Reason, Passion and Participation: Paradoxes of Deliberative Democracy

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Abstract

Deliberative democrats' understanding of democracy includes both participation and discussions before making collective decisions. However, there is a tension between the particular ways they conceptualize participation (as extensive and active) and public discussions (as deliberations under the precepts of public reason). This paper challenges the feasibility of deliberative democracy in the following ways: 1) by demonstrating the inability of deliberative democrats to provide a convincing account of why their conceptualizations of participation and deliberation should occur simultaneously; 2) by delineating, through historical and theoretical evidence, that what should reasonably be expected to occur simultaneously with active and extensive participation is not reason governed, but passion-driven public deliberations; and, 3) by arguing that these two aspects (extensive participation and public reason) may have adverse effects on each other.

Keywords: *Deliberative democracy, Passions, Public Reason, Participation*

1 Introduction

John Rawls (2001, p. 1) in his book *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement* distinguishes four roles that political philosophy may play in the 'public political culture' of society. He argues that the fourth of these roles is that "we view political philosophy as realistically utopian: that is, as probing the limits of practicable political possibility." (Rawls, 2001, p. 4) This paper investigates the following question: can the ideal of deliberative democracy be constituted as realistically utopian? In other words, is it possible that deliberative democracy will be realized under "reasonably possible but still favorable historical conditions?" (Rawls, 2001, p. 4). My central claim is that realizing deliberative democracy entails contradictory requirements from modern citizens, and that these contradictory requirements are beyond the limits of favorable conditions; consequentially the deliberative democracy ideal is not *realistically* utopian.

Deliberative democrats' understanding of democracy, like many others before, includes both participation and discussions before making collective decisions. However, the feasibility of their theoretical construct becomes tenuous because of the tension between the particular ways they conceptualize participation - as extensive and active[1] - and public discussions - as deliberations under the precepts of public reason. This paper challenges the feasibility of deliberative democracy by demonstrating: 1) the inability of deliberative democrats to provide a convincing account of why their conceptualizations of participation and deliberation should occur simultaneously; 2) that what should reasonably be expected to occur simultaneously with active and extensive participation is not reason governed but *passionate* (understood as being in opposition to reason) public deliberations; and, 3) that these two aspects (extensive participation and public reason) may have adverse effects on each other.

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[1] By active, I mean something more than one's mere participation by being present. It should involve some way of forcing the limits of one's abilities while deliberating.

I begin by briefly outlining how deliberative democrats conceptualize participation and public reason, and how they require both for the realization of their theoretical construct. I argue that these theorists provide no compelling argument about why we should assume that extensive participation should be accompanied by reasoned argumentation. In the following two sections, I present historical and theoretical evidence that shows that what is plausible is not the union of participation with reason, but the opposite: the coupling of extensive and active participation with passion. First, in examining the case of Athenian democracy, where both participation and deliberation were present, the public debates that took place were in complete opposition to the conceptualization of deliberative democrats: participation was extensive but public deliberations were passion-governed rather than reason-governed. Second, political theorists as diverse as Plato and Madison, who operated with similar notions of democracy, coupled democracy with passion not reason. I contend that the arguments they offered to curtail passion (to acquire reason based government) are either consciously linked to, or at least have co-existed with, different mechanisms to curtail either participation or public deliberation. These two sections together demonstrate that the feasibility of deliberative democracy is a serious concern, because passions are indeed an integral aspect of any conception of democracy that includes both active participation and "sions. In other words, historical and theoretical evidence suggests that extensive and active participation is coupled by passion not reason.

Finally, building on these insights, I provide a conceptual analysis of the possible challenges to deliberative democracy in contemporary societies. Drawing on a taxonomy offered by Diego Gambetta, I argue that in both of his ideal type societies (indexical knowledge and analytical knowledge societies), the tension between the participatory requirements of deliberative democracy and the process of public reasoning render such democracy impracticable. Further, by avoiding the role of passions, deliberative democrats overlook their potential function as a motivational force for active participation in democratic political processes when compared with the cool, and often indifferent impartiality associated with reason. In other words, this section suggests a causal link as to why passions, not reason, might constitute a motivation for participation.

2 Participation and Reason in Deliberative Democracy

In the last three decades, deliberative democracy has established itself in academia as one of the main conceptions of democracy, in spite of its apparently much longer historical and conceptual lineage (Elster, 1998b). As opposed to the conceptions of democracy that take people's interests as given (the utilitarian approach, the economic conception of democracy, elitist and pluralist theories), the deliberative view is mainly concerned with transforming these preferences (Nino, 1996; Shapiro, 2002b). According to deliberative democrats, democracy cannot be reduced to preference aggregation. An aggregative, fixed preferences model sees democracy as the arena where people enter and compete via fair mechanisms of assembly. Deliberative democracy places emphasis on the communicative processes of opinion and will formations that precede voting[2]. The next two sections deal with questions of how these processes (of opinion and will formation) occur and who carries them out.

2.1 Public Reason

Bohman (1996, p. 402) argues that, "deliberative democracy is a complex ideal with a variety of forms but whatever form it takes must refer to the ideal of public reason" (also for a very similar idea see: Cohen (1997, p. 413); Cohen (1997, p. 193)). Whatever their differences in terms of the value they ascribe to deliberative democracy, all deliberative democrats will adhere to one form or another

[2]Most deliberative democrats will adhere to this definition; however, a few writers operate with less demanding definitions such as the idea that deliberation is discussion before voting (Fearon, 1998).

of public reasoning. In this section, I deal with the common core of this divergently defined central concept, placing the emphasis on the motivational or moral requirements that deliberative theorists expect from participants.

The deliberative conception of democracy entails that in the face of the fact of inescapable pluralism of moral and political ends over life, people engage in public reasoning for the attainment of the common good. In its general form this means that citizens have a moral duty (and sometimes incentives depending on the conception) to refer to public reasons in their public deliberations. Public reasons as opposed to private ones are considerations that all deliberating citizens as reasonable persons can accept. Mainly, what distinguishes public from private reason is the concern of the latter for the common good.

