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Communitarianism, Liberal Individualism, and the Myth of Antecedence: A Democratic Perspective on the Citizenship Debate between Liberal Individualists and Communitarians

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COMMUNITARIANISM, LIBERAL INDIVIDUALISM, AND THE MYTH OF

ANTECEDENCE: A DEMOCRATIC PERSPECTIVE ON THE CITIZENSHIP

DEBATE BETWEEN LIBERAL INDIVIDUALISTS AND COMMUNITARIANS

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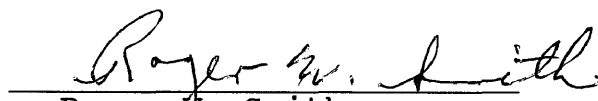
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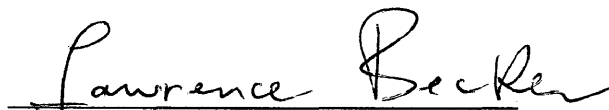
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated with love and gratitude

to two of my best teachers, my parents,

Charles and Vera Payor

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ABSTRACT

This paper outlines a "hermeneutic theory of democracy" and uses it to analyze the debate between liberal individualists and communitarians regarding citizenship. The hermeneutic approach offers fresh insight into each of these perspectives and facilitates substantive communication between them by drawing out implications of the emphasis they both place on democratic processes. Hermeneutic theory conceives of democracy as a two-sided process. The first half of the hermeneutic circle sees the shared understandings and culture of the community as constitutive of the individual. The second half sees individuals, in all their diversity, as constitutive of the matrix of shared understandings and culture. It is argued that the communitarian view of citizenship and democracy, by insisting that the community is (or ought to be) antecedent to the individual, emphasizes the first half of the hermeneutic circle, while the liberal individualist perspective, which stresses that the individual is (or ought to be) antecedent to the community, emphasize the second half. This paper, then, calls attention to the foundational imbalances in liberal individualism and communitarianism which in turn produce truncated models of the citizen, the community, and democratic processes. In liberal individualism and communitarianism we find reified segments of democratic processes rather than functioning components and an animated whole. By contrast, the identity of the hermeneutic self is not fully autonomous or entirely socially-constituted, but rather an integrated combination of individuated and communal factors. Accordingly, in the hermeneutic model, neither the individual nor the community is considered epistemologically antecedent to the other. In hermeneutic democracy, the interdependent functioning of both halves of the hermeneutic circle constitutes the cycle of democratic processes. The paper concludes that the hermeneutic model serves two purposes. First, it provides a discrete, moderate theory of citizenship and democracy capable of communicating on common ground with both liberal individualists and communitarians. Second, by avoiding the unwarranted constraints of antecedence, it offers a balanced alternative theory of citizenship in the often implacable debate between liberal individualists and communitarians.

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Introduction

The issue of citizenship, with the various theoretical and practical questions it raises, is a primary forum for the debate between liberal individualists and communitarians. The project undertaken in this essay is to assess the controversy between liberal individualists and communitarians on the topic of citizenship through the lens of what I will call hermeneutic democracy. My thesis is that this approach offers fresh insight into both perspectives and facilitates substantive communication between them by drawing out implications of the emphasis they each place on significant facets of democratic processes.

For liberal individualists, the individual is antecedent to and constitutive of the community. Conversely, for communitarians, community is antecedent to and constitutive of the individual. We shall see that contrasting views on the nature and constitution of the self are at the root of these differences. Since each perspective uses a model of the self to construct the prototype of a citizen, the trajectories set by differences at this level result in vastly disparate standpoints. Liberal individualists postulate autonomous individuals entering

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society from the state of nature. Communitarian tenets are grounded in the framework of socially-constituted humans as members of communities. Upon analysis, however, it will become evident that communitarians and liberal individualists rely on an assumption of democracy in depictions of the citizen and the relationship between the citizen and the polity. Moreover, in both cases, the benefits afforded by the inclusion of democracy are indispensable although generally unacknowledged.

In order to establish a vantage point from which we may examine the communitarian and liberal individualist views of citizenship and the aspects of democracy which they embrace, it is essential to delineate hermeneutic democracy as a discrete model. Hermeneutic theory conceives of democracy as a two-sided process, where the first half sees shared understandings and culture as constituting the individual, and the second half sees individuals, in all their diversity, as constituting the matrix of shared culture and understandings.

In the first half of the hermeneutical circle, citizens share membership in a polity, partake of a common socio-political culture, and are collectively impacted at various times by a slate of salient communal issues. These areas of commonality are the infrastructure for communicative interaction. Public discourse and policy formulation within the context of community are the initial half of the

processes which comprise the circle of hermeneutic democracy. This portion of the hermeneutic circle reflects the impact of community on the identity of the self, and the activity of the socially-constituted aspects of the self.

The second half of the circle is the activity of citizens as individual deliberators engaged in the appraisal of communal norms and consensus. The dialectics of community life augment individual and collective self-understandings, including enhancing the capacity for individual and collective self-evaluation. The ongoing reexamination of the community by its citizens is a reflection of the impact of individuals on the community, and the activity of the individuated, autonomous facets of the self. This half of the hermeneutic circle sustains the vitality of political processes and upholds the status of citizenship by averting the influence of unexamined assumptions and outmoded precedents. While we anticipate that some voices will be more influential than others, incorporation of the dynamics of critical self-appraisal ensures that deprivileged viewpoints and marginalized interests will continue to find their expression.

In the model of hermeneutic democracy, the two interrelated facets of democratic functioning are the two halves which make up the whole. Whereas the hermeneutic model is characterized by an ongoing cycle of immanent processes, communitarians and liberal individualists each

portray a fragmented half, rendered inert as a result of having been disengaged from the other. The communitarian view of citizenship emphasizes the first half of the hermeneutic circle: shared understandings are the result of common community membership, and are the basis upon which citizens come together for public dialogue. Correspondingly, the liberal individualist view of citizenship stresses the second half of the hermeneutic circle: individual reflection provides citizens with the perspective whereby they may critique the premises of the political community and the appropriateness of its decisions.

The communitarian and liberal individualist models of citizenship include aspects of democracy. Yet, the communitarian insistence on the antecedence of the community, and the liberal individualist insistence on the antecedence of the individual, result in truncated models of the citizen, the community, and democratic processes. In liberal individualism and communitarianism, we find reified segments rather than functioning components of an animated whole. The model of citizenship grounded in hermeneutic democracy offers the means of analyzing the liberal individualist-communitarian debate in terms of the democratic processes which each perspective affirms. However, the distinguishing feature of the hermeneutic model of citizenship is the absence of the constraints of antecedence: the identity of the hermeneutic self is neither

fully individuated, nor entirely socially-constituted, but rather an integrated combination of communal and autonomous factors. Similarly, in the hermeneutic model, neither the individual nor the community is epistemologically antecedent.

As the theoretical point of reference for this essay, I suggest that Aristotle can be read as propounding the hermeneutic conception of democratic processes which I advance.[1] At the most fundamental level, Aristotle's polity exhibits a moderated balance between concern for the individual and concern for the community. This aspect of hermeneutic democracy combined with the fact that essential characteristics of democracy appear in the communitarian and liberal individualist models, mean that an Aristotelian perspective provides not simply an alternative, but a middle ground. The identity of the self of the hermeneutic model is comprised of a combination of socially-contingent and autonomous qualities. Consequently, the hermeneutic model of the self as a citizen engaged in democratic processes avoids

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[1] Throughout this essay I comply with modern usage in using the term "democracy," as the equivalent of what Aristotle referred to as _politeia_. As we know, in Aristotle's six-cell matrix, democracy is actually the deviated form of _politeia_. In his words, "political control exercised by the mass of the populace in the common interest is _politeia_." Aristotle, _The Politics_, Penguin, 1962; 1279a32. _Politeia_ is the arrangement in which authority rests in the hands of the many and they wield it in the interest of the citizen body. Democracy is the deviation of polity in that it is characterized by the rule of "men without means," who do not "aim to be of profit to the common interest." Ibid., 1279b4. Please see in addition, Ibid., IV, ii, "Constitutions Placed in Order of Merit"; also, IV, iii, "Why There Are Several Constitutions."

the constraints created by the dualism which is so pervasive
in the debate between liberal individualists and
communitarians.

Because their fundamental visions of the self are so
different, the majority of what we have witnessed up to this
point in the debate between liberal individualists and
communitarians is two sides talking at each other. For the
most part, meaningful exchange is deterred by a seeming lack
of common ground. A conception of citizenship, drawing on
the resources of hermeneutic democracy, provides a context
for communication between communitarians and liberal
individualists because it integrates the socially-
constituted and individualistic aspects of the self in a
manner which indicates that these two facets of an
individual need not be mutually exclusive.

The moderating effects of hermeneutic processes as
outlined in Aristotelian thought, affords an equilibrium
between consideration of theory and practice and the
individual and the community, making it possible to discuss
theory and practice and the individual and the community
without conflating them, or giving one half of either pair
priority over the other. The contrast between this stance,
on the one hand, and liberal individualism and
communitarianism, on the other, is clear. The premises of
liberal individualism constantly pull in the direction of
the importance and options of the individual. In the same

manner, the assumptions of communitarianism push this perspective toward an emphasis on the privileges and prerogatives of the community.

The essential ingredient of hermeneutic democracy is public dialogue as the context for the exchange of ideas and decision-making. The first norm of democratic discourse is that neither perspectives nor potential solutions are rejected out of hand. This grounding is congruous with the principles of democracy, and with the corresponding hermeneutic epistemology. The consequence is a pragmatic conception of theory, and epistemological pluralism, meaning that the fairness of democratic discourse and the legitimacy of the decisions it yields are derived directly from its inclusiveness.

The relationships between liberal individualism and communitarianism, and the components of democratic functioning which they espouse, are not without problems. For liberal individualists and communitarians, the central problems of citizenship are twofold, appearing at the level of the individual and of the polity. The liberal individualist anticipates voluntary citizen involvement in the forms of voting, citizen consent to the rule of law, and cooperation with institutionalized procedures in the event of conflicts of interest. The initial tension between liberal individualism and democracy is that the self who began life in the state of nature is inclined toward neither

involvement nor compromise. Regarding the polity, the liberal individualist claim that its model of the self is universally applicable makes it extremely difficult for liberal individualists to defend restrictions on the accessibility of citizenship, since all individuals ought to enjoy comparable rights. Consequently, the question of who is entitled to the privileges of democratic citizenship, and on what bases, can only be resolved if the nation-state is accepted as a given, and is justified on pragmatic, rather than philosophical grounds. In short, the priority of the individual conjoined with the universality of liberal tenets and democratic mechanisms embedded in liberal political institutions, sets up the dissonance between the liberal individualist vision for unrestricted individual self-determination and the practical reality of the boundaries of the modern nation-state.

For communitarians, the initial problem of citizenship is that communitarianism portrays the self as a citizen unequipped to engage in individual deliberation, or to prioritize the demands of the multiple memberships characteristic of modern society. The tension between communitarian and democratic premises on the issue of citizenship is the proclivity for communitarians to emphasize the distinction between citizens and non-citizens as the justification for community boundaries. But from a democratic standpoint, distinctions made on the basis of

heredity are politically irrelevant because such attributes have negligible bearing on citizenship skills.

In communitarianism the individual citizen relates to the state through a particular sub-group--the community of origin as defined by some ascribed characteristic. The claims of this primary membership have the potential of placing the citizen at odds with the modern nation-state. By contrast, liberal individualists depict an individual citizen relating directly to the state without the buffering effects of intermediary organizations. The liberal individualist citizen is concerned with protecting his/her private life from state intrusion, because the private realm is the sphere of human fulfillment. In this schema, multiple political and social memberships have little effect on the relationship between this citizen and the state, or on the state itself.

