

Carmen Gabriela GREAB

# Deliberative Democracy in a Diverse Europe

– From Theory to Practice –



Științe politice

Carmen Gabriela GREAB

# Deliberative Democracy in a Diverse Europe

- From Theory to Practice -

**Lumen**

Iași 2008

Carmen Gabriela GREAB  
Deliberative Democracy in a Diverse Europe  
- From Theory to Practice -

**Editura Lumen este acreditată CNCSIS sub nr 003**

[www.edituralumen.ro](http://www.edituralumen.ro) [www.librariavirtuala.com](http://www.librariavirtuala.com)

Redactor: Morariu Irina Maria

ISBN:978-973-166-048-6

Carmen Gabriela GREAB

# Deliberative Democracy in a Diverse Europe

- From Theory to Practice -

**Lumen**

Iași 2008

**Pagin 1 sat  
goal inten ionat**

# Acknowledgement

*I would like to start by thanking to my family for supporting me and my work for all this time. They helped me in fulfilling my dream of studying in a foreign country, and in the same time they supported my work not only materially but mostly morally.*

*I would like to, particularly, thank Prof Ferenc Miszlivetz and Robert Manchin, who helped me understand better the concepts and the principals of deliberative democracy and polling, through the lectures and discussions I had with them.*

*Finally I would like to mention my professor from Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj, Prof. Irina Kantor who actually first brought into my attention and made me understand the concept of democracy, democratization and that of deliberative democracy.*

# Pagin 1 sat goal inten ionat

## OUTLINE:

~INSTEAD OF PREFACE~ .....	9
Democracy Transformed...? A new democracy for a new society .....	9
List of figures and tables .....	21
Summary .....	22
<b>I. Introduction .....</b>	<b>25</b>
1. Introductory words to the study .....	25
2. Tackling European Democratic Deficit through Deliberative Democracy .....	28
<b>II. Methodology.....</b>	<b>35</b>
1. Definitions of utilized concepts .....	35
2. Methods of research.....	38
<b>III. Deliberative Democracy in European Union. A Theoretical Approach.....</b>	<b>41</b>
1. Pre-conditions for deliberative democracy in European Union.....	41
2. The rights and faults of deliberative democracy in plural Europe.....	50
<b>IV. Deliberative Polling – a Practical solution for Deliberation in European Union.....</b>	<b>56</b>
1. Deliberative Polling – a practical response to the normative deliberation .....	57
2. Deliberative polls in Europe.....	64



<b>V. Deliberative Democracy in a Diverse Europe – A comparative Analysis .....</b>	<b>69</b>
1. European Union – a plural and diverse social and political space .....	69
2. A Comparative Analysis of Deliberative polls in a Pluralistic and Diverse European Union.....	76
<b>VI. Conclusion .....</b>	<b>91</b>
1. Conclusive words to the study. ....	91
<b>REFERENCES:.....</b>	<b>95</b>

## ~INSTEAD OF PREFACE~

# Democracy Transformed...? A new democracy for a new society

The nature of democracy has been debated for several millennia as philosophers and other thinkers have speculated about what it is, what might become, and what is supposed to be.

Compared to competing forms of government and methods of organizing society, democracy worked rather well by the values most theorists and idealists have held to be important. Consequently, democracy produced societies that have been humane, flexible, productive, and vigorous. Still, democracy did not come out looking the way many theorists and idealists imagined it should and it could. (Mueller, 1999)

In addition to all these, over the past century, citizens, public interest groups, and political elites in advanced industrial democracies have displayed growing doubts about whether the principals and institutions of representative democracy are sufficient mechanisms of democratic self-government. These signs point a spreading dissatisfaction with the institutions and processes of representative democracy. Consequently, there were an increasing number of demands for political reforms and restructure of democratic political systems.

