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## Democracy and Justice: Reading Derrida in Istanbul

### Book

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# 1 No Democracy without Deconstruction

Derrida's work on democracy has had relatively little impact on the vast field of democracy studies. Although scholars of Derrida have explored his work on democracy,<sup>1</sup> and Derrida has himself problematized aspects of particular democracies,<sup>2</sup> these interventions have rarely found a place among theories and analyses of democracy – even those of the more critical or disruptive kind. They have seemed even less relevant to understanding the manner in which actually existing democracies are experienced and challenged.

It is easy to speculate why this might be the case. Derrida is not, nor has ever considered himself, a theorist of democracy. Only obliquely concerned with the political prior to the 1980s, an explicit concern with democracy does not emerge until his later work, and when it does, it is difficult (and somehow underridean) to cobble it into a legible 'theory' of democracy. Previously discussed arguments regarding Derrida's 'withdrawal from the specificity of politics or empirical social research'<sup>3</sup> and accusations of 'terroristic obscurantism' have probably discouraged many from perceiving in Derrida's work a serious intervention into democratic theory and practice. Syntagmas such as 'no democracy without deconstruction, no deconstruction without democracy' and neologisms like 'democracy-to-come' have probably not helped either.

Without trying to cobble Derrida's interventions into a 'theory' of democracy, the first three chapters explore the relevance of his work to contemporary (interpretive and experiential) struggles over democracy. This chapter explores two of Derrida's cardinal propositions about democracy: that there is 'no democracy without deconstruction', and that democracy is always 'to-come'. The next chapter considers Derrida's articulation of the aporetic and autoimmune structure of democracy, and attempts to situate Derrida's work on democracy within some of the debates and problematics of democratic theory. The third chapter explores Derrida's potential contribution to theories of democratization, and considers the relevance of Derrida's treatment of democracy to understanding recent struggles over democracy in Turkey.

Thomson suggests that Derrida's 'telegraphic' statement, 'No democracy without deconstruction, no deconstruction without democracy', seeks to

provoke.<sup>4</sup> Haddad similarly assesses the relationship Derrida constructs between deconstruction and justice. The expression ‘deconstruction is justice’, suggests Haddad, ‘functions more as a provocative call to further thinking than as a statement of established fact’.<sup>5</sup> Derrida, Haddad observes, ‘makes this kind of identity statement regularly, linking deconstruction to all sorts of terms’.<sup>6</sup> This book takes up the provocation, offering a way to think through the relationship between democracy and justice, as held together by the relationship between democracy and deconstruction on the one hand, and deconstruction and justice on the other. This chapter begins with the democracy-deconstruction side of the equation, suggesting that whilst Derrida’s telegraphic statement is indeed provocative, it is also something of a ‘statement of fact’, as there would indeed be no democracy(-to-come) without deconstruction.

### Deconstruction and *Différance*

Deconstruction might well be one of Derrida’s most misconstrued notions. Scholars and students of Derrida’s work have long argued that deconstruction is key to understanding both Derrida’s politics and the political force of his work.<sup>7</sup> Yet as Leslie Hill notes in *The Cambridge Introduction to Jacques Derrida*, there persists a suspicion that deconstruction has little, if any (political) relevance. For many, sufficient evidence is furnished by the infamous phrase, *il n’y a pas de hors-texte*, rendered in English as ‘there is nothing outside of the text’.<sup>8</sup> By way of dispelling the myth, Hill offers that the phrase, which first appeared in *Of Grammatology* (in 1967 in French, and 1976 in English), is not only mistranslated, but also key to Derrida’s fundamental argument that everything is affected by ‘*différance*, iterability, and the trace as non-present remainder’<sup>9</sup> – in other words, that everything can be deconstructed. I’m inclined to think this does little to convince critics that deconstruction is anything but nihilist, post-modernist drivel.

Derrida discussed deconstruction and its political and ethical relevance often, and at length. In the *Letter to a Japanese Friend* he offers a concise reflection on the origins and intentions of deconstruction. Wishing to adopt Heidegger’s notion of *destruktion* – but without the French and English-language connotation of ‘annihilation’ that the word destruction would have had – Derrida settled on deconstruction, though was never quite satisfied with the term itself.<sup>10</sup> Given its debt to a ‘certain spirit of Marxism’,<sup>11</sup> and in the context of structuralism, deconstruction made sense. And it stuck. As Derrida writes:

At that time, structuralism was dominant. “Deconstruction” seemed to be going in the same direction, since the word signified a certain attention to structures (which themselves were neither simply ideas, nor forms, nor syntheses, nor systems). To deconstruct was also a structuralist gesture, or in any case a gesture that assumed a certain need for the

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structuralist problematic. But it was also an antistructuralist gesture, and its fortune rests in part on this ambiguity. Structures were to be undone, decomposed, desedimented (all types of structures, linguistic, “logocentric,” “phonocentric”...socio-institutional, political, cultural, and above all and from the start philosophical)...But the undoing, decomposing, and desedimenting of structures, in a certain sense more historical than the “structuralist” movement it called into question, was not a negative operation. Rather than destroying, it was also necessary to understand how a “whole” was constituted and to reconstruct it to this end.<sup>12</sup>

As articulated above, deconstruction comprises a double movement. Deconstruction takes apart – undoes, decomposes, desediments – and reassembles; it renounces and preserves. Its ‘fortune’ lies precisely in this double movement, which is at once (or by turns) destructive and constructive, negative and affirmative. Yet crucially, in disassembling, it does not aim to ‘reach the bottom, the original ground, the ultimate foundation’ from which to reassemble.<sup>13</sup> Deconstruction, as a disclosure of *différance* reveals instead there is no bottom, no ultimate foundation, no such thing as a ‘proper propriety’.<sup>14</sup>

Perhaps counterintuitively, Derrida insists that deconstruction is neither a method nor a project.<sup>15</sup> A method implies ‘technical procedures that could be repeated from one context to another’, and whilst deconstruction contains ‘some general rules, some procedures that can be transposed by analogy’, they are taken up uniquely in each text or context.<sup>16</sup> ‘A thinker with a method’ Beardsworth explains, ‘has already decided *how* to proceed, is unable to give him or herself up to the matter of thought in hand, is a functionary of the criteria which structure his or her conceptual gestures. For Derrida, this is irresponsibility itself’.<sup>17</sup>

If it is neither a method nor really a theory, deconstruction might usefully be described as a comportment – a bearing, an orientation. A deconstructive comportment would demand a distinct (rigorous yet always singular) way of approaching or orienting towards philosophical, linguistic, socio-institutional, political or cultural structures. In exacting the double, or more accurately triple movement of articulating a past so as to, first disassemble and then reassemble it, a deconstructive comportment would be marked by a distinct manner of reading, or inheriting. As Haddad points out, Derrida had indeed associated deconstruction with inheritance, proposing inheritance as one possible definition of deconstruction.<sup>18</sup>

In a fascinating discussion of deconstruction, which goes some way towards illustrating what a deconstructive comportment might look like, Edward Baring situates it in the context of ‘one of the most important institutions in French academic life’, and ‘gatekeeper of French academic philosophy – the *agrégation*’.<sup>19</sup> Baring advances the argument that deconstruction can be read as emerging from the context of the conflicting

demands of the exam, for which Derrida prepared countless cohorts of students. Like deconstruction, the *agrégation* demands the ability to reconstruct philosophical arguments to then deconstruct them, drawing out their contradictory implications and calling their fundamental premises into question. Like deconstruction, it necessitates an encounter with and recognition of a debt towards the past, and a rigorous, critical engagement with it, which in revealing its paradoxes, opens it onto unforeseeable futures.