Differing aspects of democracy are incorporated by communitarians and liberal individualists. Communitarian depictions of community discourse and communicative interaction suggest an openness of expression seemingly akin to democratic dialogue. However, the significant point for communitarians is that just as community is prior to the individual, shared understandings are antecedent to communal communication. Therefore, democracy in the context of communitarianism is reduced to discourse as a means of uncovering the pre-existent areas of general consensus and a

celebration of commonality. From a communitarian perspective, discourse in the community is not so much public as social, and as with shared understandings, the social precedes the political. Because affirmations of commonality are intrinsically fulfilling, allusions to democratic functioning become intertwined with the community's capacity to provide the good life.

To liberal individualists, democracy is a means of protecting individual citizens because the framework of democracy provides the matrix for the design of institutions which give citizens adequate control over the apparatus of the state. In addition, liberal individualists advocate democracy because it is thought to encourage civic spirit among individuals whose interests are fundamentally presocial and prepolitical. The paradox of the relationship between the citizen and the state for liberal democracy is that the state is the guarantor of personal liberty, but also has the propensity and means to intrude into the private lives and choices of citizens.

Because democracy is essential to the communitarian vision of the good life in the community, and to the well-ordered society of liberal individualists, we must ask how these two models would look if the elements of democracy they incorporate were removed. Without democracy, the polity created by communitarianism is vulnerable to collectivism, exclusivity, and internally-established requisites of

homogeneity as the basis for shared understandings. Without democracy, the polity created by liberal individualism is vulnerable to fragmentation, civic apathy, and antagonistic relations between citizens and between citizens and state, since the state is the most likely assailant of individual rights.

Without democracy, the non-elective aspects of a communitarian community become pivotal. Community membership is not determined volitionally but by birth, on the basis of hereditary characteristics. Moreover, communitarians have little to say about community leadership. We are left to wonder who becomes a leader and why. If ascribed attributes are the foundation of community, and democratic processes are not specified, the community may easily be brought under the influence of non-elected leaders because of their populistic charisma. More important, without an explicit inclusion of democracy there are no grounds for constraint on the non-democratic impulses of leaders.

The leap of faith made by communitarians is the premise that common inherited qualities will result in shared understandings. As a consequence, the discourse of communitarianism is not intended to facilitate collective deliberation or augmentation of understanding. The undemocratic propensities of communitarianism are rooted in the fallacies of this basic assumption. Although communitarians portray communities engaging in public

discourse, we find that the purpose of such activity is perpetuation of the community rather than the uncovering of citizens' opinions or joint reasoning.

Without democracy, liberal individualism devolves into atomistic anarchy. The liberal individualist emphasis on personal liberty combined with conceptualizing the private realm as the venue for fulfillment prompts recollection of the liberal adage that freedom starts where politics end. Without democratic institutions the liberal individualist self inclines back toward the state of nature. Without democratic procedures, amicable conflict resolution is likely to elude free individuals, each pursuing a personal conception of the good life.

In order to depict a well-ordered society, liberal individualists require not only political institutions, but that those institutions be democratic. Otherwise, citizens are not vested with the authority necessary to keep the apparatus of the state in check. In a liberal democracy the rule of law provides for diffusion of power and the accountability of leaders to the citizenry, and is therefore the appropriate mechanism of governmental restraint. Democracy must be the distinguishing feature of the polity of liberal individualism because without it individuals are hopelessly mired in contentious relations with each other and with the state.

The leap of faith among liberal individualists is from

the abstract construction of primordial man to the exigencies of dealing with actual citizens. The nameless, faceless individual in the state of nature, or behind the veil, is a utopian construct masquerading as a practical first order premise. For liberal individualism, democracy is the means of promoting not only civil society but civility. It is the explicit inclusion of democracy which makes movement from the theoretical to the practical possible because liberal individualists must have institutions capable of mediating between free and equal citizens, and must promote the activities associated with democracy in order to encourage associational relationships between citizens in their common interest.

By rejecting the inevitability of political conflict and choosing aspects of democracy for instrumental reasons, communitarians and liberal individualists miss its essence. Each perspective borrows facets of democracy in order to explicate the well-functioning polity. But because democracy is a means of fulfilling other objectives, the transformative potential of democracy for both individual citizens and the polity at large eludes them. Communitarians appear unaware of the possibility that democratic discourse is an avenue for the development of shared understandings which can in turn serve as the referents for practical policy decisions. Liberal individualists seem inattentive to the prospect that relations among citizens, and between

citizens and the state, could rise above the level of suspicious tolerance. Neither perspective articulates the likelihood that democratic discourse could constructively expand citizens' self-understanding and thereby increase the menu of options for personal and collective choices.

The hermeneutic model of democracy provides communitarians with a means of validating the differences, as evidenced in the diversity of ideas, within the citizen body. Hermeneutic democracy acknowledges the legitimacy of disparate, even conflicting viewpoints; it does not assume nor depend on intellectual and cultural homogeneity as the point of departure for discourse. The hermeneutic model of democracy provides liberal individualists an explanation for consensus which goes beyond the vagaries of a coincidental convergence of interests. Hermeneutic democracy builds the foundation of consensus upon public discourse, and incorporates norms which nurture mutual respect and persuasibility. The hermeneutic model regards democracy as both a means and an end. We shall see that as a means, hermeneutic democracy formulates distinctive expectations of what can be accomplished through public discourse. As an end, hermeneutic democracy offers individual citizens a venue of fulfillment through active involvement in collective decisions.

Hermeneutic democracy builds a common area for communication between liberal individualists and

communitarians on the issue of citizenship because it takes an integrative and accommodative approach to conceptualization of the self and of the polity. A central aim of communitarians is the strengthening and perpetuation of the bonds of community. An important objective of liberal individualists is safeguarding the personal liberty and autonomy of individual citizens. The tenets and processes which comprise the hermeneutic circle of democratic functioning offer to communitarians and liberal individualists the means of moderating intractable premises regarding the self which constrain their perspectives, while enhancing the democratic facets of citizen activity evident in each of the models. In so doing, hermeneutic democracy provides a theory of citizenship which stands out as a balanced and conciliatory third alternative in the debate between liberal individualists and communitarians.

The first portion of this essay focuses on communitarian conceptions of the self, the citizen, and the political community. The second section is devoted to liberal individualist perspectives on these points. The third part of this essay grounds the model of hermeneutic democracy in the Aristotelian perspective on the self, the activities associated with citizenship, and the dynamic processes which comprise the hermeneutic circle. Within this context, the conclusion attempts to contribute to our understanding of the viewpoints of liberal individualists

and communitarians regarding the constitution of the self, and the ramifications of prioritizing either the individual or the community. Finally, the conclusion draws out implications of how a hermeneutic approach revitalizes our perceptions of democratic citizenship by conceptualizing democracy as an animated circle of hermeneutic processes.

Chapter I:

The Self and Citizen of Communitarianism

The History of Conceptions of the Communitarian Self

The communitarian authors cited in this essay are unanimous in depicting the impact of community on individual citizens to be positive. But explaining the reasons for this requires more than the premises that living in communities is a natural state of affairs and that humans are products of their environments. These tenets alone can account only for a passive and benign view of community, one which would not be capable of differentiating itself from liberal individualism, since even liberal individualists are products of liberal communities. Liberal individualism reflects a spectrum of viewpoints, and similarly, communitarianism is a melange of opinions. We will address the fundamental issue of citizenship by analyzing three historical exemplars, and by asking what it means to be a member of a community, and why this membership is both constitutive and beneficial.

What is assumed but not articulated by the historical and contemporary communitarian authors cited here is democratic interaction between individuals and the community. Moreover, interaction informed by democratic

principles is the condition which ensures that this
interchange will be positive and constructive. The facet of
hermeneutic democracy which makes the relationship amicable,
as well as advantageous to members, is the capacity for
members to utilize shared understandings as a foundation
from which to establish consensus on day-to-day questions.
In other words, communitarian depictions of communal
functioning exemplify the first phase of the hermeneutic
circle.

Communitarians presuppose the existence of shared
understandings and common interests; to be a member of a
community is to subscribe to particular values and
viewpoints. On this basis, the function of discourse within
the community is to build on the pre-existent foundation of
commonality in order to uncover communal inclinations on
issues at hand. This leads us to several implications of the
emphasis on community and the socially-constituted self
found in the communitarian vision of democracy and
citizenship.

The first is a truncated account of democratic
discourse and processes since the assumption of shared
understandings indicates that arriving at consensus is a
fairly straightforward task. By contrast to the hermeneutic
model, public discourse in the communitarian schema uncovers
the consensus which already exists because of shared
understandings. In the hermeneutic model of democracy,

public discourse precedes and is a means of establishing consensus. Second, because arriving at agreement is expected to be unproblematic, there is little need for persuasion. Third, the communitarian model of citizenship is void of mechanisms that would encourage the incorporation of differing and dissenting viewpoints, and of incentives to question the validity of fundamental communal perspectives or their practical applications. In short, the second portion of the hermeneutical circle is missing. For these reasons, the communitarian renderings of democracy and citizenship fail to articulate the means whereby the community can gain deliberative perspective by which to appraise itself. The bonds of tradition become bondage to precedent since only half of the hermeneutic cycle of the democratic process can function without the means for critical self-evaluation.

A factor which contributes significantly to ambiguities and misunderstandings in the debate between liberal individualists and communitarians is that the term "community," as used by communitarians, has two broad categories of meanings. The connotations of these two groupings can be differentiated by asking whether the term is used to endorse recognition of the ubiquitous influence of communities in contributing to the identity and perceptions of individuals, or whether community positively impacts its members and is therefore associated with the

good life. In the latter case, communitarians rely on the inclusion of democracy to explain the advantages of community. The second definition of community involves a specific type of political functioning, that is, democracy, and carries normative implications since it makes democracy the standard for political processes.

The tradition of communitarianism reflects a range of perspectives regarding the constitution of the self and the importance of community. In examining the facets of contemporary communitarianism pertinent to the issue of citizenship, the impact of several strands of historical thought is evident. For our purposes, three will be considered. First is the unified community created by the General Will of Jean Jacques Rousseau. Second is community based on tradition as an accumulation of evolutionary development, portrayed by Edmund Burke. Third, is community as the essential element of the human experience because it provides the framework for interaction. Without interaction even self-awareness is impossible. This strand of communitarian thought is found in the work of Georg Hegel. Each of these perspectives have remained significant and are evident in contemporary communitarianism. Each reflects a particular emphasis on the nature and role of the political community, and consequently, what it means to be a citizen.

These three are chosen from the canon of secular communitarianism because they articulate facets of

communitarian thought which remain influential. Jean Jacques
Rousseau's conception of the General Will furnishes an ideal
of the potential for solidarity and unity of interest in a
political community. The impact of Rousseau is evident in
the thought of Charles Taylor and Alisdair MacIntyre, among
others. Edmund Burke depicts socially-constructed
individuals as citizens of communities where tradition and
precedent are the optimal guides for wise opinions and
actions. The perspectives of Alisdair MacIntyre and Michael
Sandel similarly reflect a fundamental conservatism rooted
in the value of the traditions and histories of particular
communities. The model of the self which serves as the
foundation of Hegel's philosophy remains important to
communitarianism because it provides an alternative to the
self of liberal individualism. For Hegel and Burke, it is a
fallacy to conceptualize a human in isolation from others.
The influence of Hegel is explicitly evident in the thought
of Charles Taylor, and adherence to analogous models of the
self are apparent in the work of Michael Walzer and Michael
Sandel.