The American political analyst, Dick Morris observed:

“The fundamental paradigm that dominates our politics is the shift from representative to direct democracy: Voters want to run the show directly and are impatient with all forms of

intermediaries between their opinions and the public policy. (Dalton, Scarrow and Cain, 2003, p. 2)

Moreover, in a more theoretical way, Ralf Dahrendorf argued that: “representative government is no longer as compelling a proposition as it once was. Instead, a search for new institutional forms to express conflict of interest has begun.” (Dalton, Scarrow and Cain, 2003, p. 2)

Indeed, the XX-th century is considered the richest century in terms of waves of democratization as well as turns and reforms in the democratic theory. Calls for reform in recent decades seem to emanate from a complex mix of needs and motivations. Participation and consensus-building are essential characteristics of the democratic process. Once these values become accepted, there may be an inevitable pressure to expand these processes to allow greater citizen access and ensure the effectiveness of democratic participation.

Moreover, the XXth century was a century of change as a whole. The huge debate between positivists and post-positivists in the second part of the century has made dramatic changes in terms of social sciences. It was the century when people concentrated more on the value of their freedom.<sup>1</sup>

Alongside with these transformations at social level, the theory of democracy was also in the spotlight of restructuring. For the first time, J. Schumpeter saw democracy, as a management of power relations. The classical doctrine of democracy – which depended on the common notion of citizens’ good, is challenged by the theory of democracy as a process of elite selection.

---

<sup>1</sup> The freedom movement in 1960s

If the guiding principle for the classic democratic theory was government by and for the people (substantive theory), the new theory concentrates more on procedure, on the process of selection of elites and more importantly, on competition. Consequently, the substantive theories of democracy had to confront with the new procedural theories of democracy.

Scholars ranging from Schumpeter to Dahl have concentrated on concepts like power, influence and competition in defining their perspective on the theory of democracy.

Robert Dahl aptly notes that “significant inequalities in power have been a universal feature of human relationships throughout recorded history; they exist today in all democratic systems.” This, he concludes, “falls short of the criteria of the democratic process” and the result is a serious problem for democratic theory and practice. (Dahl, 1989, p. 271)

Joseph Schumpeter introduced the importance of power in defining democracy: democracy, in his view, is that institutional system that takes political decisions and in which the individuals obtain the power over these decisions through an electoral competition of votes. It was a complete new idea to concentrate on the procedures of democracy and not anymore on its substance.

In these circumstances, J Schumpeter, related his new envisaged theory of democracy to the economic theory of market and market competition.

The next table will reveal some differences among the classic democratic doctrine and the Schumpeterian democracy.

Table The difference between classic and Schumpeterian theory of democracy

The classic doctrine of democracy	The Schumpeterian democracy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- People govern through the electorate</li><li>- The power is natural monopole</li><li>- Democracy depends on the common notion of citizens' good</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The elites are governing on the basis of elections</li><li>- The power is divisible and is an object of electoral competition</li><li>- Democracy is that institutional system that takes political decisions and in which the individuals obtain the power over these decisions through an electoral competition of votes.</li><li>- Competition is the central element of democracy</li></ul>

The advantages of Schumpeterian democracy are numerous and of a wide range. Looking at the theory most important principal, we realize the importance that is given to the elites. This new theory of democracy gives to the leaders the role they deserve. In this sense, the ordinary citizens are supposed not to be that rational as they are presented in the classical theory of democracy. Moreover, the theory clarifies the relation between democracy and liberty: The market mechanism secures the amount of liberty. Since power is divisible, everyone has the opportunity to have it and participate in the electoral competition, which eventually will lead to a certain equilibrium. Moreover, the govern is controlled

through elections, and due to the structured competition the leaders are disciplined.

Even though, the arguments are very reliable, there are still some critics or disadvantages of the new Schumpeterian democracy. First, we could see that this structured competition concentrated only on elections is a short time vision. We could not focus on elections and on government institutions exclusively.

Consequently, the Schumpeterian democracy is considered a minimal interpretation with the accent exclusively on the competition for power. A pure procedural theory of democracy is, therefore, a wrong perspective.

Continuing the same procedural trend, Giovanni Sartori, in his book *A Theory of Democracy Revised*, introduced the concept of procedural democracy based on debates. He argues that all democracies are nothing else than decisions taken in certain committees. Consequently, what is extremely important for a democracy are the procedures of decision-making in those committees. Still, this theory of democracy is only considered a rather normative one and none of the other scholars followed this trait.

