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Democratization as Deliberative Capacity Building

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Effective deliberation is central to democracy and so should enter any definition of democratization. However, the deliberative aspect now ubiquitous in the theory, practice, and promotion of democracy is generally missing in comparative studies of democratization. Deliberation capacity can be distributed in variable ways in the deliberative systems of states and other polities. A framework is described for locating and analyzing the contributions of its components and so evaluating the degree to which a polity's deliberative system is authentic, inclusive, and consequential. An emphasis on deliberation reveals important determinants of democratic transition and consolidation, thereby providing substantial explanatory as well as evaluative and normative purchase.

Keywords: *democratization; deliberative democracy; deliberative system; democracy promotion*

The comparative study of democratization has missed what, to many analysts and democratic innovators, is the most important aspect of democracy: deliberation. I outline the idea of deliberative capacity, pinpoint where it should be sought, show how it can be deployed in comparative empirical analysis, enumerate its impacts on democratic transition and consolidation (while recognizing the problematic nature of these concepts), and canvass its determinants.

Most democratization scholars define democracy in terms of electoral competition and effective constitutional respect for basic civil liberties and

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human rights. In this light, the first taxonomic task is to capture the degree to which (a) ostensibly democratic political systems fall short of liberal electoralist ideals and (b) ostensibly authoritarian regimes might embody some of them; many regime types have been conceptualized (Armony & Schamis, 2005; Collier & Levitsky, 1997). On the electoral or competitive side, shortfall comes, for example, where members of one party or leadership group effectively manipulate the system so that they cannot lose, what Carothers (2002) calls dominant-power systems, pervasive in post-Soviet countries, with ANC-dominated South Africa. On the liberal side, Zakaria's illiberal democracy (2003) and O'Donnell's delegative democracy (1994) feature competitive elections, but winners rule without any constitutional checks, accountability, and respect for the rights of their people. Some scholars prefer to call such systems *competitive authoritarianism* (Levitsky & Way, 2002).

This article does not argue that liberal electoral definitions of democracy are wrong (still less try to get to grips with approaches that deploy these definitions in all their variety and subtlety), just that they miss a key aspect—deliberation. This aspect is ubiquitous in the theory, analysis, and practice of democracy—that is, everywhere except comparative state democratization studies. Just as liberal electoral democratization studies have an applied counterpart in democracy promotion, by the U.S. Agency for International Development and other public and private bodies, so does deliberative democracy find application in a global movement to introduce deliberative institutions into governance (Gastil & Levine, 2005). Democracy promoters have discovered deliberation and financed deliberative exercises in countries such as China. Deliberative capacity does not have to be sought in any particular set of institutions (such as elections), but it can be manifested in different ways, in different systems.

In a deliberative light, the more authentic, inclusive, and consequential political deliberation is, the more democratic a political system is. Political systems (including states) can be arrayed on a continuum according to the extent of their deliberative capacity. At the negative end lie not just autocracies but also routinized administrative systems and those dominated by strategic machination or armed conflict. This does not mean that democracy is about deliberation only; it is also about decision, voting, the rule of law, and uncorrupt administration, among other things. But democracy cannot do without deliberation. This article treats deliberation as being central to democracy.

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Deliberative Capacity

Deliberation invokes a "talk-centric" aspect of democracy (Chambers, 2003, p. 308). As such, democratic legitimacy resides in the right, ability, and opportunity of those subject to a collective decision to participate in deliberation about the content of that decision (Benhabib, 1996, p. 68; Cohen, 1989, p. 22). This requirement applies to all participants, be they representatives, citizens, or activists; legitimation is secured in their interaction. In participating in deliberation, individuals reflect on their preferences and should be open to preference change. Deliberation itself is a kind of communication. In some accounts (e.g., Habermas, 1996), reasoned argument is privileged, but deliberation can be open to a variety of forms of communication, such as rhetoric, testimony (the telling of stories), and humor. Real-world political communication generally mixes these different forms, and those that do not involve argument can be effective in inducing reflection. However, some kinds of communication, such as lies, threats, and commands, are intrinsically antideliberative.

Communications are deliberative to the degree that they are noncoercive, are capable of inducing reflection about the preferences that individuals hold, and able to relate the particular interests of individuals and groups to more universal principles (Dryzek, 2000, p. 68). Gutmann and Thompson (1996) define the key deliberative virtue as reciprocity—that is, making arguments in terms others can accept. With regard to communication other than argument, this virtue can be stated as communicating in terms that others can accept. Rhetoric, for example, can be used to inflame the passions of one's religious, ethnic, or national group and so merit condemnation. But in a context that features myriad identities, religions, ethnicities, and nationalities, a speaker's rhetoric can try to appeal to the symbols valued by these groups to induce reflection on their part.

Political systems are deliberatively undemocratic to the extent that they minimize opportunities for individuals to reflect freely on their political preferences. Autocracies may be interested in individuals' preferences but only to convince people to accept the regime's doctrine, backed by a threat of coercion. If demagogues appeal to ethnic nationalist values, then the criterion of connection to more universal principles is violated. Authoritarians might appeal to general principles; for example, the Soviet leadership would justify its actions in terms of Marxist principles generalizable to humanity. However, that kind of justification cannot reach those who do not share a well-defined ideological framework, thus violating reciprocity. The

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same might be said of those invoking economic efficiency as a nonnegotiable principle for marketizing government.