Rousseau's explication of the General Will requires, as
a framework, a cohesive community. The "social pact,"
comparable to Locke's contract, transposes the individual
from the state of nature into civil society. By contrast
however, Rousseau's citizen does not enter the political
community as a person with property holdings and assorted

private interests. Rather, "every individual gives himself

absolutely" in order to form a unified whole:

> Each one of us puts into the community his person
> and all his powers under the supreme direction of
> the general will; and as a body, we incorporate
> every member as an indivisible part of the
> whole.[2]

The citizen depicted by Rousseau gains much by moving

from life as an individual in the state of nature to life as

a member of the political community. Indeed, he/she is

transformed from an "stupid, limited animal" into an

"intelligent" citizen.[3] In citing the ramifications of this

metamorphosis Rousseau exalts both the community and the

political. The parameters of the political and public realms

are circumscribed so broadly that the private realm is all

but obliterated. From the standpoints of citizenship and

community, the General Will as an abstract conception enjoys

wide appeal; one reason is that it offers an ideal of a

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[2] Jean Jacques Rousseau, The Social Contract, (London: Penguin, 1968), 61. Via the General Will, the interests of the political community are singularized into one collective interest. The General Will interprets this interest and administers all decisions related to its execution. The decisions made by the General Will "will always be good." Ibid., 73. Consequently, adherence to the General Will as the referent yields infallible direction, and resisting it is synonymous with removing oneself from the community.The reductio ad absurdum of the General Will is authoritarian totalitarianism since evidences of individuality, much less dissent, are taken as threats to the political community, "Nothing is more dangerous in public affairs than the influence of private interests." Ibid., 112.

[3] Ibid., 65. Please see also Jean Jacques Rousseau, "Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality," in The First and Second Discourses, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964), 115-16 and 139-141.

unified community in which the diverse inclinations of citizens are merged into one interest.

In Edmund Burke we have an excellent exemplar of a perspective founded on the socially-constituted self and conservative communitarianism. For Burke, the community of origin is the primary determinant of an individual's fundamental perspectives. Burkean communitarianism is not so much a study in the politics of identity as an exposition of the origins of reasonable opinions. This is indicated throughout the Reflections on the Revolution in France: "...[B]eing a citizen of a particular state is being bound up in a considerable degree by its public will...."[4] Along with this, Burke illustrates the epistemological particularism which has become a pillar of communitarian thought: Any form of political arrangement may only be evaluated in the context of its unique circumstances,

> Circumstances give in reality to every political principle its distinguishing colour, and discriminating effect. The circumstances are what render every civil and political scheme beneficial or noxious to mankind.[5]

For Burke, the value of the political community is its capacity to provide the context for its citizens to collectively rise above mere life, and to partake of the good life,

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[4] Edmund Burke, Reflections on the Revolution in France, (London: Penguin, 1986), 88.

[5] Ibid., 90.

> "[The state] is to be looked on with other
> reverence; because it is not a partnership in
> things subservient only to the gross animal
> existence of a temporary and perishable nature."[6]

The body of citizens is the foundation of consensus, in that it is the base of support for the political system.[7] The citizens of this political community participate primarily by showing proper reverence for their state. Moreover, the state is an accretion of tradition whose merit rests on its capacity to reflect evolutionary progress in the accumulated wisdom of forbearers.

Accordingly, citizens are socially-constituted persons in the sense that knowledge of self is formed relative to other members of the community, both in the present and the past. From this premise follows Burke's belief that a well-organized community is capable of producing good citizens.[8]

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[6] Ibid., 194. Because of their membership, citizens of every era are like the links of a chain which extends into the past and into the future, [The state] "becomes a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born." Ibid., 194. Citizenship furnishes the individual with both a temporal identity and the possibility of immortality by providing a connection with the past and the future.

[7] However, the making of political decisions is to be undertaken by those with technical expertise and suitable character, "A disposition to preserve, and an ability to improve, taken together, would be my standard of a statesman." Ibid., 267.

[8] As we are well aware, in Reflections on the French Revolution, this cuts both ways. Burke's affirmation of British political and civil society is contrasted with alarm over repercussions of the revolution in France. Burke takes care to demonstrate that his preference of the British political system is based on sound judgement rather than unreasoned allegiance.

The organization and structure of community are variables in the communally-determined identity of the Burkean self since individuals have identities as commoners, aristocrats, and so on. In Britain, which is Burke's ideal community, the estates as sub-communities are entirely harmonious with, and indeed reinforce, the super-community of the state.

In juxtaposing the British political system with the French Revolutionary government, Burke develops a meticulous defense of tradition as a guide, when it is tempered with provisions for incremental change.[9] The new community created by the French revolutionaries is an effort to sweep away everything associated with the ancien regime. To Burke, this is preposterous because in so doing the French have cut themselves off from the only possible source of practical and applicable knowledge.[10] As the outcome, Burke anticipates a community of rootless and fatuous citizens lacking direction, with the potential to become an

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[9] "A state without the means of some change is without the means of its conservation." Burke cites Britain's combination of statutory and common law as the means of gradual and evolutionary transformation. By contrast, the leaders of the French Revolution have attempted to sweep away all that was associated with civil and political society under the Bourbons. Burke warns, "But power, of some kind or other, will survive the shock in which manners and opinions perish; and it will find other and worse means for its support." Edmund Burke, Reflections on the Revolution in France, (London: Penguin, 1986), 106 and 172.

[10] "In history a great volume is unrolled for our instruction, drawing the materials of future wisdom from the past errors...." Ibid., 247.

international menace.[11]

Hegel uses the language of metaphysics to render the socially-constructed self. For Hegel, understanding of humans is sought on a collective basis, by identifying the Spirit, (alternatively translated as Mind or Reason), of a given community during a particular era. The inception and character of a community's Spirit is traced back to the elemental interaction between individuals.[12] Interaction as a requisite of self-consciousness and community is the foundation of the socially-constituted self.

The chief characteristic of the citizen is his/her interconnectedness to all other members of the community. Thus, the political community is depicted as a network,

> There is formed a system of complete
> interdependence, wherein the livelihood, happiness
> and legal status of one man is interwoven with
> the livelihood, happiness and rights of all. On
> this system, individual happiness, etc., depend,
> and only in this connected system are they
> actualized and secured.[13]

The claim made here is fundamental to communitarianism: The

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[11] "I cannot conceive how any man can have brought himself to that pitch of presumption to consider his country as nothing but carte blanche, upon which he may scribble whatever he pleases." Ibid., 266.

[12] "For ethical life is nothing other than the absolute spiritual unity of the essence of individuals...." Georg F. W. Hegel, The Phenomenology of Mind, 174. "At first this active reason is conscious of itself only as an individual, and as such must demand and bring forth its actuality in another." Ibid., 175. "Consciousness of an other...is indeed itself necessarily self-consciousness...." Ibid., 211.

[13] Georg Hegel, "Philosophy of Right," in Political Writings, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), 120.

community is a prerequisite of human fulfillment. As we shall see, this is frequently the basis upon which community is elevated to the stature it enjoys in communitarianism. The political community is far more than a pragmatic response to the difficulties encountered by individuals in the state of nature. The community may be an efficient means by which to provide for the necessities of life, but of far greater significance, the community is the means of living the good life.

The self whose identity is socially-constituted combined with the notion of community as the venue for human fulfillment means that the ideal citizen is one who lives in harmony with community norms. Hegel maintains that this insight has classical roots, "The wisest among the ancients declared that wisdom and virtue consist in living in accordance with the customs of one's own people."[14] This bears obvious resemblance to Burke. The actualization of self occurs in the context of the community and in a cultivated consonance between the individual and the standards of the group. The possibility of individual self-development, in a context separate from the community, is implicitly dismissed by Burke and Hegel and explicitly discouraged by Rousseau.

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[14] Georg Hegel, The Phenomenology of Mind, (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1910), 223.

The Communitarian Self as the Prototype for the Citizen

The common foundation of contemporary secular communitarianism is the socially-constructed self grounded in a particularistic and constructivist epistemology. The communitarian claim that human identity is socially-constituted raises the question of how communities contribute to individual development and identity. Although this leaves room for variance, communities are generally distinguished by some shared understanding. The organizing principle of a community is a basic commonality such as culture, religion, or a physical attribute like ethnicity. Moreover, communities whose shared understandings are founded in cultural, religious or ethnic commonality develop agendas which include political goals. For this reason, the part played by the propensity for humans to group themselves according to culture, religion and ethnicity is viewed here in the context of collective political relations, or, in terms of the public and political interests of communities.[15]

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[15] To avoid misunderstanding, it should be pointed out that communitarians vary the vocabulary used when referring to what is commonly held to be community. Charles Taylor frequently uses the term "culture." Michael Sandel refers to community commonalities in terms of "shared history," although he also articulates a number of practical forms which communities make take. Please see Michael J. Sandel, Liberalism and the Limits of Justice, 31. Alisdair MacIntyre most commonly refers to communities as "traditions." Please see After Virtue and Whose Justice? Which Rationality?. Robert Bellah and the authors of Habits of the Heart refer to the benefits of communitarian thinking in sociological terms, such as "shared conceptions of the common good," "social ecology," and "common dialogue," as well as using traditional terms to identify

Fundamental to communitarian thought is the premise that there are multiple societal and communal factors which contribute to the identity, personality and self-understanding of each human being.[16] Acknowledging the influence of the communities of which we are a part, is not merely a theoretical technique used to establish first order principles. Rather, communitarians associate this acknowledgement with cognizance of what determines the evolution of the framework and reference points of self-understanding. Moreover, it is on this basis that communitarianism claims a valid representation of the nature of humans and associative relationships, and therefore, its philosophical authority and applicability.

Community as the context of accumulated wisdom which operates through the network of social and political relationships is a feature evident in the thought of Edmund Burke and Michael Sandel. For Burke and Sandel, the individual is socially-constituted in the sense that community is the framework for all strata of human

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recognizable communities such as family, religious, civic and political communities. Michael Walzer forthrightly refers to communities, almost invariably using that term itself rather than synonyms. Please see Michael Walzer, "Complex Equality," and "Membership," in Spheres of Justice.

[16] Please see Charles Taylor, The Sources of the Self Chapters 1 and 4; also, "...[T]he free individual of the West is only what he is by virtue of the whole society and civilization which brought him to be and which nourishes him....I doubt whether we could maintain our sense of ourselves as autonomous beings...." Charles Taylor, "Atomism," Philosophy and the Human Sciences, 206.

understanding--from self-awareness to a world view. The
perspective of Sandel also resonates with Hegel regarding
the integral role of human interaction. The views of Hegel
and Sandel on this point suggest that construction of an
isolated individual, or an unencumbered self, is merely a
chimera.

As articulated by Michael Sandel, a communitarian self-
understanding involves awareness that there are
circumstantial and environmental factors which profoundly
impact the formation and composition of the self:

> For to have character is to know that I move in a
> history I neither summon nor command, which
> carries consequences none the less for my choices
> and conduct. It draws me closer to some and more
> distant from others; it makes some aims more
> appropriate, others less so. As a self
> interpreting being, I am able to reflect on my
> history and in this sense to distance myself from
> it, but the distance is always precarious and
> provisional, the point of reflection never finally
> secured outside the history itself. A person with
> character thus knows that he is implicated in
> various ways even as he reflects, and feels the
> moral weight of what he knows.[17]

This conveys the dynamics of the internal workings of the
individual, and indicates the centrality of community by
suggesting that the beliefs derived from commonality with
other members of the community are the referent for the
internal politics of the self. It is worth noting that
communal identities are not an overlay added to a "real,"
essential, or primitive self. A socially-constituted self is

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[17] Michael J. Sandel, <u>Liberalism and the Limits of Justice</u>,
(New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 179.

the real and essential self.

