregated model of citizenship.”

One can find the same procedure of conceptual disaggregation at work across a number of debates in which political theorists have taken up explicitly geographical themes. Globalization serves as a kind of preconstructed fact, against which democratic theorists refine key analytical distinctions. Various examples of this operation of conceptual disaggregation will be considered in this and the next two chapters. Each chapter traces different ways in which critical theorists of democracy elaborate on issues of political agency and the legitimate exercise of institutionalized power. Rather than supposing that the pressing task is to critique the adequacy of the spatial concepts they deploy, I propose that the best way to proceed is by asking what problems are made visible through the explicit spatial framing of democratic dilemmas. In particular, I will show that a central theme disclosed by the invocation of spatial figures is the recurring problem of how to theorize the relationship between the “influence” generated by social movements in the public sphere and the institutionalized “exercise” of power. The distinction between exercising and influencing power captures the tension between arguments that democracy refers to forms of governance and those that tend to locate the force of democratization more squarely beyond state forms, in movements and public spheres. Joshua Cohen and Archon Fung refine this tension more tightly, identifying a fundamental difference between two approaches to radical democracy: one that emphasizes the goal of broadening participation, but with an
implicit acknowledgement of attenuated effects on the exercise of power, and one that focuses on improving the quality of deliberative participation and enhanced impact. This distinction cuts across the deliberative versus agonistic contrast—we will see that John Dryzek, for example, shares with Jacques Rancière a strong preference for democracy as a contestatory practice and that Nancy Fraser shares with Chantal Mouffe a strong commitment to the need for institutions with authoritative decision-making power.

In order to illustrate the way in which the breakout of geography in political thought serves as the occasion to pick apart dimensions of previously unitary concepts and how this in turn reorders how influencing and exercising democratic power is conceptualized, I want to consider the example of Habermas’s account of the “postnational constellation.” The animating problem in this account is the determination of the degree to which “the normative heritage of the democratic constitutional state is to function as a brake on the at present unfettered dynamic of globalized capitalist production.” Habermas here presents globalization as an external force impinging on the nation-state. Accordingly, his formulation of postnational democratic legitimacy is framed in terms of the possibilities of expanded political forms being able “to catch up with the forces of a globalized economy.”

Habermas’s discussion of the postnational constellation does not simply concern matters of spatial scale. It is developed against the background of his worry about organic images of community, and this is evident not least in his reframing of democratic legitimacy with reference to the all affected principle. The idea of the postnational constellation is a response to the question of whether the demos of popular sovereignty must be rooted in an ethnically homogenous community. This is also the question at stake in Habermas’s broader concern with developing a critical theory equal to the development of phenomena such as the European Union, international human rights law, and global protocols of geopolitical governance. The explicit issue at stake in his discussion of democratic legitimacy is how to square principles of popular sovereignty with equally compelling principles of individual human rights. But it is also shaped by Habermas’s long-standing engagement with the unhappy legacy of Carl Schmitt’s thought about relations between nations, democracy, and the rule of law at the international scale.

Habermas’s concern is, then, to detach republican political thought from its nationalist heritage. In arguing against the claim that the demos of citizens must be modeled on the image of a homogenous, prepolitical community, Habermas makes a strong claim that the modern nation-state is already based on an abstract form of social integration through which human rights and democracy have been institutionalized. Whereas Schmitt contrasts the organic substance and harmony of the people with the empty abstraction of humanity, Habermas affirms that an element of abstraction has always inhered in national modes of solidarity. What
he sees as distinctive about the postnational constellation is that these abstract
relationships of solidarity are now no longer necessarily contained within the
boundaries of national territories. He proposes that the development of future
constellations of democracy simply requires “a further abstractive step”: “The hu-
man population has long since coalesced into an unwilling community of shared
risk. Under this pressure, it is thus quite plausible that the great, historically mo-
mentous dynamic of abstraction from local, to dynastic, to national to democratic
consciousness would take one more step forward.”

What is at stake in Habermas’s claim here—about the need for a further ab-
stractive step—is not simply the scaling-up of national models of democratic
citizenship. He is using the figure of the postnational to fundamentally reconfig-
ure the meaning of democratic legitimacy. Habermas argues that his deliberative
account of democratic legitimacy is better suited to the analysis of postnational
forms of democracy because, compared to models of democracy based on the
norm of the nation-state, it affirms “a less demanding basis of legitimacy.” The
importance of Habermas’s explicit rejection of the image of “the concrete embod-
iment of the sovereign will” lies not just in an assertion about the changing scales
at which democratic politics is possible and required. More than this, Habermas’s
rejection of this image entails the detachment of democratic legitimacy from the
ideal of embodying the singular will of all. He instead reformulates legitimacy in
terms of an ideal of the deliberation of all.38 Legitimacy is thereby defined much
more loosely, at least when it comes to the assumed link between opinion forma-
tion and decisive will formation. On the other hand, it is defined more stringently
insofar as normatively acceptable decisions are those that meet with the agree-
ment of all the affected parties, who should have the opportunity of subjecting
them to critical debate and discussion.

In fundamental respects, then, Habermas uses the geographical figure of the
postnational constellation to present an image of democracy in which the influ-
ence generated in civil society and the public sphere is only weakly articulated
with formalized centers of the exercise of power. And this also implies a more con-
testatory understanding of democracy, understood as a process of claims-making,
than is often ascribed to Habermas.

Reading Habermas with a view to the spatial grammar of his account of the
postnational constellation—in the sense in which I defined that idea in chapter 1,
as a means of alerting us to what conceptual issues are at stake in recourse to geo-
graphical figures—allows us to see that the proliferation of geographical concerns
in political thought is an index of the problem of how to locate the source and
meaning of democratic legitimacy. In the rest of this chapter I will focus on how
the translation of the problem of democratic legitimacy into a conceptual regis-
ter that emphasizes problem solving through communicative action should also
change how all-affectedness is understood as a geographical idea. In this transla-
tion, the all affected principle is transformed from a narrowly causal standard into
an expansively communicative and affective register of action. And, in turn, this transformation begins to bring into view the centrality of issues of claims-making in the emergence of democratic politics, a vital preliminary to grasping the meaning of domination and injustice to be addressed in subsequent chapters.

**Having and Taking an Interest**

We have seen that Habermas seeks to shift the meaning of democratic legitimacy in critical theory away from an image of the will of all and toward an image in which popular sovereignty is thoroughly desubstantialized—disembodied—and made dependent on “subjectless flows” of communication. This loosening of legitimacy criteria both depends on the all affected norm and also transforms its meanings in fundamental ways. To understand the significance of Habermas’s translation of affectedness into a register of communicative action, it is important to appreciate how this idea has been used traditionally and in turn how and why it has been revived in democratic theory more recently.

In debates in political theory, the principle of all affected interests is usually invoked in at least one of three ways. First, it is often used to diagnose a problem with existing arrangements or theories. It is implicitly invoked in this way in debates about global democracy, immigration, and environmental politics: as a way of opening up to scrutiny models of nation-state democracy. Second, the all affected principle is sometimes invoked as a norm that can actually help generate boundaries, a task for which it might actually be poorly suited. And finally, it is often invoked to justify boundaries, a usage that implies that theorists should adopt the role of adjudicating membership of the demos. The question at stake in these varied usages is what political theory can be expected to do, not least the degree to which it is a legislative practice capable of deciding contentious political matters. I propose an alternative approach that is neither legislative nor conventionally critical. It seeks to make analytical use of the core idea of the principle of all affected interests by directing inquiry to analysis of how claims of injustice can be thought of as constitutive of democratic politics.