For the jury who judged a candidate's performance, it was 'impossible to do philosophy without a long familiarity with the philosophers, but it was also impossible to understand what they are saying to us, except by starting to philosophize ourselves, humbly but courageously'.<sup>20</sup> The candidate was thus expected to offer a 'personal' reading of a text, but one that 'emerged organically' from a thorough engagement with it.<sup>21</sup> And so, Derrida trained his students to carefully reconstruct the arguments of a text, recognize its paradoxes, and read, or inherit it through immanent critique. The 'strategy' was thus to present 'a clear and standard exposition of a text that would act as the foundation for any further analysis, and provide the means to draw out contradictory and, at first glance, hidden implications'.<sup>22</sup> Such comportment (in this case, to philosophical texts) is precisely what deconstruction demands – 'on the one hand a rigorous, demanding, critical, but affirmative commitment to the legacy of the past, and on the other an equally exacting commitment to what the legacy of the past suppressed, remained unassimilated by it, and belonged perpetually to the future'.<sup>23</sup> Equally, it speaks to the affirmative and creative nature of deconstruction, on which Derrida unwaveringly insisted when deconstruction was presented as destructive and annihilative.

Another exposition of deconstruction is supplied by Giovanna Borradori.<sup>24</sup> Borradori suggests that the aim of deconstruction – to 'disassemble any discourse standing as a "construction"' – is accomplished, first, by identifying the 'conceptual construction of a given...field' (a task not unlike that required by the expository portion of the *agrégation*), and second, by highlighting the hierarchical ordering of the conceptual pairs through which the field is produced as such. For Borradori, deconstruction's third move is to invert or subvert the existing hierarchy. To deconstruct, as Derrida argues elsewhere, is to intervene, and an effective intervention necessitates the overturning of hierarchies, or the revaluation of values.<sup>25</sup> The fourth (and final) move involves the production of a third concept that 'complicates the original load-bearing structure beyond recognition'.<sup>26</sup> Thus, a deconstructive comportment to hospitality, for instance, enables Derrida to draw out its conditional and unconditional forms through a careful exposition of its foundations; subvert their hierarchical ordering by exploring the case for unconditional hospitality; and finally, offer up the concept of *hostipitality*,<sup>27</sup> which reveals the aporia of hospitality – the hostility that marks every welcome.

Borradori's synopsis of deconstruction is usefully schematic. But it does seem rather methodical – precisely what Derrida hoped to avoid. In

proposing a succession of steps, which culminate in a predetermined outcome – the ‘third concept’ – Borradori translates deconstruction from a comportment or bearing into a technical procedure whose outcome is effectively determined in advance. But deconstruction can never be certain of how it will proceed. It can likewise never be certain of what it will reveal, beyond the fundamental certainty of revealing that *différance* determines and inhabits all discursive and non-discursive structures. It might thus be more useful to conceptualize it as comportment – which seeks to inherit by exposing constitutive difference and deferral (of meaning) and destabilizing ossified structures – rather than subduing it into an inventory.

Having sketched (roughly) the contours of deconstruction, now is probably a good time to take a close look at what is (politically and ethically) at stake in deconstruction – the disclosure of *différance*. References to *différance* have already been made, as it is difficult to consider deconstruction without it. Yet it merits some further consideration, not simply because the disclosure of *différance* is, so to speak, the aim of deconstruction, but also, and related to this, because it is critical to understanding Derrida’s conceptualization of democracy as aporetic in structure, and uniquely susceptible to the workings of autoimmunity (the focus of Chapter Two).

Baring notes that the word *différance* makes its first appearance in ‘*La Parole Soufflée*’ in 1965,<sup>28</sup> though it is not flagged or introduced until a year later, in ‘Freud and the Scene of Writing’ (1966 in French, and 1972 in English),<sup>29</sup> where it is traced back to a passage in ‘Of Grammatology’, where interestingly, it does not actually appear at all.<sup>30</sup> What that passage does indicate, however, is that what had occupied Western philosophy almost from its foundations onwards, namely, the problem of ontico-ontological difference could no longer be primary, as ‘the difference between Being and beings appealed to a Being that was itself riven with difference’.<sup>31</sup> The origins and force of *différance*, therefore, lies in the notion that there is no ultimate foundation, no ‘proper propriety’.

The tortuous history of Derrida’s neologism accords with its complexity. In the translator’s note to *The Ear of the Other*, Peggy Kamuf situates *différance* at the intersection of the spatial and temporal sense of the verb *différer*, that is, ‘to differ’ and ‘to defer’.<sup>32</sup> As the standard spelling of the noun *différence* corresponds only to the first sense of the verb (to differ), it proved inadequate for Derrida, who wished to designate both difference and deferral. Thus, the ‘a’ in *différance* indicates a deferral, ‘by means of delay, delegation, reprieve, referral, detour, postponement, reserving’.<sup>33</sup> *Différance*, then, refers simultaneously to (perpetual) deferral and (originary) difference.<sup>34</sup>

*Différance* is the originary condition. In an interview with Julia Kristeva, Derrida insists that nothing precedes *différance* – ‘there is no subject who is agent, author, and master of *différance*, who eventually and empirically would be overtaken by *différance*. Subjectivity – like objectivity – are an effect of *différance*, an effect inscribed in the system of *différance*’.<sup>35</sup> And it is this *différance* that deconstruction reveals. It reveals the inherent heterogeneity

and impropriety of seemingly homogenous and proper concepts, structures and institutions. 'At the heart of something seemingly natural, self-identical, and proper,' writes Derrida in *Of Grammatology*, 'stands something that is unnatural, other, or improper, with the result that the so-called opposition between natural and unnatural, self and other, proper and improper is called into doubt, and what, by rights, should only be on one side of the equation is found to be already on the other'.<sup>36</sup>

It is in this prying open, which discloses the impropriety at the heart of propriety, that the ethical and political stakes of deconstruction are revealed. To unearth difference within that which seems selfsame, and deferral (of closure or meaning) within that which seems predetermined is indeed transgressive. In undoing 'the self' by revealing it is fundamentally shot through with 'the other' it renders the ontology of 'the self versus the other' or 'us and them' unsustainable. It reveals, as Derrida writes in *The Other Heading: Reflections on Today's Europe*, that '*what is proper to a culture is not to be identical to itself*. Not to not have an identity, but not to be able to identify itself, to be able to say "me" or "we"'.<sup>37</sup> It reveals, in other words, that 'there is no culture or cultural identity without this difference *with itself*', and thus, that 'there is no self-relation, no relation to oneself, no identification with oneself without...a culture of oneself *as a culture of the other*, a culture of...the *difference to oneself*'.<sup>38</sup> This has clear political implications for how we imagine and inhabit the world. Relatedly, it opens within that which *is* the potential to *become* otherwise.