For Alisdair MacIntyre, attempting to ignore the debt to tradition, is to cut oneself off from the source of rational evaluation and moral reasoning,

> The person outside all traditions lacks sufficient
> rational resources for enquiry and...has no
> adequate relevant means of rational evaluation and
> hence can come to no well grounded conclusion,
> including the conclusion that no tradition can
> vindicate itself against any other. To be outside
> all traditions is to be a stranger to enquiry; it
> is to be in a state of intellectual and moral
> destitution....[18]

The self without the community as a framework for ethical understanding is an alienated and arational being. In a manner similar to that outlined by Sandel, communal shared understandings are the beacons which guide personal reflection. Once again it becomes clear that the socially-constituted self is not merely intended as an abstract construct, but as an immanently applicable model. Accordingly, we find in communitarian thought articulation of the inverse: the morally self sufficient and autonomous individual is a delusion. For MacIntyre, Taylor, Sandel and Bellah, the self which serves as the cornerstone of liberal individualism is pointless as a philosophical starting point

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[18] Alisdair MacIntyre, Whose Justice? Which Rationality?, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), 367. It should be noted that for MacIntyre, "enquiry" describes moral reasoning. Please see "Rival Justices, Competing Rationalities," in Whose Justice? Which Rationality?.

because it is a fallacy.[19]

With Jean Jacques Rousseau, Alisdair MacIntyre shares an emphasis on the unity of interests within a community, and the morality of shared understandings. In both cases, the legitimacy of community decisions is derived from agreement on a fundamental slate of social goods. MacIntyre's reliance on traditions of moral enquiry as the grounding for community values also bears some similarity to Edmund Burke's emphasis on history and precedent. However, for MacIntyre the importance of history lies in the evolution of the prioritization of virtues[20], whereas for Burke, the British model of community decision-making is validated on the basis of the admirable national community which Britain has become.

MacIntyre, Sandel, Taylor, Walzer, Bellah and co-authors seek to add a dimension to human understanding in explicating how collective, community-based factors effect self-understanding, and foundational social and political

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[19] Please see Alisdair MacIntyre, After Virtue, Chapters 5, 6, 9 and 18, and Whose Justice? Which Rationality?, Chapter 17; Charles Taylor, The Sources of the Self, and "Atomism," in Philosophy and the Human Sciences, 187 210; Michael Sandel, Liberalism and the Limits of Justice, Part I; Robert Bellah, et al., Habits of the Heart.

[20] MacIntyre criticizes "liberal individualism" inter alia because it "illegitimately ignores the inescapably historically and socially context-bound character which any substantive set of principles of rationality, whether theoretical or practical, is bound to have." Alisdair MacIntyre, Whose Justice, Which Rationality? (Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), 4.

concepts.[21] Furthermore, it is implicit that the impact of community is positive. The benefit of community for a socially-constituted self is a foundation and context for shared understanding which affords to members a stable referent upon which to build one's personal identity. The communitarians cited have an assortment of reasons for their emphasis on community. These reasons provide insight into the degree to which the community is emphasized relative to

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[21] The grouping and categorization of persons necessarily involves some oversimplification. In the case of Michael Walzer this is particularly evident because his thought combines fundamental liberal (although not atomistic) premises, with strong advocacy of the benefits of community. Walzer's chapter on "Membership" in Spheres of Justice is an appropriate case in point. Walzer exhibits a fundamental concern is for the physical security and protection of the rights of individuals as autonomous moral beings, "Statelessness is a condition of infinite danger." In addition, Walzer is interested in the just distribution of a social good, "The primary good that we distribute to one another is membership...." But this is combined with the particularistic and constructivist epistemology of immanent critique, more in line with communitarianism, "Membership as a social good is constituted by our understanding; its value is fixed by our work and conversation...." Michael Walzer, Spheres of Justice, (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1983), 31-32. It would perhaps be most apt to refer to Walzer as a liberal communitarian. Michael Walzer does not develop a typically communitarian version of the self, in the sense of a socially-constituted self. However, in Spheres of Justice Walzer launches an argument which is "radically particularistic," and in which social justice is understood exclusively within the context of communal frameworks. Community membership is clearly the most valued social good, and the explication of the spheres of justice strongly suggests multiple communities as the spheres for distribution. Please see also, Michael Walzer, "Citizenship," in Political Innovation and Conceptual Change, "Philosophy and Democracy," Political Theory 9 (1981), "The Communitarian Critique of Liberalism," Political Theory 18 (1990), and "The Civil Society Argument," in Dimensions of Radical Democracy (London: Verso, 1992).

the individual.[22]

The Communitarian Conception of Citizenship

To communitarians, communities are the entities which

provide citizens with the context for forming and acting on

collectively determined concepts of the good. The content

and focus of citizens' concepts of the good are inherently

social. For Charles Taylor, citizenship is a derivation of

the individual's membership in their community of origin.

Because the socially-constructed self is the only reasonable

description of a human being, the self in the context of

his/her community is the model of the citizen. This

conception of citizenship is founded on a particular

understanding of the good, since "the nature of the good

requires that it be sought in common."[23]

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[22] Over the centuries, communitarians have described and
prescribed many types of communities. However, the topics at hand
are political communitarianism and citizenship. In this context,
one additional essential of communitarianism should be mentioned:
the absence of a state/society distinction. The state/society
distinction occasionally appears in theological communitarianism.
However, the communitarian authors cited in this essay define
"political" broadly, are concerned with secular political
communities, and view the community in extensive and inclusive
terms which obviates the purpose of a distinction between the
state, (understood as the political community), and society.

[23] Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," in
Multiculturalism and "The Politics of Recognition", ed. Amy Gutmann
and Charles Taylor (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992),
59. Consequently, Taylor explains the importance of collective
self-understanding and the genesis of the self/other distinction
within the framework of citizenship, "On their [Quebeckers] view,
a society can be organized around a definition of the good life,
without this being seen as a depreciation of those who do not
personally share this definition." Ibid., 59.

Taylor adopts what is perhaps the most foundationalist perspective on this point by associating ontology with explanations of associative relationships. "Ontological questions concern what you recognize as the factors you will invoke to account for social life."[24] If explanations of associative relationships are ontology, the basic understanding of community becomes the venue in which ontological issues are played out. Taylor's conceptions of community and the self are theoretically holistic and organic as opposed to atomistic and metaphysical. Correspondingly, practical recommendations on communities, understood as subgroups of nations, reflect a holistic approach by upholding the value of the parameters of communities, since these lines of demarcation permit the maintenance of each community's distinctive features.[25]

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[24] Charles Taylor, "Cross Purposes: The Liberal Communitarian Debate," in Liberalism and the Moral Life, ed. Nancy Rosenblum (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 159.

[25] The need to preserve the distinguishing features of communities is a matter of the utmost importance, because it can mean the difference between survival and extinction. The substructure of Taylor's communitarian citizenship is ontological if one accepts the definition of ontology as factors that explain the inception of society. This is characteristically communitarian since it is grounded in the conviction that individuals are socially-constituted. Although Taylor cites examples of historical and contemporary communities, the central case in point is his community of origin, the Quebeckers of Canada. The distinguishing features of Quebeckers are cultural and linguistic. The political goals which Taylor advises for the Quebeckers focus on these two facets of the community's uniqueness. Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," in Multiculturalism and "The Politics of Recognition", ed. Amy Gutmann and Charles Taylor (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 53-55. Taylor's advocacy of this agenda assumes that Quebeckers possess more than one membership

The influence of Georg Hegel in the work of Charles
Taylor is evident in the integral place of human interaction
for all understanding including self-awareness, and the
resultant ontological conception of human relations. Hegel
observes that the objects of our consciousness can only find
their "essential reality in another."[26] In similar fashion,
Taylor asserts: "I doubt whether we could maintain our sense
of ourselves as autonomous beings."[27]

In the case of Alisdair MacIntyre, citizenship remains
largely in the realm of theory and is tied to practice via
concerns regarding the potential impact of public ethics and
morality on policy. MacIntyre's central concern is moral
decline. The dilemma is, "We have very largely, if not
entirely lost our comprehension, both theoretical and

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identity. Quebeckers are citizens of Quebec, a province with a
separate cultural and linguistic heritage, as well as citizens of
Canada. For Taylor, this is not intrinsically problematic because
individuals are assumed to simultaneously hold membership in
several communities, and be capable of having the appropriate
loyalty to each. Taylor responds to allegations of ethnocentrism by
pointing to the republican premise which is the foundation of
Canada's governance, "participation in self rule is the essence of
freedom, and part of what must be secured." Please see Charles
Taylor, "Cross Purposes: The Liberal Communitarian Debate," in
Liberalism and the Moral Life, ed. Nancy Rosenblum (Cambridge, MA:
Cambridge University Press, 1989), 179.

[26] Georg Hegel, The Phenomenology of Mind (London: George Allen
and Unwin, Ltd., 1910), 174.

[27] Charles Taylor, "Atomism," in Philosophy and the Human
Sciences (Cambridge, Eng: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 206.
The impact of Hegel on Taylor can be observed also in Taylor's
theory of social action. On this point, please see Charles Taylor,
"Social Theory and Practice," in Philosophy and the Human Sciences
(Cambridge, Eng: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

practical, of morality."[28] Rather than a coherent and
applicable morality, we possess only the "fragments of a
conceptual scheme, parts which now lack those contexts from
which their significance derived."[29] Implicit in this
critique is that the shared understandings and moral
resources available through communities provide, _inter alia_,
a common language capable of serving as the medium of
communication. This is evidenced in MacIntyre's depiction of
his project,

> The hypothesis which I wish to advance is that in
> the actual world which we inhabit the language of
> morality is in a...state of grave disorder....[30]

The problem has been identified, and requirements of a
solution are clear: A framework must be found which is
capable of providing a coherent context for the language and
understanding of morality. Communities, or "traditions," are
the answer to this quest.[31]

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[28] Alisdair MacIntyre, _After Virtue_, (Notre Dame: Notre Dame
University Press, 1981), 2.

[29] Ibid., 2.

[30] Ibid., 2.

[31] The archetypical community for MacIntyre is the Athenian
polis, and Aristotelian thought is the corresponding zenith of
philosophical achievement. The crucial characteristics of the polis
are an esteem for virtue, and the guiding influence of the concept
of _telos_. The impact of _telos_ for community life is its capacity to
provide a context for the self in which modes of judgement and
action can be chosen. With this foundation, citizens are in a
position to evaluate and prioritize virtues. This evaluation then
becomes the reference point for all community decision-making and
policy. In this way, the polis is the community which best provides
the context for the "language of morality." On the effects of the
absence of teleological thinking for both individuals and

The views of citizenship and community found in
MacIntyre reflect the particularism characteristic of
communitarian thought. However, MacIntyre understands and
applies this somewhat differently than Taylor. Where Taylor
is concerned with the difficulty of making external
judgments across communities and cultures, MacIntyre
emphasizes that values form only within specific
communities. This epistemology is particularistic in
observing that the content and relative priority of values
can only be internally established, and are therefore only
relevant and applicable within the community of origin.

The problem of noncommensurability is encountered by
both Taylor and MacIntyre. Taylor's concern is with pitfalls
in the making of exogenous judgments which could be applied
across communities. For MacIntyre, the quandary is how a
community can prioritize a slate of goods when there is no
manifest way to establish a standard by which to judge them
all.[32] This point is crucial to the highly-obscured, but
significant place of democracy in MacIntyre's schema. What

communities: "The self is now thought of as lacking any necessary
social identity, because the kind of social identity that it once
enjoyed is no longer available; the self is now thought of as
criterionless, because the kind of _telos_ in terms of which it once
judged and acted is not longer thought to be credible." Ibid., 32.