Applying deliberative principles to evaluate instances of communication does not automatically translate to a concept that is useful in analyzing and evaluating whole regimes or political systems. For that we need an account of deliberative capacity.

Deliberative capacity may be defined as the extent to which a political system possesses structures to host deliberation that is authentic, inclusive, and consequential. Pursuit of this capacity does not connote any particular institutional prescription (be it competitive elections, a constitution, or a set of forums), but it may be secured in connection with different sorts of institutions and practices. Authenticity can be understood in light of the tests just introduced; that is, deliberation must induce reflection noncoercively, connect claims to more general principles, and exhibit reciprocity. Inclusiveness applies to the range of interests and discourses present in a political setting. Without inclusiveness, there may be deliberation but not deliberative democracy. Mutz (2006) worries that deliberation works against inclusion because "hearing the other side" induces people to participate less. But Mutz is referring only to unstructured talk in everyday life, not deliberation—still less, deliberation tied to particular locations in a political system.

Consequential means that deliberative processes must have an impact on collective decisions or social outcomes. This impact need not be direct—that is, deliberation need not involve the actual making of policy decisions. For example, public deliberation might have an influence on decision makers who are not participants in deliberation. This might occur when an informal deliberative forum makes recommendations that are subsequently taken into account by policy makers. Nor need the outcomes in question be explicit policy decisions; they might, for example, be informal products of a network, thus entailing "governance without government."

A polity with a high degree of authentic, inclusive, and consequential deliberation will have an effective deliberative system. Before describing the conceptually necessary features of such a system, I enumerate some political sites that might feed in to it.

Where Can Deliberation Be Found?

We can begin with the central institutions of states, such as legislatures, cabinets, constitutional courts, and corporatist councils that empower

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representatives of labor and business federations and government executives. Rawls (1993, p. 231) believes that the U.S. Supreme Court is an exemplary deliberative institution. Designed forums—such as citizens juries and assemblies, deliberative polls, consensus conferences, stakeholder dialogues—can also contribute, and these have appeared in developing countries so are not just an attribute of developed liberal democracies. For example, a widely praised and occasionally copied deliberative approach to participatory civic budgeting has been developed in Brazil, notably in Porto Alegre (Fung, 2003, pp. 360-362).

Benhabib (1996) and Habermas (1996) stress the informal public sphere, where deliberation generates public opinion, which then ought to influence deliberation in the legislature. The public sphere may play an especially important role in countries where formal legislative deliberation is weak or absent. For example, Poland in the early 1980s featured no legislature with any deliberative capacity. But the country did have a flourishing public sphere associated with the Solidarity movement, in which deliberation was practiced and deliberative capacity built. Ekiert and Kubik (1999) argue that even after 1989, the public sphere in Poland was a kind of remedial site that compensated for deliberative failure in state institutions. But the public sphere in any democracy is where perspectives and ideas are generated, policy decisions are questioned, and citizen competences are developed.

Different sites can contribute to deliberative capacity in different proportions, in different societies and systems. We should not fixate on any one institutional contributor to this mix and assume that it is *the* key to deliberative capacity. For example, we might dismiss contemporary China as thoroughly lacking in deliberative capacity if we focus on central state institutions and the public sphere, severely circumscribed by controls over the media and restrictions on association, advocacy, and expression. If China does have any deliberative capacity, then it might be found in participatory innovations at the local level, designed in part to cope with the unwanted side effects of rapid economic growth. Those interested in the democratization of China could look for ways of building up from this localized capacity. Some leaders of the Communist Party have seemed receptive to such possibilities. In 2005 Li Junru, vice president of the Central Party School, called for the expansion of deliberative democracy in China (He & Leib, 2006, p. 8). Skeptics can point to local assemblies that remain controlled by party officials, but cases do exist where forums have overruled the decisions of party officials. Deliberative democratization need not be top-down reform of central state institutions.

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Deliberative capacity can also be sought in nontraditional institutional forms, such as governance networks (Sørensen & Torfing, 2006). Networks transcend formal political institutions and sometimes cross state boundaries. They can be made up of a variety of public and private actors. Sometimes they are purely informal; sometimes their role is validated by governments or intergovernmental organizations; sometimes they have little deliberative capacity. So global financial networks, as described by Castells (1996), work on the basis of unreflective shared commitment to market-oriented neoliberalism. However, the webs of transnational regulation described by Braithwaite and Drahos (2000) involve nongovernmental organizations, businesses, activists, publicists, and government officials in relationships that need to develop deliberative capacity—because interactions begin with competing understandings and values, which need to be bridged to craft effective regulation in the absence of sovereign authority. When networks transcend state boundaries, they may still contribute to the deliberative capacity of states. Consider, for example, the transnational network that monitors the social and ecological certification of forest products: It actively engages timber producers and government officials in timber exporters such as Indonesia, through the Forest Stewardship Council scheme, possibly contributing to the deliberative capacity of Indonesia.