But the disclosure of difference in that which appears, or is constituted as homogenous also has more mundane political relevance. Borradori offers the example of the Berlin Wall, and the homogenous, hermetically sealed blocs fixed on either side: corruption, injustice and bourgeois civilisation to the west, an 'emancipated communist utopia' to the east.<sup>39</sup> Though the adjectives might change depending on who was looking, the one side was always 'perfectly immune' to the other. Deconstruction, by contrast, reveals that 'traces of what a totality explicitly excludes are always silently contained within it'.<sup>40</sup> Deconstructive interventions, in other words, 'detotalise self-enclosed totalities by placing them face to face with their internal differentiation'.<sup>41</sup>

An analogous argument, the contours of which were first outlined by Edward Said<sup>42</sup>, has of course been made regarding the distinction between the occident and the orient. Situating Said's seminal work within a critique of the Enlightenment, Timothy Mitchell suggests that 'orientalism...was not just a particular instance of the general historical problem of how one culture portrays another, but something essential to the peculiar nature of the modern world'.<sup>43</sup> Haunting the ways in which we make sense of the world, the episteme of the Enlightenment conditions us to conceive of the world as comprised of things that are essentially or fundamentally the same (despite the appearance of difference) and things that are wholly and irreconcilably different. Perceiving or distilling the former (i.e. unity or identity in what

might initially appear as different) engenders a sense of tranquillity; discerning the latter (irreconcilable, unintelligible difference) produces anxiety and fear.<sup>44</sup> Each elicits commensurate political responses.

In the intervention that deconstruction makes through the disclosure of *différance*, we can begin to discern its critical contribution to theorizing democracy. It is difficult, ventures Derrida, to think of democracy without imagining some sort of rota and rotation – both in the sense of the taking of turns (the fundamental tenet of democracy, to rule and be ruled in turn), and in the sense of the return

toward the self, toward the origin itself, toward and upon the self of the origin, whenever it is a question, for example, of sovereign self-determination, of the autonomy of the self, of the *ipse*, namely, of the one-self that gives itself its own law...self-relation as being in view of the self, beginning by the self with the end of self in view.<sup>45</sup>

Democracy is thus, on the one hand, grounded in a certain *ipseity*, first of the individual, then of a ‘people’. *Ipseity*, Derrida indicates, suggests ‘the self, the one-self, being properly oneself, indeed being in person’.<sup>46</sup> Noting that *ipseity* is always designated in the masculine, Derrida proceeds to identify it with the ‘principle of legitimate sovereignty’, that, prior to the sovereignty of state, nation-state, or in the case of democracy, ‘the people’, suggests the sovereignty of ‘the self’.<sup>47</sup> Yet if both ‘the self’ and ‘the people’ are riven by *différance*, fundamentally affected ‘by what or who comes, by what happens or by who happens by, by *the other to come*, a certain unconditional renunciation of sovereignty is required a priori’.<sup>48</sup> Therein lies one of the fundamental aporias of democracy, revealed by the disclosure of *différance* – the indispensability of a certain *ipseity*, on the one hand, and the recognition of its impossibility on the other; the indispensability of sovereignty (of the self, and of the people) and its impossibility. The aporias of democracy, and their relevance for understanding democracy in general, and Turkish democracy in particular, will be discussed at greater length in Chapters Two and Four. Yet they are worth some mention here, as their discovery, so to speak, is owed at least in part to deconstruction. And though thus far discussed largely in the abstract, they have considerable significance for how democracy is lived.

In addition to unearthing the constitutive aporias of democracy, deconstruction, as some of the above began to show, enables us to apprehend and reimagine the world we inhabit. Through its disclosure of *différance* as the ‘non-essential essence’ of identities, structures and systems deconstruction makes a perhaps more mundane, yet no less important intervention into analyses of democratic discourses and, as Chapter Four will more clearly demonstrate, practices. It was important to Derrida that deconstruction transcend the boundaries of academic discourse, and in doing so, challenge accepted social, political and cultural truths, and denaturalize and revalue



accepted values. As ‘nothing is altogether natural in this world, everything is shot through with law, conventionality, technology (*nomos, thesis, tekhnē*)’,<sup>49</sup> deconstruction, argued Derrida, must not restrict itself to ‘an analysis of discourses, of philosophical statements or concepts, of a semantics; it has to challenge institutions, social and political structures, the most hardened traditions’,<sup>50</sup> and attempt to ‘intervene responsibly (but not in the sense of a calculated, strategic and controlled intervention) in the *cit e*, the *polis* and the world’.<sup>51</sup>

Deconstruction, however, is not just a political endeavour. It is also an ethical one. Deconstruction shares the violence of all institutive moments – in disassembling that which is, and reassembling it into something else (that is, opening the possibility of an ‘otherwise’) it takes a risk; it can give no guarantees. But, as in the case of all institutive moments, its violence is not only destructive, but also affirmative – it creates, it enables the emergence of something else. Derrida is unequivocal: ‘deconstruction is always on the side of the yes, on the side of the affirmation of life’.<sup>52</sup> What is more, and related to this, its violence is in the service of justice. It is ‘the privilege granted to unity, to totality, to organic ensembles, to community as a homogenized whole’ that constitutes a danger for politics and ethics.<sup>53</sup> In that sense, deconstruction seeks justice. As Derrida indicates, justice drives, and constitutes the limit of deconstruction. An orientation towards justice is what compels us ‘constantly to suspect, to criticize the given determinations of culture, of institutions, of legal systems’.<sup>54</sup> Justice can drive us to suspect, criticize and endeavour to improve the law because justice is, for Derrida, distinct from (and always already exceeding) law. The difference between justice and law, and its relationship to democracy will be explored further in Chapters Four and Five. But it is necessary to flag here, as it is the irreducibility of justice to law that makes justice the limit of deconstruction. Justice must be ‘both regulated and without regulation: it must confirm the law and also destroy it or suspend it enough to have to reinvent it in each case, to rejustify it, at least to reinvent it in the affirmation of the new and free confirmation of its principle’.<sup>55</sup> Justice is grounded in a deconstructive comportment, articulating the law whilst undoing and reinventing it, and without ever knowing how to proceed in advance, responding to the uniqueness and singularity of the situation at hand. It is this singularity, incalculability, uncodability, and thus also ephemerality of justice that makes it undeconstructable, the limit of deconstruction. It is its dual status as the driving force and limit of deconstruction that prompts Derrida to figure justice as the ‘undeconstructible condition of any deconstruction’.<sup>56</sup>

## Democracy and Deconstruction

We still have not (quite) discussed the relationship between democracy and deconstruction, or the axiom ‘no democracy without deconstruction, no deconstruction without democracy’. Whereas I have attempted to show that

deconstruction, in its disclosure of *différance*, is a political and ethical endeavour, I have not specifically addressed its relationship to democracy. Exploring this relationship in *Deconstruction and Democracy*, Thomson points to Derrida's *The Politics of Friendship* as crucial to its understanding. There, Derrida discusses the 'self-deconstructive force in the very motif of democracy, the possibility and the duty for democracy itself to de-limit itself', and describes democracy as having the 'autos of deconstructive self-delimitation'.<sup>57</sup> Thomson argues that in linking democracy and deconstruction Derrida points to a 'constitutive flaw' in the concept of democracy, which produces what Thomson, perhaps a bit inelegantly, calls the 'situation' of democracy-to-come – an ideal of justice that democracy can never reach, but should always work towards.<sup>58</sup>