Although Rawls' relation to deliberative democracy is problematic, (compare Freeman (2000) with Chambers (2003) and Manin et al. (1987)) we can argue that his conception of public reason is crucial because it was instrumental in the formulations of public reason by some deliberative democrats. According to Rawls, "an essential feature of a well-ordered society is that its public conception establishes a shared basis for citizens to justify to one another their political judgments." Further, "[public] justification proceeds from some consensus: from premises all parties in disagreement, assumed to be free and equal and fully capable of reason, may reasonably be expected to share and freely endorse"(Rawls, 2001, p. 27). In sum, consensus on the essentials, coupled with an already established consensus on the values of public reason (Rawls, 2001, p. 91) will breed agreements on the actual political issues. At least they will circumvent conflictual politics enough to ensure agreement among reasonable people[3]. Although Rawls excludes deliberations over comprehensive moral doctrines, he makes no epistemic claim about the public deliberation (Rawls, 1993, p. 97-105). In this context, deliberative democracy should be seen as a moral requirement for legitimacy, because for institutions to be legitimate they should be justifiable to all. And these justifications should rely on reasons that all citizens can reasonably accept.

Like Rawls, all proponents of deliberative democracy presuppose reason-based discourse; however, there are differences among their conceptions of public reason. For example, (Habermas, 1984, p. 42)' conception of public reason is different from that of Rawls in two fundamental senses. First, he does not exclude comprehensive moral doctrines from deliberation, and he argues that the rightness of moral norms are natural components of proper public discourse, hence they can be tested in them . Second, Habermas makes the epistemic claim about rationally motivated deliberations. "...in relation to some matter requiring regulation, an interest *common to all* those affected and must be capable in principle of meeting with rationally motivated approval of everyone affected under conditions that neutralize all motives except that of cooperatively seeking the truth" (Habermas, 1984, p. 19).

(Cohen, 1998, p. 195-196)'s views are somewhat closer to those of Rawls. He also argues for the exclusion of deep comprehensive moral reasons , and that in an ideal deliberative procedure, participants regard each other as free, equal and reasonable: "reasonable in that they aim to defend and criticize institutions and programs in terms of considerations that others, as free and equal, have *reason to accept*, given the fact of reasonable pluralism" ((Cohen, 1998, p. 194), *his emphasis*). Gutmann and Thompson (2000, p. 167) differ from both Rawls/Cohen and Habermas, in the sense that they try to incorporate an appeal to comprehensive views in their conception of deliberation by putting the emphasis on reciprocity[4] in their understanding of public reason. Reciprocity suggests a purpose to seek agreement with respect to principles that can be justified to others who share the same purpose of reasonable agreement. In this conception, when citizens pursue moral lines of argumentation, "they do so by justifying the policies that they find most morally defensible in a way that minimizes rejection

[3]Public reason does not necessarily deal with non-fundamental issues. "This means that political values alone are to settle such fundamental questions..." (Rawls, 1993, p. 214). However, Rawls concedes that sometimes daily issues have fundamental components (Rawls, 1993, p. 214-215).

[4]Together with publicity and accountability, but reciprocity is the core concept.

of the reasonable positions that they nonetheless morally oppose on moral grounds" (Gutmann and Thompson, 2000, p. 168), (Gutmann and Thompson, 2002, p.158-165). Therefore, in such a situation of moral disagreement, deliberators are still expected to be open to the reasons of others and mutually respect each other -consistency and sincerity being other associated values.

We should, however, not place undue emphasis on these differences, because when evaluated from within the larger field of democratic theory, the commonalities between deliberative democrats in terms of how they conceptualize proper deliberation are striking. When Elster (1998b, p. 5) argues that "reason is impartial, both disinterested and dispassionate. Arguing is connected to reason, in the sense that anyone who engages in argument must appeal to impartial values", he ends up positioning himself on the strongly rationalistic side of the different views on public deliberation. However, deliberative democrats often require discussants to take the standpoint of impartiality - what Benhabib (1996) calls the *generalized other* - or to engage in argumentation with each other "by the intention of convincing a universal audience", taking the perspective of all (Habermas, 1984, p. 26); (Benhabib, 1996, p. 72). The winner (if there is one) of this reason-governed process is determined by "excluding all force, except the force of better argument" (Habermas, 1984, p. 25).

In short, deliberative democrats differ on whether to include comprehensive moral doctrines, or if yes, on how to include them, and on epistemic claims about the procedure. Still, all share the conception that deliberation is a reason-governed process, characterized by civility, impartiality, a lack of passion, and which is "...proper for *free, equal and rational agents*" who are ready to "reason together in the right spirit" ((Elster, 1998b, p. 5), *his emphasis*).

2.2 Participation

To support the claim that deliberative democracy has serious feasibility problems, it is necessary to establish that deliberative democrats do not envision this type of public reason giving process for selected political elites on a few issues, but for large segments of the citizen body on an extensive range of issues.

As an ideal conception, deliberative democracy aims at the free public deliberation of 'all affected parties' about matters of 'public concern' (Benhabib, 1996). Although most deliberative democrats will agree that deliberation should involve public policy-making (as in (Przeworski, 1998; Gambetta, 1998; Elster, 1998b)), they will not generally limit it to just this function. It is even possible to argue that some idea of self-government is intrinsic in the ideal of deliberative democracy ((Habermas, 1997, p. 57-60); (Nelson, 2000, p. 187-188)). In a less controversial manner, most deliberative theorists believe that when there is a disagreement, deliberation is required. The disagreements may be: 1) about specific policies and the means to achieve them; 2) about the procedures of deliberation itself (Benhabib, 1996); 3) about how to advance common goals; or 4) about moral questions involving goals themselves (Gutmann and Thompson, 2000, p. 163-167), 163-167; (Gutmann and Thompson, 2002, p. 165-169).