On one account, governance networks are increasingly displacing the sovereign state in the production of collective outcomes. Internally, the state is "hollowed out" (Rhodes, 1994); externally, transnational networks overshadow the states' decisive policy actions. It is not necessary to take a position on these controversial propositions here. It should simply be noted that a conceptualization of democratization as deliberative capacity can be applied to governance networks, whereas electoral approaches to democratization cannot. Networks do not hold elections, nor do they have constitutions.

The Deliberative System

Analysis of democratization in terms of deliberative capacity building requires a way to account for the degree of completeness of a deliberative system, which for Mansbridge (1999) reaches from everyday talk to representative legislatures. Hendriks (2006) extends this notion, showing how informal public spheres can be linked to deliberation in more formal governmental settings, with a crucial role for designed forums populated by a mix of public and private actors. Parkinson (2006, pp. 166-173) shows how multiple actors and institutions (activists, experts, bureaucracy, designed

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forums, media, legislature, referenda, and petitions) can combine to generate deliberative legitimation in public policy. In this system, different kinds of communication might be appropriate in different places: Parkinson thinks that rhetoric has a place in activists' agenda setting but not elsewhere (p. 172). Constitutional courts, which could be easily added to Parkinson's scheme, may feature skillful application of argument in public interest terms to legal and policy issues—but rarely do justices (at least on the U.S. Supreme Court) actually talk to one another, still less subject themselves to public accountability. This sort of scheme can accommodate the paradox that effective deliberation sometimes benefits from moments of secrecy, allowing representatives to try to understand one another without immediately being pulled back by skeptical constituents (Chambers, 2004). Publicity can enter later or elsewhere in the deliberative system.

The deliberative systems sketched by Mansbridge, Hendriks, and Parkinson are too tied to the institutional details of developed liberal democracies to be applicable in the comparative study of democratization. We can imagine deliberative systems without, say, a legislature, or internally deliberative political parties, or designed forums, or elections. A more general scheme for a deliberative system would be composed of the following elements:

Public space: a deliberative space (or spaces) with few restrictions on who can participate and with few legal restrictions on what participants can say, thereby featuring a diversity of viewpoints. Such spaces may be found in connection with the media, social movements, activist associations, physical locations where people can gather and talk (cafés, classrooms, bars, public squares), the Internet, public hearings, and designed citizen-based forums of various sorts (which restrict on the basis of numbers but not on the kinds of persons who can deliberate).

Empowered space: a deliberative space for actors, recognizably part of institutions producing collective decisions. Such a space might be home to or constituted by a legislature, a corporatist council, sectoral committees in a corporatist system, a cabinet, a constitutional court, or an empowered stakeholder dialogue. The institution need not be *formally* empowered; as such, a network producing collective outcomes would constitute one such space. Public space and empowered space can both be tested for the degree to which they are inclusive of relevant interests and voices.

Transmission: some means by which public space can influence empowered space. These means might involve political campaigns, the deployment of rhetoric, the making of arguments, or cultural change effected by social movements that come to pervade the understandings of formally empowered actors, or personal links between actors in the two kinds of spaces. The

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relationship between public space and empowered space can be critical; it can be supportive; or it might be both.

Accountability: some means whereby empowered space is accountable to public space. Such accountability is key to the generation of broad deliberative legitimacy for collective outcomes. The elements mentioned under *empowered space* might also act as accountability mechanisms, as might election campaigns where empowered politicians have to justify their positions to a broader public.

Decisiveness: some means whereby these first four elements are consequential in influencing the content of collective decisions. For example, under *empowered space*, a parliament may be a flourishing deliberative chamber but have no impact on the decisions of a president who rules by decree (think Boris Yeltsin in Russia in the 1990s). Or a government may appear internally deliberative but have its key policy decisions dictated by international financial institutions.

The kinds of communication present in the first four elements can be more or less deliberative, according to the authenticity criteria introduced earlier. Steiner, Bächtiger, Spörndli, and Steenbergen (2004) have developed an empirical measure of deliberative authenticity, in the form of a discourse quality index. Applying this index involves parsing the transcript of a debate and coding each intervention on multiple criteria. The scores for each contribution are summed and averaged to give a measure of the quality of the debate as a whole. Steiner et al. compared similar types of debates in similar institutions of different countries, finding that presidential, consensual, and bicameral features of state institutions facilitate quality parliamentary discourse. To date, the researchers have compared only developed liberal democracies, but it would be a straightforward matter to extend their analysis to other systems, in a research program on the institutional determinants of deliberative authenticity. However, a system featuring quality legislative deliberation may conceivably have poor deliberation when it comes to other parts of empowered space or public space. Ideally, we want to apply a discourse quality index to communication in all these locations.

The deliberative system as a whole is diminished by any nondeliberative substitute for any element. For example, transmission might be secured by those in empowered space fearing the political instability that those in public space might unleash if they are ignored. This means might be the only one available for local deliberations in China to have a cumulative impact on empowered space (currently nondeliberative) in modifying China's developmental path (He & Warren, 2008). Or accountability might be sought in a plebiscite with no opposition allowed to campaign.