The claim that the all affected principle can function as a norm of democratic legitimacy often faces objections on the grounds that it is impractical, incoherent, and leads to the problem of infinite regress (an objection that presumes that the principle should indeed be used to decide on questions of membership or the scope of decision making). The place to start to develop the alternative approach is by recasting the objections usually raised against the application of the all affected principle as a set of questions that face any democratic theory. In this spirit, Archon Fung has identified three recurring questions raised by the intuitive sense that individuals “should be able to influence decisions that affect their interests”: “What kinds of decisions and decision-making entities are regulated by the prin-
One or more of these three questions—about decisions, interests, and influence—is often invoked rhetorically to dismiss the relevance of the principle of all affected interests, because each contains an element of arbitrariness in its resolution. Fung’s purpose in raising them is to develop a set of critical questions with which to address settled understandings of the decisions, interests, and influence through which democracy is institutionalized. This is the first step in our reconstruction of the idea of all-affectedness—thinking of it not as a principle to be applied but as a rule of thumb guide to further critical inquiry.

Ian Shapiro’s argument for the importance of the all affected principle to a theory of democratic justice helps to clarify the direction of analysis that Fung’s three questions point toward. In particular, it helps to make sense of the element of arbitrariness implied in each aspect—decisions, interests, and influence. Shapiro’s ambition is to extend democratic principles to areas such as the family, everyday life, and work. No single decision rule is appropriate for all of these areas, he argues, but there is “a general constraint for thinking about decision rules.” This is the idea that “everyone affected by the operation of a particular domain of civil society should be presumed to have a say in its governance.” This idea follows from “the root democratic idea that the people appropriately rule themselves.” Shapiro describes the core idea of his account of democratic justice as “a causally based notion of having an affected interest.” He therefore interprets what he calls “the idea of affected interest” as “a causally based principle of legitimation”: “The right to participate comes from one’s having an interest that can be expected to be affected by the particular collective action in question.”

Shapiro’s account of democratic justice combines two related ideas, one of which is traditionally given more attention than the other. The idea of inclusive participation is well established in theories of democracy, not least in discussions of the all affected principle. But the status of opposition is much less well developed in democratic theory. And it is this second emphasis that makes Shapiro’s account of all-affectedness most distinctive. He introduces a dimension of conflict and contestation into the center of a debate that is often treated merely as a matter of establishing a normative ideal of inclusiveness. Shapiro’s argument is that both liberal and communitarian theories of democracy presume that membership in a relevant community has priority over questions of affectedness when it comes to determining the identity of the demos. He suggests that this idea follows from a contractualist way of thinking, rather than from thinking of issues of democratic justice by reference to power relations. The emphasis on power as the key variable in determining affectedness is the crucial contribution of Shapiro’s discussion of the principle: “The causal principle of affected interests suggests that ideally the structure of decision rules should follow the contours of power relationships, not that of memberships or citizenships: if you are affected by the results, you are...
Shapiro acknowledges the difficulties that this model faces, including difficulties “in establishing who is affected how much by a particular decision and who is to determine which claims about being affected should be accepted.” But he also points out that membership-based arguments are prone to the same issues of definition as causally based arguments.

For Shapiro, the reorientation of democratic theory around the idea of affected interests follows from the distinctive qualities of contemporary global living: “In today’s world, actions and decisions in one part of the globe can be consequential for millions of lives thousands of miles away.” But Shapiro presents the idea of affected interest as a causal principle, not to argue for a single global governance structure but as a way to differentiate those whose basic interests are more strongly affected by an issue from those less affected. In this respect, Shapiro’s argument is one example of a broader strand of thought that seeks to displace territorially embedded, membership-based models of popular sovereignty with a more fluid vision of overlapping modes of participation that operate decision by decision and in which “different groups of persons are sovereign over different classes of decision.”

Using the idea of affected interests enables Shapiro to argue for the need to disaggregate popular sovereignty, rejecting membership “as an all-or-nothing decision-making trump.” Rather, he endorses the idea that inclusion in democratic activity “is best defined activity by activity, decision by decision.”

While Shapiro may appear at first to be proposing a highly expansive interpretation of the idea of all affected interests, he actually introduces a principle of restriction by defining the idea of interests in a particular way. He points out that the presumption of inclusion is not always conclusive, nor does everyone necessarily have a right to their point of view being accorded equal weight: “There are often, though not always, good reasons for granting outsiders to a domain (who may be subject to external effects of decisions made within it) less of a say than insiders concerning its governance. Even within a domain there may be compelling reasons to distribute governing authority unequally, and perhaps even to disenfranchise some participants in some circumstances.” He continues, “Those whose basic interests are most vitally affected by a particular decision have the strongest claim to a say in its making.” Shapiro’s argument here reflects a broader feature of treatments of the all affected principle in democratic theory. There is a tendency to fall back on a strongly objectivist notion of interests to contain the more expansive implications of the principle. For example, Robert Goodin draws a sharp distinction between merely taking an interest in something and having an interest to determine the application of the all affected idea. This sort of distinction seems necessary to sustain the causal interpretation of the principle of all affected interests, whether it is invoked in a critical spirit, as in the case of Shapiro, or whether it is used negatively to argue against more expansive models of democracy.

In centering his account of the idea of affected interests around the issue of
power, Shapiro shifts analytical attention away from trying to determine membership and provides a crucial affirmation of the contested dynamics through which questions of affectedness arise. However, the kind of causal account developed by Shapiro raises questions of its own. First, there are good reasons to question whether the idea of all affected interests can be treated as a causal principle in the strong sense he proposes—determining the scope of consequences and decisions might be more complex than the causal argument leads us to suppose. Second, there is the question of whether it should be treated as a causal principle in the first place. Treating affectedness as a causal principle, which is after all also what lends the all affected idea its apparently exemplary qualities as a geographical notion, might well misconstrue what is most radical about the idea in the first place. In Shapiro’s case, the opening up enabled by asserting that all-affectedness trumps membership is promptly closed down by the presupposition that affected interests can be objectively determined. I argue below that the affected interests idea shouldn’t be treated as a causal principle, and that understanding why helps us to appreciate why it can’t be applied to objectively discriminate between types of interest on a decision-by-decision basis.

We can see, then, that the long-standing problems with the idea of all-affectedness continue to bedevil Shapiro’s causal interpretation. Carol Gould identifies two recurring difficulties with the all affected principle as a guide for thinking about democracy, both of which help to clarify what is of most value in Shapiro’s revision of the idea. The first difficulty is the impossibility of actually specifying who is affected by a course of action, because of the play of unintended consequences. And the second difficulty arises from the fact that different actors are likely to be differentially affected by any given decision.53 Shapiro tends to make a virtue out of the second difficulty, suggesting that it is the basis for a model of decision-by-decision democratic participation. Gould’s own development of “interactive democracy” seeks to address these difficulties by working up a notion of being “importantly affected” by decisions, where this is taken to involve people’s ability to fulfill their basic human rights.54 Like Shapiro, then, she uses the fact of being differentially affected to qualify what is ostensibly an expansive principle of inclusion. But in both of their cases, this move succeeds only in erasing from view the more difficult issue, the first of Gould’s two difficulties—the question of whether a strongly causal interpretation of the all affected principle can be sustained not only empirically but also theoretically.

The recurring difficulties that can be found in revisionist accounts of the all affected principle as radical as those of Shapiro and Gould require us to consider more carefully just what kind of principle the principle of all affected interests actually is. This requirement is underlined when we consider how the difficulties that Gould identifies are sometimes associated with proposals that are far from obviously democratic in substance. For one thing, the view that the all affected principle requires a new constituency for each decision, recommended by Shapiro
as a virtue of the causal interpretation against the chauvinisms and closures of membership-based citizenship, also implies that citizenship rights would not be predictable and stable over time. Territorially defined access to equal rights, which is not necessarily the same as culturally defined membership, is a way of ensuring that political rights are not rendered contingent on determinations of valid interests. To put it another way, territorially defined rights function as a means of establishing the security of rights, which is a principle not to be lightly discarded.

