Post-conventional Political Cultures via Processes of Direct Democracy: Theoretical Considerations Based on Jurgen Habermas and Lawrence Kohlberg
Post-conventional Political Cultures via Processes of Direct Democracy: Theoretical Considerations Based on Jürgen Habermas and Lawrence Kohlberg

ROLF RAUSCHENBACH

Abstract: In this article, it is proposed to differentiate political cultures in two dimensions. First, inspired by Habermas’ distinction of the contents of discourse, a distinction is suggested between moral, ethical-political and pragmatic elements of political culture as well as an element of culture of balancing interests. Second, inspired by Kohlberg’s stage models for the development of the individual moral consciousness and for moral culture, a distinction is similarly suggested between two pre-conventional, two conventional and two post-conventional collective stages of political culture. It can be shown that from a normative point of view, only deliberations made in a post-conventional political culture can produce reasonable or at least fair results. Conceptual considerations indicate processes of direct democracy as the method for promoting post-conventional political cultures. The more liberty that the citizens have to formulate and trigger processes of direct democracy, the more one can expect from them to generate post-conventional political cultures.

KEYWORDS: Deliberative democracy, Moral culture, Political culture, Direct democracy, Developmental psychology

Introduction

It was Montesquieu who argued as one of the first authors that cultural elements are relevant for the stability of a political system. He stated that fear stabilizes despotism, honor is the cultural basis of monarchy and virtue the foundation of a republic (2008 [1748]). John Stuart Mill added to this the idea that individuals are able to learn and, consequently, that the cultural basis of a polity can be modified over time (1865 [1861]). The modern concept of political culture goes back to the work of Almond and Verba, who were looking for an explication for the stability (or lack thereof) of political systems. Their basic point was that a polity remains stable only when its institutions are congruent with the prevalent political culture. They formulated four types of political culture and stated that only a civic culture could guarantee the long-term survival of a democracy. In general terms, for these two authors, political culture provides the psychological basis for democracy. It represents the socially internalized cognitive, affective and evaluative orientations of an individual towards others, in particular in political contexts (1989 [1963]: 14). Other authors have refined and varied the concept. Easton (1965a, 1965b, 1990) proposes a matrix which combines two forms of political support (diffuse and specific) with three objects of

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the political system (political community, political regime and political authority). Lipset derives stability of a political system from its legitimacy and efficiency (1960). Fuchs proposes a complex model of political processes based on political support; political culture plays a central role (2002). As Lipset, Diamond also studies the relationship between legitimacy and efficiency, however in a more sophisticated manner; in addition to that, he attempts to establish benchmarks, which should allow determining the stability of political systems (1999). Rohe focuses on the procedural character of political culture and underlines its symbolic importance (1994). In addition to the traditional notion of political culture, two concepts have been introduced which can be seen as extensions of the initial idea: Inglehart studies values and their modifications (1977; Inglehart and Welzel 2005). In his conception, political culture is rather dependent on the general set of values of a society. His overall goal is to explain the shift from materialistic to post-materialistic values. Here, he identifies civic values as important drivers for this development. Putnam coined the resource of a collective to coordinate itself efficiently social capital (1993; 2000; 2002). It is interesting to note that none of these authors refers to Habermas, despite the fact that their considerations have a strong normative grounding; Habermas touches only superficially on Almond and Verba as well as on Inglehart.

In political crises of established democracies as well as when polities cannot be democratized as desired, the lack of adequate political culture is often advocated as the prime reason for such problematic situations. Przeworski et al. (1998) showed however, that the stability of democracies is first and foremost determined by the income per capita. Above a certain threshold, they were not able to identify one single case where a democracy crumbled. From this, they conclude that it would be rather difficult to prove that political culture has causal quality on the stability of democracies.

In this paper, political culture is not conceptualized as a strictly causal variable. The view adopted here is hermeneutical: it is assumed that political culture is both consequence as well as cause of political behavior. Formal political institutions and socio-economic circumstances play an equally important role in this game. It is assumed, though in this paper I will not test it empirically, that changes in the political culture can be viewed as early signs of more profound political alterations, which ultimately can result in formal institutional modifications. However, this assumption also works the other way around: a specific set of political institutions has an impact on the political culture of that very polity; this point will be illustrated with the institutions of direct democracy. When I refer to political culture, I mean the sum of the collectively held but not formally institutionalized norms and beliefs which steer political actors in their public views and actions. It goes without saying that these norms and beliefs are not independent variables, they are also influenced by the formal political institutions and the socio-economic circumstances. However, I hold up the normative hypothesis that humans as rational beings have a certain capability to decide on their own, independently of the political institutions and socio-economic circumstances they live in, what is morally right or wrong, what kind of identity they would like to pursue, how the factual world should be dealt with and how consensus or compromise with others can be reached. The goal of this paper is to show how an individual acquires such cognitive capabilities and how, from an institutional point of view, these learning processes can be promoted.

The issues raised in this paper will be dealt with in a theoretical manner. As a starting point, the theory of deliberative democracy by Jürgen Habermas has been chosen. The choice is motivated by its explicit normative quality (derived from the ethics of discourse, 1983; 1991) and its integration into the overarching theoretical framework of communicative action (1995), which allows to situate the observations in a wider theoretical context. However, the analysis of Habermas’ concept of political culture will lead to an unsatisfactory result: Although political culture
plays an important role in his theory, he provides only a vague conceptualization and no hints of how political cultures that favor deliberation could be promoted. To fill these gaps, I go back to the work of Lawrence Kohlberg who formulated an extensive theory on the acquisition of moral reasoning capabilities; he also developed a system of collective stages of moral culture, which will be the basis for my conceptualization of political culture. Habermas and Kohlberg worked together quite intensively, in particular when the first was formulating his ethics of discourse and the second his philosophy and psychology of moral development. They inspired each other profoundly; both declared the other’s work as important complements to their own theories. Their dialog was abruptly ended by Kohlberg’s early death in 1987. The present study can be viewed as an attempt to virtually continue the dialog between Habermas and Kohlberg.