How should deliberations on such matters occur in a democracy? (Habermas, 1997, p. 57) proposes that "...the normative expectation of rational outcomes is grounded ultimately in the interplay between institutionally structured political will-formation and spontaneous, unsubverted circuits of communication in a public sphere..." . Based on a basic system of rights, arenas in which these deliberations will be held are formal spheres of legislative and court processes (of will-formation) and the broader less formal public sphere of civil society (of opinion formation) (Habermas, 1997; Chambers, 2003; Brooke, 1998).Benhabib very clearly articulates these arenas: "this [deliberative] model privileges a *plurality of modes of association* in which all affected can have the right to articulate their point of view. These can range from political parties, to citizens' initiatives, to social movements, to voluntary associations, to consciousness raising groups, and the like. *It is through the interlocking net of these multiple forms of associations, networks, and organizations that an anonymous 'public conversation'*

results ((Benhabib, 1996, 74-75),her emphasis)[5].

In light of these claims, we can argue that the process of deliberation minimally involves, or even more strongly *requires* the active participation of free and equal citizens at multiple stages of the democratic process. Therefore, for deliberative democracy to be feasible, 'all affected parties' should actively participate in a reason-governed public deliberation process -although at various layers and in different forms.

2.3 Participation and Public Reason

Because of its requirement of public reason, deliberative democracy is criticized from different points of view; still, these criticisms can be differentiated from the one presented in this paper. In one line of criticism, the central role is played by the problematic exclusion of self-interest from public deliberation. According to a number of authors who make use of rational/social choice theories, such an exclusion may not only be impossible (requiring too much from the participants) but may also have ominous affects ((Johnson, 1998); (Przeworski, 1998); (Dryzek, 2000, p.35-38);(Shapiro, 2002a, p. 208-211)). A second line of criticism focuses on the problem of power in the conceptualization of public deliberation, focusing on the infiltration of power hierarchies in deliberative processes often neglected by deliberative democrats. Some of these authors question the desirability of deliberative democracy (Mouffe, 1996, 2000), while others - after critically evaluating hierarchy inducing public reasoning processes - try to render deliberative processes free from domination by embracing difference (Young, 1997; Fraser, 1996; Sanders, 1997; Chambers, 1996).

While these two lines of criticism focus on interests and power, my account focuses on problems of the *feasibility* of deliberative democracy in the face of *passions*[6], and as a result differs from the other two because they argue that the difficulties in the deliberation process occur because of the intervention of other factors - interests and power. Also, my criticism not only emphasizes this same drawback for passions (i.e. passions will intervene negatively with deliberation process) but also questions the assumption that without passions, the participation of all (or full dedication when participating) is still secure[7].

For deliberative theory, passionless reason of some form should be able to explain why participation occurs because for this theoretical construct to hold, ensuing public deliberation should be based on reason. In other words, if dispassionate reason cannot explain why people participate, it will be problematic to require people to discuss under the precepts of reason when participating. Nevertheless, deliberative theorists may provide arguments which will explain why people will be driven to argue under the precepts of reason when participating. In other words, there might be independent causal mechanisms "sions provide that will oblige people to deliberate under the auspices of reason

[5]It should be noted that different authors privilege different institutions for deliberation. For example, Cohen and Manin put primary emphasis on political parties ((Cohen, 1997); and (Manin et al., 1987)), whereas Gutmann and Thompson emphasize a diverse range of institutions such as work place, cultural institutions, etc. (Gutmann and Thompson, 2000, 2002).

[6]Passion and self-interest have very interesting entangled histories. For a comprehensive discussion please see: Holmes (1995, p. 13-69). In addition, it should be noted that post-structuralist critiques also focus on passion, however, only insofar as passion pertains to power relations.

[7]It should also be noted that I am neither questioning desirability of the deliberative model nor am I conducting an empirical investigation. The argument may be read as anticipating potential challenges to the feasibility of deliberative democracy. An essay that questions the feasibility of deliberative democracy has an affinity with an empirical challenge, however, they are arguments of different kind. There are a number of studies that constitute empirical challenges to deliberative democracy. For example, some form of drive towards consensus, although not necessary, is expected by deliberative theorists, however, Sustein (2001)'s study shows that it may well be the case that deliberation promotes more polarization.Sanders (1997)' study demonstrates that empirical realities (inequality) create very strong barriers against desirable deliberation . However, at the end, the empirical literature's findings are quite mixed (also see, (Ackerman and Fishkin, 2002; Fishkin and Luskin, 2005))

-independent from the reason of their participation. Therefore, from the vantage point of feasibility, there are three relevant questions: 1) do people participate?; 2) if they participate, why? (does reason provide a good explanation of why they participate?); and, 3) if reason does not motivate participation, are there mechanisms intrinsic in deliberative processes that will force people to discuss under the guidance of reason? Below I address each of these questions in turn, arguing that in no case is an affirmative response secure.

Finley (1985, p. 1) states that "perhaps the best known, and certainly the most vaunted, 'discovery' of modern public opinion research is the indifference and ignorance of a majority of the electorate in western democracies. They cannot state the issues, about most of which they do not care about anyway..." . The issue of why people participate is not a subject elaborated enough among deliberative theorists. This is quite surprising because unlike many other contemporary democratic theories, where only moderate levels of participation or apathy are acceptable, theirs requires a high level of citizen participation in democratic deliberations. Alternatively, deliberative theorists may believe people will participate because they will want their voices to be heard. However, this is just an assumption and we certainly have enough reason to doubt that this is the case: widespread apathy alone provides an important example countering this assumption. In short, at the first level, participation cannot be assumed to be secure even if deliberative forums are instituted, and deliberative democrats do not problematize this issue enough.