The idea that all-affectedness can determine those who are directly affected by actions is therefore not as obviously democratic as it might sound. The appeal to the principle to support a human rights centered account of democracy of the sort Gould develops, for example, might well depend on a rather thin conception of the conditions of democratic politics. As Robyn Eckersley points out, this sort of interpretation “dispenses with the whole idea of community, replacing it with a set of abstract individuals who enforce their rights under a global law.” In the human rights interpretation, the idea of all-affectedness can be used to justify a mode of self-rule that completely circumvents problems of participation in the collective life of a community: “Abstract, legally mediated social integration replaces concrete social interaction in the demos.” This view is perhaps best exemplified by David Held’s democratic theory. When interpreted in this way, the idea of all-affectedness can easily be used as a principle of exclusion by “preventing those who are merely concerned (as distinct from affected) from engaging in democratic politics.”

Here I return to the double sense of both affecting and being affected that I have suggested is at work in discussions of the all affected principle in democratic theory. The interpretation that I am seeking to develop rests on recognizing a further distinction that Eckersley alludes to within the idea of being affected. To appropriate Goodin’s terms, I distinguish between a causal sense of having an interest and a more affective sense of taking an interest. As we have seen, being concerned with a matter or being interested in it is often considered an unsatisfactory ground on which to justify democratic inclusion. Making a categorical distinction between these two senses of being affected is crucial to sustaining the strongly causal, objectivist interpretation of the all affected principle. The distinction might well be important, but we should interpret it less prescriptively, and furthermore, the binary evaluation of the dimensions might well need to be deconstructed.

Skeptical voices about the democratic credentials of the all affected principle should actually give us pause before accepting the causal interpretation of the idea that underwrites the geographical resonance of these debates. The most significant contribution of Shapiro’s revival of the all affected idea is the part it plays in his reorientation of democratic theory around issues of power, processes of claims-making, and practices of contestation and opposition. But there is no reason to suppose that demands for justice are only articulated by those immediately affected by unjust decisions or by those on the wrong end of inequities. To suppose
that they seem to imply that political action is restricted to motivations of self-interest and thereby disallow any sense of action undertaken through solidarity, responsibility, or concern for the public good. Shapiro's strongly objectivist interpretation of the all affected idea, with its emphasis on basic interests and causal reasoning, closes off consideration of the combination of direct implication and indirect motivation that we might well suppose shapes political mobilizations. To keep this combination of rationalities of action in view, we need to allow that having an interest and taking an interest—being causally affected and being moved to act—are not so easily separated as is sometimes supposed.

One place to start in freeing the idea of all-affectedness from an overly causal interpretation, an interpretation that maintains the focus of analytical attention on objectively determining who is to be included in a decision procedure, is with John Dewey's account of the formation of the democratic public as an expanding network of problem-solving communities. Dewey's notion of publicness plays an important background role in various stands of deliberative democratic theory. Dewey suggests that the conditions for a new type of public life could be discerned in the spatial and temporal extension of consequences associated with the complex integration of modern capitalism. Herein, he argues, lies the potential for the enlargement of people's perception of being part of wider communities of interest. Dewey proposed that modern communications technologies enable people to develop "more numerous and varied points of shared common interests" and facilitate "freer interaction between social groups." In Dewey's account, public formation depends on shared and contested judgments about both who is directly affected and, crucially, who is indirectly implicated in chains of extended consequences. Neither of these aspects, for Dewey, is straightforwardly subject to "objective" calculation. They are matters of deliberative inquiry.

Dewey argues that the complexity of modern economic and social integration over time and space means that people cannot accurately trace the contours of their own implication in distanced and distributed networks of actions and consequences. But they do become sensitized to the idea that they are indeed implicated in some way. The expansion of people's imaginative horizons is the mechanism for the transformation of functionally integrated systems into publics. This transformation depends on a capacity to imagine one's place in systems of widely distributed and indirect consequences. In this account a democratic public turns out not to be composed only of all those directly affected by the consequences of actions. A public emerges only when "the perception of consequences are projected in important ways beyond the persons and associations directly concerned in them."

Once we countenance the idea that publics emerge through concerted caring for "the extensive and enduring indirect consequences of transactions between persons" along the lines Dewey proposes, then the number and location of those affected by complex chains of action and consequence expands beyond the scope
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of easy comprehension. The fundamental innovation of Dewey’s account is the idea that public action depends on the capacity of actors to respond to events that neither directly affect them nor are immediately affected by them.

The importance of Dewey’s conceptualization of democratic public formation lies, then, in allowing us to see that the notion of all affected interests is not best thought of as a causal principle. In Dewey’s formulation, the causal interpretation of affected interests might help to determine the object of matters of public concern: publics form around the shared concern to intervene and “take care of” extensive systems of action and their indirect consequences. But the emergence of a public as a subject of collective action does not follow automatically from the cognitive apprehension of chains of cause and effect. Rather, the extension of consequences over space and time serves as the vector through which people learn to abstract themselves from their own perspectives. In short, for Dewey, a public is primarily an imaginative entity.

Dewey helps us further clarify the different aspects of affectedness I have already alluded to in this chapter. Not the least of his contributions is to differentiate between two forms of interest generated by “conjoint” action and its consequences—the interests of those directly engaged and implicated in such actions and the interests of those only indirectly involved and implicated. Crucially, as we have seen, Dewey accords primacy to the latter type of interest in accounting for the emergence of democratic publicness. This emphasis on the apprehension of indirect implication in extended and enduring consequences supports the refinement of the twofold distinction between being affected and affecting. We can split the aspect of being affected in two, so that we can distinguish having an interest in an issue from taking an interest in one. The latter sense directs attention to capacities for acknowledgment, imagination, identification, and recognition. The purpose in splitting the sense of being affected in this way is not, though, to distinguish between groups of people affected by decisions in different ways. It is to distinguish aspects of being affected. Alongside these two aspects of being affected, we can place a third dimension, the aspect of affecting, of having agency or the capacity to act in concert. I present this more complex, threefold sense of the aspects of affectedness in a Deweyan spirit, as a framework for further inquiry. It suggests a more nuanced approach to investigating the geographies of emergent democratic politics than is found in either ontological interpretations of the political or in democratic theory marked by an overinvestment in methodological globalism.

In order to further specify what is at stake in emphasizing the necessarily imaginative formation of what we might now call communities of affected interest, and the degree to which this process depends on the cultivation of a capacity for abstraction from objectively determinate conditions, in the next section I return to how the idea of all affected interests is transformed in the democratic theory of communicative action inaugurated by Habermas. Habermas’s reconstruction
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of the norm of all-affectedness is a central reference point for the geographical turn in critical theories of democracy more generally. It relies on a pragmatist understanding in which the emergence of democratic action is a response to problematic situations that require the generation and regulation of collective power.65 I will argue that fully appreciating the significance of the reconstruction of this norm actually requires a reconsideration of the globalist imagination underwriting debates about deliberative democracy.

Reasonable Universalisms

Contemporary debates about the geographical aspects of democracy often turn on a tension between two dimensions of democratic inclusion: a dimension of belongingness, based on a communitarian principle of membership, and a more cosmopolitan principle of affectedness.66 Habermas’s development of a critical theory of democracy, based on a social theory of action and a normative theory of discourse ethics, seeks to reconcile and overcome the back-and-forth between these two positions. If followed through to its logical end point, Habermas’s reconstruction of the idea of all-affectedness in the vocabulary of a theory of communicative action should actually transform how we conceptualize the geographies of democratic politics. It does so by drawing back into view the importance of situated contexts of contestation and communication, as well as extensive networks for exercising and influencing power.