[32] MacIntyre opens this discussion with a reference to the
following: "...[E]very action and choice seem to aim at some good;
the good, therefore, has been well defined as that at which all
things aim. But it is clear that there is a difference in the ends
at which they aim; in come cases activity is the end, in others the
end is some product beyond the activity." Aristotle, _Nichomachean
Ethics_, I, 1094a.

results from a community's need to prioritize various goods, is community as the context for "dialectical reasoning."[33] This alludes to the communitarian version of democracy and illustrates the operation of the first portion of the circle of hermeneutic processes: the community utilizes discourse grounded in shared understandings as the means of weighting social goods, especially, (for MacIntyre), in the form of virtues. There are two points worthy of note here. First, the ranking of goods is the most essential function of communities. Second, this ranking is carried out through dialectical processes within the community. Consequently, public discourse is a necessity. However, beyond the endorsement of "dialectical reasoning," neither participatory citizenship nor democratic processes are articulated.[34]

The ordering of goods and virtues within specific communities is the sine qua non of the logic behind a particularistic epistemology. At the same time, MacIntyre usefully illustrates a communitarian distinction between particularism and relativism. On one hand, the value placed

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[33] Alisdair MacIntyre, Whose Justice, Which Rationality? (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), 133.

[34] "From within and only from within a given polis, [citizens are] already provided with an ordering of goods, goods to be achieved by excellence within specific and systematic forms of activity, integrated into an overall rank order by the political activity of particular citizens...." Alisdair MacIntyre, Whose Justice? Which Rationality?, (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1988), 133.

on goods and virtues is particular to specific communities.
On the other hand, within their domain, (that is, each
community), the ranking of goods and values constitutes a
hierarchy. "Dialectical reasoning," is the,

> condition of asking and answering questions about
> the arche of practical rationality that one is
> already a participant within a form of community
> which presupposes that there is a supreme, albeit
> perhaps complex, human good.[35]

The gradation of goods and virtues is based on community
acknowledgment of a "supreme" good, so the ordering produced
is hierarchical and community-specific, but not
relativistic.

In the thought of Michael Sandel, understanding the
importance of community in the development of personality is
a philosophically logical means of understanding the human
experience, because people are ineluctably influenced by
communities. Therefore, comprehending modes of rationality
is best pursued by observing humans as moral agents, but
within the context of communities. Community is not simply a
different format from which to ground theory. Theory is a
priori to community, and to all other experience because all
action reflects some theoretical stance,

> ...[P]hilosophy inhabits the world from the start;
> our practices and institutions are embodiments of
> theory. To engage in political practice is already
> to stand in relation to theory.[36]

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[35] Ibid., 134.

[36] Michael J. Sandel, "The Procedural Republic and the
Unencumbered Self," Political Theory 12 (February 1984), 81.

MacIntyre and Taylor espouse a similar view with the proposition that theory is apparent in the "practices" of individuals and communities.[37]

The view that theory is prior to action is a significant component of the thought of Sandel, MacIntyre and Taylor. A primary implication of this premise is that the tangible practices of community life give insight into underlying theory. Shared understandings become, in a sense, the theory which precedes practice and communities' practices reveal theory. The antecedence of shared understandings as the theory which informs public discourse yields a model of community practices which illustrates the limitation of democratic functions to the first portion of the circle of hermeneutic democracy. In communitarianism, associative relationships and collective deliberation within a community comprise the context of both theory and practice. Theory is developed in the community as a by-product of the collectivity acting on its conception of the good. It is therefore not necessary for theory to be spelled out in order to serve as a guide for action.

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[37] "There ought not to be two histories, one of political and moral action and one of political and moral theorizing, because there were not two pasts, one populated by actions, the other only by theories. Every action is the bearer and expression of more or less theory laden beliefs and concepts; every piece of theorizing and every expression of belief is a political and moral action." Alisdair MacIntyre, After Virtue, 58. Please see the conception of "practice" in Alisdair MacIntyre, After Virtue, 175-82; also Charles Taylor, "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man," Review of Metaphysics 25, (1971):3-51.

For Sandel, unlike MacIntyre, community, is not the response to a quest for coherent morality. Communities do provide the framework for collective reflection regarding values and goals; more importantly, communities are where we live, where we are coming from--whether we realize it, or admit it, or not.[38] Democracy within the self and within the community are implied by Sandel as follows: "intersubjective" and "intrasubjective" describe the dialogue which takes place on both levels. The self, (i.e. the individual citizen) is the context of intrasubjective discourse, while the community is the context of intersubjective discourse between citizens.[39] Both the individual and the community are aware of and attentive to diverse internal voices.

Sandel does not argue for the founding or revitalization of communities, but for recognition of the impact of communities and the benefits of this impact.

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[38] The most basic community is the family, the most sophisticated is the nation, and between these two strata lie many intermediate human associations. Possible intermediate associations include, "tribes, neighbourhoods, cities, towns, universities, trade unions, national liberation movements and established nationalisms, and ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic communities." Please see Michael J. Sandel, Liberalism and the Limits of Justice, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 31.

[39] "Intrasubjective conceptions...allow for...a plurality of selves within a single, individual human being, as when we account for inner deliberation in terms of the pull of competing identities...." Michael Sandel, Liberalism and the Limits of Justice, 63. Similarly, "intersubjective conceptions...embrace more than a single, individual human being...." Ibid., 62-63.

Regarding citizenship, this amounts to the recommendation that citizens relinquish atomistically oriented self-understandings in favor of a view in which the self is a component of a whole, where the whole is a community.

Michael Walzer approaches the topic of community by asking, "what is the preferred setting, the most supportive environment, for the good life?"[40] That the response will be a social and collective setting is implicit in the framing of the question. In Spheres of Justice, Walzer proposes a system of complex equality based on the seriation of goods corresponding to spheres of human activity. The project is to provide an outline for the just distribution of important goods in a manner which will not be determined by the utility maximization and rational choice associated with market forces and economics. The argument for complex equality is launched in the context of politics because, "the political community is probably the closest we can come to a world of common meanings."[41] Democracy is suggested at

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[40] Michael Walzer, "The Civil Society Argument," in Dimensions of Radical Democracy, ed. Chantal Mouffe (London: Verso, 1992): 90. Walzer's text, Spheres of Justice has prompted use of the phrase, "liberal communitarianism." The essay, "The Civil Society Argument," goes beyond the book in advocating a more complex and pluralistic account of community activity, described in terms of "civil society."

[41] Michael Walzer, "Complex Equality," Spheres of Justice, (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1983), 28. Membership in the political community is the most important good, and therefore the first to be considered. Walzer explicates the importance of political membership in terms of both internal and external considerations. For those inside the political community it is the first sphere of shared understandings and "common meanings." By contrast, being

this point because the distribution of political membership

is to be determined by and within the community,

> The community itself is a good, conceivably the
> most important good that gets distributed. But it
> is a good that can only be distributed by taking
> people in....membership cannot be handed out by
> some external agency; its value depends on an
> internal decision.[42]

The significant points of Walzer's conception of citizenship

are that community is the legitimate venue for decision

making, and the community provides a context of basic

consensus which facilitates collective decisions. One of the

most important responsibilities of a citizen is to help

decide the bases on which the rights of citizenship should

be allocated. Walzer indicates that this is best

accomplished through democratic processes.[43]

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outside is perilous since, "[S]tatelessness is a condition of
infinite danger." Michael Walzer, "Membership," in Ibid., 32.

[42] Michael Walzer, "Complex Equality," in Ibid., 29.

[43] A less obvious point regarding Walzer, but one which is
pertinent to classifying him as a communitarian, is the methodology
he advocates for the formulation of political theory. "The Civil
Society Argument" explicates the functioning of civil society
characterized by a plurality of memberships, networks and
associations that create a variety of interpersonal relationships.
This model of civil society defines community broadly so as to
include all varieties of social and economic relations, as well as
those which are overtly political. Small and loose communities with
citizens having multiple memberships results in a civil society
characterized by the expression of a diversity of opinions on a
variety of topics. The citizens of civil society are "connected and
responsible," in a way which encourages civic spirit. Please see
Michael Walzer, "The Civil Society Argument," in Dimensions of
Radical Democracy, ed. Chnatal Mouffe (London: Verso, 1992), 107.
The epistemology here is consonant with communitarianism because
political theory is broadly defined, and understood as the network
of shared understandings on which civil society functions.

The communitarian conception of citizenship is predicated on the capacity of the community to serve as the context and reference point for shared understandings. Community is where basic values are worked out and propagated. By living in a community, citizens learn the characteristics and distinctives of the group they are members of. Consequently, community is the most influential variable in what citizenship means to citizens. The communitarian self is a citizen who relies on shared understandings to make decisions which are either abstract or practical. This analysis of the communitarian self as the prototypical citizen raises two points also found in critiques of communitarianism by liberal individualists. First, because the autonomy and individuality of this citizen are underdeveloped, he/she lacks the resources which would be needed in order to evaluate the validity and appropriateness of both the shared understandings and their implications. Second, the communitarian notion of citizenship leaves undefined the distinction between the political and the social, between the leaders and the led, and between the public and private realms. It is on these bases that the communitarian conception of citizenship is most vulnerable to criticism by liberal individualists.

We find that the communitarian self is not inclined toward the formation or expression of autonomous opinions and critical assessments of the community. The extent of the

influence of the communal environment in the formation of the identity of the communitarian self precludes the likelihood of the individual functioning in this manner. Consequently, collected communitarian selves are expected to engage only in the activities which we would associate with the first part of the hermeneutic circle. However, public discourse in the communitarian perception differs from the hermeneutic model in the following way. The hermeneutic model of democracy expects that community dialogue will produce sufficient consensus for the making of collective choices. The communitarian version of democracy anticipates the reverse: that consensus grounded in shared understandings will produce public dialogue which will uncover areas of agreement; persuasion is unnecessary and choices will be obvious.

Democracy as Essential in the Communitarian Vision of the Good Life

Surveying communitarian conceptions of citizenship and community reveals that further distinctions are needed regarding what the term "community" is being used to convey.[44] In order for community to provide the good life and have a positive impact on its members, certain modes of relating must characterize community life. The contemporary communitarians under discussion clearly suggest, but stop

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[44] This observation applies to the contemporary authors as well as Rousseau, Burke, and Hegel.

short of explicitly delineating, democratic processes. On closer inspection, it thus becomes evident that what makes community good, for communitarians, is that shared understandings are utilized to promote the first facet of hermeneutic democracy. Specifically, we find the assumption that community discourse suggests a democratic political arrangement because it includes the discourse intended to guide decisions on proximate issues.

"Community," as used by communitarians, has two distinct connotations. These meanings can be differentiated by asking whether the term is employed to endorse recognition of the ubiquitous influence of communities in contributing to the identity and perceptions of individuals, or whether community positively impacts its members, and is therefore associated with the good life. In the latter case, communitarians rely on the inclusion of the first portion of the circle of hermeneutic democracy to explain the advantages of community.

If community membership is beneficial and associated with the good life we also find a specific type of political functioning which is distinctively democratic, and carries normative implications since it makes democracy the standard for political processes. However, the antecedence of community results in its reification; no space is created for collective critical self-evaluation and indeed, there is no analytical outlet for the examination of fundamental

common meanings. We find little explanation by communitarians of how democratic processes emerge in communities, or on what bases this type of functioning is legitimated. The debate between communitarianism and liberal individualism could only profit from greater clarity by communitarians in defining what is meant by "community" and giving a more complete account of why community membership is valuable to citizens.