Even if citizens participate, it is highly questionable that rationality alone could motivate them to dedicate a considerable amount of their time. On this point, deliberative democrats can argue that exchange of information and distribution of the knowledge aspects of deliberation processes will provide a reasonable incentive to participate. This argument is part of the more general argument that goes as follows: deliberative democracy "improves the moral, or intellectual qualities of participants" (Elster (1998b, p. 11), having its sources in Mill (1865), and also;Manin et al. (1987, p. 354); Gambetta (1998, p. 22); Fearon (1998, p. 45); Cooke (2000, p.848); Freeman (2000, p. 383);Bohman (1996, p. xiii)). This happens because deliberation -understood as free discussion- allows information to be better distributed, enhanced, and exposes faulty arguments. If we take this as an argument for participation in general, and as long as we accept that people will prefer this method to other methods of receiving information and improving intellectual qualities, we can say that it makes sense. However, this argument holds for all kinds of participation, not for participation in the sense deliberative democrats envision. All of these qualities that are furthered for deliberation are reasons for participation in democratic politics, not to reason-governed deliberative processes. Also, if these qualities are unintended consequences of the reason-governed deliberation processes, then we cannot explain the reasons behind why people participate with this line of argument.

On the other hand, it is possible to argue that, assuming people participate, there are compelling reasons that will drive people to deliberate in light of reason. Deliberative theorists provide such an account. According to this account, we should expect the coupling of participation and reason-governed "sions because when individuals participate - whatever the reasons for their participation - pragmatically they will be pressured to take the view of all, or will feel compelled to give public reasons because persuasion is impossible with private reasons. Along these lines Benhabib (1996, p. 71-72) argues that public deliberation "forces individuals to think of what counts as a good reason for all others involved" or Cohen (1997, p. 75-77) argues that self-serving arguments are incompatible with deliberation, because reasons should be demonstrated as an outcome that is in the interests of all . However, this pragmatic line is self-referential because for this pressure to constitute an effective incentive for people to argue in light of reason, we already need to assume a reason-governed polity where people have already bracketed passions. Because, if participants do not assume that other participants are publicly motivated through reason, they themselves will not need to refer to public

reason; instead they will be able to tempt others by referring to their passions[8].

For instance,Manin et al. (1987, p. 353) argues that argumentation (the form of "sions in a deliberative democracy) is an exchange of propositions aimed at producing agreement in the listener (persuasion), and it is in this sense 'a discursive and rational process' . However, as he indicates, this determination for persuasion is always relative to the audience (Manin et al., 1987, p. 353-354), so if passions are an integral part of the human/social life, persuasion may well work through them. In other words, to obtain agreement with the argument that people will be compelled to carry out reason governed argumentation for persuasion, deliberative democrats need us to assume that citizens: 1) actively participate; and 2) are free of passions, or at least primarily driven by reason. It is in this sense that their arguments are self-referential. Constructing the argument positively: if people need to convince others that their views are the right ones, they may not be compelled to give public reasons, because as long as it is public knowledge that (at least for some) people's passions are an important factor in politics, appealing to people's passions strategically, or even unconsciously will prove to be successful[9].

Moral arguments constitute another line of thinking furthered by some deliberative theorists to shed light on reason-governed deliberations, or why people are compelled to give public reasons when they participate (Cohen, 1997, p. 407-437). According to these accounts it is almost a moral requirement that citizens give public reasons (e.g., the reciprocity argument, see (Gutmann and Thompson, 2000), however, these categorical arguments (that requires citizens to behave one way, independent of behavior of others) should be seen as an attempt to solve an empirical problem by referring to ideal conditions. Instead, an account that concerns itself with the feasibility of deliberative democracy will need to explain why it is plausible to expect people -in a world where power, interests and passions are central in politics- to both participate *en mass*, and to behave morally as such (such as public reason giving, reciprocity) in the deliberation process.

In short, deliberative democracy does not provide any account for why people will participate, and no compelling reasons why participants in deliberative processes will be necessitated to comply with the rules of public reason giving. Below, I aim to substantiate my claim that passions are an integral part of the participatory democratic processes.

3 Participation and Reason in Athenian Democracy

The Athenian democratic system can be construed as a political system that made its executive decisions with passion-governed rather than reason-governed discussions, while trying to realize active participation and public discussions.

For those who were included, the Athenian political system entailed substantial amounts of participation. Its participatory ideals are well depicted by Pericles when he states:

"Our public men have, besides politics, have their private affairs to attend to, and our ordinary citizens, though occupied with the pursuits of industry, are still fair judges of public matters; for, unlike any other nation, regarding him who takes no part in these duties not as unambitious but as useless, we Athenians are able to judge at all events if we cannot originate, and, instead of looking on discussion as a stumbling-block in the way of action, we think it an indispensable preliminary to any wise action at all. Again, in our enterprises we present the singular spectacle of daring and deliberation, each

[8] Elster (1998a, p. 105-116) proposes an interesting way to salvage some of what this account argues in the idea of the '*civilizing force of hypocrisy*'. However, in and of itself, I don't think this force is desirable for most deliberative democrats; besides if the main causal work is carried out by the *civilizing force of hypocrisy*, the system constituted would not be a deliberative democracy.

[9] Appeal to self-interest is also subject to the same criticism: what will be considered self-interest may be constituted by passions.

carried to its highest point, and both united in the same persons; although usually decision is the fruit of ignorance, hesitation of reflection" (Pericles, Funeral Oration, from Thucydides)[10].

These ideals are concretized with a number of principles and mechanisms that distinguished democracy from other forms of government. According to Aristotle (1996, p. 154-155), some of those were as follows: each should rule over each other in turn; selection of offices by lot; no property qualification; no holding offices twice; short office terms; all men should sit in judgment; the assembly should be supreme; payments for services. Therefore, democracy was fulfilled by the active citizen participation through the mechanisms enumerated by Aristotle. Additionally, according to Athenians, processes of democratic decision-making needed to be based on discussions, guaranteed by *isegoria*, an equal right to speak in the assembly (Finley, 1985, p. 18-19). Accordingly, democrats thought of the *polis* as a transformative political unit that brings together men of different backgrounds and enables them to transform themselves via intense political interaction (Farrar, 1992, p.38). Therefore, in this system, where "politics was the expression of the freedom to participate in ordering one's own life" (18), apathy is seen as a liability, although not self-control ((Finley, 1985, p. 30-32), also (Manin, 1997, p. 13-14)).