The relevance of Habermas’s work to our discussion of the principle of all affected interests lies in how his work loosens the sense of interests as objective or real that subsists in many contemporary accounts of all affected interests. In the classic model associated with the Frankfurt School, critical theory is meant to enable objective or real interests to be established among agents.67 Habermas once provided his own refinement to this model, distinguishing between technical-cognitive interests, practical interests, and emancipatory interests, suggesting that these are mapped onto empirical-analytic sciences, historical-hermeneutic sciences, and critical theory.68 His later theory of communicative action and his discourse-theoretic reconstruction of democratic legitimacy effectively subordinate the determination of interests to an intersubjective mode of assessment.69

The transformation of the idea of all-affectedness in Habermas’s democratic theory rests on the claim that the conditions of possibility for rational agreement can be found in the dimensions of everyday action. Habermas claims that his discourse theory of legitimacy is postmetaphysical. a claim that has a precise meaning in his thought: “Postmetaphysical thinking turns its back on strong ontological conceptions that deduce normativity entirely from the constitution of being or of subjectivity.” In contrast to the sort of epistemological or ontological
one-upmanship that seeks after infallible foundations, Habermas claims to develop an interpretation that “derives a normative content from the practice of argumentation on which we always depend in situations of uncertainty, not only in the role of philosophers or scientists, but already in everyday communicative practice when the disruption of routines leads us to reflect momentarily in an attempt to reassure ourselves of our well-founded expectations.” This postmetaphysical approach assumes that there are unavoidable pragmatic presuppositions implicit in the coordination of social activities and that these are best modeled on argumentative practice. Habermas’s notion of “ideal speech situation” is not, in this understanding, meant to stand as a metaphysical foundation for democratic consensus. It is the name Habermas gives to the practical orientation to understanding that he claims is immanent in social interaction and from which a stronger argument about the possibility of rational agreement for both moral argumentation and justice is constructed.

Habermas’s reconstruction of democratic legitimacy therefore rests on a social theory of communicative action in which the idealizing presuppositions of everyday practices are formally elaborated by drawing on various resources from fields such as linguistics, psychology, and sociology. There are two important things to note about this way of developing democratic theory. First, it takes ideals to be immanent to social practice, not transcendent norms applied from the outside. Second, it is in important respects a fallibilistic account, insofar as it depends on the authority of fields of empirical social inquiry, and is therefore open to revision and criticism in the terms of those fields. For Habermas, philosophy can no longer reasonably suppose that it can escape this fallibilistic reference point.

These twin commitments lead Habermas to a distinctive account of the universality of democratic criteria. He presents a contemporary version of the Kantian categorical imperative, according to which one should act only for reasons that one can will to become universal principles. But Habermas argues that there is no need to imagine a form of reason that can transcend its own context in order to maintain such a universalizing perspective. In making this claim, he notes that criticisms of universalism often appeal to an image of context as closed and all-encompassing. For Habermas, agreement is an accomplishment achieved through an orientation to universality understood first and foremost as a horizon, not a ground or foundation.

In elaborating on his discourse-theoretic account of democratic legitimacy, Habermas is keen to differentiate his model of universalizability from that developed by John Rawls in his famous account of the “original position.” Rawls’s procedure proposes that the validity of reasons is determined monologically from a position of willful ignorance: “Like Kant, Rawls operationalizes the standpoint of impartiality in such a way that every individual can undertake to justify basic norms on his own. The same applies for the moral philosopher himself.” Habermas suggests that Rawls’s ideal procedure presupposes that the philosopher is an
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expert qualified to construct a theory of justice. He disavows this position and instead claims that he is reconstructing principles implicit in action and doing so as a participant in a process of argumentative opinion formation. For Habermas, the universalization built into ideals of democratic legitimacy is not to be established monologically “in the form of a hypothetical process of argumentation occurring in the individual mind.”

By redefining universality as a horizon approached through intersubjective engagement with the demands and reasons of others, Habermas is led to the position that the universalizability of maxims actually requires that “just those norms deserve to be valid that could meet with the approval of those potentially affected, insofar as the latter participate in rational discourses.” He argues that this principle requires a revised notion of the impartial mode of judgment: “True impartiality pertains only to that standpoint from which one can generalize precisely those norms that can count on universal assent because they perceptibly embody an interest common to all-affected. It is these norms that deserve intersubjective recognition.” Impartiality here is not a view from nowhere. Rather, in another echo of Arendt’s account of representative thinking, the impartiality of judgment “is expressed in a principle that constrains all-affected to adopt the perspectives of all others in the balancing of interests.”

Habermas’s dialogical reformulation of affectedness as the horizon of universalization is indebted to George Herbert Mead’s account of self-formation through role taking in communicative interaction. The significance of American pragmatism, for Habermas, is that it “made insight into what is in each case equally good for all parties contingent on reciprocal perspective taking.” He takes from Mead the idea that impartiality is attained not by turning away from contexts of interaction and abandoning the perspective of participants but by extending the perspectives of individual participants in a universal direction: “Each of us must be able to place himself in the situation of all those who would be affected by the performance of a problematic action or the adoption of a questionable norm. What G. H. Mead recommends with his notion of ideal role taking cannot be performed privately by each individual but must be practiced by us collectively as participants in a public discourse.” Habermas uses Mead’s account of self-reflective subjectivity through the adoption of a second-person perspective to underwrite his own discursive concept of rationality, understood as a practice embodied in argumentative practices. Habermas’s version of egalitarian universalism therefore involves “a decentering of one’s own perspective,” adopting an attitude that “demands that one relativize one’s own views to the interpretative perspectives of equally situated and equally entitled others.” In this model of universalism as reciprocal perspective taking, the idea of the universal is rendered thoroughly dependent on processes of dialogic engagement with other affected actors.

This pragmatist understanding of universalism informs Habermas’s inflection of the all-affected idea into the so-called discourse principle of democratic le-
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gitimacy, according to which “just those actions are valid to which all possibly affected persons could agree as participants in rational discourses.” Habermas claims that in his understanding the principle “reflects those symmetrical relations of recognition built into communicatively structured forms of life in general.” Habermas’s reconstruction of democratic legitimacy on the basis of an intersubjective theory of discourse ethics therefore effectively translates the idea of all affected interests into a communicative norm, so that the identity of those affected is subordinated to the principle of meeting with the approval of participants in practical discourse. The discursive notion of legitimacy rests on the image of a cooperative process of argumentation that respects individuals’ right to judge what is in their own interests, on the condition that they are willing to subject the description of their own interests to criticism by others: “Needs and wants are interpreted in the light of cultural values. Since cultural values are always components of intersubjectively shared traditions, the revision of the values used to interpret needs and wants cannot be a matter for individuals to handle monologically.”

To reiterate, the importance of Habermas’s work for my own argument lies in his transformation of the idea of all-affectedness into a thoroughly intersubjective norm of participation in communicative practices. His account of democratic legitimacy transforms the all affected idea from a concept of objectively definable interests into an emergent principle that arises from intersubjectively arrived at understandings and agreements. In elaborating on the idea that action norms are valid insofar as “all possible affected persons” agree to them in rational discourse, Habermas says “I include among ‘those affected’ (or involved) anyone whose interests are touched by the foreseeable consequences of a general practice regulated by the norms at issue.” And this reconstruction of the all affected principle is potentially highly expansive in its implications for understanding the potential scope of democratic decision making.