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Despite these examples, no particular institution is required by any of the elements of a deliberative system. There are potentially many kinds of deliberative systems, and the kind that we see in, say, a transnational network will not resemble what we see in an adversarial Anglo-American liberal democracy, which will not resemble what we see in the European Union, which will not resemble what we see in a more consensual Confucian state.

Particular deliberative systems may have peculiar or unique features. In transnational regulatory networks, empowered space may be coterminous with public space—for instance, the content of forest certification regulation is negotiated in dialogue encompassing nongovernmental organizations, timber corporations, certifiers, government officials, and consumer representatives. This deliberative system falls short on decisiveness given the extent of timber production not regulated by the network. In the European Union, the open method of coordination, linking the European Commission and the policy decisions of member states, is a unique deliberative form in empowered space that is decisive in producing collective outcomes (Eriksen, Joerges, & Neyer, 2003). In European Union institutions more generally, the norm is that member state representatives have to argue in terms of shared legal principles and/or common interest justifications. The union falls short on public space, given the lack of a European public sphere, with nongovernmental organizations, parties, and the media all organized on a national basis. Accountability is weak: European elections are fought by national parties on national issues, and no accountability mechanism effectively substitutes for elections.

A system with high deliberative capacity will feature authentic deliberation in the first four elements (public space, empowered space, transmission, accountability); it will be inclusive in the first two; and it will be decisive. Real-world political systems will fall short to greater or lesser degrees, and they may conceivably miss one or more elements entirely. These five logical requirements constitute a starting point for the description and evaluation of all real-world deliberative systems and their comparison across space and time. It is in this sense that deliberative capacity building provides the basis for a comprehensive approach to the study of democratization.

Democratization requires the development of all five elements, but it does not necessitate any specific institutions, be they competitive elections or a constitutional separation of powers. Thus, some of the problems that democracy promotion has when tied to a liberal electoral blueprint can be avoided. As Carothers (2002) points out, democracy promoters are often perplexed when elements of the blueprint seem unattainable (such as truly competitive elections); thinking in terms of deliberative capacity would give promoters more options.

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Institutions can constitute, and interact within, a deliberative system in intricate and variable ways. Seemingly low deliberative quality in one location (say, corporatist state institutions) may be compensated by, or even inspire, higher deliberative quality in another location (say, a flourishing public sphere). Conversely, high deliberative quality in one location may undermine deliberative quality in another. For example, if legislators know that their more dubious collective decisions will be overruled by a constitutional court, then they are free to engage in irresponsible rhetoric. Thus, we should always keep our eye on whole systems. Quantitative measures of deliberative authenticity can inform comparison, but they cannot tell the whole story. Histories of the development or attenuation of deliberative capacity can be investigated, and comparative case study may be useful in locating the aspects of capacity present in one society but not in another.

In tracking deliberative capacity over time, we can evaluate continuous and drawn-out processes of democratization, such as that which unfolded over several centuries in the United Kingdom. But the deliberative approach can also be applied to the kinds of cases that now preoccupy democratization scholars, involving a disruptive transition in which an authoritarian regime gives way to a more democratic one. Democratization scholars have problematized the concepts of transition and consolidation (Carothers, 2002; Schedler, 1998). Many hybrid regimes, including successors to clearly authoritarian regimes, fall far short of liberal democratic ideals and show few signs of moving closer with time. It is possible to assess and explain the democratic fortunes of these and other sorts of regimes using the notion of deliberative capacity, without mentioning either transition or consolidation. However, these two concepts remain important touchstones, and so I organize the discussion in the next two sections through reference to them.

Deliberation in Transition

Breakdown of an authoritarian regime is more likely to yield a democratic replacement when deliberative capacity is present under the old regime, because such capacity affects the background and capabilities that key actors bring to the political crisis. If opponents of the old regime come from a deliberative public space—as opposed to, for example, a militarized resistance movement or a network of exiles involved in strategic machinations—then they can bring to the crisis some clear democratic commitments that stem from abiding by deliberative precepts. This was the sense in which civil society was idealized in pre-1989 East Central Europe. Democratic credentials are

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not easily established or developed in electoral or constitutional terms, because authoritarian regimes (by definition) lack free and fair elections under a constitution. Leaders with a background in deliberative public space are more likely to see transition in terms of establishing a democracy rather than putting themselves in power. The public space in question need not involve large numbers of people, as the 1989 experience of Czechoslovakia shows. Deliberative participation in oppositional civil society comes with a self-limiting obligation that may be carried into the transitional crisis, which may explain why figures with this background often subsequently prove no match for strategic power-seeking politicians more ruthless in seeking electoral advantage and building coalitions.

Deliberative capacity under authoritarian regimes may be found most straightforwardly in oppositional public spheres. But it is conceivable that the old regime may develop some such capacity; in which case, those schooled in it may be more likely to talk to, rather than repress, opponents as crisis looms. Deliberative capacity may also develop within society at a distance from state power, not clearly oppositional but not part of the administrative structure. Although participants in such processes are unlikely to play a part in peak political events in a transitional crisis, they may be more likely to support a new democratic regime. He and Warren (2008) have this hope for China.