This particular combination of extensive participation and public discussions also had unique expressions. For example, Finley (1985, p. 53) tells the story of a farmer who is sitting in the Pnyx, waiting for the assembly to begin, and saying to himself how he hates the city and everyone in it, and how he intends to shout down any speaker who proposes anything except peace. Therefore, one needs not be entirely convinced by the philosophers of the time who were critical of democracy - such as Plato, and Aristotle - to see the lack of public reasoning in Athenian democracy in the sense aspired to by deliberative democrats.

Finley (1985), for example, after cogently describing the arbitrariness (unpredictability) of the game of politics in Athens, and the constant tension it creates for the politician (demagogue), indicates that: "Athenian politics had an all-or-nothing quality. The objective on each side was not merely to defeat the opposition but to crush it, to behead it by destroying its leaders. And often enough this game was played within the sides, as a number of men maneuvered for leadership" (Finley, 1985). Politics was the arena where 'difference' was getting accentuated, extraordinarily competitive, and intensive (Held, 2006, p. 27). "The public arena at Athens was vigorously, bitterly contested ground" (Rahe, 1994, p. 193). Full participation depended on oratory skills, clashes between rival groups of leaders, informal networks of communication and intrigue, and the emergence of strongly opposed factions which were prepared to push for quick and decisive measures (Held, 2006, p. 24-27). This fact was well known to Athenians. For instance, young Pericles reportedly complained that, "[Athenians] are more abusive of each other and more envious among themselves than they are towards other human beings. In both private and public gatherings they are the most quarrelsome of men" (Rahe, 1994, p. 177). In the end, although Athenians were participating *en mass*, some of them were present in the public sphere for emotional reasons, and booing, hassling the speaker, taking emotional sways, and consequently, crowd psychology was a significant characteristic of deliberations.

Therefore, as Finley (1985) emphasizes after depicting a very spontaneous debate and decision process: "...the last thing I wish to imply is the activity of a free, disembodied rational faculty" (1993, 57). From the vantage point of deliberative theorists then, Athenians were by no means following the precepts of public reason. However, Athenians were not at all apathetic. As Plato describes them "each type of human being [living in Athens] was different in character, and each type was governed by an economy of desires peculiar to a particular political regime. Moreover, where the Spartans were so cautious, so self-restrained and reticent that the term laconic came to be synonymous with taciturn, the Athenians were like drunkards: so convinced of their wisdom and the capacity to rule that they were notoriously willing to talk and so reveal themselves" ((Rahe, 1994, p. 176) , referring to Plato's

[10]From the Ancient History Sourcebook: Thucydides: Pericles' Funeral Oration from the Peloponnesian War (Book 2.34-46)

leg. 1.641e-642a). In other words, because passions were highly involved, "it would be easy to preach about the irrationality of crowd behavior at an open-air mass meeting, swayed by demagogic orators, chauvinistic patriotism and so on. But it would be a mistake to overlook that the vote [in the Assembly to invade Sicily] had been preceded by a period of intense discussion, in the shops and taverns, in the town square, at the dinner table" (Finley, 1985, p. 22-23).

Therefore, active discussions and mass political participation were both realized in Athens. However, from a deliberative democracy point of view, the failings of such a system were the democratic calamities that are outcomes of the inescapable coupling of participation with passions. Also, although it is difficult to determine how big of a motivational force passions were in inspiring participation, historical/anecdotal evidence is suggestive. In short, people were actively participating and debating in Athenian democracy, and in contradiction to the deliberative model, they were very impulsive, loud, uncivil, and passionate.

4 Participation and Reason in Political Theory

In line with the Athenian case, political theorists who rely on a conception of democracy which includes both extensive participation and public discussions, not only take passions seriously in human behavior, but also conceptualize passions and participation[11] as inseparably entangled. Also, in their ensuing conceptualizations of politics, participation is curbed so that passions can be taken under control (except Rousseau whose method to control passions was different)[12]. Therefore, the idea that extensive participation and passions are entangled has major theoretical lineage.

From Plato up to contemporary times, democracy has been conceptualized and criticized as the form of government that involves people's active participation and extensive public debate. Only recently, from the 19^{th} century on, has the particular model of modern constitutional representative government come to be called democracy ((Dunn, 1993, p.239-269); also see (Manin, 1997)). This new form of government neither envisioned extensive participation nor included public deliberation. Deliberative democrats are, in a particular sense, reviving the content of the earlier conception of democracy which includes participation and discussions before decision-making.

Before presenting the main claims of selected political theorists, it should be noted that this account does not maintain that all of these writers have similar views about an ideal form of government, or that they draw the same normative inferences from the perceived entanglement of passions and participation. Indeed, some opted for non-democratic forms of government, some others for mixed forms, while still others for representative government, later to be called democratic.

Plato believed that democracy was regrettable in many ways, including its lack of reason, its tendency to marginalize wisdom and be governed by impulses, excessive passions, and emotions of various kinds. The lack of justice in democracy (the system of full, unfettered participation) was mainly due to the preponderance of appetite over reason. The necessary hierarchical relationship between reason, spirit and appetite was inversed in democracy (Plato, 2000, p. 216-222)[13]. According to him, "to be free is to be ruled by reason" (Farrar, 1992, p. 31) and reason in the ideal state should tame passions in such a way as to transform them into virtues. In a democracy, however, just the opposite is true: untamed passions, unnecessary desires are accentuated. Of course, his solution to this

[11] Because they refer to Athenian democracy when they use the concept democracy, some of the writers reviewed simply couple democracy with participation.

[12] Some writers, such as Madison, curb participation directly because of the perceived ominous (reason-detracting) effects of passions, so it is easy to see the causal link; in some others' writings, although they take passions seriously, this direct link is not there (such as Hobbes).

[13] Plato does not think that passions' effects are all ominous; in fact he believes that when they are controlled by reason, they can be turned into virtues (for example, Plato's guardians would be fierce abroad and gentle at home, but of course such passion also leads to civil fights).

(and other) passion-provoking system(s) is the infamous enlightened despotism erected on his moral objectivism (virtue is knowledge), where democratic participation is completely crippled (Plato, 2000, p. 117-202).