The discursive model of democratic legitimacy developed by Habermas should be understood primarily as providing a stringent principle of critique, one in which questions of all-affectedness take center stage in communicative practices of argument and justification: “‘Discursive’ procedures make egalitarian decisions dependent on prior argumentation (only justified decisions are accepted); they are inclusive (all-affected parties can participate); and they compel the participants to adopt each other’s perspectives (a fair assessment of all-affected parties is possible).” As already noted, this account of democratic legitimacy is tied to a claim that the conditions for rational agreement are immanent in the orientation toward understanding that underwrites everyday forms of interaction. It is this emphasis on consensus as a deep background condition that most often arouses the suspicion of critics from within the same tradition of critical theory to which Habermas belongs. Part of the suspicion is based on an empirical issue about how
deliberation actually works. But it also arises from a concern that Habermas holds to an excessively rationalistic model of consensual agreement.

In response to the latter concern, Seyla Benhabib seeks to rid critical theory of the “excessively rationalistic formulations” of Habermas’s revisionary account of democratic legitimacy. Benhabib’s revision of the discourse-theoretic view of universalism opens the way much more decisively than does Habermas’s for the appreciation of the intimate relations between being causally affected and being moved to act that is central to the reconstruction of the principle of all affected interests in critical theories of democracy. She argues for a fundamental shift away from a legislative notion of rationality and toward “interactive rationality,” a notion that in turn informs a principle of “interactive universalism.” This is a form of universalism that takes difference and conflict as “as a starting point for reflection and action.” Benhabib therefore separates the notion of universalizability at the core of Habermas’s discourse ethics, which rests on the idea of the reversal of perspectives and the willingness to take others’ points of view, from the image of consensus as the final arbiter in disputes. She loosens this latter image as the condition of legitimacy and proposes instead the idea of democratic legitimacy as “reasonable agreement in an open-ended conversation.” According to Benhabib, this formula provides a discourse principle of democratic legitimacy “which enjoins that all those affected by the consequences of the adoption of a norm have a say in its articulation.”

The central theme of Benhabib’s revision of Habermas’s discourse ethics is the emphasis on “the capacity to reverse perspectives in practical disputes in general and the ability to reason from the standpoint of others involved.” Benhabib draws here not just on Mead but also on Arendt’s sense of political discourse as a scene of agonism in which narratives and storytelling are a primary means for enlarging participants’ imaginative perspectives. Benhabib’s revision of Habermas’s account of discourse ethics therefore transforms how we should understand the practice of argument. Rather than presenting argument as a means of settling disputes through the force of better reasons, we might instead emphasize a more resolutely pragmatist understanding of argument as a form of inquiry open to pluralism, dynamism, and revision. In turn, this pragmatist understanding implies a concern not just with rational argument but also with a wide variety of modes of expression—or “genres of reasoning”—such as storytelling, testimony, and witness.

Benhabib’s notion of the “reversibility of perspectives” is indebted to Arendt’s account of political thought as a form of “representative thinking,” modeled, as we have seen, on Kant’s image of judgment depending on the cultivation of “enlarged mentality.” Arendt claims, “I form an opinion by considering a given issue from different viewpoints, by making present to my mind the standpoints of those who are absent; that is, I represent them.” Benhabib uses this image to inform a concept of universalizability based on the capacity to reverse perspectives with others.
It is an idea that gives priority to “the willingness to reason from the others’ point of view, and the sensitivity to hear their voice.” Rather than recommending putting oneself in the place of others in a form of empathetic imperialism, Benhabib places the emphasis on listening to the voices of others. She thereby shifts the image of representative thinking decisively away from any lingering association with monological reasoning.

Benhabib’s account of democratic legitimacy as an ongoing search for reasonable agreement, involving a dialogical switching of perspective and listening, depends in turn on a distinction between two models of Self-Other relations, drawing on broader philosophical divisions between values of autonomy and dependence, justice and care, universality and particularity. The idea of the “generalized other” refers to an actor with equal rights, obligations, entitlements, respect, and duties. It is an abstract individualized figure, detached from the particularities of common life. The “concrete other” is an individual with specific histories, embedded in relations of sharing, responsibility, and feelings of love, care, and sympathy. These two figures are not incompatible—they are meant to draw into view two aspects of deliberation oriented toward reasonable agreements. Benhabib’s concept of interactive universalism holds that every generalized other is also a concrete other. Democratic deliberation involves practices of “actual dialogue among actual selves who are both ‘generalized others,’ considered as equal moral agents, and ‘concrete others,’ that is individuals with irreducible differences.”

Benhabib’s notion of the concrete other is central to an argument for a “situated universalism,” as distinct from a notion of universality that is a background set of presuppositions to be articulated by the expert theorist. Situated universalism arises from claims and counterclaims concerning the needs and motivations of participants.

The distinction between general and concrete other suggests a doubled image of democratic conversation about shared interests, one that disallows any treatment of reason and feeling as separate realms. In turn, it disallows the reification of justice and care as wholly opposed principles. In important respects, the distinction provides Benhabib with the means to redress the lack of passion in Arendt’s account of imaginative perspective taking. In place of Arendt’s deep suspicion of empathy and compassion, Benhabib makes the specific needs, interests, and emotions of individuals central to the process of interactive universalism, rather than depicting them as a threat to rational consensus. Benhabib’s argument therefore presupposes that what motivates people politically is a set of concerns that have as much to do with relations with others as with material concerns of work, money, or power. In her view, “the phenomenology of our moral experience” requires an approach that is able to acknowledge the salience of the personal domain in the articulation of moral issues in the public realm.

I argued earlier in this chapter that Habermas’s account of deliberative democracy seeks to detach the idea of legitimate decisions from an image of the singular
will of an organically whole people. Benhabib significantly revises Habermas's stringent model of argumentation as the site of rational universalization. She emphasizes the agonistic conditions of situated encounters as well as the plural modes of expression through which matters of common concern are debated. In the work of both, the translation of all-affectedness into a deliberative norm displaces issues of legitimacy into a consideration of the communicative processes by which judgments, interests, opinions, and preferences are formed, tested, abandoned, adapted, and revised. This view of democratic legitimacy places the emphasis on the agency of social movements, nongovernmental organizations, and advocacy coalitions in lubricating the dispersed communicative fields through which globalized power is presumed to function—by raising issues, articulating claims, and facilitating dialogues. The emphasis on these forms of mediated agency indicates that while the presentation of all-affectedness as a deliberative phenomenon certainly supplants one set of assumptions about the organic unity of the demos, it does so only to open up a new set of problems about the legitimacy of the representative claims made by the multiple agents of democratic practice.

**Extending Representative Thinking**

I have argued, with a little help from John Dewey and Seyla Benhabib, that Habermas’s theory of communicative action lifts the restriction on referring the all-affected principle only to those who have objectively identifiable interests in an issue. It does so by shifting the attention away from the who of affected communities toward a series of questions about the how of participation. The shift is central to moving from a focus on the will of all to the deliberation of all that we have already seen is at the core of deliberative theories of radical democracy. But I have suggested that this opens up further questions, ones not so easily contained by straightforward images of deliberation. In order to fully engage with these questions, I will close this chapter by considering how the idea of all-affectedness has been mobilized in various strands of thought focused on ecological and environmental democracy. I am less concerned here with the claims often found in strands of this work about the ontological status of non-human participants as political agents. On their own, loud assertions about the extension of the franchise beyond humans actually threaten to reproduce the monological and causal models of evaluation discussed above. The more important aspect of these ecological and environmental strands of democratic thought lies in their explicit treatment of the role of representation in the formation of communities of affected interests. This emphasis on representation helps to foreground more fully than in Habermas’s work the degree to which all-affectedness is formed through processes of claims-making.