Thomson's argument is useful, if somewhat awkwardly articulated. Though the terminology of 'constitutive flaw' is not ideal, as it does not quite capture *différance* – which is what I think Derrida proposes as the core of democracy – it does point in that direction. In disclosing that *différance*, deconstruction does indeed condition the possibility of democracy-to-come. And since, as Haddad rightly points out, when Derrida speaks of 'democracy' we should always hear the trace of the 'to-come' resonating within,<sup>59</sup> the first part of Derrida's 'telegraphic' statement – no democracy without deconstruction – makes sense. As the second part of the statement – no deconstruction without democracy – is not critical for our purposes, and has, in any case, been very aptly addressed by Haddad<sup>60</sup> through the concept of inheritance, I shall not dwell on it here. What is of greater interest is that, as Derrida stresses in *The Politics of Friendship*, it is not just deconstruction but self-deconstruction and self-delimitation that are constitutive of democracy. Whilst deconstruction is always self-deconstruction, always immanent in its comportment, there seems to be something particularly self-deconstructive and consequently self-delimiting about democracy. 'Democracy is the only system', Derrida suggests in *Rogues*, 'in which, in principle, one has or assumes the right to criticize everything publicly, including the idea of democracy, its concept, its history, and its name'.<sup>61</sup> It demands, more than other political regimes and experiences, more than other political organizations and practices, 'the exposure to an open-ended future'.<sup>62</sup> The not unrelated constitutive hollowness, vacancy, and ungroundedness of democracy makes it distinctly aporetic and autoimmune, and thus distinctly 'to-come'. This, in turn, and as Thomson alludes to, fastens democracy(-to-come) to justice, as Derrida articulates it. We will revisit the relationship between democracy(-to-come) and justice in Chapters Four and Five. For now, let's turn to the manner in which Derrida conceptualizes democracy.

Although Derrida never considered himself a theorist of democracy, democracy(-to-come) was among his preoccupations, particularly in his later work. It might be useful to begin by considering Derrida's reflections on the meaning of democracy. Throughout his work on democracy, and particularly in *The Politics of Friendship* (1997) and *Rogues* (2005), where democracy is

most explicitly treated, Derrida insists on the inherent and originary indeterminacy of democracy. 'There are, to be sure, claims or allegations of democracy everywhere', Derrida declares in the opening pages of *Rogues*, yet we 'do not know the meaning of this legacy, the mission, emission, or commission of this word or the legitimacy of this claim or allegation'.<sup>63</sup> Already at its Greek origins, democracy does not have a 'proper, stable, and unequivocal' meaning, suggesting that democracy marks an 'essence without essence...a concept without concept'.<sup>64</sup> Plato, argues Derrida, 'already announces that democracy is, in the end, neither the name of a regime nor the name of a constitution'; and it is not one constitutional form among others, as it can be

at once monarchic (what is called constitutional monarchy) and parliamentary (found in a large number of European nation-states), popular democracy, direct or indirect democracy, parliamentary democracy (whether presidential or not), liberal democracy, Christian democracy, social democracy, military or authoritarian democracy, and so on.<sup>65</sup>

That almost every government can call itself a democracy, suggests Derrida, is not just hypocrisy, but a consequence of the structure of democracy itself – 'it has no one model, no one form, for it makes possible many'.<sup>66</sup>

Even a return to the 'origins' does not clarify, nor bring into sharper focus, the meaning of democracy, which remains 'obscured, obfuscated, reserved', with 'neither the word nor the thing "democracy"...yet presentable'.<sup>67</sup> Democracy, both now and at its origins, lacks 'proper meaning, the very meaning of the selfsame'; it is, in fact, defined by this 'lack of the proper and the selfsame. And so, it is defined only by turns, by tropes'.<sup>68</sup> Democracy is, thus, determined and delineated by *différance* – by the inherent and permanent difference and deferral of meaning – and so not determined and delineated at all, but rather, indeterminable and uncircumscribable. As it is so by definition and in 'essence', democracy, cannot 'gather itself around the presence of an axial and univocal meaning'.<sup>69</sup>

Elsewhere, although not unrelatedly, Derrida likens democracy to philosophy. Like philosophy, democracy does not have 'one sole memory'; it is 'bastard, hybrid, grafted, multilinear, and polygot'.<sup>70</sup> Determined by *différance*, democracy is, in essence, self-differentiated and multiple, its meaning indefinitely deferred, never 'properly' fixed or stabilized. It is in this sense that democracy is self-delimiting, always already transgressing its limits.

In some ways, then, democracy is like all other concepts – always already riven with difference, unable to gather (or be gathered) around a single origin or definitive meaning. But it also seems different: more noticeably aporetic, more volatile. That difference seems to derive from the fact that self-critique is democracy's constitutive element. 'Of all the names grouped a bit too quickly under the category "political regimes"', argues Derrida, though with the provision that he is not in fact convinced that democracy

should be interpreted as a political regime, ‘the inherited concept of democracy is the only one that welcomes the possibility of being contested, of contesting itself, of criticizing and indefinitely improving itself’.<sup>71</sup> Democracy is thus ‘a form of society in which men consent to live under the stress of uncertainty’.<sup>72</sup> It is, as Jacques Rancière submits, a scandal.<sup>73</sup> Democracy is scandalous because in order to exist – to be(come) democratic – it must always already transgress itself, its instituted forms. As Bensaïd, following Rancière aptly suggests, ‘democracy is not itself unless it is scandalous right to the end’.<sup>74</sup>

This unique aspect of democracy is what makes self-deconstruction the ‘very motif of democracy’, and grounds its relentless self-delimitation. It is, in other words, what gives democracy the ‘*autos* of deconstructive self-delimitation’. There are, argues Matthias Fritsch in ‘Derrida’s Democracy to Come’, reasons why this is the case. Having come of age in the context of the disenchantment, demystification, and desacralization that marked modernity, democracy bears its characteristics – it is ungrounded, vacant at the core, always already open to reinvention and reinterpretation. In fact, it is this disenchantment that ‘[brings] democracy into its own’.<sup>75</sup> Claude Lefort comes to a similar conclusion, noting that ‘the markers which once allowed people to situate themselves in relation to one another in a determinate manner’, as in, for instance, the pre-18<sup>th</sup> century feudal orders, ‘have disappeared’.<sup>76</sup> Yet, whilst modern disenchantment may indeed have brought contemporary democracy into its own, traces of its distinct volatility and unique self-delimitation were present also at its Greek origins. And thus, democracy, always already lacking a ‘proper propriety’ and characterized by the lacuna produced by the self-critique that constitutes and distinguishes it, is also always already (differently) inherited.

Derrida himself distinctly reads, and inherits (from) democracy. As Fritsch points out, Derrida’s inheritance of democracy affirms particular strains and interpretation of the democratic heritage.<sup>77</sup> Derrida’s democracy is, for instance, defined less by popular sovereignty, equality, and majority rule than by free speech, openness to criticism and otherness, and hospitality to singularity.<sup>78</sup> Derrida, Fritsch argues, affirms a democracy committed to ‘free speech, to hearing the other out, to being open to challenges regarding the interpretation of essential concepts, to criticiz[ing] and perfect[ing] institutions with a view toward singularity and otherness, etc., in short, to what Derrida routinely affirms as his gloss on the emancipatory project of the Enlightenment’.<sup>79</sup> Haddad cautions that Fritsch’s analysis was published prior to the publication of *Rogues*, where Derrida explores other facets of democracy, including sovereignty.<sup>80</sup> Whilst this is indeed the case, it seems that Fritsch’s argument still stands – and Haddad seems to broadly agree.<sup>81</sup> Derrida inherits a democracy that is primarily (and constitutively) self-critical, self-deconstructive and, through the spatial and temporal openness effected by *différance*, just. Derrida’s democracy, even the *non-ipseic* sovereignty he explores in *Rogues*,<sup>82</sup> is ‘cut

to fit the deconstructive understanding of identity-formation [and] of time and space'.<sup>83</sup>