Kohlberg’s ideas were received quite controversially; this can be exemplified by two critiques he was faced with: Carol Gilligan alleged that Kohlberg would systematically favor a male ethics of justice as opposed to a female ethics of care (1982). It is a fact that Kohlberg-thinking relies mainly on theories of justice, but this did not favor the assessment of male participants in interviews guided by Kohlberg (Jaffee and Hyde 2000: 721). Although Gilligan’s critique was empirically unfounded, it enriched the debate on the development of moral reasoning insofar as it showed that a focus on justice only might limit the understanding of the phenomenon. Kohlberg’s later shift of focus from the individual to the collective can be viewed as an indirect response to Gilligan’s critique. In a similar vein goes the allegation that Kohlberg promoted a western worldview and values incompatible with other cultures. Kohlberg and his team tested the theory of individual stages of moral reasoning in more than fifty intercultural research projects and were able to identify the first four individual stages in almost all cultures; they could identify the fifth stage not only in western countries, but also in modern urban settings in India, Japan and Taiwan (Kohlberg 1996: 28). Although the second allegation was empirically unfounded too, it cannot be denied that intercultural research on moral reasoning is a challenging task. The critique and the difficulties encountered motivated Kohlberg and his team to review various elements of their thinking and testing and allowed them to refine their approach.

Revisiting Kohlberg’s pedagogical methods to promote the individual cognitive capabilities in moral reasoning and the moral culture of a collective will shed new light on processes of direct democracy. It will become clear that these institutions favor the generation of post-conventional political cultures by involving all citizens in the decision-making process.

The concept of political culture in the writing of Habermas

According to Habermas, democratic institutions alone are not sufficient to allow for deliberations that produce reasonable or at least fair results. In addition to institutions, a certain kind of political culture is required which disposes political actors – citizens as well as office holders – to apply reason and by doing so, enable solidarity (1999: 206). He states that political culture is the foundation for democratic freedom and at the same time the medium in which political progress towards more democracy takes place (1999: 333). Political culture allows citizens to react upon legal, but illegitimate, situations according to their moral beliefs (1996: 87). Without political culture, citizens become isolated, egoistic monads, exercising their individual rights as weapons against each other (2005: 112). The political culture that favors deliberations is characterized by a paradox: although it is a prerequisite, there is no way to force or steer its generation. The state has to refrain from political indoctrination or more subtle normative demands, as this would rather damage the political culture (1999: 381).

Although the concept of political culture plays an important role in the theory of deliberative democracy, Habermas provides a rather vague definition of it and no clear hints on how political
culture can be promoted. This paper aims to fill this gap. Kohlberg’s concept of moral culture and his pedagogical instruments of dilemma discussions and just community will inspire the answers.

The concept of moral culture in the writing of Kohlberg

Kohlberg is most known for his research on the individual stages of moral reasoning. He argues that moral behavior is the result of affective and cognitive processes; it is however the cognitive reasoning that gives behavior a moral quality (1984: 9). Cognitive processes create the moral consciousness, which enables a person to interact with others along explicit moral choices. In that sense, moral reasoning is a cognitive capability, which allows a person to assume different perspectives in a moral dilemma and to reflect on the conflicting views to derive a just solution. However, this capability needs to be acquired. Kohlberg describes this learning process in two pre-conventional, two conventional and two post-conventional stages.

In general, cognitive stages have the following characteristics (Colby and Kohlberg 1987: 6ff): while different cognitive stages serve the same basic function of reasoning, they imply a qualitative difference in structures. This means that different modes of thinking can be observed in different stages. Stages form an invariant sequence, meaning that an individual has to go through one stage at a time; none can be skipped. A number of factors may speed up the progress along this sequence, slow it down or even stop it, but they do not change the sequence as such. These sequential modes of thought form a structural whole. A given stage response to a task does not simply represent a specific response determined by knowledge and familiarity with that task or tasks similar to it; rather, it represents the organization of an underlying thought. Stages are hierarchical integrations and form an order of increasingly differentiated and integrated structures for fulfilling a common function. Therefore, higher stages integrate the structures at lower stages.

Based on the concept of individual stages, Kohlberg and his colleagues formulated six stages of individual moral reasoning as well as detailed interview guidelines to assess the cognitive capabilities of individual persons facing a moral dilemma. With extensive empirical research, they were able to identify quite easily the first four stages of pre-conventional and conventional moral reasoning. The fifth stage could be identified less easily, as post-conventional stages are normally reached by adulthood and Kohlberg was predominantly testing children and teenagers. The sixth stage serves mainly as a normative reference and may have been reached only by individuals such as Gandhi or Martin Luther King.

In his later research, Kohlberg shifted his focus from the individual to the collective. This was due to his observation that in certain schools, students developed to higher stages more quickly than in others, despite the fact that individually they seemed to have the same cognitive capabilities. Kohlberg realized that the general setting of a school, both in terms of the physical infrastructure as well as the “soft factors” had an influence on the development of the students. It was in this context where he coined the concept of “moral culture”. His notion of culture is based on Levine (1981): “Culture is a shared organization of ideas that includes the intellectual, moral and aesthetic standards prevalent in a community and the meaning of communicative action.” In that sense, moral culture refers to the shared ideas and norms of a group on how to resolve moral dilemmas in a way that the group deems adequate.

To distinguish different kinds of moral cultures, Kohlberg extended his concept of individual stages to collective ones. Here, the characteristics of individual stages, as described above, are softened. Individual stages refer to the cognitive structures of individual persons; collective stages refer to a group of persons and their behavior. While it is assumed that individuals think
and constantly try to organize and integrate their cognitive structures in a rational way, no “group mind” is assumed doing the same, even though it is maintained that individuals interacting in groups construct common norms, which in turn influence their thinking in the group. However, the construction of such common norms reflects moral reasoning performance, not moral reasoning competence. For that reason, collective stages have a qualitatively different structure (Power et al. 1989a: 136ff): The dynamics within collective stages do not follow an invariant sequence. There is no natural starting point at collective stage 1. The collective stage in a given situation depends on the individual stages of the persons involved, as well as the general context. The collective stage will never be higher than any of the individual stages represented in the group. Fluctuations, both upwards and downwards, can be observed much more frequently than in individual development, where regress is rather uncommon. As long as a group operates in a relatively stable environment and has a clearly defined task, an optimal collective stage can be deduced. This is in contrast to individual persons, who ultimately are confronted with the challenge engaging them in the complex global order; in the long term, it can fulfill such a task adequately only by post-conventional means.