Far from being able to resolve the problem of inclusion usually addressed by
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appeal to the all affected principle, this problem actually becomes all the more acute in light of the ascendancy of theories of deliberative democracy. The paradox that appears to bedevil the principle of all affected interests follows from the implication that either the franchise should be expanded beyond practicability or that the scope of democratic decisions should be drastically curtailed. This paradox seems only to be deepened once the idea is premised on participation of all those potentially affected in meaningful deliberations over decisions.104 The sense that the all affected idea pulls in different directions can be finessed in various ways, including by the reduction of the number of people involved in deliberation through representative mechanisms such as parliaments, deliberative polls, and citizen juries or by the reduction of the breadth or depth of deliberation, thereby reducing the meaningfulness of the idea of deliberation. The sense that applying the all affected norm might be incompatible with commitments to broad-based deliberative participation is addressed by Robert Goodin's proposal of a model of "reflective democracy." It is a refinement of theories of deliberative democracy, but one with the distinctive twist of conceptualizing democratic deliberation "as something which occurs internally, within each individual's head, and not exclusively or even primarily in an interpersonal setting." "Democratic deliberation within" is Goodin's suggested practice for imagining ourselves in the place of other people, taking account of other interests, and thereby dealing with issues of scale and distance in imagining democratic deliberation.105 More significantly, Goodin seeks to extend the idea of political deliberation as a form of representative thinking to explicitly consider so-called mute interests. His claim is that the model of democratic deliberation within is a better way of addressing the problem of representing "excluded interests" such as future generations and non-humans. Reflective democracy is presented as a practical response to the apparent impossibility of "enfranchising the earth" that seems to follow from applying the principle of all affected interests literally.106

At first sight, Goodin's model seems to revert toward a monological view of deliberative reason, appearing to contravene the principle of dialogical engagement that is pivotal to other deliberative theories of democracy. But it actually has strong resonances with Arendt's account of representative thinking as the medium by which imagination is mobilized as a medium for communing with pluralism. The similarity enables us to see that Goodin's idea of reflective democracy is intended to explicitly address the necessity for practices of representation to deliberative practices of democratic inclusion. He suggests that there is no need to think that democracy requires "each person representing his or her own interests, and those exclusively." According to Goodin it is "empirically more realistic, as well as being morally and politically preferable, to think instead of democracy as a process in which we all come to internalize the interests of each other and indeed of the larger world around us."107

Goodin's account of reflective democracy is animated by one of the foun-
dational concerns of environmental political thought, namely the question of whether the idea of all affected interests can be extended to include non-human living things and future generations. The same theme is addressed more directly in Robyn Eckersley’s discussion of a “democracy of the affected.” She extends features of deliberative democracy to environmental concerns by reference to what she calls the “ambit claim.” According to this principle, “all those potentially affected by risks should have some meaningful opportunity to participate or otherwise be represented in the making of the policies or decisions which generate such risks.” The central theme in Eckersley’s model is the idea of communities of fate, that is, the idea that communities of the affected are formed through a shared potential to be harmed by proposed decisions. She shifts attention away from a simple causal model of affectedness and in so doing introduces a further element of indeterminacy and uncertainty into the contingencies associated with the deliberative model.

For Eckersley, opportunities to participate or “otherwise be represented” in risk-generating decisions “should literally be extended to all those affected, irrespective of social class, geographic location, nationality, generation, or species.” The combination of the emphasis on the dynamics of risk with an acknowledgement of the place of representation in deliberative processes leads her to recommend a move from thinking in terms of democracy-of-the-affected toward a more assertive idea of democracy-for-the-affected. This latter idea loosens the strong sense of reciprocity found in other deliberative models of democracy, not least in recognition of unequal power relations that are too easily overlooked by rosier versions of the deliberative theory. As with Goodin, Eckersley’s revision of deliberative reasoning requires representative thinking on behalf of non-human others as well as differentially situated other humans.

Both Goodin’s account of reflective democracy and Eckersley’s account of democracy for the affected use the consideration of potentially affected nonhuman interests to draw out essential features of any form of democratic deliberative reasoning. The same supplementary significance can be ascribed to other strands of argument concerned with conceptualizing non-human agency. For example, Noortje Marres argues that political matters are not objectively public but have to be actively assembled into issues of public concern. She argues that forming communities of affected interest around public issues requires the mobilization of imagination and capacities for identification. Marres proposes that conceptualizations of democratic publics should therefore be focused on what she calls “issue-affectedness.” In a similar spirit, Bruno Latour outlines a program for “the natural history of issues.” In his version of ontological politics, Latour identifies no fewer than five different meanings of the word “political”: the production of new associations of humans and non-humans; the generation of issues and problems; the turning of problems into governable fields under the sway of sovereign authorities; the deliberative engagement with problems; and the daily
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routines of administration and management. Latour’s claim is that his own model of “cosmopolitics” actually encompasses all these meanings and throws light on the complexities through which issues emerge as matters of concern that demand collective responses.

While often associated with strong ontological claims about the agency of matter, non-humans, objects, and things, the line of argument developed by Marres and Latour on issue-formation also, and perhaps more significantly, foregrounds the ways in which normative values are folded into broader configurations of practice. This strand of neopragmatism draws into view the dependence of democratic publics on the cultivation of the capacity of “learning to be affected.” The formulation “learning to be affected” allows Latour to avoid mind/body dualisms in thinking about the processes of public formation. It situates affectedness within a process of being moved to action by other bodies, and it directs us toward thinking of political agency in terms of capacities to be moved, including dispositions to think, feel, and imagine.

Taken together, these strands of ecological thinking show us the importance of not reducing the idea of affectedness to a causal account of objectively determinable interests or consequences. They also accentuate the shift already identified in Habermas’s work from a strong sense of objective interests and toward understanding the dynamics of being moved to act. The shared pragmatist influence across these very different theoretical frameworks opens up the possibility of further loosening the objectivist restrictions on the idea of affectedness and developing an account of the politics of affectedness. In such an account, affectedness would no longer be either causally determined or theoretically adjudicated. It would instead be understood as enacted and performed through practices of articulation, identification, and composition.

Latour provides the clearest formulation of such a politics of affectedness. He specifically addresses the challenge of thinking about the role of scientific knowledge and expertise in forming democratic collectives. His account also addresses the challenge of making space for non-humans in political thought and practice. But Latour’s version of ontological politics is distinctive because he does not simply assert that all non-human objects should be ascribed political agency, on the grounds that they play some causal role in generating issues or events. He differentiates the principles of judgment that define what is true and false in various fields of practice, a project oriented by a normative concern with elaborating on the relationships of commitment, responsibility, and representation that distinguish fields from one another and make possible relationships between them.

In light of these concerns, Latour develops an expansive political vision that recasts democracy as a variable practice based on two types of representative power: “the power to take into account” and “the power to put in order.” According to Latour, these are the means of “composing the collective” of humans and non-humans. The power to take into account is Latour’s variation on the
classical “boundary problem” with which the idea of all affected interests is often associated. It addresses the question “How many are we?” It involves a moment of opening out, in Latour’s terms, and of being attuned to the complexity of situations by ensuring that principles of maximal consultation are adhered to. The power to put in order, on the other hand, revolves around the question “Can we live together?” It responds to the imperative of ordering and institutionalizing.119

In the last instance, Latour falls back on the genre conventions associated with ontological interpretations of the political, invoking the necessity of both the imperative of opening up and the imperative of ordering. But despite this, his account of “bicameralism,” as he calls it, does place a premium on the importance of expressing and responding to demands. For Latour, the distinctive political contribution of environmental movements has been to draw into focus the centrality of representation to democratic politics. He presents this in terms of the articulation of a series of “propositions,” that is, claims made on behalf of people, things, plants, and animals that are then taken up and tested, challenged, affirmed, or revised.120 Latour’s interpretation of politics, in short, emphasizes claims-making as the medium in which affectedness becomes an issue of contestation, rather than simply a principle used to settle disputes.