Yet Derrida does not just read, or inherit democracy as constituted by self-criticism, freedom and so on. Derrida fundamentally, though not unrelatedly, inherits democracy as aporetic and autoimmune. This has important implications for both democracy and its constitutive concepts.<sup>84</sup> It is this inheritance that leads Derrida to articulate democracy as 'to-come'. In short, it reveals that Derrida inherits democracy as democracy-to-come. And, as Derrida acknowledges, it is precisely the freedom inherent in the concept of democracy, its 'intrinsic plasticity' that enables him to posit that the 'syntagma "democracy-to-come" belongs to at least one of the lines of thought coming out of the Platonic tradition'.<sup>85</sup>

### Democracy-to-come

Derrida inherits democracy as democracy-to-come. It is for this reason that when Derrida speaks of democracy, it has the resonance of 'to-come'. For Derrida, 'democracy-to-come makes democracy what it is'.<sup>86</sup> In *Rogues*, one of his most explicit reflections on the meaning of democracy-to-come, the 'strange syntagma that does not form a sentence',<sup>87</sup> Derrida confesses:

I have most often used [democracy-to-come], always in passing, with as much stubborn determination as indeterminate hesitation – at once calculated and culpable – in a strange mixture of lightness and gravity, in a casual and cursory, indeed somewhat irresponsible, way, with a somewhat sententious and aphoristic reserve that leaves seriously in reserve an excessive responsibility.<sup>88</sup>

Its first occurrence, Derrida recalls, was in 1989–1990, with *The Right to Philosophy*, where democracy was figured as that which 'remains still to come', followed by the *Force of Law*, which expressed the sentiment that 'there is not yet any democracy worthy of this name', as it 'remains to come'.<sup>89</sup> Haddad points to another early appearance of democracy-to-come in *The Other Heading*, where democracy-to-come is figured as 'not something that is certain to happen tomorrow, not the democracy...of the future, but a democracy that must have the structure of a promise – and thus the memory of that which carries the future, the to-come, here and now'.<sup>90</sup> It is there, when suggesting that 'what is proper to a culture is not to be identical to itself',<sup>91</sup> that Derrida seems also to allude to the previously discussed heterogeneity at the core of democracy(-to-come).

Derrida is explicit with what democracy-to-come is not. It is not, as Derrida repeats on numerous occasions, a future democracy, a utopian or democratic ideal, or a regulating or regulative idea (in the Kantian sense).<sup>92</sup> But neither does it imply that democracy(-to-come) does not or cannot exist.

If all that democracy-to-come implied – announces Derrida in (what seems at least) a slight fit of pique – was that a

perfect democracy, a full and living democracy, does not exist...[and] not only does it not presently exist, but, indefinitely deferred, it will always remain to come, it will never be present in the present, will never present itself, will never come, will remain always to come, the impossible itself...[then] wouldn't I have been simply reproducing, even plagiarizing, the classical discourse of political philosophy? For example that of *On the Social Contract* [that] a true democracy has never existed and never will.<sup>93</sup>

That Derrida is explicit, however, does not mean that his position on democracy-to-come is straightforward. Democracy-to-come is not a future democracy that will one day arrive. It is not a regulative idea (because, among other things, a regulative idea remains within the realm of the possible, whereas as an event democracy-to-come must remain outside that realm). But it is also not a utopian ideal that will never arrive, but against which existing democracies can be measured. How, then, can this strange syntagma be interpreted?

Because a resonance of to-come is present in all of Derrida's remarks on democracy (owing to its inherent and originary self-differentiation and -deferral, its having the structure of a promise), Derrida's account of democracy-to-come dovetails with his account of democracy. Thus, democracy(-to-come) is fundamentally characterized by *différance*, 'by which it defers itself and differs from itself' and in doing so, opens up to the 'experience of the alterity of the other, of heterogeneity, of the singular, the not-same, the different, the dissymmetric, the heteronomous'.<sup>94</sup> Yet Derrida still spends some time exploring the 'to-come', drawing attention to its significance for understanding democracy. Alluding to the grounding difference that deconstruction reveals in linguistic structures, the 'to-come', writes Derrida in the *Monolingualism of the Other*, 'gathers language together...it welcomes it, collects it, not in its identity or its unity, not even in its ipseity, but in the uniqueness or singularity of a gathering together of its difference to itself: in difference *with itself* [*avec soi*] rather than difference *from itself* [*d'avec soi*']'.<sup>95</sup> Although Derrida is here referring to language, the gathering in of heterogeneity – with(in) itself, within a *non-ipseic* 'self' – also describes the interminable movement of *différance* that constitutes democracy(-to-come). The 'to-come' thus also draws attention to the aporetic structure of democracy – the presence of, among others, the aporias of 'incalculable singularity and calculable equality, commensurability and incommensurability, heteronomy and autonomy, indivisible sovereignty and divisible or shared sovereignty'.<sup>96</sup>

Underlining that democracy-to-come is not a future democracy, Derrida explains in *The Other Heading* that 'to-come' does not reference something

that is 'certain to happen tomorrow, not the democracy (national or international, state or trans-state) of the *future*, but a democracy that must have the structure of a promise – *and thus the memory of that which carries the future, the to-come, here and now*'.<sup>97</sup> The 'to-come' orients democracy to the future. It does not reference a future democracy, but indicates, rather, that in having the structure of a promise – in being open toward unknown possibilities, and an unknown and unknowable future – democracy(-to-come) is always orienting towards something other than 'itself', towards (an)other. Yet in order to orient towards the future, the 'to-come' must be tethered to the past. There is no 'to-come without heritage and the possibility or repeating', notes Derrida.<sup>98</sup> Parsing the syntagma, Haddad proposes that Derrida's "to come" stands open in the present toward an unknown future, while democracy brings with it a whole history of meaning'.<sup>99</sup> Democracy-to-come is tethered to the past, to the heritages and lineages of democracy, whilst transgressing them through the movement of self-deconstruction and self-delimiting, and in doing so, opening up to undisclosed futures. Thus, democracy-to-come reflects a distinct (deconstructive) inheritance of democracy, which takes into account 'the absolute and intrinsic historicity of the only system that welcomes in itself, in its very concept...the right to self-critique and perfectibility'.<sup>100</sup>

### The Event of Democracy

In being constituted by self-transgression, and in having the structure of a promise, democracy-to-come constitutes an event, a rupture with the already given. It constitutes, in other words, an irruption of, or interruption by, the unforeseeable other. For Derrida, an event cannot and should not be prevented, contends Fritsch, noting Derrida's move from the structural impossibility of closure (that is, of preventing the event, which in its singularity, pries open the present and conditions the possibility of (an)other future) to its undesirability.<sup>101</sup> For Derrida, 'any event worthy of its name' must be unforeseeable;<sup>102</sup> it must be 'to-come'.<sup>103</sup> Something predictable, which can be anticipated, forecast or envisioned does not constitute an event. If it can be forecast, it (is as if it) has already happened or arrived; the irruptive nature of the event has been neutralized. That which falls, 'like a case, like the object of some knowledge, under the generality of a law, norm, determinative judgement, or technoscience, and thus of a power-knowledge and a knowledge-power, is not, at least in this measure, an event'.<sup>104</sup> In turn, 'without the absolute singularity of the incalculable and the exceptional, no thing and no one, nothing other and thus nothing, arrives or happens'.<sup>105</sup>