Individual stages represent a structural whole, implying a consistent strategy to resolve cognitive problems. Collective stages do not possess such consistency. They are the result of interactions between individuals who are themselves moved by cognitive and affective factors. For that reason, collective stages refer not purely to cognition, but to behavior in general. Furthermore, it cannot be assumed that in a given situation, all persons involved dispose over the same individual stage. Therefore, collective stages are always a mixture of different individual stages. This heterogeneity does not represent a problem per se, as heterogeneity enables the expression of different points of view, which in turn creates the need for discursive interaction and may provoke individual and collective learning. It is thus clear that collective stages do not represent hierarchical integrations in the strict sense of the word. They are too heterogeneous and there is no agent trying to establish overall consistency within the reasoning of a given group. Groups are more concerned with the question of how they should act than why they should act in a certain way (Power et al. 1989a: 138). It was in this context that Kohlberg formulated the collective stages of moral culture (Power et al. 1989b: 271ff):

**Collective stage 1 – authoritarian moral culture**

There is actually no description of a moral culture at stage 1 by Kohlberg, and one might rightly argue that there cannot be any moral culture at stage 1. In fact, at stage 1, the moral culture consists in its total absence. Only his own interests determine the behavior of each person; other people are not taken into account, or if at all, only as a means for egoistic ends. The relationship between individuals is based on massive – normally physical – coercion. An authority with an arbitrary legitimization exercises the coercive power. To secure his authority, solidarity among individuals is undermined to avoid any kind of moral culture and consequent uprising. For that reason, the concept of community does not enjoy any kind of appreciation and as soon as the authority loses power, the whole structure evaporates into anarchy. For obvious reasons, the notion of democracy has no tangible meaning at stage 1.

**Collective stage 2 – moral culture of trading relationships**

The moral culture at stage 2 has the characteristics of a market place. Relationships with others are established to engage them in trade. Needs of others are of concern as long as their satisfaction gives the right to the satisfaction of one’s own needs. Needs are perceived in an isolated
fashion and in a strict means-ends logic; the fact that each individual is a complex whole and that it is an end in itself is least appreciated. The sense of community is limited to the experience that trading within a community is easier as needs tend to be similar. At stage 2, democratic mechanisms are rudimentary, as individual needs are satisfied bilaterally and no collective decisions are required. Collective needs are scarce or are not perceived as such. Overall, democracy at stage 2 implies that everybody can express his own needs. The satisfaction of these needs is however not a question of justice but of market power. Overall, there is, if at all, only a very limited moral culture at stage 2.

**Collective stage 3 – moral culture of community**

It is only from stage 3 onwards that substantial forms of moral culture can be observed. Community is appreciated as a netting of strong interpersonal bonds based on friendliness and mutual consideration; affective fondness and closeness are important elements. The community allows for reaching goals and creating common norms, which would be impossible to achieve individually. At stage 3, democracy implies the right to be heard. Individual and collective needs matter equally. The majority determines collective needs. The majority is the new authority and is respected even to the detriment of individual interests.

**Collective stage 4 – moral culture of stabilization and identification**

At stage 4, community is perceived as something that is more than the sum of interpersonal relationships. Community becomes an end in itself. Interpersonal relationships are formalized to stabilize the formerly affective basis of the community. Identities are not only based on personal relationships but also on norms, principles and institutions, provided by the community. At stage 4, democracy implies the right to express needs, being heard and being taken into consideration, so that the majority can represent the common good. The pivotal issue at this stage is thus the benefit to the community.

Kohlberg does not provide descriptions of post-conventional moral cultures. It did not occur to him, while doing research in schools, that post-conventional moral cultures most probably would not be identifiable, as children and teenagers rarely reach post-conventional stages individually. Furthermore, schools as social entities are of communitarian, not societal nature. Schools lack the complexity typical of modern societies and necessary to stimulate post-conventional structures. Complexity is not an inherent characteristic of a phenomenon; it depends on the perspective of the observer (Stüttgen 1999). From that point of view, the presupposition that societies are more complex than communities is arbitrary. This presupposition is based on the assumption that schools as communities are designed in such a way that allows students to train capabilities within a limited and controlled space, whereas public deliberations on the level of a society are by nature unlimited and uncontrollable, as anybody can participate. As the intention here is to provide the full array of political cultures, of which moral culture is an important element, it is proposed to bridge this gap with the descriptions of the following two post-conventional moral cultures.

**Collective stage 5 – moral culture of the constitutional nation state**

The first post-conventional moral culture considers that an individual is always a member of a complex society. Society itself is not a given entity; it is the product of innumerable communicative contributions by all members of society. These contributions have to respect fundamental
rights. The *Rechtsstaat* and its institutions – in particular parliaments and courts – facilitate the application of fundamental rights. Minorities enjoy special attention and some privileges. However, it is the majority who delineates minorities and decides about their special treatment. This segregative structure is reflected in the distinction between civil and human rights too. Human rights are applicable to everybody, and civil rights to only the citizens of a specific polity.

**Collective stage 6 – moral culture of universalization**

Within the second stage of post-conventional moral culture, the notion of global citizenship (*Weltbürgersrecht*) is universalized. Distinctions between citizens and persons without civil rights are extinguished. All human beings receive equal treatment on all dimensions. The moral culture of stage 6 does not allow for the mechanisms of segregation, as awareness prevails that such instruments pervert moral principles at their core and transform them into ideology. At this stage, no specific form of good life is propagated. Instead, a mode that permits the co-existence of most diverse conceptions of good life is at the forefront. These conceptions of good life are in constant dialog with each other; it is communication that highlights the differences positively. (World-) society is as complex as it is fragmentary; fragmentation is reflected in the identities of individual persons too. This is not perceived as a threat, because of the prevailing consciousness that differences are unavoidable. The moral culture of stage 6 permits resolution of unbridgeable differences peacefully and living diversity positively.

**From the concept of moral culture to political culture**

The discussion so far has provided two results: first, with the collective stages, we have encountered a conceptual framework that allows differentiating cultural phenomenon both in a descriptive and normative fashion. As this framework is designed in hierarchically integrated stages, different cultures can be viewed as products of a learning process. Secondly, with the six collective stages of moral culture, we have an example for substantive descriptions of a variation of a cultural phenomenon at hand that can be used as a blueprint for the formulation of collective stages of political cultures.