Deliberation may also be found in the crisis itself. At the peak level, deliberation can come in negotiations between old regime leaders and their opponents. It is possible to analyze such talks in purely strategic terms, as positional bargaining in which authoritarian leaders give up power in return for guarantees about their status in the new order. However, as Elster (1998, p. 105) points out, roundtable talks in Poland and especially Hungary in 1989 involved deliberation as well as bargaining. Participants made warnings about what might happen (warnings that had to be explained and justified), not threats about what they could do to the other side. They argued in terms of the public interest. While arguing in favor of the public interest could be seen as hypocrisy on the part of old-regime participants (as Elster points out), if public interest justifications were transparently dishonest, then they would persuade nobody and there would be no point in making them. One indicator of dishonesty is perfect correspondence between one's interest and the alleged public interest; this mode of arguing forces participants to shift away from pure self-interest. On Elster's account, threats and self-interested argument would have risked breakdown of the talks.

More widespread public deliberation may enter the crisis, as with people power in the Philippines in 1986, the autumn of the people in 1989 East

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Central Europe, and the color revolutions in Georgia (2003) and Ukraine (2004–2005). To the extent that participants in such movements abide by deliberative precepts of noncoercive communication that not only induces reflection but connects particular demands to general principles, participants become a moral force for democracy, rather than a mob seeking revenge against oppressors. Elite negotiators feel this force.

Deliberation in Consolidation

Democratic consolidation is a concept with multiple meanings. Schedler (1998) argues that we should restrict the concept to regime survival, entailing only avoidance of breakdown and erosion of democracy; that is, we should not apply it to the building of democracy: "The concepts of 'democratic quality' and 'democratic deepening' are still unclear and controversial" such that conceptualizing consolidation as deepening "amounts to a free-for-all" (p. 104). However, at the core of the idea of deliberation is a developed notion of democratic quality such that the greater the deliberative capacity of a system, the higher the quality of its democracy. Not only can the deliberative effects enumerated below contribute to regime survival, but they can also increase democratic quality—specifically, making regimes (a) more legitimate, (b) more effective in coping with divisions and solving social problems, (c) better able to solve the basic problems of social choice, and (d) more reflexive in correcting their own deficiencies.

Legitimacy

Any new regime is faced with the challenge of securing legitimacy in the eyes of its people. Legitimacy can be achieved in many ways, not all of them democratic. But in a democracy, an especially secure basis involves reflective acceptance of collective decisions by actors who have had a chance to participate in consequential deliberation. This claim is at the heart of deliberative theory, which began as an account of legitimacy. Empirical study has lagged behind, although Parkinson (2006) shows how deliberative legitimacy can be generated in a deliberative system for health policy making via multiple forums and practices. Deliberative legitimacy can either substitute for or supplement other sources of legitimacy, such as the consistency of a process with constitutional rules or traditional practices.

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Coping With Deep Division

In many societies, democratization is challenged by deep division on ethnic, racial, national, religious, or linguistic lines. Although a number of solutions have been proposed to this problem—notably, consociational power sharing (Lijphart, 1977)—deliberation also can play a part in healing division. Where this might be accomplished, however, is an open question. O'Flynn (2006) seeks more deliberation linked to consociational institutions. Dryzek (2005) stresses interactive forums composed of individuals from different blocks, at a distance from contests about the construction of sovereign authority, concerned more with particular needs and concrete problems. Examples include mixed-race discussion groups in post-apartheid South Africa and District Policing Partnerships in Northern Ireland. A large literature in conflict resolution emphasizes the effectiveness of deliberation among key parties to a dispute, in producing durable solutions to conflicts—especially in mediation and through consensus-building exercises (Susskind, McKearnan, & Thomas-Larmer, 1999). These exercises yield not consensus interpreted as universal agreement on a course of action and the reasons for it but rather an agreement to which all sides can reflectively assent—if for different reasons (including fear of what might otherwise happen). In this light, agonistic critics of deliberation across identity difference, such as Mouffe (1999), who allege a deadening emphasis on consensus miss the point. Moreover, they provide no alternative way to reach collective decisions in the more passionate encounters of agonism.

Deliberation can have a social learning aspect that helps to determine how different segments live together, without necessarily being validated in explicit policy decisions. Kanra (2005) shows that in Turkey, there are substantial possibilities for deliberative learning across Islamists and secular left-liberals that cannot easily be expressed in public policy, because of the way that polarization between military–nationalist Kemalists and Islamists has been entrenched in electoral politics. Such social learning could nevertheless have consequences for political reconfiguration and social peace.

Deliberation's contribution to conflict resolution comes with mutual recognition of the legitimacy of disputed values and identities (Dryzek & Niemeyer, 2006, pp. 639-640). The absence of such recognition means that politics becomes, not a contest in which some losses and compromises are acceptable, but rather a fight to eradicate the values of the other side. This absence defines, for example, religious fundamentalisms that cannot tolerate what they see as sinful behavior or heresy in their societies. Neither side in such a contest can accept the possibility of even temporary defeat, and

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collective outcomes will lack legitimacy in the eyes of whichever side such outcomes disadvantage. In contrast, functioning democracies feature substantial normative meta-consensus on the legitimacy of disputed values. Meta-consensus has force in structuring interdivisional political interaction to the degree that it is reflectively accepted by key political actors; for that, deliberation is needed.