Aristotle (1996, p. 11-16)'s conception of passion is also negative, and he believes that *eudemonia* (good life) can be attained only through the prevalence of reason over passion. Aristotle claims that, "It is clear that the rule of the soul over the body, and of the mind and the rational element over the passionate, is natural and expedient, whereas the equality of the two or the rule of the [naturally] inferior is always hurtful" (Aristotle, 1996, p. 16-17;also 187). The democratic form of government then is classified among perverted forms of government because it is not conducive to such an ordering[14]. Although for Aristotle the link between the ideal and the feasible is sometimes weak, given the non-existence of clearly superior human beings (philosopher kings), from among true forms he sides with the most practicable and enduring government: the *polity* (constitutional government). In this form of government, in addition of the governance of law, different features of oligarchy and democracy are mixed. This mixture is not only a barrier against class rule for itself, but also, it will prevent many to be swayed by passions, and still will retain beneficial features of people's involvement with politics (Aristotle, 1996, 86-87 and 99-100). However, how this mixing occurs is quite telling for our purposes, because Aristotle (1996, p. 104-105) enumerates three possible ways and all involve curbing participation in one way or another: property barriers, elections, and no pay for participation. On the one hand, in this form of government there will be mechanisms that will make people think that they are ruling (Aristotle, 1996, p. 106), and on the other hand the equal participation of all will be curtailed enough that we should not fear the involvement of passions and passion-provoking, faction-inducing demagogues (Aristotle, 1996, p. 98-99)[15].

Passions are also taken very seriously in the earlier liberal tradition that utilizes, but does not adhere to the same notion of democracy that includes participation and public discussions. Although Hobbes is not a liberal, I initiate my discussion with his ideas on passion and participation because he is one of the most influential figures in the later development of the tradition[16]. In the latter two parts of Leviathan, it is evident that zeal (in the religious form) is a very strong passion that plays a crucial role. But passions are integral in Hobbes's account all along: even without passion-inducing communication it is "our natural passions, that carry us to partiality, pride, revenge, and the like" (Hobbes, 1994, p. 106). Or as Holmes put it, for Hobbes "individuals are compulsive, creatures of habit and victims of emotional frenzy. Moreover, most people, as classical liberals followed Hobbes in describing them, turn out to be obsessively concerned with social status and hypersensitive to social slights and humiliations. Dispassionate assessment of their current situation is seldom within their reach" (Holmes, 1995, p. 3). These passions seem to become even more potent and more ominous in deliberative processes since "the passions of men, which asunder are moderate (as the heat of one brand), in an assembly are like many brands, that inflame one another (especially when they blow one another with orations) to the setting of the commonwealth on fire, under the pretence of counseling it" (Hobbes, 1994, p. 171). What does this account of passion mean vis-à-vis his conception of democracy as a form of government? Hobbes connects passion and democracy in Chapter XIX of *Leviathan*. In a fashion in line with Bodin, he classifies all forms of government according to the locus of sovereignty as monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. And in his ensuing account, although all forms of government can be absolutely sovereign, there are some practical reasons for him to prefer monarchy

[14]Actually, the more immediate reason that makes democracy perverted is that it is based on partial justice.

[15]It should be noted that Aristotle's conception of participation in politics is different than that of deliberative democrats. Aristotle does not envision a transformative democratic participation process; instead his endorsement for participation is centered on practical and justice-related reasons (for example: many are less corruptible).

[16]The account of Hobbes utilized here is built on the insights developed by non-standard interpretations of Hobbes ((Lloyd, 1992; Pasquino, 2001; Johnston, 1989)). Still, for my purposes, it is sufficient to show that he took passions seriously and in his narrative, he conceptualized deliberative processes as enhancing and/or triggering them.

or to reject democracy and aristocracy based on their ability to provide peace and security. His most important objections to democratic sovereignty rely on the infringement of passions into democracy since "the passions of men are commonly more potent than reason" (Hobbes, 1994, p. 20) and "for the understanding [in assemblies] is by the flame of the passions never enlightened but dazzled" (Hobbes, 1994, p. 120).

Locke, like Hobbes, gives centrality to passions juxtaposed to reasons in his account of man. Although Locke does not connect passions with deliberative settings, he provides a good connection to the later tradition of liberalism that links these two very clearly. According to Locke, reason should be man's "only Star and compass" (Locke, 1988, p. 182) while following the precepts of moral and political rights and duties. In his relatively peaceful state of nature, inconveniences arise because people sometimes utilize their executive rights over transgressors not by "calm reason and conscience" (Locke, 1988, p. 272) but by "self-love [that] will make men partial to themselves and their friends: and on the other side, that ill nature, passion and revenge will carry them too far in punishing others" (Locke, 1988, p. 275 also 350-351). From these inconveniences arise the need of the impartial judge, i.e. the government. However, as the government gets established, the problem becomes limiting it, because holders of the office are not different than the human beings above, and they may well be swayed by their passions and private interests. Even his supreme legislative power needs to be restricted by standing laws because it is highly probable that the laws of nature being unwritten "but in the minds of men, they who through passion or interest shall miscite, or misapply it" (1982, 388)[17].

The connection between passion and public discussion are more clearly articulated by first Montesquieu and then Madison. Montesquieu has a slightly more positive understanding of passion and is slightly less enthusiastic about reason than Locke (Montesquiedeu, 1989, p. 166) but similarly he reserves a central place for passions in his account of human beings. In his account, passions are firmly entrenched properties of individuals (as in Locke) and people as collectivities. Because of this: "people whose nature is to act from passion" are "not at all appropriate for such [public] discussions" (Montesquiedeu, 1989, p. 14). Instead, in a proper form of government, people "should not enter the government except to choose their representatives" (Montesquiedeu, 1989, p. 160) about which they are quite perceptive, but "they are not suited to manage by themselves" (Montesquiedeu, 1989, p. 12). Therefore, in his moderate government, a number of social (aristocracy), institutional and legal/constitutional checks are in place, and only through these checks liberty can be realized.