To unravel this one step further, we see that there is an aspect of community, which is antecedent to democracy. Congenial relationships between community members is the facet of community life which furthers democratic-style functioning. Communitarian citizens exhibit mutual respect and concern.[45] The result is the capacity for amicable relations between citizens which in turn facilitates democracy. The type of democratic discourse which communitarians envision is facilitated by, and indeed, predicated upon, filial attachments.

Viewing the debate between communitarians and liberal individualists from the vantage point of democracy highlights their common dependence on democracy but differences in the reasons for including it. Communitarians depict polities made up of agreeable citizens. Shared understandings conduce toward community congeniality, but we

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[45] It is not entirely clear whether there is an antecedent variable which produces these filial bonds, or whether they are a consequence of community living.

find few specifics on how communal political decisions are made and carried out. Oblique references to discursive and deliberative processes create an impression of smoothly-functioning communities. Ostensibly, communities are grounded in _philia_, and therefore have the capacity to build on fundamental shared understandings in order to make practical collective decisions. Moreover, the assumption of democratic functioning by communitarians lends an aura of legitimacy to the exercise of political authority, (whatever form that authority may take).[46]

Compatibility, which paves the way for democratic cooperation is apparent in communitarian precepts. The concept of the socially-constituted self and a capacity for harmonious relationships are consistently linked. The sequence of causation is, first, socially-constructed selves living as citizens in communities, second, the capacity for concordant relations, and third, collective discourse and deliberation suggesting functioning democracy. For example, Charles Taylor argues that since "participatory self-government is itself usually carried out in common actions, it is normal to see it as animated by common

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[46] By contrast, the polity portrayed by liberal individualists relies on the consent of citizens to grease the wheels of democracy. Self-interested utility maximizers each acting to fulfill their own preferences, come together under the auspices of democratic procedures in order to negotiate the allocation of goods and negotiation of disagreements. This will be discussed in Part II.

identifications."[47] In this instance, the effect of placing the community prior to the individual is evident in the association of "common action" with "participatory" governance.

Walzer clearly assumes that members of the political community, as the citizen body, are making collective decisions.[48] Near the end of Spheres of Justice, important goods have been divided along appropriate distributive patterns in differentiated "spheres of justice." At this point, democracy, as an institutional arrangement, seems to win affirmation by default, because it is most likely to permit the needed distinctions between social goods,

> Once we have located ownership, expertise,
> religious knowledge, and so on in their proper
> places and established their autonomy, there is no
> alternative to democracy in the political sphere.
> The only thing that can justify undemocratic
> forms of government is an undifferentiated
> conception of social goods...[49]

According to Michael Sandel, affinity with democracy is something which communitarians, rather than liberals, should rightfully claim because functioning democracy depends on a sense of community. Sandel argues that the alliance between

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[47] Charles Taylor, "Cross-Purposes: The Liberal-Communitarian Debate," in Liberalism and the Moral Life, ed. Nancy Rosenblum (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 170.

[48] From the chapter on "Membership": "Are citizens bound to take in strangers?...Let us assume that the citizens have no formal obligations....Citizens can make some selection among necessitous strangers...." Michael Walzer, Spheres of Justice (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1983), 45.

[49] Ibid., 303.

liberal individualism and democracy is uneasy at best
because liberals' association with democracy is grounded in
an instrumental utilitarianism. The liberal regime exhibits,

> ...two broad tendencies foreshadowed by its
> philosophy: first, a tendency to crowd out
> democratic possibilities; second, a tendency to
> undercut the kind of community on which it
> nonetheless depends.[50]

In describing the model of society envisioned by
communitarians, Charles Taylor assumes "collective goals,"
as well as deliberation, because "the nature of the good
[for the community] requires that it be sought for in
common."[51] Similarly to other communitarians, Taylor
assumes citizens may belong to several associations, each of
which is a community. As long as the allegiances appropriate
to each community, and the demands made of members by each
community do not conflict, multiple memberships create no
discord. Regarding relations between sub-groups and the
nation, there is an issue which distinguishes Taylor from
other communitarians. Taylor takes up the issue of the
potential for tension to arise for citizens because of

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[50] This passage continues: "Where liberty in the early republic
was understood as a function of democratic institutions and
dispersed power, liberty in the procedural republic is defined in
opposition to democracy, as an individual's guarantee against what
the majority might will." Michael J. Sandel, "The Procedural
Republic and the Unencumbered Self," Political Theory, 12 (February
1984): 93-94.

[51] Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," in
Multiculturalism and "The Politics of Recognition", ed. Amy Gutmann
and Charles Taylor (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992),
59.

multiple memberships in diverse communities. The nation-state is the likely source of this tension if it is unwilling to permit sub-groups to retain and nurture the features which set them apart.

In the work of Alisdair MacIntyre, the "arguments" regarding the relative importance of goods within specific communities imply democracy,

> Moreover when a tradition is in good order it is always partially constituted by an argument about the goods the pursuit of which gives to that tradition its particular point and purpose....Traditions, when vital, embody continuities of conflict.[52]

MacIntyre grounds his philosophical positions in a teleological perspective, where _telos_ is understood in terms of morality and virtue. MacIntyre has a strong affinity for Aristotle and the capacity of the Athenian polis to serve as the context for forming the shared understandings which in turn encourage virtue and morality. However, these affinities are not accompanied by an acknowledgement of the political processes which provide the community with the ability to engage in constructive "argument" and productive "conflict." The discourse in MacIntyre's community does not qualify as democratic because the dialogue does not incorporate differing moral perspectives, and no persuasion is taking place. Ostensibly, the views of those with superior insight will prevail, and conflict will be confined

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[52] Alisdair MacIntyre, _After Virtue_ (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1981), 206.

to the ordering of goods, rather than their nature. In
short, this is a superficial and abbreviated view of
democracy because the seemingly democratic processes do not
create a space for deliberative distance by which to foster
collective self-understanding or critical self-appraisal.

The Communitarian Citizen and the Good Life

As we have seen, community for communitarians is more
than an escape from the dangers of the state of nature, and
more than a means of collectively acquiring the necessities
of life through the division of labor. Community is the
condition and means of living the good life.[53] For
adherents of liberal individualism, the self is initially
conceived as outside of society. In this condition humans
are free, in that they are autonomous and rational moral
agents. The challenge is how to maintain and maximize
freedom once individuals have entered society, and how to do
so fairly. The political community, especially in the form
of the state, poses a potential threat to the freedom and
just treatment of citizens. As we have seen, from the

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[53] How might a communitarian citizen expect the community to
nurture the conditions of the good life? The citizen could expect
the community to advance the shared understandings and traditions
upon which the community is founded. This may include education of
youth in the heritage of the community, and public events which
recall and rehearse such traditions. In addition, the citizen
anticipates that as the overarching community, the nation-state,
will provide for freedom to sustain distinctive sub-communities.

communitarian standpoint, being outside the political community would alienate a person from the means of living the good life. Because humans are social creatures, philosophical grounding does not originate with hypothetical pre-social anthropology. It is the community that creates the context for the good life because it is within the political community that freedom and justice are conceptualized and experienced.

Walzer's concern with the community's capacity to facilitate the good life focuses on just distribution. The community is the context for citizens' decisions on how goods should be allocated within their respective spheres. The most significant collective choice for the community is how to distribute citizenship,

> The primary good that we distribute to one another is membership in some human community. And what we do with regard to membership structures all our other distributive choices: it determines with whom we make those choices, from whom we require obedience and collect taxes, to whom we allocate goods and services.[54]

The next goal is to identify a principle capable of guiding the community toward just decisions. The principle which Walzer feels best fulfills this requisite is Rawls' maxim of mutual aid.[55]

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[54] Michael Walzer, <u>Spheres of Justice</u> (New York: Basic Books Inc., 1983), 31.

[55] Very simply, the principle of mutual aid is the "duty to do something good for another...." Like other natural duties, the principle of mutual aid is "derived from a contractarian point of view," and applies "not only to definite individuals, say to those

Having established the importance of just distribution,
(and basing this on the principle of mutual aid), Walzer
turns to practical questions the political community will
have to address: "Whom should we admit? Ought we to have
open admissions? Can we choose among applicants? What are
the appropriate criteria?"[56] An important feature of
communitarianism is illustrated here: the self-understanding
of the community will be reflected in the criteria by which
choices are made on applications for admission. Citizens'
collective self-understanding is the theoretic basis for
these criteria.

The choice of practical criteria would be preceded by
questions such as: What are the most important aspects of
our commonality? What are the shared understandings which
form the foundation of our community? How is the community
evolving, and what do we see as the best course for the

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cooperating together in a particular social arrangement, but to
persons generally." In Section 51 Rawls explains the Kantian roots
of the principle of mutual aid, citing The Foundations of the
Metaphysics of Morals. Please see John Rawls, A Theory of Justice
(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 114-15 and 338.
Liberal aspects of Walzer's communitarianism are evident here.
First is the use of Rawls at a pivotal juncture. More importantly,
Rawls' principle of mutual aid is based on contract. This suggests
Walzer's acceptance of the need for contract and consent in order
to explain the community cohesion necessary to make collective
decisions. The contrast here with other communitarians is the
apparent requisite of a justification for this cohesion, rather
than depicting it as an expected by-product of the community
itself. (We might note this as an additional substantiation of
Walzer's designation as a liberal communitarian.)

[56] Michael Walzer, Spheres of Justice (New York: Basic Books,
Inc., 1983), 32.

future? Are there specific needs evident in the community potential that new members could help meet? Could an applicant possess a characteristic which would be disruptive, or somehow detrimental to the community? Those possessing citizenship must decide:

> "We who are already in the community do the choosing, in accordance with our own understanding of what membership means in our community and of what sort of a community we want to have. Membership as a social good is constituted by our understanding...."[57]

This gives further credence to the contention that it is not only community, but democracy, that is crucial to the good life. Criteria for membership reflect the self-understanding of the community to the extent that such decisions are made democratically.

For MacIntyre and Sandel the capacity for citizens to live the good life depends both on politics within the self and the politics of the community, and that there be symmetry between them. The view of the individual and the community are consonant in that the organization and internal workings of the individual are a mirror image of the organization and internal workings of the community.[58]

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[57] Michael Walzer, Spheres of Justice (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1980), 32.

[58] Use of a model which exhibits this type of resonance between the individual citizen and the community is one of the reasons for the association made between contemporary communitarianism and Platonic and Aristotelian thought. Interestingly, Sandel gives no indication that community deliberation will produce unity of opinion. The benefits of community which conduce toward the good life include connectedness through dialogue, although dialogue does

According to MacIntyre, the community does not intrinsically conduce toward the good life unless the community is well-ordered. The question then becomes: what is it that makes the community well-ordered? MacIntyre's response is the capacity of the community to provide a "context" for the "language of morality,"

> From within and only from within a given polis, [the citizen is] already provided with an ordering of goods, goods to be achieved by excellence within specific and systematic forms of activity, integrated into an overall rank order by the political activity of those particular citizens....[59]

In short, the well-ordered community facilitates the good life by providing the individual with the means and

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not necessarily result in consensus. Nor does Sandel prioritize justice as a characteristic or by-product of community. On these points Sandel differs from the more idealized vision of community of Alisdair MacIntyre, who assumes consensus and emphasizes justice. The polis is the archetype of a community for MacIntyre, hence, the good life in the community is explicated by referring to Aristotle. The pivotal citation referred to by MacIntyre is, "The virtue of justice is a feature of a state; for justice is the arrangement of the political association, and a sense of justice decides what is just." Aristotle, Politics, 1253a29. The phrase "political association," denotes the framework or organization of the association that takes the form of a polis. Aristotle, Politics, with notes by Trevor J. Saunders, 61. MacIntyre's esteem for the polis, and use of the term to describe the ideal of community is evident, "For the polis is human community perfected and completed by achieving its telos...." Alisdair MacIntyre, Whose Justice? Which Rationality?, 97.