To characterize democracy-to-come as an event goes some way toward giving the rather abstract notion a more experiential inflection. Though unforeseeable, an event can eventually (if only after the fact) be seen; it leaves a (discursive or non-discursive) trace; it effects (or at least endeavours

to effect) a change that might, at some point, be perceived. But the ‘strange syntagma’ might still seem some distance removed from political and democratic ‘realities’, and we might still be some way from understanding the kind of political practice it might entail. In fact, Derrida’s account of democracy(-to-come) might still seem largely unintelligible, at least vis-à-vis the field of democracy studies. As Thomson rightly points out, Derrida’s contribution to theorizing democracy does not, after all, ‘proceed...from an analysis of the history of the democratic state form nor from the observation of what democracy means in the contemporary world’.<sup>106</sup> It does not offer practical and pragmatically oriented normative models of democracy, nor adapts such models to ‘local conditions’.<sup>107</sup> In short, it does not fit within the corpus of (democratic) theory as we have come to expect it. Thus, as Thomson continues, whilst Derrida expresses the desire for more rather than less democracy, he makes little contribution to democratic theory, and is ‘unable to make any concrete suggestions as to how [more democracy] might be brought about’.<sup>108</sup>

Thomson is right in pointing out that Derrida’s contribution to theorizing democracy does not resemble conventional theories of democracy. It is also not easily translated into tangible or pragmatic political practice. But the fact that it does not resemble conventional political theory does not mean that it cannot contribute to it. And the fact that it does not easily translate into political action does not mean that it does not, or cannot be translated. What is more, Derrida’s work can, I think, offer some (more or less) ‘concrete suggestions’ for how more democracy, of the ‘to-come’ kind, might be brought about.

What might be needed, to use Thomson’s terms, for more democracy to be brought about, what a democracy-to-come might ‘look like’, and what kind of political practice it might entail is addressed in Chapter Four. For now, it suffices to say that Derrida himself seemed to have thought that his articulation of democracy(-to-come) had relevance not only to theorizing democracy – in offering a conception of democracy as grounded in *différance* – but also to a political practice directed towards justice – in being inherently self-critical and self-delimiting. In a statement from *Rogues* that seems worth quoting at length, Derrida says the following about democracy-to-come:

“Democracy to come” can hesitate endlessly, oscillate indecidably and forever, between two possibilities: it can, on the one hand, correspond to the neutral, constative analysis of a concept. (In this case I would simply be describing, observing, limiting myself to analyzing, as a responsible philosopher and logician of language, as a semanticist, what the concept of democracy implies, namely, everything we have just spoken about: the semantic void at the heart of the concept, its rather ordinary insignificance or its disseminal spacing, memory, promise, the event to come...the right to autoimmune self-critique, and an indefinite number of aporias. This would amount to saying: if you want to know



what you are saying when you use this inherited word democracy, you need to know that these things are inscribed or prescribed within it; for my part, I am simply describing this prescription in a neutral fashion... But, on the other hand, no longer satisfied to remain at the level of a neutral, constative conceptual analysis, “democracy to come” can also inscribe a performative and attempt to win conviction by suggesting support or adherence, an “and yet it is necessary to believe it”.<sup>109</sup>

For Derrida, democracy-to-come can be both (at once) analytical and performative. In its analytical form, it is an interpretation of the concept of democracy, and a catalogue of its characteristics – some of which, like its self-critical and self-delimiting nature; the void that constitutes its core; its promissory and aporetic structure were discussed in this chapter, with other, others, like its autoimmunity and ‘indefinite number of aporias’ to be discussed in the next. Yet democracy-to-come can also ‘inscribe a performative’. It can translate into conviction, which can in turn, translate into political practice. Democracy-to-come, as Derrida writes a few pages earlier, ‘does indeed translate or call for a militant and interminable political critique’.<sup>110</sup> The self-critique, self-delimitation and interminable potential for perfectibility of democracy-to-come can serve as a weapon against

all naiveté and every political abuse, every rhetoric that would present as a present or existing democracy, as a *de facto* democracy, what remains inadequate to the democratic demand, whether nearby or far away, at home or somewhere else in the world, anywhere that a discourse on human rights and on democracy remains little more than an obscene alibi so long as it tolerates the terrible plight of so many millions of human beings suffering from malnutrition, disease, and humiliation, grossly deprived not only of bread and water but of equality or freedom, dispossessed of the rights of all, of everyone, of anyone.<sup>111</sup>

Democracy-to-come is thus also a transgressive political moment, an incessant critique of existing democracies. It calls for and grounds a deconstructive engagement, one that blows the lid off existing democracies, exposing and transgressing their limits.

What I would like to stress is that we need not, and in fact should not, think of such deconstructive political practice as necessarily disembodied – restricted to the conceptual prying open of texts, discourses, structures and institutions. To do so would be to ignore, or at least not fully come to terms with, the performative possibilities of democracy-to-come. The militant and interminable political critique that democracy-to-come calls for can also be performed – thought corporeal acts, interventions and initiatives that expose not only the hypocrisies of existing democracies, but attempt to unsettle the identities on which they are grounded. Some such interventions into democracy in Turkey will be discussed in Chapter Four, revealing, I hope,

that democracy-to-come can be performed, if only as an ephemeral irruption onto the scene of existing democracies. Yet it is crucial, from the outset, to keep equally in mind the analytical and performative postures of democracy-to-come.

What is likewise crucial to keep in mind is that there is an urgency to both the analytical and performative postures of democracy-to-come. 'To-come', Derrida again stresses, references neither a future democracy for which we should wait, nor a regulative idea by which we should let ourselves be 'governed, reassured, pacified, or consoled'.<sup>112</sup> It does not give the right to defer 'the experience, or even less the injunction of democracy'.<sup>113</sup> To the contrary, it signals an 'urgency'. Democracy-to-come is thus an injunction for the present, a demand to act in and for the present.<sup>114</sup>

## Conclusion

This chapter was framed by two of Derrida's radical propositions on democracy: that there is no democracy without deconstruction, and that democracy is 'to-come'. The chapter first considered Derrida's contention that there is no democracy without deconstruction. Whilst conceding that Derrida does make these kinds of telegraphic statement provocatively, and often, I took on the provocation, and tried to think through what such a link between deconstruction and democracy might mean for our understanding of democracy.

Thus, the chapter began by exploring deconstruction, and the political and ethical relevance assigned to it by Derrida. I suggested that deconstruction – as that which disassembles and reassembles, renounces and preserves, negates and affirms, inherits and invents – might be usefully conceptualized as an ethico-political comportment. I then explored what such deconstructive comportment might reveal, contending, following Derrida, that whilst one can never be certain of what deconstruction will reveal, it will always reveal that *différance* determines and inhabits all discursive and non-discursive structures.

Having thus sketched the contours of deconstruction the chapter proceeded to take a closer look at the disclosure of *différance* as the aim of, and that which is ethically and politically at stake in, deconstruction. The chapter examined the concept of *différance*, exploring its spatial and temporal connotations (difference and deferral). I suggested that the unearthing of difference and deferral (of meaning) within that which is constituted as fixed and selfsame has significant ethical and political consequences. The challenge it poses to the ontology of cultural immunity, for instance, or to the ontology of self versus other through the disclosure of originary difference has fundamental consequences for how we imagine and inhabit the world. Its disclosure of interminable deferral, in turn, reveals within that which *is* the potential to *become* otherwise.