Madison builds on these themes and develops an even more rigorous account of passions and the ways to limit them. As we have seen in the earlier liberal tradition, passions have a fundamental place in Madison's conception of human beings and society as well. Given the passions of the people, in times of collective decision-making (participation and discussion), "the passions, therefore, not the reason, of the public would sit in judgment" (1982, 133). This is in turn calling for lack of stability and turbulence (56). Therefore, it is "the reason, alone, of the public that ought to control and regulate the government. The passions ought to be controlled and regulated by the government" (133). In Madison's conception people cannot seem to deliberate without being ruled by passions and whenever they participate passions automatically follow (124-125). Therefore, not only their participation should be limited, but also the power of their institutions (the legislature) should be checked (124-141). Also, Madison argues for the utilization of the passions of people in positive ways by instituting a homeostatic system of checks and balances (that do not need the people's involvement for alterations). In this way, the perception of defect in the government will be avoided; instead, veneration of the people will be taken to the constitution's side because even "the most rational government will not find it a superfluous advantage, to have prejudices of the community on its side" (131).

All in all, theorists in the liberal tradition like Plato and Aristotle were very much aware of passions

[17]Locke does not discuss the problem of passions in his own system, most probably because he had a very limited conception of democratic participation.

and they generally depict them as an inescapable component of human nature. Based on a more or less unequivocally negative conception of them, they devised diverse social or institutional mechanisms to avoid them (or turn them to the benefit of the good as in Madison) in order to attain reason-based government. Although mechanisms were diverse, they generally included minimizing active citizen participation in the government and restricting passion-inspiring non-elite public deliberations.

The final theorist that I deal with is Rousseau. He departs radically from the liberal tradition in many ways; however, an account of his approach is called for because although his democratic theory radically differs from all the other theorists, he also offers a different way to deal with passions[18]. Rousseau and Cress (1992, p. 16-33)'s account of reason and passion is complicated since he is not certain about the positive qualities of reason, or about the negative qualities of passion. In the *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* passions like *amour de soi* (self-preservation), and *pitie* (pity) play favorable roles. Only through the interference of perfectibility and the later development of reason do these relatively beneficial passions leave their place and turn into more ominous forms of passions such as self-regarding, appearance-oriented *amour-propre*. Therefore human beings transform through social interaction and changing environmental conditions into beings that embody superior forms of reason and different forms of passion. For our purposes, we can argue that these transformed human beings are those that should deliberate (in the sense of decide not discuss, see: (Manin et al., 1987)) for the common good, and they need to be giving primacy to their reason not to their passions: "in the civil state...duty replaces physical impulse, right replaces appetite...[man] find himself forced to consult his reason before listening to his inclinations" (Rousseau, 1978, p. 27-28). Therefore reason should be 'sublime' and should control passions. However, differently from the tradition I reviewed above, Rousseau in *Social Contract* does not take the road of curbing participation via institutions to curtail special interests and ominous passions in the formation of General Will. Instead, he focuses on banning public deliberation (in the sense of public discussions before making a decision), where factional politics and orators will provide the fertile ground for the domination of special interests (and ominous passions). Therefore, although he does not give precedence to passions in his *Social Contract* (see Rousseau (1978, p. 38-39 and 27)), we can still argue that he at least circumvents the equilibrium of participation plus public discussions equals passions by eliminating public discussions before decision-making.

A number of insights can be drawn from this discussion that would be useful in evaluating deliberative democracy. First, despite this long and strong tradition that operated with a conception of democracy entailing participation and discussion, and centrally dealing with passions, passions are not taken seriously enough by deliberative democrats. Second, although it is traditionally thought that participation is coupled with passion, and deliberative processes enhance involvement of passions, deliberative democracy depends not only on participation, but also it needs participation and deliberations coupled with reason -creating serious doubts for its feasibility. Third, combining the first two, it is clear that although deliberative democracy seems to be demanding what has been thought of as impossible, it does not acknowledge it as a central problem: it does not give an account of how to get rid of passions. In short, deliberative democracy does not adequately explain its own coupling of extensive participation and public reason.

5 Participation and Reason in Contemporary Societies

Based on the insights provided above, I pinpoint feasibility problems for deliberative democracy in two ideal-type contemporary societies by anticipating possible empirical problems. For the conceptual

[18] Although, it should be noted that he does not operate with the exact same notion of democracy: "Athenian democracy ought not to be brought up against me, because Athens was not in fact a democracy" (Rousseau, from(Manin et al., 1987, p. 346)).

framework to explore these arguments, I mainly rely on a critical reading of Diego Gambetta's insightful article, which provides a sociologically relevant conceptual framework to discuss reason and passion in the context of deliberation in contemporary societies.

To recap, the main insights proposed in this paper thus far include: 1) Participation in a setting that reason-governed discussions will take place cannot be considered secure; 2) Arguments that claim that public deliberations include mechanisms that force people into reason governed argumentation processes are not compelling; 3) Extensive participation and public discussions will plausibly generate passion governed discussion processes; 4) Passions in a setting of mass participation and public discussions have been (in Athens) and are often thought to be imperialistic: deliberative settings have multiplication effects on passions. In this section, I force to its extremes the conceptualization of modern societies of Diego Gambetta. I imagine a passion-free society, in which deliberative democracy would not confront most of these problems. Then by developing the idea of passion as a motivational force for active participation[19] , I argue that even in a passion-free society, deliberative democracy will face feasibility problems because a lack of passion renders problematic the issue of participation[20]. I further elaborate on the issue, suggesting that there might be something more than a mere correspondence between passion and participation. I suggest a causal link that works through the mechanisms of social rewards and punishments.