Before doing so, the question needs to be addressed how moral and political cultures are interrelated. For obvious reasons, one has to refrain from a moralization of politics by conflating moral and political culture. In this context, Habermas’ distinction between (ethical) discourse and (political) deliberation is of great use. He distinguishes discourse, in which the involved assess whether a norm is morally just, from deliberation, in which the involved search for consensus or compromise over issues which involve not only a moral dimension, but also ethical-political and pragmatic considerations (1998: 207). Inspired by the later distinction, I propose to conceptualize political culture as the sum of four “sub-cultures”: moral culture, ethical-political culture, pragmatic culture and culture of balancing interests. The moral culture has been introduced above. It sets the standards that need to be met to preserve the sense of justice in a given group. The ethical-political culture informs how a group forms its identity and how its notion of the good life gets established. This does not imply that it is the expression of a large-scale version of ego-identity. It merely describes what kind of mechanisms a group uses to guarantee both individual and collective identifications. The pragmatic culture informs how a group deals with issues of truth. It indicates how a group perceives the objective world and how it adapts itself to it. The culture of balancing interests informs how a group deals with situations in which no consensus can be reached and some sort of compromise is required.
With these elements, the initial definition of political culture can be refined: political culture is the sum of the collectively held but not formally institutionalized norms and beliefs which steer political actors in their public views and actions. It guides political actors in their search for consensus or compromise over political issues. Whenever political decisions are taken, the involved need to consider moral, ethical-political and pragmatic dimensions, as well as how interests can be balanced. The informal modes of these considerations are inscribed in the political culture. Although political culture and public reason are concerned to a certain extent with similar issues, they cannot be equalized. Public reason is a purely normative concept, idealizing the rational and solidary support for the common good by all members of a state. In a similar vein, we can distinguish between just deliberations and political culture: just deliberation is a communicative activity, which requires specific institutions as well as a specific political culture; otherwise, a consensus based on reason and solidarity cannot be expected. Political culture is the sum of collectively held but not formally institutionalized norms and beliefs which may favor the use of reason and solidarity to a higher or lower degree.

**The six stages of political culture**

Based on the previous reflections, it is now possible to formulate six collective stages of political culture. As shown in the Table 1, each stage is composed of four “sub-cultures”, which together form ideal types (Weber 1968: 190) of political culture. What follows is a description of these six collective stages.

**Collective stage 1 – Political culture of fear**

The moral culture relevant to the political culture of fear is characterized by its absence. The moral culture of stage 1 leads to no consideration for others; one’s own interests dominate but only those of the authority prevail. However, the assertion is based on the means of power instead of the others’ consent. When a political culture of fear reigns, ethical-political questions arise, if at all, to a very limited extent. The definition of who holds the power resolves all other questions, as all other actors remain in a state of total dependency. Issues of survival dominate and questions of individual or collective identity play, if at all, a minor role. With a political culture of fear, pragmatic aspects appear to be totally materialistic and immutable. They seem to be sole limitations and/ or threats. One can even doubt if, in a political culture of fear, the issues of truth, and the good and the just can be distinguished, as the authority dominates all areas with the same undifferentiated means of (physical) power. For that reason, the culture of balancing interests is equally weak: As the authority always prevails, no compromises need to be searched for. Summing up, the political culture of fear is the state of minimal differentiation.

**Collective stage 2 – Political culture of egoism**

The moral culture, relevant to the political culture of egoism, is the one of markets – relationships with others are established to engage in trade. The needs of others play a role insofar as contributions to their satisfaction engender the right to satisfy one’s own needs. However, satisfaction of needs itself is not a question of justice; it solely depends on market power. Ethical-political questions continue to play a minor role. Individual and collective identities seem to be byproducts of trade relationships. The undifferentiated worldview also appears in the context of pragmatic aspects. As at stage 1, they seem to be materialistic and immutable, but they are not only perceived as limitations and/ or threats, but also as opportunities to gain advantage over
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Moral culture</th>
<th>Ethical-political culture</th>
<th>Pragmatic culture</th>
<th>Culture of balancing interests</th>
<th>Political culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Moral culture of authority</td>
<td>Only rudimentary need for collective identities. If at all, they are the result of authoritarian coercion</td>
<td>Pragmatic aspects are perceived as materialistic and immutable; they represent restrictions and/or danger</td>
<td>No balancing of interests is foreseen. Only the interests of the authority prevail</td>
<td>Political culture of fear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Moral culture of trading relationships</td>
<td>Identities are still no priority. They are perceived as by-product of trading relationships</td>
<td>Pragmatic aspects continue to be perceived as materialistic and immutable. However, they offer the possibility to gain advantages over others</td>
<td>Interests can be balanced as long as everybody is better off</td>
<td>Political culture of egoism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Moral culture of being in good hands</td>
<td>Collective identities are appreciated and engender a family-feeling. Towards outsiders, the community assumes supremacy</td>
<td>Pragmatic aspects appear no longer as immutable. With the help of the community, certain pragmatic aspects can be affected positively if it favors the community</td>
<td>Balancing interests to the detriment of individual positions is acceptable</td>
<td>Political culture of community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Moral culture of stabilization and identification</td>
<td>The importance of collective identities increases further. They refer to specific locations and events and are evoked by rituals and symbols; they seem to be of materialistic nature.</td>
<td>Pragmatic aspects appear in abstract categories. Accordingly, the group can redefine them collectively anew</td>
<td>As more abstract categories are available, interests can be balanced in more flexible and asynchronous ways</td>
<td>Political culture of traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Moral culture of the constitutional nation-state</td>
<td>Collective identities are based on abstract principles which allow for diversity. Civil rights are an important part of the collective identity</td>
<td>The enlarged time-horizon induces sustainable solutions</td>
<td>Seeming renunciations are not perceived as such. Minorities enjoy special attention</td>
<td>Political culture of the constitutional nation-state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Moral culture of universalization</td>
<td>(Collective) identity is viewed as a result of communicative processes</td>
<td>Pragmatic aspects are perceived in cycles</td>
<td>Balancing interests is, as far as necessary, self-evident</td>
<td>Political culture of cosmopolitanism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
other actors. In that sense, the political culture of egoism is the culture of balancing interests in its simplest form. However, the principles by which interests are balanced are extremely undifferentiated. In a figurative sense, any bill must be paid immediately and in the same currency; otherwise, no transaction will take place.

**Collective stage 3 – Political culture of community**

The political culture of community is based on the netting of strong interpersonal relationships which are friendly and respectful. The community allows pursuing goals and creating values, which are otherwise unachievable. Within the community, a sense of identity can be established. This identity is founded on family or clan feeling. However, the positive identification is limited to the small circle of persons with whom one maintains close bonds. As the interpersonal relationships and the communities’ social realities become moldable, pragmatic aspects also change in nature. Within the community, pragmatic aspects can be manipulated. Due to higher degrees of differentiation of all relevant aspects, more sophisticated modes of balancing interests become available. Compromise to the detriment of one’s own interests is always unacceptable at stage 2, but at stage 3 the same would be acceptable if it is in favor of the community. Renunciations are however limited to the small circle of the community. Overall, it can be stated that at stage 3, a vague notion of collective goods is emerging.