Following the discussion of the ethical and political implications of deconstruction, the chapter turned more explicitly to exploring the potential contribution of deconstruction, as the disclosure of *différance*, to theorizing democracy. I suggested that the disclosure of difference and deferral as the constitutive core of democracy gives rise to Derrida's interpretation of democracy as unable to gather, or be gathered around a single origin or definitive meaning, and as inherently and particularly self-deconstructive. Derrida's distinct conception of democracy, I argued, is thus indeed dependent on deconstruction – and so, for Derrida, no democracy without deconstruction.

The chapter then turned to the neologism democracy-to-come, suggesting that it signifies the particular way in which Derrida inherits democracy. Derrida's democracy always reverberates with the trace of the 'to-come', making it possible to figure Derrida's interpretation of democracy as democracy(-to-come). The chapter proceeded to explore what democracy(-to-come) might, and might not mean. As Derrida indicates, democracy-to-come is neither a future democracy, nor a utopian ideal, nor a regulative idea. As it is constituted by *différance* and has the structure of a promise, it can be figured as an event, an opening towards, irruption of and interruption by an unforeseeable other. As an event, democracy-to-come is thus a transgressive ethical and political event, exposing and violating the limits of existing democratic practices and the identities on which they are grounded. It constitutes, as Derrida proposes, 'a militant and interminable political critique'.

The chapter thus concluded with an exploration of the contribution Derrida's inheritance of democracy as democracy-to-come makes to theorizing democracy and engaging in democratic practice. It suggested that Derrida's contribution lies in both the analytical and performative injunctions of democracy-to-come. It stressed the importance of recognizing the performative possibilities of democracy-to-come (including acts, interventions and initiatives that attempt to unsettle the identities on which existing democracies are grounded), and its demand to act in and for the present.

The next chapter continues to explore Derrida's contribution to democratic theory and practice by focussing on the aporetic structure of democracy and its particular vulnerability to autoimmune processes. Chapter Three brings these in conversation with analyses of Turkish democracy, drawing out some of the contributions Derrida's work can make to theorizing democracy in general, and Turkish democracy in particular.

## Notes

- 1 Matthias Fritsch, 'Derrida's Democracy to Come', *Constellations*, vol. 9, no. 4, 2002: 574–597; Samir Haddad, *Derrida and the Inheritance of Democracy*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013; Michael Naas, "One Nation... Indivisible": Jacques Derrida on the Autoimmunity of Democracy and the Sovereignty of God', *Research in Phenomenology*, vol. 36, 2006: 15–44; Michael Naas, 'Derrida's Laïcité', *CR: The New Centennial Review*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2007: 21–42; Alex Thomson, *Deconstruction and Democracy*, London:

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- Bloomsbury, 2005; and, Samuel Weber, 'Rogue Democracy', *diacritics*, vol. 38, nos. 1&2, 2008: 104–120.
- 2 For instance in Giovanni Borradori, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror: Dialogues with Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
  - 3 Thomson, *Deconstruction and Democracy*, p. 2.
  - 4 *Ibid.*, p. 25.
  - 5 Haddad, *Derrida and the Inheritance of Democracy*, p. 43.
  - 6 *Ibid.*, p. 43.
  - 7 See, for instance, Richard Beardsworth, *Derrida and the Political*, New York: Routledge, 1996.
  - 8 Leslie Hill, *The Cambridge Introduction to Jacques Derrida*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 46.
  - 9 Hill, *The Cambridge Introduction to Jacques Derrida*, p. 46.
  - 10 Jacques Derrida, 'Letter to a Japanese Friend', in *Psyche: Inventions of the Other, Volume II*, trans. David Wood and Andrew Benjamin, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008, p. 3.
  - 11 Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*, New York: Routledge, 1994, p. 115.
  - 12 Derrida, 'Letter to a Japanese Friend', p. 3.
  - 13 Jacques Derrida, 'Fifty-two Aphorisms for a Foreword', in *Psyche: Inventions of the Other, Volume II*, trans. Andrew Benjamin, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008, p. 125.
  - 14 *Ibid.*, p. 125.
  - 15 *Ibid.*, p. 124.
  - 16 Jacques Derrida, "'There is No One Narcissism" (Autobiophotographies)', in *Points...Interviews, 1974–1994*, trans. Peggy Kamuf et al., Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992, p. 200.
  - 17 Beardsworth, *Derrida and the Political*, p. 4.
  - 18 Haddad, *Derrida and the Inheritance of Democracy*, p. 1. For more on the relationship between deconstruction and inheritance see Haddad, *Derrida and the Inheritance of Democracy*, pp. 117–118.
  - 19 Edward Baring, *The Young Derrida and French Philosophy, 1945–1968*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011, p. 222.
  - 20 *Ibid.*, p. 237.
  - 21 *Ibid.*, p. 237.
  - 22 *Ibid.*, p. 238.
  - 23 Hill, *The Cambridge Introduction to Jacques Derrida*, pp. 117–118.
  - 24 Borradori, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror*, p. 138.
  - 25 Jacques Derrida, 'Positions: Interview with Jean-Louis Houdebine and Guy Scarpetta', in *Positions*, trans. Alan Bass, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981, p. 41.
  - 26 Borradori, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror*, p. 138.
  - 27 Jacques Derrida, 'Hostipitality', *Angelaki*, vol. 5, no. 3, 2000: 3–18.
  - 28 Jacques Derrida, 'La Parole Soufflée', *Tel Quel*, vol. 20, Winter, 1965.
  - 29 Jacques Derrida, 'Freud and the Scene of Writing', *Yale French Studies*, trans. Jeffrey Mehlman, no. 48, 1972: 74–117.
  - 30 Baring, *The Young Derrida and French Philosophy*, pp. 200–201.
  - 31 *Ibid.*, pp. 190–191.
  - 32 In Jacques Derrida, *The Ear of the Other: Otobiography, Transference, Translation*, trans. Peggy Kamuf, New York: Schocken, 1985, p. xii.
  - 33 Jacques Derrida, 'Implications: Interview with Henri Ronsse', in *Positions*, trans. Alan Bass, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981, p. 8.
  - 34 *Ibid.*, p. 9.