Gambetta (1998, p. 24) explores the possibility of deliberation and deliberative democracy in two distinct ideal-type societies (symbolizing two poles of possible deliberative settings). His main concern is to examine the possibility of deliberative democracy in one of these: a particular kind of society where indexical knowledge is dominant. He describes an indexical knowledge (IK) society by contrasting it with another ideal type: an analytical knowledge (AK) society[21]. In the society where analytical knowledge is dominant, he argues that "knowledge is not necessarily seen as professionalized or even specialized, but it is thought to be the result of a combination of good reasoning, empirical verification, and generally hard work. Furthermore it is believed to be tentative rather than definitive". Therefore, in this society, ignorance about one subject is not seen as an indicator of ignorance in all subjects. His analysis of this society seems to be accompanied by a subtext of praise because of its conduciveness to deliberative democracy. Instead the argument that he strongly pursues is the impossibility of deliberative democracy in the opposite ideal type: that of an IK society. In an IK society, "knowledge is assumed to be*holistic* : knowledge or ignorance about x is taken as a sign of knowledge or ignorance of the whole. It reveals more than a local failure; it stands for lack of Kultur" (Gambetta, 1998, p. 25)[22].

Gambetta argues that AK societies are characterized by equality of resources, equal access to information, civil discussions, and logical arguments. He argues that because one's lack of knowledge on one subject does not create social humiliation for that person, in these societies the social pressure for winning the argument is not strong, and information sharing is possible. On the contrary, because of the immense social pressure created by the existence of the holistic attitude towards knowledge,

[19]The suggestion is that passion will be influential on both of the terms of active participation. Which means it will not only provide an incentive for people to be there, but also to think hard, forcing one's limits -being active when participating.

[20]However, it should be noted that I do not mean to reduce the desire to actively participate into passions. Admittedly, there might be a number of different reasons to actively participate in public deliberations.

[21]Certainly, IK and AK societies and IK and AK subjectivities are ideal-types in Gambetta's article and they are used as such in this analysis because by epitomizing two mutually exclusives poles, they provide clarity to my argument. In practice societies and individuals will show features of both, also passion and reason will be more entangled.

[22]It should be noted that his empirical reference for building the IK ideal-type are contemporary Latin American countries and Italy, and for the contrasting AK societies, mainly contemporary Anglo-Saxon countries. As in the construction of all ideal types, these categories are exaggerated versions of concrete empirical cases. In my analysis, I further exaggerate one quality of both of these societies to better clarify my point: passion-dominated IK societies versus passion-free AK societies

emotions dominate the discussions in IK societies, and those who shout more win the argument. In consequence, information sharing and development through discussion are beyond the realm of possibility. Two points that come up recurrently in his critical observations against IK societies are that the accumulation of knowledge is harder in IK societies and that the desire to participate is minimal (Gambetta, 1998, p. 33).

This insight holds well *prima facie*. However, if we assume that the participatory mechanisms are present in IK societies, that is, they are not eradicated by a political actor that makes use of some of these passions (such as anger and fear), perhaps it misses an important aspect of IK, passion-dominated societies. The winner of discussions in such societies, may not be determined merely by the decibel of his/her voice, but necessarily and inescapably through his/her knowledge over factual details, and a number of other content-related tangential factors as well. This means that at least some people will try very hard to participate in the discussions, struggling to interpellate knowledge that they have on the subject, and if such knowledge does not exist, they will try to find a way to compensate for that. Moreover, if the subject matter is a public issue, they will be more attentive to public issues. All in all, staying very much in the realm of Gambetta's description of IK societies, I believe that he is right in pinpointing the difficulties of public reasoning in IK societies, but with one caveat: although discussions may not be occurring in the way envisioned by deliberative democrats, there is still an incentive to participate in them. Because on the one hand, participating has the potential to bring the subject glory, respect and recognition; on the other, failing to participate or a bad performance may mean humiliation, and the perception of generalized ignorance.

In passion-free AK societies on the other hand, specialization of knowledge and the acceptance of localized ignorance retracts this specific incentive to participate in discussions. In addition to that, the fact that one does not know something does not have any cost for him or her either -no honor, no humiliation or no incentive for participation, and no cost for not participating. And given that participation because of reason cannot be easily substantiated (as I argued earlier), unless the discussions are heavily structured and specifically connected to a reward mechanism, participation of any kind may be in jeopardy in AK societies. For example, the Athenian farmer who hates the city and everyone in it and is determined to shout down any speaker who proposes anything except peace, would harm the deliberative process, but would still be a willing participant in public discussions.

In short, Gambetta furthers a number of arguments for the impossibility of fruitful deliberations in IK societies and in almost all of his arguments he relies on the contrasting case of AK societies for his explanations. However, he fails to pinpoint possible problems with AK societies in relation to deliberative democracy. AK societies lack the reward and punishment mechanisms that are provided by IK ones (through passions of pride and humiliation) for the active participation of citizens into the process of deliberation (or when they are in the process, of fully committing themselves to it). In IK societies where passions are the overriding force in political life, people have motivations to participate, in contrast to more politically apathetic AK societies. So to Gambetta's classification of passionate/rational we can add active/passive, political/apathetic. Therefore, in IK societies, deliberative democracy will fail due to obvious reasons - in terms of its inadequacy to meet the requirements of public reasoning. On the other hand, in passion-free AK societies, in which understanding will not happen 'by the flame of the passions', active participation will be more problematic.

My central claim in this paper is that passions not reason should be plausibly expected to correspond with participation. I add to this argument that even under an imaginary situation, where a passion-deprived society is available (like in AK), deliberative democracy will still confront feasibility problems. Because reason -lack of passion- may produce adversary effects against active participation.

6 Conclusion

I argue that deliberative democracy is not realistically utopian. However, I do not question its desirability, and I have not argued that these problems cannot be solved theoretically. But as a normative theory, deliberative democracy makes a number of behavioral assumptions, some of which are not sound enough to render the theory feasible.

For deliberative democracy to be feasible, at the very least its theorists need to give an account of passions, and they need to problematize the issue of the participation of all affected. Or perhaps, like Thucydides, they need to accept "the possibility of conflict, of the triumph of desire over reason, in order to preserve the slender chance that a *polis* could realize its full potential to both express and transform the beliefs and capacities of its citizens" (Farrar, 1992, p.34).

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