**Collective stage 4 – Political culture of traditions**

The moral culture of the political culture of traditions focuses on stabilization and identification. At stage 3, community is still perceived as a by-product of interpersonal relationships. At stage 4, community as such becomes a priority. It is perceived as being bigger than the sum of the individual relationships between the group members. The interpersonal relationships at stage 3 are still dominated by affective aspects. To stabilize them, they are formalized at stage 4 and attributed to specific functions within the community. Accordingly, the ethical-political culture is transformed. Collective identities are not anymore based on interpersonal relationships. They are derived from specific geographic locations and historical events and referred to by symbols and rituals. Individual identities are derived from the origin of a person. In general, identities seem to emerge out of themselves and remain changeless. Due to the availability of more abstract categories, pragmatic aspects lose their totally materialistic characteristics and, therefore, can be collectively redefined. These more abstract categories also allow for new modes of balancing interests. Instead of balancing interests simultaneously, they may be balanced over a longer period of time and in different categories. Overall, stage 4 includes the notion of public goods and expands the timeframe to a longer term.

**Collective stage 5 – Political culture of the constitutional nation-state**

In comparison to the conventional stages of political culture, the post-conventional stages are further differentiated. This can be seen in the moral culture of stage 5: the social signifier is no longer the community, but the society. Society itself is not perceived as a fixed entity, but as the product of innumerable communicative contributions of all societal members. At conventional stages, interpersonal relationships prevail, but at post-conventional stages, anonymous and functional relationships become the dominant mode of social interaction. It is crucial that these relationships are always guided by human rights. The Rechtsstaat and its institutions enable and facilitate this endeavor. The complexity of societal and state structures is also reflected in the
modes in which identities are formed. First of all, more complex structures permit a bigger variety of individual identities. Secondly, identities do not rely on materialistic and seemingly changeless foundations, but on abstract principles and procedures which allow for diversity. A more abstract reasoning also prevails in the context of pragmatic issues. Mechanical concepts of reality are replaced by more complex idealizations. In particular, the time horizon is expanded considerably, and motivates sustainable solutions of pragmatic problems. At stage 5, compromises and renunciations appear in a new light. The culture of balancing interests at stage 5 approves a preferential treatment of minorities. With a more differentiated and long term vision, the society perceives that the discrimination of minorities is detrimental not only to the discriminated, but also to the discriminator. Overall, the political culture of the constitutional nation-state produces, therefore, public goods not only for the long term, but also of a complex nature.

Collective stage 6 – Political culture of cosmopolitanism

The moral culture of the political culture of cosmopolitanism strives for universalization. The moral culture at stage 6 dissolves differences between members of different societies. Stage 5 still differentiates between civil rights, applicable to only citizens of a specific polity and human rights, applicable to all human beings. At stage 6, this differentiation is abandoned. However, this does not imply that only one way of the good life is propagated. On the contrary, the moral culture of stage 6 permits an open dialog between different concepts of good life. The concept of citizenship vanishes and is replaced by the idea of cosmopolitanism. In that new light, identities change their quality. They no more have a materialistic appearance, as at stage 4; their core is no more a number of general principles, as at stage 5. At stage 6, the view prevails that both individual and collective identities are the product of communicative processes. For that reason, the care of these communicative processes becomes essential. Commonalities – in the shape of shared communicative processes – and differences – perceivable only by communicating with each other – remain, therefore, in balance. This does not mean that within the culture of cosmopolitanism all differences are dissolved. In fact, all aspects of life, in particular identities, are further fragmented. However, these fragmentations are not perceived as a threat, as there is the awareness that differences are unavoidable. The moral culture of universalization allows for resolving unbridgeable differences peacefully and for enjoying diversity. In total contrast to the perception at stage 1, where pragmatic aspects are viewed as threats, at stage 6 they are perceived in cycles. Potential menaces are not negated but understood as part of a bigger whole. Accordingly, there is a relaxed attitude towards renunciations. As far as necessary, they are accepted naturally and perceived in a wider context, which attributes some meaning to them. Overall, the political culture of cosmopolitanism is the culture in which complexity is produced and mitigated communicatively.

Postconventionality

When viewing different stages of political culture, the question arises as to which stages prove adequate for a deliberative democracy and may contribute to the realization of the good and just statehood. Habermas defines political culture as an essential element of a deliberative democracy. He states that a liberal political culture represents the foundation on which the institutions of liberty are based. It disposes citizens and office holders to act rationally and to search for consensus and solidarity. Without political culture, political actors transform themselves into isolated monads, using their rights as weapons against each other. It goes without saying that stages 1 to 3 do not correspond with what Habermas has in mind. It is also doubtful that stage 4 can fulfill
the needs of a deliberative democracy. At stage 4, although the purely egocentric perspective has been replaced by a larger vision, besides the interpersonal relationships being less affective and formalized by traditions, the overall horizon continues to be restricted to the community, which is devoid of the complexity that is typical of societies. The gap vanishes once Habermas’ requirements are compared with the post-conventional stages of political culture (collective stages 5 and 6). With our formulations, a given political culture does not appear anymore as a diffuse netting of mentalities; instead, it can be differentiated analytically into four elements. Based on the proposed differentiation, the different forms of political culture can be reconstructed systematically and brought into a hierarchical sequence. In the light of pre-conventional and conventional political cultures, the normatively desired post-conventional stages show up not only as normative idealizations, but as challenging, though reachable end points of individual and collective cognitive learning processes.

This leads to the question: To which status shall the model of collective stages of political cultures and the requirement for post-conventionality be ennobled? It is easy to perceive that the pre-conventional and conventional collective stages of political culture and its descriptive formulations can be used as analytical tools to better understand specific political situations. The same applies for post-conventional stages, as far as they can be identified empirically. The requirement for post-conventionality however is normatively motivated. It shall remain an open question, whether the trend to post-conventionality is motivated only normatively, or if it actually has anthropological foundations. It is however clear that the project of modernity and its overarching endeavor – democracy – remains unthinkable without post-conventional structures. The claim of universality of the principle of post-conventionality is less oppressive than it might look at first sight: boiled down to its core, it implies that legitimate decisions can be reached only when all perspectives are taken into account, without favoring one particularly.