[59] Alisdair MacIntyre, Whose Justice? Which Rationality, 133. The skills associated with citizenship relate to assessment of the goods (i.e. virtues), which when possessed by citizens, will contribute to the community, "Those who participated...would need to develop different types of evaluative practice. On the one hand they would need to value...those qualities of mind and character which would contribute to the realisation of their common good or goods." Alisdair MacIntyre, After Virtue (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1981), 141.

motivation for the pursuit of goods, (understood here by

MacIntyre as virtues).[60] The pursuit of virtue is a

community-specific activity. Even though "all faiths and all

evaluations are equally non-rational; all are subjective

directions given to sentiment and feeling,"[61] the community

is the starting point for any moral enquiry including the

search for "the good."[62]

For Sandel, the good life of a citizen hinges on the

definition and re-definition of the self available through

interaction. This raises the issue of democracy as it

pertains to political membership. The politics of the

intrasubjective self are a microcosm of the politics of

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[60] In addition, justice is a condition of the well-ordered community. For MacIntyre, justice is crucial to the community as the context for the good life. Similarly to an Aristotelian perspective, justice is not only a product of institutional arrangements but a quality of the well-ordered community itself. As MacIntyre points out, "...justice is the norm by which the polis is ordered, a norm which lacks application apart from the polis." Alisdair MacIntyre, Whose Justice? Which Rationality? (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1988), 97. In short, an individual separate from the community is deprived of the capacity for justice. Conversely, the individual within a community based on a shared moral conceptions gains an understanding of justice, and rightfully expects just treatment from the community.

[61] Alisdair MacIntyre, After Virtue (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1981), 25.

[62] "...[T]he self has to find its moral identity in and through it membership in communities [but this] does not entail that the self has to accept the moral limitations of the particularity of those forms of community. Without these moral particularities to begin from there would never be anywhere to begin; but it is in moving forward from such particularity that the search for the good consists." Ibid., 205. For a further exposition of Aristotle on the good life and implications for community functioning please see Alisdair MacIntyre, Whose Justice? Which Rationality? (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1988), 96-123.

deliberative democracy. On both levels, democratic discourse is depicted since each identity has a voice and potential impact. In Sandel, the intrasubjective self is to the citizen as the intersubjective citizen is to the community. Most importantly, it is the communal aspects of identity which permit joint reasoning, or collective deliberation. In the words of Sandel,

> For persons encumbered in part by a history they share with others, knowing oneself...is less a strictly private thing. To take seriously such deliberation is to allow that my friend may grasp something I have missed, may offer a more adequate account of the way my identity is engaged in the alternatives before me.[63]

As we have seen, with regard to the citizen and the good life, the discourses carried on in the context of community have an enlarging and enriching effect on individual citizens and the collectivity. Because a portion of each member's identity is shared, the notion of "self-interest" is expanded to include the interests of the community. Contemporary communitarians build here on an expansive version of self-interest similar to that articulated by Rousseau. The good life is a provision of community because the communal identity permits citizens to transcend an individualistic and autonomous conception of

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[63] Michael J. Sandel, Liberalism and the Limits of Justice (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 181.

self-interest.[64] In addition, the communitarian version of

democracy transcends political conflict with the assumption

that pre-existent shared understandings will produce

consensus, and by restricting democratic processes to only

the first half of the hermeneutic circle.

Walzer, Sandel, Taylor, Miller and MacIntyre all assume

that citizenship will be meaningful because of citizen

involvement.[65] Collective self-understandings are formed

when citizens participate in the articulation of consensual

understandings.[66] As we have noted, these communitarians

all hesitate to make distinctions between the leaders and

the led, and between the social and public on one hand, and

the political on the other. Community as a facilitator of

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[64] For example, "...[H]e, [the citizen] cannot regard politics merely as an arena in which to pursue his private interests. He must act as a citizen, that is as a member of a collectivity who is committed to advancing its common good." David Miller, "Community and Citizenship," in Communitarianism and Individualism, ed. Shlomo Avineri and Avner de-Shalit (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 96.

[65] "Citizenship...is not just a matter of possessing rights....The citizen has to see himself as playing an active role in determining his society's future, and as taking responsibility for the collective decisions that are made." David Miller, "Community and Citizenship," in Communitarianism and Individualism, ed. Shlomo Avineri and Avner de-Shalit (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 96.

[66] "The crucial feature of human life is its fundamentally dialogical character....But we learn these modes of expression through exchanges with others. People do not acquire the languages needed for self-definition on their own." Please note the influence here of Hegel. Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," in Multiculturalism and "The Politics of Recognition", ed. Amy Gutmann and Charles Taylor (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 32.

the good life presupposes that belonging will be a positive experience when citizens are members of communities and nation-states which derive their legitimacy from the citizen involvement. It is democracy, poorly-articulated but clearly suggested, which these notable communitarians use to explicate the ability of community to provide the good life.

Democracy is the element which permits the community to be set in motion. Each aspect of community can be described in a static condition, but it is democracy which provides the dynamic for effectual functioning. Recall the implications of the constructivist epistemology: as the self is constituted by community membership, the community is constituted by the manner in which its citizens interpret and understand it. The self and the community are reciprocally constituted and their meanings are mutually reinforcing within given communities. These meanings are in an ongoing state of flux, and the flux is expressed through discourse which communitarians opt to describe in terms of democracy. However, according to a hermeneutic model of democracy, a given community could only be considered democratic if both of these meanings are continually scrutinized and redefined. The shared understandings of communitarianism guide proximate decisions, but the insight and perspective gained are not utilized to challenge these collective values nor to redefine the community's self-

understanding.

Considering the citizen and the good life underscores the two meanings given to community by communitarians. The first is an ambiguous and reified notion of community. The primary value of this idealized community regarding the good life, is its capacity to afford a sense of solidarity and belonging. But contemporary philosophy and current events suggest that community this loosely conceived is not necessarily associated with the good life. It is in fact vulnerable to criticism on the bases of hypernationalism, exclusionary chauvinism and forced collectivism. The communitarians we have considered reflect a subtle, but crucial distinction between community, undefined beyond these basics, and community capable of serving as the context for the good life. It is my contention that the component of democracy, understood as the first half of the circle of hermeneutic processes, is the feature which permits differentiation between community as a romanticized political and social association, and community which does in fact afford opportunities for the good life.

Chapter II:

The Self and Citizen of Liberal Individualism

The History of Conceptions of the Liberal Individualist Self

The long and diverse tradition of liberal individualism has resulted in an ideology so broad it often seems capable of incorporating both sides of many political philosophy debates. However, the views of liberal individualists and communitarians on the sources of the identity of the self, citizenship, and the nature of democracy, are distinct to the point of being mutually exclusive. These disparities result from contrasting views of the self. Moreover, these differences produce the emphasis by communitarians on the first half of the hermeneutic circle, and the emphasis by liberal individualists on the second. By placing the individual antecedent to the community, liberal individualists are compelled to stress the autonomy of the self as an agent, over the cohesion of community, and to anticipate a profusion of differing opinions on every political and social issue, rather than to expect consensus.

The liberal individualist self is a philosophical construct which has its genesis in some form of state of nature theory. The preferences and interests of this self are formed prior to entering society; it is the uniqueness

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of these preferences, combined with the capacity for choice, upon which the dignity and value of this person are founded. The rights of this self are inalienable because they are prepolitical, having been derived from the state of nature. Upon entering society, the individuated self will have little in common with others, but may choose to join with fellow citizens to pursue specific goals which further his/her interests. Liberal individualists expect that the individual will challenge the polity if it wrongly assumes that he/she concurs with its premises or decisions. The liberal individualist self is oriented toward finding fulfillment in the private sphere, and toward selective involvement in the public realm when it suits his/her purposes.

To observe the elements of liberal individualism most pertinent to citizenship and democracy, the influence of three exemplars will be considered. The first is the contractarian perspective, as outlined in the work of John Locke. Second, is the utilitarianism of John Stuart Mill; and third, is deontological, as founded in Immanuel Kant. Each of these represent liberal individualist views of the self, of who and what a citizen is, as well as of the rights and responsibilities associated with citizenship.

These three are important representatives of liberal individualism because, as we shall see, their premises and methodology have demonstrated lasting influence. The

centrality of the contract in the founding of society remains evident in the thought of John Rawls, Judith Shklar, and Robert Nozick. John Stuart Mill's emphasis on individual liberty, the validity of diverse opinions, and maximization of the public good has impacted Ronald Dworkin, Friedrich Hayek, Robert Nozick, T.M. Scanlon, and Judith Shklar, among others. Immanuel Kant's model of the highly individuated self whose reason makes him/her a discerner of universal law is apparent in the premises of John Rawls, Ronald Dworkin and Amy Gutmann.

In Lockean contractarianism, the citizen becomes a part of the political community by consenting to the social contract. Joining the political community is a logical and pragmatic decision for the individual because "civil government is the proper remedy for the inconveniences of the state of nature."[67] Locke explicates the universal aspects of human nature in the depiction of a state of nature which is social, but without government.[68] The

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[67] John Locke, Two Treatises of Government (New York: MacMillan, 1947), 127. The state of nature is inconvenient indeed since each person has the right to judge and to punish. In the absence of impartial judges, justice is administered by aggrieved parties, resulting in biased, personal judgments, retributive justice, and "violence." Ibid., 126-28.

[68] Ibid., "Of the State of Nature," Chapter 2, 122-28. Responsibilities of citizenship include: desisting from violation of the rights of other citizens, recognizing the supreme power of civil society in the legislative authority of the government. Ibid., 188-94. In the event that the government should become tyrannical, the citizens make an "appeal to Heaven." This entails initiating a citizen revolution, dissolving the government, and founding a new government. Ibid., 131, 207, 224-25, 228-47.

primary right of the individual who becomes a citizen via the social contract is physical security, the chief benefit is protection of private property.

That his precepts are reified by the assumption of their timelessness is apparent in Locke's initial assertion that there is a human condition common to all mankind, "To understand political power right...we must consider what state all men are naturally in, and that is a state of perfect freedom...."[69] This premise is also evident in the closing paragraph of <u>Two Treatises on Civil Government</u> when Locke explains that the transaction between the individual and the community, the contract, is a permanent agreement.[70] Since these are not actual people making an explicit contract, but imagined people giving hypothetical tacit consent, the contract is not bound to time by the life span of individuals or generations, but carries on endlessly into the future.

The tenets of utilitarianism which have influenced

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[69] Ibid., 122.

[70] "To conclude, the power that every individual gave the society when he entered into it can never revert to the individuals again...but will always remain in the community, because without this there can be no community, no commonwealth, which is contrary to the original agreement...". This passage illustrates two additional points: first, what the individual gives to the community through the contract is power, and second, the community is an entity which may or may not exist, but cannot exist without the contract. Note the difference between this view and communitarianism. Communitarians include the possibility that a particular individual may be within a community or outside of any community, but the prospect of the absence of community is not considered viable. Please see Ibid., 246.

liberal individualism are oriented toward the capacity of the principle of "moral utility" to guide individual and collective action. Also referred to as the "greatest happiness principle," the principle states, "actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness."[71] This standard becomes the source of "rules and precepts for human conduct." In a manner similar to Locke, the utilitarian "standard of morality" is applied in the broadest possible context: "the happiness which forms the utilitarian standard of what is right in conduct is not the agent's own happiness," but the happiness of "all mankind," and "the whole sentient creation."[72]

The individual citizen's most valuable asset is an understanding of the principle of utility since it is the unimpeachable guide for every circumstance of life, including how to live in a political community.[73] Mill claims that the utility principle is in itself sufficient for the adjudication of all moral and political decisions.