Tractability in Collective Choice

Deliberation offers one way—perhaps the most effective democratic way—to dispel the problems of instability and arbitrariness that some social choice theorists believe ought to plague democracies, as clever politicians wreak havoc in their strategic games by introducing new options and new dimensions of choice. Such problems may be acute in new democracies, with unclear rules and contested procedural understandings.

Riker (1982) suggests that this to be the normal condition of democratic politics—that is, not just in new democracies. For example, he blames the outbreak of the U.S. Civil War on the machinations of elected politicians' taking advantage of opportunities to manipulate agendas and votes. Van Mill (1996) argues that the conditions of free deliberation are exactly those most likely to exacerbate the problems that Riker identifies. The puzzle then becomes why we observe so little chaos in established liberal democracies (Mackie, 2003). One answer is that mature democracies have developed mechanisms endogenous to deliberation that can structure interaction and so overcome the dire predictions of Riker's theory (Dryzek & List, 2003). Deliberation can produce agreement on a single dimension on which preferences are arrayed, thus ruling out the introduction of other dimensions to confound collective choice on the part of clever strategists (Miller, 1992). It can also produce agreement on the range of alternatives considered acceptable. As Arrow's theorem (1963) implies, if democratic processes cannot find a way to induce such agreements, the main available alternative is dictatorship. To the extent that new democracies develop deliberative capacity, they become able to cope with the dangers identified by social choice theory: arbitrariness, instability, civil conflict, and a lapse into dictatorship. Voting in elections and in the legislature can then proceed without fear.

Effectiveness in Solving Social Problems

Deliberation is a means for joint resolution of social problems. Of course, problems can be resolved top-down, technocratically; or, they can

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be allocated to quasi-market mechanisms. But a large public policy literature points to the effectiveness of deliberation on the part of those concerned with a common problem in generating solutions that are both effective and mutually acceptable (see, e.g., Innes & Booher, 2003)—and than can work when top-down solutions are resisted by those whose interests and arguments are overridden. This is not the place to assess the effectiveness of deliberation in comparison with its alternatives in social problem solving. But as long as some degree of pluralism is seen as being instrumental to effective decision making—that is, considering multiple perspectives (a staple of liberal democracy)—deliberation can help generate mutual acceptance of the credibility of disputed beliefs. Such mutual acceptance ought to be promoted to the degree that actors try to state positions and supporting beliefs in terms acceptable to the actors on the other side of an issue. Again, reciprocity comes into play. The absence of such acceptance means that the other side is seen as trafficking in falsehoods rather than a different perspective on common problems. Such alleged falsehoods might concern economic doctrines (Marxist or market liberal), interpretations of history (identifying oppressors, liberators, friends, and enemies), or theories about the impact of policy.

Reflexivity

Elster, Offe, and Preuss (1998) liken the democratization and marketization of postcommunist systems to "rebuilding the ship at sea"—as opposed to the construction of a new ship from a set of plans. One aspect of deliberative capacity involves a distributed ability to reflect critically on preferences, including those about the structure of the political system itself. Thus, deliberative capacity ought to promote the ability of a system to identify its shortcomings and reform itself. Without this ability, reformers may be tempted by more authoritarian pathways. The anti-deliberationist Adam Przeworski (1991) inadvertently puts the issue into stark perspective when he states that post-transition economic reforms "are based on a model of economic efficiency that is highly technical. They involve choices that are not easy to explain to the general public and decisions that do not always make sense to popular opinion" (p. 183). Similarly, Brucan (1992) argues that "a reform policy is not one that emerges from broad participation, from a consensus among all the affected interests, from compromises" (p. 24). Przeworski and Brucan may be right—but only to the extent that the society in question lacks deliberative capacity.

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This reflexive quality may be enhanced inasmuch as the experience of deliberation increases the competence of political actors. Some evidence suggests that participating in a deliberative forum has an enduring effect on the political efficacy of citizen participants (Delli Carpini, Cook, & Jacobs, 2004, p. 334). However, this evidence comes mainly from deliberative polls in developed democracies; as such, it is not clear how generalizable the effect is nor whether the effect extends to partisan political actors, as opposed to ordinary citizens.

In sum, the ability to promote legitimacy, heal division, secure tractable collective choice, solve social problems effectively, and promote reflexivity means that deliberative capacity contributes to state building as well as democratic consolidation. Carothers (2002, pp. 8-9) points out that many democracy promoters assume that democratization is done to a well-functioning state, as opposed to proceeding in tandem with state building. A deliberative capacity approach can appreciate this dual task, in part because it can apply to situations with any degree of stateness—including zero.