**Procedures that promote post-conventional political cultures**

As only post-conventional stages of political cultures have proven to be adequate for a deliberative democracy and the realization of the good and just statehood, the question arises how such political cultures can be favored. Habermas’ recommendations prove to be rather vague, which is why Kohlberg’s methods to promote the development of higher stages of moral consciousness and moral culture are consulted here. Kohlberg designed these methods for schools. For that reason, they cannot be transferred directly to the political realm. However, Kohlberg’s methods are useful as they provide six criteria which need to be met by a procedure that is supposed to favor post-conventional moral cultures. Applying these criteria leads to processes of direct democracy:

According to Habermas, political cultures are produced and regenerated spontaneously (1999: 292), in varied and labyrinthine ways (1990: 95). Political and administrative steering mechanisms of the state fail to influence the political culture. Even if the state could influence the political culture, it should abstain from doing so, as indoctrination and other means of manipulation would erode the foundations of post-conventional political cultures, which are based on free will. Solidarity and reasonableness can be hoped for, but they can never be enforced. Because of this, Habermas avers that orientation towards the public good should be extolled in small coins (1999: 381). From Habermas’ point of view, post-conventional political cultures are the result of learning processes which take place beyond the institutionalized mechanisms of the formation of political will. To favor such learning processes, he suggests a jurisdictional structure that includes the maximum instances of auto-correction. Such structures admit the need for constant revision of all state acts. Instances of auto-correction can be exemplified by the requirement of multiple readings of laws in the chambers of parliament or by the normal channel of courts.
(1996: 88). As each instance of auto-correction includes the possibility to deliberate and revise positions, the political culture can be regenerated simultaneously. From a conceptual point of view, Habermas’ suggestions make sense. However, the impact of deliberations in parliaments and courts on the political culture of a whole polity remains questionable, as only few persons are actively involved in such procedures.

Reverting to Kohlberg to identify adequate procedures for the promotion of post-conventional political cultures can be justified by the fact that Kohlberg not only established analytical tools to describe and understand individual moral consciousness and collective moral cultures, he also designed pedagogical methods to favor the development to higher stages of moral reasoning and moral culture. He introduced and tested successfully two methods: dilemma-discussions and the just community-approach. In dilemma-discussions, students regularly deliberate hypothetical moral dilemmas. By exposing themselves to the arguments of others, they train themselves in changing perspectives and acquiring more complex cognitive structures of moral reasoning (Colby and Kohlberg 1986: 159). However, no impact on the moral behavior could be detected when applying the method of dilemma-discussions (Steffek 2000:144).

For that reason, Kohlberg designed a model in which students, teachers and administrators of a school decide, on a regular basis, jointly on issues relevant to their daily school life (Power et al. 1989c). He could show in various empirical applications that the just community-approach produces positive effects on the moral reasoning capabilities, on the moral behavior of the students as well as on the overall moral culture of the school. However, there was one important limitation: no post-conventional stages could be achieved (Kohlberg 1980: 28). That is also why Kohlberg formulated only pre-conventional and conventional collective stages of moral culture. It did not occur to him that just communities lack the complexity typical of societies, precisely because they are in sociological terms of communitarian and not of societal nature. Despite the limitation of Kohlberg’s methods, six conceptual criteria can be derived which have to be met by a procedure that is supposed to produce post-conventional political cultures:

1. The procedure must treat real and relevant issues, as dilemma-discussions of hypothetical issues have shown to have no impact on behavior and culture.
2. The procedure must allow for active participation of all the persons concerned, not only in the deliberation but also in the final decision. Having the final say is an important motivational factor to get involved in a debate which otherwise remains hypothetical.
3. The participation in the procedure must be voluntary: An obligation to participate in a procedure that is supposed to generate post-conventional political cultures would be a contradiction in itself, as the core of post-conventionality is the disposition to solidarity and reasonableness based on free will.
4. The procedure must treat complex issues: The deliberation of issues relating to communities must contribute to the development of conventional moral cultures. Owing to the lack of complexity of communitarian issues, post-conventional stages could not be reached in schools. The introduction of issues of the organization of modern societies will guarantee the degree of complexity required to stimulate post-conventional structures. The participation of all members of a society will further increase the complexity of the resolution of an issue.
5. The procedure must be self-reflective and self-referential: An important element of post-conventionality is that it motivates self-reflexion and has an open structure devoid of external restrictions. To replicate and reinforce these traits, the procedure has to allow it to be its own object, so that it is possible to decide both on content issues and on formal adaptations of the procedure.
The procedure must be applied on a regular basis: Empirical cases show that a regular application of methods such as dilemma-discussions and decision-making and taking processes within just communities is crucial to sustainable development of moral culture to higher stages. For that reason, the procedure that promotes post-conventional political culture should be allowed to occur with quite some frequency.

Considering these six criteria, the question arises as to which procedure can meet all these criteria, and can at the same time generate legitimate and binding political decisions. In (deliberative) democracies, parliamentarian processes are traditionally the procedure applied to generate legitimate and binding political decisions. From the point of view relevant to this article, their limitation lies in the restricted number of persons involved. For that reason, it cannot be assumed that parliamentarian processes contribute to the generation of post-conventional political culture of a polity on a large scale. This leads to the question if at least the elections of the representatives serve the cause of post-conventionality. Elections do not fulfill the forgoing criteria, because in elections, candidates are the concern, not issues. From a psychological point of view, electing a representative implies a regression, as the responsibility to decide is delegated to another person, who is then followed in pre-conventional or conventional modes. Furthermore, the frequency of parliamentarian elections is so low that no sustainable effect could be assumed on the generation of post-conventional political culture.