- 35 Jacques Derrida, 'Semiology and Grammatology: *Interview with Julia Kristeva*', in *Positions*, trans. Alan Bass, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981, p. 28.
- 36 Cited in Hill, *The Cambridge Introduction to Jacques Derrida*, pp. 43–44.
- 37 Jacques Derrida, *The Other Heading: Reflections on Today's Europe*, trans. Pascale Anne-Brault and Michael Naas, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992, pp. 9.
- 38 *Ibid.*, pp. 9–10.
- 39 Borradori, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror*, p. 146.
- 40 *Ibid.*, p. 146.
- 41 *Ibid.*, p. 147.
- 42 Edward Said, *Orientalism*, New York: Vintage, 1978.
- 43 Timothy Mitchell, *Colonizing Egypt*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991, p. 32.
- 44 Agnes Czajka, 'Orientalising the Egyptian Uprising, Take Two: A Response to Rabab el-Mahdi and her Interlocutors', *Jadaliyya*, 1 July 2011.
- 45 Jacques Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, trans. Pascale Anne-Brault and Michael Naas, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005, pp. 10–11.
- 46 *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- 47 *Ibid.*, pp. 11–12.
- 48 *Ibid.*, pp. xiii–xiv.
- 49 Jacques Derrida, *Athens, Still Remains: The Photographs of Jean-François Bonhomme*, trans. Pascale Anne-Brault and Michael Naas, New York: Fordham University Press, 2010, p. 39.
- 50 Derrida, "'There is No One Narcissism" (Autobiophotographies)', p. 214.
- 51 Jacques Derrida, 'Force of Law: The "Mystical Foundation of Authority"', in *Acts of Religion*, trans. Mary Quaintance, New York: Routledge, 2002, p. 236. In attending to the aporias of hospitality, law, and democracy, among others, Derrida makes a concerted effort to transcend the boundaries of the academy and demonstrate the ethical and political relevance of deconstructive interventions. But he also attempts to bring a deconstructive comportment to bear on more prosaic institutions, including for instance, the United Nations, suggesting that such comportment is useful, and indeed necessary. (See Derrida's 1991 address at the first UNESCO International Conference for Humanistic Discourses in Jacques Derrida, *Ethics, Institutions, and the Right to Philosophy*, trans. Peter Pericles Trifonas, Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002.)
- 52 Jacques Derrida, *Learning to Live Finally: The Last Interview*, trans. Pascale Anne-Brault and Michael Naas, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p. 51.
- 53 John Caputo (ed.), *Deconstruction in a Nutshell: A Conversation with Jacques Derrida*, New York: Fordham University Press, 1997, p. 13.
- 54 *Ibid.*, p. 18.
- 55 Cited in Borradori, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror*, p. 169.
- 56 Derrida, 'Force of Law', p. 243.
- 57 Cited in Thomson, *Deconstruction and Democracy*, p. 1.
- 58 *Ibid.*, p. 41.
- 59 Haddad, *Derrida and the Inheritance of Democracy*, p. 46. This might perhaps be helpfully rendered as democracy(-to-come).
- 60 *Ibid.*
- 61 Derrida, *Rogues*, pp. 86–87.
- 62 Fritsch, 'Derrida's Democracy to Come', p. 577.
- 63 Derrida, *Rogues*, p. 9.
- 64 *Ibid.*, p. 32.
- 65 *Ibid.*, pp. 26–27.
- 66 Haddad, *Derrida and the Inheritance of Democracy*, p. 53.

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- 67 Derrida, *Rogues*, pp. 8–9.
- 68 Ibid., p. 37.
- 69 Ibid., p. 39.
- 70 Derrida, *Ethics, Institutions, and the Right to Philosophy*, p. 10.
- 71 In Borradori, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror*, p. 121.
- 72 Daniel Bensaïd, ‘Permanent Scandal’, in Giorgio Agamben (ed.), *Democracy in What State?*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2011, p. 32.
- 73 Jacques Rancière, *Hatred of Democracy*, trans. Steve Corcoran, New York: Verso, 2006, p. 51.
- 74 Bensaïd, ‘Permanent Scandal’, p. 43.
- 75 Fritsch, ‘Derrida’s Democracy to Come’, p. 574.
- 76 Cited in Frank Cunningham, *Theories of Democracy: An Introduction*, New York: Routledge, 2002, p. 34.
- 77 Fritsch, ‘Derrida’s Democracy to Come’, pp. 581–582.
- 78 Ibid.
- 79 Ibid., p. 582.
- 80 Haddad, *Derrida and the Inheritance of Democracy*, p. 156, n.29.
- 81 Haddad stresses that, among others, Derrida’s democracy privileges freedom, discussing its consequences along lines similar to Fritsch’s discussion of its inherent contestability and openness to otherness. See *ibid.*, p. 51.
- 82 Derrida’s critique of democratic sovereignty is, as previously discussed, grounded in his commitment to deconstruction. Commenting on the conceptualization of democratic sovereignty advanced in *Rogues*, Samuel Weber (‘Rogue Democracy’, pp. 115–116), draws attention to the debt it also owes to Derrida’s reading of Rousseau’s conclusion that, ‘If there were a people of gods, it would govern itself democratically. So perfect a government is not suited to humans.’ Derrida, Weber suggests, inherits Rousseau’s emphasis on the plurality of gods, leading him to reflect on ‘how this alters the very notion of the divine, and with it, of the sovereignty it informs’. By associating democracy with a plural divinity, Rousseau breaks (as does Derrida after him) with ‘the tradition of political discourse that...insists on the indispensable unity and indivisibility of the sovereign’.
- 83 Fritsch, ‘Derrida’s Democracy to Come’, p. 582.
- 84 For freedom, for instance, riven by the aporia of liberty and licence. This will be discussed further in Chapter Two.
- 85 Derrida, *Rogues*, p. 25. ‘Though this cannot always be said’, continues Derrida, ‘without a bit of duplicity, if not some polemical bad faith, but it also cannot be said without some verisimilitude’ (Derrida, *Rogues*, p. 25).
- 86 Thomson, *Deconstruction and Democracy*, p. 26.
- 87 Derrida, *Rogues*, p. 8.
- 88 Ibid., p. 81.
- 89 Ibid., pp. 81–82.
- 90 Cited in Haddad, *Derrida and the Inheritance of Democracy*, p. 47. See also Derrida, *Rogues*, pp. 85–86.
- 91 Derrida, *The Other Heading*, p. 9.
- 92 Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, pp. 80–81; Derrida, *Rogues*, pp. 37–38 and p. 83. Derrida offers the most comprehensive justification for not interpreting democracy-to-come as a ‘regulative idea in the Kantian sense’ in *Rogues* (pp. 83–85).
- 93 Derrida, *Rogues*, p. 73.
- 94 Derrida, *Rogues*, p. 38.
- 95 Jacques Derrida, *Monolingualism of the Other, or, The Prosthesis of Origin*, trans. Patrick Mensah, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998, pp. 67–68.
- 96 Derrida, *Rogues*, pp. 85–86.

- 97 Ibid., pp. 85–86.
- 98 Jacques Derrida, 'Faith and Knowledge: The Two Sources of "Religion" at the Limits of Reason Alone', in *Acts of Religion*, trans. Samuel Weber, New York: Routledge, 2002, p. 83.
- 99 Haddad, *Derrida and the Inheritance of Democracy*, p. 65.
- 100 Derrida, *Rogues*, pp. 86–87.
- 101 Fritsch, 'Derrida's Democracy to Come', p. 582.
- 102 Derrida, *Rogues*, p. 143.
- 103 Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, p. 81.
- 104 Derrida, *Rogues*, p. 148.
- 105 Ibid., p. 148.
- 106 Thomson, *Deconstruction and Democracy*, p. 28.
- 107 Ibid., p. 28.
- 108 Ibid., p. 28.
- 109 Derrida, *Rogues*, p. 91.
- 110 Ibid., p. 86.
- 111 Ibid., p. 86.
- 112 Ibid., p. 108.
- 113 Ibid., p. 29.
- 114 Urgency, it should be kept in mind, does not only (or necessarily) imply a temporal measure. It is also related to undecidability. 'Undecidability' notes Derrida, 'makes urgency something other than...the empirical briefness of a lapse of time. Even if one had a...virtually unlimited amount of time, the structure of urgency...the *interruption* of reflection...would be irreducible. There can be urgency...at the end of a thousand years of reflection' (See Jacques Derrida, 'Ethics and Politics Today', in *Negotiations: Interventions and Interviews, 1971–2001*, trans. Elisabeth Rottenberg, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002, p. 298).