The Determinants of Deliberative Capacity

Let me turn now from the impacts of deliberative capacity to the determinants. Deliberative capacity may be facilitated by the following:

Literacy and Education

Literacy and education facilitate deliberative capacity inasmuch as they influence the communicative competence of political actors and ordinary citizens. Sanders (1997) worries that, at least in the United States, deliberative forums will be dominated by participants who are white, male, high income, and well educated. Cook, Delli Carpini, and Jacobs (2007) demonstrate that although inequalities in deliberative participation do exist, they are smaller in relation to income than they are in other forms of participation. But even if Sanders is right, deliberative capacity will benefit from more equal access to education.

Shared Language

Kymlicka (2001) suggests that democratic politics has to be politics in the vernacular, implying that democracy across language groups can be problematic—although the case of societies such as Switzerland and India,

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with multiple languages, suggests that this barrier is not insuperable. A much bigger obstacle to deliberative capacity may be when elites cultivate a form of language unavailable to the masses as a way of bolstering their standing and power (Anderson, 2007). Historical examples here might include the use of High German by Prussian elites, French by the Russian aristocracy (famously recounted by Tolstoy in the opening pages of *War and Peace*), *futsubun* by politicians in pre-1945 Japan (Anderson, 2007, p. 32), and even the distinctive accent of the British upper classes.

Voting System Design

Horowitz (1985) and Reilly (2001) recommend preferential voting for divided societies, on the grounds that it advances the prospects of moderate politicians and parties because they can appeal for second and third preferences across the divide. Although not explicitly conceptualized by Horowitz and Reilly, deliberative capacity may also benefit because such appeal requires politicians to cultivate reciprocity: to communicate in terms that voters from the other side can accept.

State Structures and Institutions

Different sorts of state structures and institutions may be more or less conducive to deliberation. Of course, parliaments and constitutional courts ought to be better than executives who rule by decree. Beyond such comparisons, it is not always clear which sorts of institutional combinations best promote deliberative capacity in particular settings, especially when these institutions are combined in a deliberative system. State structures may have unintended and surprising consequences that can be revealed only by empirical analysis. For example, the exclusive character of West German corporatism until the mid-1980s provided few opportunities for political access to social interests other than business and labor, thereby making any deliberation that did occur far from inclusive. However, political activity was channeled into a deliberative public space, at a distance from the state, where profound critiques of public policy were constructed by green, feminist, and peace movements, among others. Even when those developing the critiques lacked formal access, their influence was felt on empowered space and so public policy—at first through protest action and later through the development of expertise via research centers associated with movement groups. Only when the walls of corporatism crumbled did erstwhile movement activists take their deliberative competence into government (Dryzek, Downes, Hunold, & Schlosberg, 2003).

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Political Culture

Deliberation may play out quite differently in different kinds of political cultures. The comparative analysis of cultural determinants of deliberative capacity got off to a questionable start in Gambetta's evaluation (1998) of the deliberative possibilities in "analytical" cultures (the paradigm for which is the Oxford University committee), as compared to "indexical" cultures. In indexical cultures such as Italy, *discursive machismo* means that one cannot admit uncertainty or any lack of competence or knowledge. A competent political actor in an indexical culture system has to be an expert on everything. Gambetta's provocative essay is high on entertainment value and anecdote but low on empirical evidence. Discursive machismo and its opposite, deliberation, are likely to appear in different ways in different locations in different political cultures (Sass, 2006). Comparative empirical analysis might reveal the subtlety of their forms and locations. There are plenty of other hypotheses concerning the effects of political culture that merit empirical study. For example, it is plausible (but by no means certain) that deliberation travels to Confucian, Islamic, and some indigenous cultures far more easily than do the adversarial politics associated with competitive elections or an individualistic conception of human rights. Aspects of deliberative democracy may resonate with the Confucian emphasis on reasoned consensus, the Islamic emphasis on consultation, and the sorts of communicative approaches to conflict resolution found in many indigenous societies. Deliberation may play out in radically different ways among different kinds of societies—just as democracy in general does (Dryzek & Holmes, 2002).

Obstructions to Deliberative Capacity

Deliberation may be obstructed by the following.

Religious Fundamentalism

Fundamentalist adherents of religious doctrines by definition struggle with deliberative reciprocity because they see no reason to communicate in terms that respect the frameworks held by nonbelievers. Nor are they interested in the kind of reflection upon values and beliefs that is central to deliberation. Deliberative capacity is in trouble when fundamentalists control the state. Even here, though, deliberative capacity is not necessarily totally absent. Even in a country such as Saudi Arabia, Islamic traditions

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related to consultation can involve some modicum of deliberative capacity. And to the extent that fundamentalists disagree among themselves about what the word of God really means, space for deliberation might eventually open.

Ideological Conformity

If the state has an official ideological doctrine that is not readily challenged, then deliberative capacity is impaired. Moments of ideological conformity can impede the deliberative capacity of any polity—as illustrated by the case of the United States in the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, when critics of dubious presidential initiatives could be stigmatized as being unpatriotic.