The search for a procedure that fulfills the six criteria leads to processes of direct democracy. They represent the mechanism in which citizens have the final decision making power and may overrule the parliament and/or the government. It is important to note that I speak of processes of direct democracy, not of direct democracy *tout court*. In my understanding, processes of direct democracy do not represent a full-fledged political regime that could function on a stand-alone basis. They are an institutional complement to a democratic regime with representative parliaments, independent courts etc.. In that light, concepts such as deliberative or participatory democracy are to be viewed on a different theoretical level. In theories of deliberative democracy, it is argued that the exchange of ideas, opinions and values and the reaching of a reasoned consensus before political decisions are taken is crucial for the functioning of a democracy; this position can be viewed in opposition to aggregative theories, in which it is maintained that political interests are fixed and the only relevant moment is the fair aggregation of votes in elections (Turan 2011). Theories of participatory democracy have again a different focus: they stress the importance of political participation in general; including non-institutionalized forms of participation (Kaase 2011). As the following debate shows, processes of direct democracy meet the six criteria established above:

1. Processes of direct democracy treat real and relevant issues. The outcome of processes of direct democracy can be binding and has a real impact on the polity. Defining certain legal requirements for the initiation of processes of direct democracy can ensure the relevance of the issues.
2. Processes of direct democracy allow active participation of all persons concerned: They can be designed in a way that permits citizens to initiate processes of direct democracy and to take the final decision.
3. The participation in processes of direct democracy can be voluntary.
4. Processes of direct democracy treat complex issues: The processes regulate political issues of a polity; they are derived from their societal context. Modern societies, by definition, are of complex nature and for that reason, processes of direct democracy can be assumed to treat complex issues.
5. Processes of direct democracy are self-reflective and self-referential: They can be designed in such a way that they themselves can become the object of a process of direct democracy.
democracy. This is in particular the case when all constitutional matters, including the formal regulation of processes of direct democracy, are subject to processes of direct democracy.

(6) Processes of direct democracy can be applied on a regular basis: Because of their dynamic nature, modern societies never lack complex issues to be regulated collectively. By designing the legal requirements in such a fashion that insurmountable hurdles do not hinder the initiation of processes of direct democracy, an adequate number of processes of direct democracy can be expected.

Processes of direct democracy in theories of deliberative democracy

Processes of direct democracy are a promising candidate for the promotion of post-conventional political culture. As the theoretical foundation of this research is the theory of deliberative democracy, it is interesting to analyze how theorists of deliberative democracy conceptualize these processes. First, Habermas’ position will be summarized. This will be followed by a debate of other critical and favorable positions. This debate will allow for assessing the adequacy of the processes of direct democracy within the theories of deliberative democracy.

Habermas’ theoretical contributions to processes of direct democracy are rather limited. This is somewhat surprising, considering what he states with the principle of discourse: Only such norms can be assumed to be valid if all people concerned approve (or could have approved) them in a practical discourse (1983: 103). In a similar vein, he states that laws can be assumed to be legitimate only if they find approval by all citizens in a discursive process regulated by law (2005: 100). However, he does not derive from these principles a request for processes of direct democracy. This is because, in his view, there is no possibility to include large numbers of citizens in deliberations. That is why he bets on parliamentarian processes, in which deliberations can take place more easily (1998: 210). The political institutions in the center depend, however, on impulses coming from the periphery, although it is the institutionalized procedure that generates legitimacy and not the citizens themselves. Their contributions are to be extolled in small coins; citizens shall contribute to the formation of the political will without participating in the final decision. Habermas recognizes that this concept easily leads to a populist relationship between citizens and office holders that deliberations end up being dominated by (charismatic) persons and that party programs tend to be commoditized. Habermas believes that such an ill could be cured only by communicative practices of auto-determination, but he pursues this idea only very feebly. In his comments on specific political issues, Habermas draws more frequently on processes of direct democracy. He advocated for a referendum on the re-unification of Germany, particularly because this would have laid the foundation for a new (post-conventional) political culture (1990: 165). For similar reasons, he advocated a referendum on the European constitution after the failure of the Lisbon treaty (2008a: 10). In an interview, he expressed his admiration for the republican mode of democracy practiced by Swiss citizens, though he questioned, in view of continental and global challenges, if the Swiss processes of direct democracy dispose over an adequate grasp (2008b: 49). Overall, Habermas considers that processes of direct democracy play only a marginal role, although he does not exclude them by definition and is actually aware of their ability to contribute positively to the formation of (post-conventional) political cultures.

There are only a few theorists of deliberative democracy who are in total opposition to processes of direct democracy. Wolfensberger dismisses such mechanisms per se; he argues that the American people are not interested in more participation on the federal level and that the state
Referendums and initiatives have turned into weapons of special-interests instead of remaining safety valves for the last resort (2000: 4, 279). It is true that certain American states face alarming situations and some of their problems are also related to perverse effects of initiatives and referendums. It would be however methodologically unsound to dismiss processes of direct democracy when looking only at negative cases. Sabato, Ernst and Larson question processes of direct democracy in light of big budgets in campaigns in the USA (2001; Matthews 2005). The amount of money spent on campaigns has undoubtedly increased – the same is true for electoral campaigns. Money from lobbies challenges democratic institutions in general and new modes of financing and transparency are required. Processes of direct democracy may prove useful in establishing new rules and disseminating them in the general population. Petit argues against the processes of direct democracy, because they may induce passionate feelings that hinder deliberations (2006: 95ff). At the same time, he appreciates the positive contribution to more legitimate decisions and expects that these procedures have a favorable impact on the performance of the parliament (2003: 153 ff). Leduc lists a dozen factors, which may reduce the deliberative quality of the processes of direct democracy; they concern mainly the possibility of manipulation by the government, with overwhelming budgets for campaigns, with misleading wording of the ballot, low levels of information, as well as the problem of low turnout, the potential for polarization etc. (2006: 7ff). While Leduc’s considerations cannot be dismissed lightly, it has to be admitted that they apply equally to the processes of representative democracy. In addition to that, it should be considered that the potential problems also depend also to a high degree on the specific regulation of processes of direct democracy, as a comparison for example between the Californian and the Swiss legislation would show (Möckli 1994).

Theorists of deliberative democracy who favor the processes of direct democracy agree that the act of voting itself cannot replace the deliberative process. The main argument for processes of direct democracy lies in the fact that these procedures help to impart between the political center with its institutions and office holders on the one hand and the periphery and the citizens on the other hand. In Mastronardi’s view, processes of direct democracy work as filters between the center and the periphery and empower the citizens considerably as they can represent themselves on certain issues without any intermediary (2007: 174, 258). In opposition to Scheyli (2000: 184), Mastronardi argues that the processes of direct democracy do not integrate the periphery into the political center, because decisions taken in such procedures remain the exception. Schneider demonstrates in a comparative study that the processes of direct democracy are able to reflect the complexity of the issue in question, as long as there is a versatile media system and an active citizenry. She even concludes that the quality of public debates proved to be better in the regime with processes of direct democracy as in the purely representative system (2003: 222ff). Admittedly, such positive effects depend on a number of factors such as a certain educational level, as well as a certain level of social and economic security. Once institutions of the processes of direct democracy and of the preconditions are in place, a mutually reinforcing mechanism is activated, improving the way these procedures are applied, the educational and socio-economical context, and the political culture of the polity (Mastronardi 2007: 272).