This line of self-defined materialist thought shows that, while the idea of all-affectedness might not be able to settle questions of the limits of the demos, it is not thus fated to remain only a secondary factor in accounts of democratic politics. Latour’s treatment of affectedness foregrounds claims-making in the enactment of democratic politics and in turn emphasizes the inherently contested nature of such claims. The significant ontological lesson of this strand of work, if there is one to be found, is not the status of non-humans as agents or the assertion of materiality over the humanistic assumptions of social theory. It lies instead in its thinking of democracy in terms of the enactment and processing of claims of inclusion, claims generated by situations in which specific issues arise as matters of shared concern for distributed communities of fate.

I have argued that various strands of ecological and environmental political thought demonstrate that deliberative approaches to democracy contain a supplementary logic that foregrounds issues of representation as claims-making. This emphasis can support an inquiry into democracy as the contestatory enactment of claims against injustice.121 In these strands of thought, the subjects of democratic politics are redefined, appearing now as representative agents of a variety of sorts rather than simply individuals bound together in relations of intersubjectivity. This redefinition is most clearly evident in the work of John Dryzek, who develops insights from the analysis of environmental politics and other fields of social movement mobilization into a strongly contestatory model of what he calls discursive democracy. In so doing he explicitly recenters deliberative theories of democracy around representative practices of claims-making.
Dryzek’s theory of discursive democracy rests on his distinction between thinking in terms of models of democracy and thinking in terms of processes of democratization.\textsuperscript{122} He suggests that democratization is a process that unfolds along three distinct but related paths: expansion of the democratic franchise (through struggles for more effective inclusion), extension of the scope of democracy (to address a wider range of issues), and enhancement of the authenticity of democratic control (through more open communication).\textsuperscript{123} For Dryzek, the key challenge facing democratic theorists is to address the potential for existing authority and governance mechanisms to be democratized along these three dimensions.

As with other thinkers considered in part 3 of this book, Dryzek uses an account of transnational democracy to disaggregate and clarify the relationships between different aspects of democratic agency. In his case it is the relationship between social movements, claims of affectedness, and representative agency that is disclosed by the emergence of transnational political processes. Dryzek’s account of transnational democracy invests heavily in a specific account of the discursive integration of fields of political action. He argues that the systems of global capitalism and international governance are integrated and steered by a variety of discourses with causal power, including discourses of human rights, market liberalism, sustainable development, and the rules of war. In turn, Dryzek argues that any potential for transnational democratization therefore lies in the contestatory energies of social movements rather than in the search for new institutional configurations. This argument follows from his assertion that “discourses cannot be governed, but they can be engaged.”\textsuperscript{124} In Dryzek’s view, opportunities for political agency are distributed across networks of discourses. Accordingly, he presents social movements as collective actors engaged in discursive contestation and only loosely engaged with sites of authoritative, binding decision making.

We have already seen that one feature of deliberative theories of democracy is a shift away from strong models of legitimacy embodying the unified will of a demos and toward an emphasis on the critical force of practices of claims-making. The key contribution of Dryzek’s refashioning of deliberative democracy as discursive democracy is his argument that the primary criterion of democratic inclusion is the effective representation of discourses rather than persons.\textsuperscript{125} This argument rests on the claim about the discursive integration of systems of international and global power as well as a principle of economy, according to which it is practically impossible to organize all those affected into a coherent deliberative forum.\textsuperscript{126}

In this understanding of the integration of complex systems, democracy is thought of in terms of the representation of discursive repertoires, not just people and their opinions. And so transnational democracy appears as the exemplary case of a discursive understanding of the contestatory force of representative claims:
Representing discourses in transnational political action is actually more straightforward than representing persons or groups. Indeed, it is already happening. In recent years, even economic global institutions such as the World Bank and (be-grudgingly) the International Monetary Fund have begun a program of outreach to global civil society, meaning accountability no longer runs strictly to states. Who elects the NGOs? Nobody. Is there an identifiable constituency or category of people with which each NGO is associated, and to which it is accountable? Not usually. NGOs pushing for human rights, fair trade, sustainable development, demilitarization, transparency, and so forth, may best be thought of as representatives of particular discourses in international politics. Is the world any more democratic for their activities? Clearly yes: the international governmental institutions they target now have to justify their activities in light of a variety of discourses, whereas previously they either felt no need to justify at all, or did so in narrowly economistic and administrative terms.127

This vision of the democratization of transnational practices reflects a strong commitment to the view that any attempt to reconcile a theory of democracy with the designs of state institutions or the imperatives of law is an unwelcome compromise of the critical impulses of critical theory. The normative claim about democratic legitimacy that follows from Dryzek's shift of political agency away from a deliberative subject to a process of representation is, therefore, significantly weaker even than that found in other strands of critical theory: “Democratic legitimacy is to be found in the degree to which collective decisions are consistent with the constellation of discourses existing within the public sphere, in the degree to which this balance is itself under the decentralized control of reflective, competent, and informed actors.”128 Yet this vision provides a stronger sense of the contestatory energies of democratic politics than do the views of other thinkers in the deliberative tradition.

We have now reached the point where the all affected principle, which is so central to the deliberative turn in critical theories of democracy, has moved from a realm of intersubjective communication to a realm of discursive representation. By making explicit the problematic relationship between highly participatory norms of deliberation and the practicalities of more attenuated styles of engagement, Dryzek's elaboration of a theory of discursive democracy, much like Latour's account of the ontological politics of democracy, decisively reorders the assumptions about the types of political agency through which the dynamic of democratization is generated. By presenting transnational politics as the exemplary scene of discursive democracy, Dryzek effectively displaces the question of whether the inclusive ethics of deliberative theories of democracy can be squared with equally compelling imperatives to extend the all affected principle to include non-human interests. He does so by proposing an analysis of how new forms of
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democratic control are enacted and new forms of legitimacy are demanded and contested through representative claims of various forms.129

Situating the Claims of Democracy

This chapter has traced the revival and transformation of the principle of all affected interests in critical theories of democracy. We have seen that the most obvious implication of the application of the all affected idea is to extend the spatial scope of democratic universalism beyond the boundaries of nation-states, within which it has been conceptually contained. It is common enough to argue that we need to respacialize the democratic imagination to match the scope of interactions in a globalized world.130 Such an argument rests on the suggestion that current arrangements exclude some affected persons from decisions or that they include those who should not be empowered. The all affected idea is often invoked in this way, as if it were a straightforward, coherent causal principle for objectively redistricting the global polity. I have suggested that these calls should be seen as expressions of an often-unacknowledged methodological globalism.

We should pause to consider more carefully the full implications of making the all affected principle central to democratic theory. In critical theories of deliberative democracy, the all affected principle of democratic inclusion is translated into a deliberative norm via Habermas’s discourse ethics and theory of communicative action. Seyla Benhabib’s critical revision of Habermas’s account draws into view new dimensions of the idea of affectedness. And they are further elaborated in the work of materialist theorists who emphasize the centrality of practices of learning to be affected, as well as by thinkers concerned with democracy and environmental politics. Across the fields of critical theory discussed in this chapter, a recurring theme is the idea of thinking of representation as a practice of claims-making, or “as a thing that is done.”131

Across these conceptual elaborations, the all affected idea emerges as a critical norm of inclusive communicative action. I have traced the move away from a strongly causal interpretation of the idea of all-affectedness to an emphasis on the variable formation of communities of the affected through processes of imagination and discursive representation. I also have shown how the notion of affectedness can itself be disaggregated into three distinct aspects—having an interest, taking an interest, and affecting. These analytical distinctions follow from thinking of affectedness as a product of communicative interaction rather than as an objectively causal phenomenon.