Segmental Autonomy

Lijphart (1977) specifies segmental autonomy as one of the defining features of consociational democracy, conducive to stability in divided societies. But segmental autonomy provides no opportunity for members of different blocks to communicate with one another. Consociationalists might argue that there is a high degree of good deliberation in consociational systems, but this observation would apply only at the elite level, purchased at the expense of more socially pervasive capacity. Some divided societies feature ubiquitous and intense political talk, but this should not be confused with deliberative capacity, if people interact only with like-minded others. Enclave deliberation of this sort has a polarizing effect. Sunstein (2000) criticizes deliberation on the grounds that it induces groups to go to extremes, but his argument holds only to the extent that a group contains no countervailing views at the outset. In sum, religious fundamentalism, ideological conformity, and segmental autonomy all repress the variety in points of view necessary for deliberation to work.

The Historical Dynamics of Deliberative Capacity

The reflexive aspect of deliberative capacity intimates the possibility of a virtuous circle in which deliberative capacity begets more deliberative capacity. However, regress is possible, as is progress. Consider the following cases.

The history of the early bourgeois public sphere, as recounted by Habermas (1989), portrays a deliberative public space that arose with the development of capitalism in Europe. The emerging bourgeoisie was excluded from power by

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the landed aristocracy and by the church. Thus, bourgeois political interaction was forced into an oppositional public sphere, featuring debate in newspapers and coffeehouses. With time, the bourgeoisie became accepted into the state, through liberal revolutions or more gradual processes. Newspapers become commercialized, thereby compromising their ability to host robust political debate. Thus the public sphere went into decline; its deliberative capacity became lost. The liberalization of politics that attends bourgeois entry into the state may mean an increase in the contribution of empowered space to deliberative capacity (especially in parliaments), perhaps compensating for the loss in the contribution of public space. Only detailed comparative study across time could determine whether the gain in empowered space fully compensates for the loss in public space.

Old, as well as new, democracies can experience losses in deliberative capacity—for example, when national crisis enables critics of governmental policy to be labeled unpatriotic and, thus, illegitimate participants in public debate. Some government policies can involve a direct attack on deliberative capacity. For example, one approach to increasing efficiency in local government seeks to construct people as customers or consumers of government services, as opposed to citizens potentially engaged in the co-production of governmental decisions (Alford & O'Neill, 1994). To the extent that approach succeeds, *homo civicus* is displaced by *homo economicus*, who can make choices but not give voice.

The trade-off between deliberative capacity in public space and empowered space can be observed in connection with social movements. As noted earlier, until the late 1980s West Germany featured a corporatist state that denied access to social movements. In contrast, in the late 1960s Scandinavian countries began actively incorporating social movements such as feminism and environmentalism into state structures. The result was not necessarily greater deliberative capacity in Scandinavia because the inclusion of social movements was bought at the expense of their radicalism. So whereas Scandinavia featured moderate movements with small membership whose leaders—and only their leaders—could deliberate on policy-making committees, Germany featured a critical public sphere engaged by movement activists and, in the case of environmentalism, an associated network of research institutes. In public space, Germany had a deliberative capacity higher than that of the Scandinavian countries (Dryzek et al., 2003).

Poland illustrates the trade-off between deliberation in public and empowered space. Although the public space established by Solidarity did carry over (to a degree) after 1989, empowered space has since been problematic. Neoliberal economic reforms were accepted rather than

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deliberated; subsequently, parties led by populists and ethnic nationalists have prospered. Although prerevolutionary deliberative capacity is important in determining the outcome of a crisis in the old regime (see above), its legacy in the long run is more uncertain.

Deliberation is a demanding activity—almost certainly not for all of the people, all of the time. But it might be for most of the people, some of the time. Ackerman (1991) interprets U.S. political history in terms of three decisive deliberative moments that instigated society-wide deliberation about constitutional fundamentals—namely, the founding, the Civil War amendments to the constitution, and the Great Depression. Politics had an unusual intensity and breadth in both public space and empowered space. Moments of similar intensity and impact can be found elsewhere—for example, in instances of people power directed against authoritarian leaders or in the color revolutions in Georgia (2003) and Ukraine (2004–2005).

The inclusiveness and intensity of deliberation that can surround transitional moments—what O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) call the "layers of an exploding society" (p. 48)—are hard to sustain. For Linz and Stepan (1996), the subsequent replacement of a politics of truth by a politics of interests is actually good for democratic stability. However, this does not mean that in the long democratic run we should forget about deliberation in favor of interest and strategy. As argued earlier, there are many reasons why democratic consolidation can benefit from authentic, inclusive, and consequential deliberation. These reasons shade into the numerous arguments that theorists and practitioners alike have advanced for the necessity of deliberation in democratic politics. Thus, the full intellectual, financial, and organizational resources of the global movement for the institutionalization of deliberative democracy (Gastil & Levine, 2005) can be brought to bear in building deliberative capacity that will look quite different from that which explodes in transitional moments.

Conclusion

Deliberation that is authentic, inclusive, and consequential is central to democracy and so ought to be incorporated into any definition of democratization. Deliberative capacity is instrumental in democratic transition and crucial to democratic consolidation and deepening. Examination of the development of this capacity does not require specifying any well-defined beginning or end, and so it can apply in all kinds of political settings: under

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authoritarian regimes, in new and old democratic states, and in governance that eludes states.

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