This brief overview demonstrates that the processes of direct democracy may occupy a more prominent role among the theories of deliberative democracy. It also shows how several authors presume that these processes contribute to the production of (post-conventional) political culture, but none of them constructed a complete argument in that direction. With regard to political culture, it can be said that these processes are not only a complement to other deliberative institutions, but are essential for the generation of post-conventional political cultures.
Processes of direct democracy and their impact on political culture

Thus far, processes of direct democracy have not been differentiated. In this section, applying the criterion of the degree of liberty in participating in the political decision, four types of processes of direct democracy are distinguished (listed with increasing degree of participation; for a detailed discussion on available classifications refer to Svensson 2011):

- Processes of direct democracy which have to be applied by law: Neither office holders nor citizens have an influence on the triggering of such processes;
- Processes of direct democracy, which can be initiated by the parliament and/ or the government: Citizens have no direct influence on triggering and formulation of such processes. In certain cases, public pressure may have some impact on the office holders to initiate and/ or formulate a process of direct democracy;
- Processes of direct democracy in which citizens can veto decisions of the parliament and/ or the government: Citizens can decide on which issues they want to vote, without having the power to make their own proposals;
- Processes of direct democracy in which citizens can define the issues themselves: This gives citizens the highest degree of participation, because they themselves can propose the issue on which to vote.

In the following section, these four processes will be assessed in terms of their aptness to generate post-conventional political cultures. They are listed with increasing aptness:

- Processes of direct democracy, which can be initiated by the parliament and/ or the government, are the weakest in terms of generating post-conventional political cultures. As the initiation of such processes depends totally on the goodwill of the parliament and/ or the government, there is considerable risk of their being applied only to those cases in which the office holders expect results favorable to them. This reduces the citizens to mere means to blindly legitimize the decisions already taken by the parliament and/ or the government. The contribution to the generation of post-conventional political culture is further reduced if the results of such processes of direct democracy are not binding.
- At the first glance, the processes of direct democracy, which have to be applied by law, do not seem to be capable of contributing considerably to the generation of post-conventional political culture. Paradoxically, this is not the case. The obligation to let the citizens decide on certain (important) issues demonstrates the confidence that the constitution places in them. Such an obligation shows that, regardless of the intention of the parliament, the government and/ or the citizens, the final say remains with the citizens. This regulation is of post-conventional nature, as it expresses the position that certain decisions cannot be delegated to anybody else and that each individual should be able, or become able, to decide on his own. The reflexivity of such procedures becomes particularly clear when the institution of processes of direct democracy is the object of a process of direct democracy. In these cases, what needs to be decided is not an issue of policy-content, but the formal design of processes of direct democracy. To avoid a contradiction in itself, such meta-processes should be, by law, the object of processes of direct democracy.
- Processes of direct democracy, in which citizens can veto the decisions of the parliament and/ or the government, can generate even more post-conventional political cultures, because here, the citizens can actively decide when to intervene and when to veto decisions of the office holders. The more the decisions of the parliament/ and or the government are subject to a potential popular veto, the more the equality between citizens and office holders is affirmed. The fact that citizens can veto a decision taken by office holders forces the latter to constantly consider public
opinion to avoid a possible veto. That is why processes of direct democracy that allow citizens to veto the decisions of office holders are particularly able to generate post-conventional political cultures. Such procedures demonstrate to the citizens that their representatives are not leaders to be followed in pre-conventional or conventional modes. They imply full responsibility of the citizens for their political destiny and motivate them to reach post-conventional stages. For obvious reasons, the impact of generating post-conventional political cultures is reduced if the results of such processes of direct democracy are non-binding.

- Processes of direct democracy, in which citizens can define the issues by themselves, are the strongest for generating post-conventional political cultures. This type permits citizens not only to trigger a process of direct democracy, but also to define the issue to be voted on. Citizens become active on specific issues and can be sure to have the final say on them. With this instrument at hand, citizens are motivated to reflect on the societal realities in general and shortlist those issues that seem most relevant to them in the processes of direct democracy. This kind of political involvement is particularly favorable to the generation of post-conventional political culture on a large (societal) scale.

The fact that some types contribute less to the generation of post-conventional political cultures does not imply that they should be excluded from the constitutional menu. On the contrary, each process has its merits; different types of processes of direct democracy address different types of issues. Ultimately, it shall be the citizens of an individual polity who have to adapt the institutions of direct democracy to their specific needs, again by using the processes of direct democracy.

Conclusion

Reactivating the dialog between Habermas and Kohlberg has allowed formulating six collective stages of political culture. With this, the full array of political cultures is available: from the political culture of fear, typical for authoritarian regimes, to the political culture of cosmopolitanism, the normative vision for a fully democratized global order. The different political cultures are conceptualized as stages of an individual and collective learning process.

Revisiting Kohlberg’s pedagogical methods to promote the individual cognitive capabilities in moral reasoning and the moral culture of a collective has shed new light on processes of direct democracy. It has become clear that these institutions favor the generation of post-conventional political cultures by involving all citizens into the decision-making process. Processes of direct democracy represent a unique learning opportunity for the citizen, who, by deciding on specific issues, has to assume another responsibility as when he elects a representative. It is not argued that processes of direct democracy could replace parliamentary decision-making processes; they are viewed as complements that elevate the citizen to a position in which he can or must make up his mind on particularly important issues. Ultimately, our argument narrows the difference between deliberative and liberal theories of democracy. We agree that deliberation is crucial for the generation of reasonable or at least fair decisions; at the same time we maintain that taking part in the final decision is an important motivational factor for the success of the desired learning process.

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Rolf Rauschenbach graduated in political science from Universität St. Gallen, where he also completed his doctoral thesis. In addition, he studied at Université Catholique de Louvain-la-Neuve, New York University, Institut des études politiques de Paris and Universität Basel. He is currently working on a post-doctoral research project at Universidade de São Paulo. His doctoral thesis Mit direktdemokratischen Verfahren zu postkonventionellen politischen Kulturen. Theoretische Überlegungen anhand von Jürgen Habermas und Lawrence Kohlberg has been published by Duncker & Humblot, Berlin. Address of correspondence: Universidade de São Paulo, Núcleo de Pesquisa de Políticas Públicas NUPPs, Rua do Anfiteatro, 181 - Colônia, Favos 9 e 21, Cidade Universitária, São Paulo – SP – CEP 05508-060 – Brazil, E-Mail: rolf@rauschenbach.ch