Crucially, in this process of translation and disaggregation the interpretation of the all affected idea shifts away from a strongly legislative emphasis to a more heuristic inflection. Attention should now be focused on how affectedness is used
as a register for articulating and contesting representative claims. This does not imply a purely scholarly pursuit. The tradition of critical theory I have drawn on in this chapter puts a premium on the pragmatist claim that democratic legitimacy is derived from the epistemic function that discourse, negotiation, and mediums of publicity play in identifying relevant problems, informing citizens, and communicating to centers of authoritative decision making. Affectedness—understood as a combination of taking an interest and having an interest but also as a mode of affecting—emerges from this ongoing process of problematization. In this respect, the reconfiguration of the all affected idea is central to the commitment to experimenting with alternative mechanisms of institutional design that is a feature of deliberative theories of democracy.

Earlier in this chapter I suggested that one implication of Habermas’s translation of the idea of all-affectedness into the terms of his theory of communicative action is to recast our understanding of the geographies of democratic politics. The chapter began by showing how political theorists use figures of globalization to disaggregate key concepts of democratic theory. They do so, however, within a broad frame of reference, which I dub methodological globalism. From this perspective, it is presumed that reconceptualizing democracy around norms of inclusive deliberation necessarily implies the spatial extension of political action beyond the scales within which it has hitherto been conceptually and normatively enclosed. The communicative reconstruction of the all affected principle might, in theory, extend the scope of any potential demos beyond territorial limits. But the conceptual transformation of affectedness should not be interpreted as a straightforward warrant for a type of methodological globalism that believes that the emplaced contexts of social integration—cities, nations, places—have lost their empirical significance or normative legitimacy as sites of democratizing energy. In fact, I want to close this chapter by affirming that the conceptual transformation of affectedness actually requires a heightened concern for the situated contexts of social integration through which communicative capacities are worked-up. This affirmation follows, first, from the fact that it is communicative practices of dialogue, learning, reasoning, and recognition that are made central to the formation of affected communities in recent critical theories of democracy. Second, post-Habermasian theories of democratic politics, with their strongly pragmatist inflection, also view situated contexts of interaction as crucial focal points around which a sense of the shared salience of issues is generated.

In both respects—in the emphasis on the centrality of communicative mediums of interaction and in the emphasis on the problematic situations around which affectedness is formed—the transformation of the idea of all-affectedness into a norm of democratic judgment requires an appreciation of what Habermas would call the “lifeworld.” Lifeworld is Habermas’s name for the background of shared meanings, institutional orders, and personality structures in which subjectivities are formed and nurtured. More formally, lifeworld is the name for the
“context-forming horizons of social action” that facilitate communicative action oriented to understanding, providing the basis for being able to deal with and define situations. In the terms used previously in this chapter, it is in lifeworlds that dispositions toward “learning to be affected” are worked up and reproduced.

My claim is that the methodological globalism that characterizes theories of cosmopolitanism, global justice, or transnational democracy requires as a kind of necessary supplement a heightened sensitivity to the situated contexts in which the discursive and affective competencies required by these theories are worked up in the first place. For both Habermas and Benhabib, the deliberative mediation of affectedness necessarily takes place with reference to shared traditions and through situated encounters with others. Herein lies the significance of the disqualification of monological styles of reasoning in critical theories of democracy. Insofar as the spatial extension of democracy imagined in these theories depends on the theoretical transformation of norms of universalization into the vocabulary of communicatively mediated affectedness, then the emphasis given to contestatory processes of claims-making in critical theories of democracy requires also an analysis of the necessarily partial contexts in which capacities to develop solidaristic identifications and to affectively acknowledge and act on the claims of others are cultivated and learned.

I affirm the importance of the situated emergence of communicatively mediated affectedness in order to draw into view the degree to which the more “transcendent” dispositions presumed necessary for cultivating cosmopolitan, global, or transnational action always depend on infrastructures of socialization and social reproduction. This is a relationship that methodologically globalist theories of democracy often have difficulty acknowledging. The issue is made explicit in Benhabib’s account of the apparent paradox of democratic legitimacy exposed by the politics of transnational migration, in which the spread of universal principles of human rights appears to contradict the boundedness of democratic communities. Arguing against the presupposition that the imperatives of human rights necessarily trump national claims of territorial sovereignty over membership, Benhabib asserts that democracy requires borders in order for the norm of all those affected by a course of action having a say in its adoption to have any practical meaning. Her claim is that a degree of closure of the demos is necessary not for empirical reasons or on ontological grounds but on normative grounds. Democratic practice must, Benhabib asserts, be “accountable to a specific people.” This claim follows from her earlier account of the necessary dialogical mediation of universal principles through switching perspectives between generalized and concrete others.

On the principle that universal norms must be appropriated dialogically through concrete communities of deliberation, Benhabib proposes a model of “democratic iteration,” or “a series of interlocking conversations and interactions” through which context-transcending norms of universal human rights are appro-
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priated and subjected to scrutiny by concrete associations of people. The sense of “iteration” in this account of the situated appropriation and transformation of universal norms indicates that “closure” does not have the same connotation for Benhabib as it does in poststructuralist theories of radical democracy. It implies an active to-and-fro between situated communities and universal imperatives. But more than that, the theme of democratic iteration also points toward a sociologically thicker understanding of the qualities of political communities than that provided by a vocabulary of citizens and foreigners, nationals and aliens. It is a view, in short, that presumes that partial, situated practices of solidarity are the very condition for more expansive forms of political identification.

Following Benhabib’s lead, I submit that methodological globalism causes critical theorists of deliberative democracy to persistently underestimate not just the resilience of territorialized forms of organization and culture but also their normative and conceptual significance for understanding the geographies of democratic politics. I endorse Craig Calhoun’s claim that such approaches have often displayed a “blindness toward the sociological conditions for cosmopolitanism itself and toward the reasons why national, ethnic, and other groups remain important to most of the world’s people.” The point is not that nation-states are the only available or necessary structures of social integration. But they are in important respects quite good models for such processes and continue in practice to perform important integrative functions. Alongside other fields of practice embedded in family life, in religious networks, in neighborhoods and cities, nations and nation-states can provide crucial resources for integrative lifeworld functions on which affectively rich communicative action relies—resources that are not merely “ideological” or even “cultural” but that extend to “educational systems, health care systems, and transportation systems.”

Benhabib and Calhoun help us see the continuing salience of spatially embedded cultural formations and institutional systems that provide resources for solidarity and integration and on which the capacities to imaginatively identify with and practically engage in the politics of humanitarian concern, international solidarity, cosmopolitan rights, or global justice depend. These situated contexts in which capacities to “learn to be affected” are worked up need not necessarily be territorialized, but it is reasonable to suppose that they do often remain in important ways emplaced in infrastructures and practices of national culture, rhythms of urban living, and locally configured practices of everyday life. In short, if the communicative reconstruction of the idea of all-affectedness leads to a contestatory emphasis on claims-making as the medium of democratic politics, then this requires us to take seriously not only the deterritorializing effects of globalized chains of cause and consequence but also the geographies in which dispositions to affectively acknowledge the claims of others are learned and capacities to act on these claims are embedded.

We have arrived, then, at the idea of thinking about the all affected principle...
as a medium for contestatory demands. This view should lead us to adjust our imaginations of the geographies of democratization. And I have suggested that the translation of the norm of all affected interests into a register of claims-making also requires further attention to the variable genres of reasoning through which communities of the affected are assembled. But we need to move on to refine more precisely the specific form of “wrong” that is expressed in modes of democratic claims-making in the register of affectedness. I turn to this issue in the next chapter.