As a response to these strictly procedural theories, another group of scholars developed a new form of substantive democratic theory. The new deliberative perspective on democracy also concentrates on people and their involvement in politics. The difference is that, for the first time, the common good is not seen as an aggregative good, but as a deliberative one.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> The Common good:

Aggregative: the finding of general will associated with the function of social wealth.

Deliberative: looks for the transformation of preferences not their aggregation.

Sidney Verba and Norman Nie, declare that “if democracy is interpreted as rule by the people then...the more participation there is in decisions, the more democracy there is.” (Mueller, 1999) Indeed, citizens are increasingly demanding more transparency and accountability from their governments, and want greater public participation in shaping policies that affect their lives.

In these circumstances, the other approach in restructuring democratic theory followed the idea of civic engagement in politics and social life. Up until the XXth century, the classic approach to democratic theory was based on citizens and their common good but in an aggregative way. The new approach in substantive democratic theories is based on the idea of deliberation and the deliberative common good of citizens<sup>3</sup>.

Alongside with the interest on citizens' engagement in politics and social life, many scholars addressed the importance of the psychology of citizens. Before designing a new democratic theory based on people's common good, we have to fully understand the psychology of the people. Following this idea, Abraham Maslow proposed in his 1943 paper *A Theory of Human Motivation*, a new theory in psychology: the pyramid of needs. His theory contends that as humans meet 'basic needs', they seek to satisfy successively 'higher needs' that occupy a set hierarchy. Moreover, people's needs are structured in a hierarchical way on five levels.

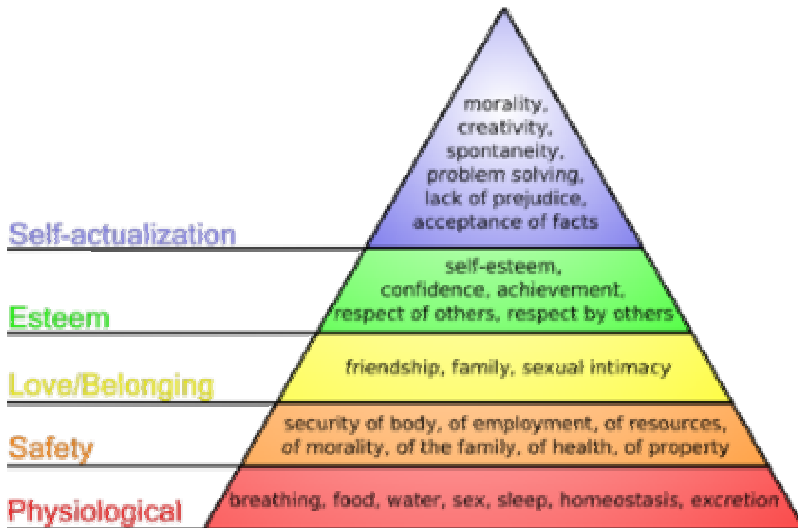
**Fig. The Pyramid of needs**

---

<sup>3</sup> The common good is in continuous transformation and deliberation. As a result, the point of democratic participation is more to manufacture the common good than to discover it on this account.

Deliberative Democracy in a Diverse Europe  
- From Theory to Practice -

---



The last group of needs is that of the self-actualization. As we could easily see on the previous figure, mostly morality and problem solving characterize this group of people. They feel very close to the others and want to be involved and participate in solving problems.

At its core, deliberative democratic theory depends very much on a very specific psychology of the citizen participant and a complementary social psychology of discourse. A key psychological assumption of deliberative democratic theory is that if an institutional arrangement is made that creates the opportunity for free and equal deliberation, the citizen participants will be able to engage one another in the manner required. Indeed, in deliberative conception, the individual citizen is defined to have significantly greater cognitive capacities and moral potential than in rational choice theories.



**Continuarea acestui volum o puteți lectura achiziționând volumul de pe**

**[www.editalumen.ro](http://www.editalumen.ro)**

**[www.lumenpublishing.com](http://www.lumenpublishing.com)**

**sau din librăriile noastre partenere.**



Conținutul acestui volum nu  
reprezintă în mod necesar  
punctul de vedere al Editurii  
Lumen sau al finanțatorilor

ISBN 973-166-048-3



9789731660486

Publicat cu finanțarea:

media **LUMEN**  
[www.EdituraLumen.com](http://www.EdituraLumen.com)