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[71] John Stuart Mill, <u>Utilitarianism</u> (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1987), 16.

[72] Ibid., 22, 28.

[73] Because utility is the "ultimate source of moral obligations, [it] may be invoked to decide between them when their demands are incompatible." Ibid., 28. Clearly, the principle of utility is <u>a priori</u> to all others, including that of moral obligations. Although, John Stuart Mill deals here with the possibility of competitive and mutually exclusive moral choices, the potential for competition between incommensurable alternatives is not broached.

For the citizen, moral obligations derive from the principle of utility, and conversely, it is the principle of utility to which citizens are obligated. The salient implication here is that citizens do not bear a moral obligation to the community in the sense of the collective other, nor to traditional beliefs of the community.

The first responsibility of citizenship is not to deprive others of "personal liberty, property, or any other thing which belongs to another by law."[74] The primary right of citizenship is the "right to equality of treatment."[75] Although derived on dissimilar bases these tenets are obviously compatible with those of Locke. The primary duty the utilitarian state is to act as the agent which will facilitate the greatest happiness for the greatest number. For Mill, this is best accomplished by a state founded on respect for individual liberty.[76] It is significant that Mill's endorsement of liberty is subordinate to the summum bonum of utilitarianism: the protection of liberty is instrumental because liberty is a means not an end; the only

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[74] Ibid., 59.

[75] Ibid., 82.

[76] Unlike Locke, this is not a liberty grounded in natural rights derived from state of nature theory. "Society is not founded on a contract, and no good purpose is answered by inventing a contract in order to deduce social obligations from it; everyone who receives the protection of society owes a return for the benefit and...should be bound to observe a certain line of conduct toward the rest." John Stuart Mill, On Liberty (London: Penguin, 1974), 141.

end and reference point being the "greatest happiness principle."

Mill's presentation of utilitarianism as a "science of morals"[77] has profound epistemological implications. Mill argues for the superiority of utilitarianism by claiming that it is scientific. As a science, utilitarianism makes several claims, the first of which is infallibility. Second, as in all science, truth is objective and discoverable. Mill's project is to take a discovered truth (i.e. the principle of utility), and ascribe to it the stature of Truth, as understood in the natural sciences. This Truth is then useable in the political and social realms. There is a notable contrast here with communitarian epistemology in which principles applied in the social realm would be considered subjective, contextual and created, rather than objective, universal and discoverable.

Kantian deontology is spawned in a world of solitary individuals; similarly to contractarianism, deontological liberal individualism requires explicit construction of an individual. Kant's self is an ideal of a human being, although he/she is plagued by a person whom Kant believes has "inclinations" which are certainly other than

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[77] John Stuart Mill, Utilitarianism (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1987), 11. Mill divides previous philosophies into the categories of inductive and intuitive. Utilitarianism, by contrast, has a very distinguished inception: citing a Platonic dialogue, Mill relates that utilitarianism was taught to Socrates by Protagoras. Ibid., 10.

constructive. In the social and political contexts, the dilemmas which Kant deals with are largely created by the propensities of this base, or natural man.[78]

The Kantian dichotomization of the self raises the issue of whether it will be noble or base man who serves as the model for the citizen. Kant never resolves this question, although the citizen as natural man is obviously a predominant consideration in the design of robust state institutions, and his strong endorsement of citizen compliance with the rule of law. It appears that the higher self is the author of laws which exercise control over the lower self. On one hand, the Kantian self is a rational being, appearing prior to the advent of society, and is a discerner and maker of universal law. However, this individual, as a citizen, experiences conflict with other citizens in day-to-day dealings, and behaves in a less than civil manner,

> Man is an animal which, if it lives among others of its kind, requires a master...who will break his will and force him to obey a will that is universally valid, under which each can be free.[79]

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[78] Please see Immanuel Kant, Conjectural Beginning of Human History, Idea for a Universal History, and Perpetual Peace.

[79] Ibid., 17. After emphasizing the need for an entity capable of establishing and maintaining order, Kant reveals that the solution to this dilemma is strong societal law. Kant asserts that inevitable societal dissension will be the catalyst which nurtures the development of human potential, "The means employed by Nature to bring about the development of all the capacities of men is their antagonism in society." Immanuel Kant, "Idea for a Universal History," in On History, ed. Lewis Beck (New York: MacMillan, 1963), 15.

A similar dichotomization of human nature is evident in Locke's explication of the need for societal, (i.e."known"), law,

> First, there wants an established, settled, known law, received and allowed by common consent to the standard of right and wrong...for though the law of nature be plain and intelligible to all rational creatures, yet men, being biased by their interest as well as ignorant...are not apt to allow of it as a law binding to them....[80]

The validity of the law of nature is derived from the fact that it is self-evident truth. The hypothetical "rational" person would grasp it, although actual individuals are biased and ignorant, and therefore likely to miss it. The "great law of nature" is: 'Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed'."[81] It is clear that the human being must be removed from the realm of the law of nature, and moved to civil society, where the state administers the laws. For these three classical liberal individualists, the model of the self with both an higher and lower nature is the prototype of the citizen. Examining this model of the self offers insight into liberal individualism's need for democracy. Democracy offers to liberal individualism a political arrangement which will reinforce the nobler inclinations of the self, and buffer the effects of separateness and isolation. Higher man is capable of using

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[80] John Locke, <u>Two Treatises of Government</u>, (New York: MacMillan, 1947), 184.

[81] Ibid., 126.

reason to create appropriate laws, but concerns regarding the man of base nature are evident in the design of institutions, and the outlining of procedures for the mediation of controversy.

These observations on the dichotomization of the self set the stage for what we earlier referred to as the central problem of citizenship for liberal individualists. The model of the autonomous self is a being who is not only unique, but alienated. The individual opinions of this self are validated by grounding them in a presocial condition. This means that the individuality of the self is substantiated by how little he/she has in common with others. Only the rhetorical tools of contract and consent are capable of transforming this model of the self into a citizen. The central problem of citizenship for liberal individualists is this tension between autonomous individuals with their diverse interests, and the polity which must not only guard individual liberty, but maintain order by compelling citizens to comply with the rule of law. This tension is evident in the thought of Locke, John Stuart Mill, and Kant.[82]

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[82] The difficulties associated with transposing the highly individuated self into a citizen are apparent in Mill's On Liberty. For example, "If all mankind minus one were of one opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind." Later in the text, Mill goes on to warn: "No one pretends that actions should be as free as opinions. On the contrary, even opinions lose their immunity when the circumstances in which they are expressed are such as to constitute their expression a positive instigation to some mischievous act." John Stuart Mill, On Liberty (London: Penguin, 1974), 76, 119. Locke and Kant also encounter and deal

The dichotomization of the self by liberal individualists is further indication of the reification of the self, particularly the "higher self." By making the individuated self the first principle for all theory, liberal individualists overlook both the antecedent variables in the constitution and identity of the self, as well as the consequences using the self as the point of inception. This observation, in the inverse, can be made regarding communitarians: by claiming the community as prior to the individual and using it as the groundwork for theory, communitarians overlook the antecedent factors in the composition of a community, and the consequences of making the community the foundation of all tenets. I would suggest that the reification of the self by liberal individualists, and of community by communitarians precludes the immanence and reality of democratic processes and political conflict, and the complementarity and dynamism produced by both halves of the hermeneutic circle functioning in a mutually-reinforcing balance.

The communitarian conception of citizenship is premised on theoretical and practical particularism, as well as an absence of universality with regard to either "truths" or

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with the resolution of this tension. On Locke, please compare Chapter 2, "Of the State of Nature," of The Second Treatise on Government, with Chapter 18, "Of Tyranny," where Locke asserts: "Wherever law ends tyranny begins." Ibid., 224. Regarding Kant, consider the contrast between the idealized self of "The Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals," with the self as a citizen in "Idea for a Universal History," and "Perpetual Peace."

prescriptives. By contrast, Locke, Mill and Kant, as well as contemporary liberal individualists convey principles and prescriptives intended to transcend time and space. Whereas communitarian ideological authority and applicability rest on the claim of a realistic representation of human nature and associative life, liberal individualist claims of authority and applicability are grounded in an appeal to universal truth.[83]

References to "rational men" illustrate the technique used in order to substantiate the validity of the "truths" being conveyed. "Rational men" are used as the foil by which to affirm the reasonableness of basic assumptions, thereby creating an impression of consensus. Rather than speaking in the first person these liberal individualists present their premises and principles as those on which rational men would

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[83] According to these three traditional liberal individualists, reason is the source of universal truth, "Men living together according to reason, without a common superior on earth with authority to judge between them, is properly the state of nature." John Locke, Two Treatises of Government (New York: MacMillan, 1947), 130; please see also Ibid., 124-26. "No one can be a great thinker who does not recognize that as a thinker it is his first duty to follow his intellect to whatever conclusions it may lead." John Stuart Mill, On Liberty (London: Penguin, 1974), 95. "But between him and that imagined place of bliss, restless reason would interpose itself, irresistibly impelling him to develop the faculties implanted within him. It would not permit him to return to that crude and simple state from which it had driven him to begin with." Immanuel Kant, "Conjectural Beginnings of Human History," in On History, ed. Lewis Beck (New York: MacMillan, 1963), 59.

agree.[84] The logical converse of this is an important

epistemological point: agreement becomes the standard of

rationality--if the hearer is rational, he/she will

concur.[85]

With regard to the debate between communitarianism and

liberal individualism, these premises profoundly influence

conceptions of citizenship and community. For liberal

individualists, citizenship and community, like truth, exist

in a realm beyond time. Is the epistemology of liberal

individualism pitched at a higher level of abstraction than

that of communitarianism? With regard to theoretical

foundations grounded in claims of transcendent truth, the

response must be affirmative. The epistemology of

communitarians is however, highly abstracted, as evidenced

in the reliance on models of community which are idealized

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[84] Locke illustrates the premise that reason affords understanding of the most basic law, that is, the law of nature, while adding as a caveat the possibility that due to the base nature, persons may not be consistently capable of adhering to this law, "Though the law of nature be plain and intelligible to all rational creatures, yet men, being biased by their interest as well as ignorant for want of studying it, are not apt to allow of it as a law binding to them in the application of it to their particular cases." John Locke, Two Treatises of Government (New York: MacMillan, 1947), 184.

[85] Michael Oakeshott explains the connection between individualism and liberal rationalism as deriving from the "Rationalist" setting him/herself as the gauge of appropriate thought: "[the Rationalist]...is something of an individualist, finding it difficult to believe that anyone who can think honestly and clearly will think differently from himself." Michael Oakeshott, "Rationalism in Politics," in Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays, (London: Metheun and Company, Ltd., 1969), 2.

or wholly imagined.[86]

The Liberal Individualist Self as the Prototype for the Citizen

The self constructed presocially and prepolitically is

the cornerstone of liberal individualist conceptions of the

citizen. In a contractarian model, the self is _a priori_ to

society and community[87], the needs and desires of the self

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[86] Instances here include: Sandel's communities of socially-constituted persons, MacIntyre's eras of thought and tradition which appear as communities, (for MacIntyre, the dialogue of philosophy is the discourse between different eras of thought), and Walzer's spheres of justice where meanings are internally established and context specific. A recent text which examines potential negative implications of imagined communities is Benedict Anderson, _Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism_. Examples of historical communities, used by the communitarian authors cited in this essay include fifth-century Athens, medieval Europe, and colonial America. Liberal individualist critics charge that these three historical examples do not qualify as "communities." On this point, please see Derek Phillips, _Looking Backward: A Critical Appraisal of Communitarian Thought_ (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993). Phillips argues: "The historical prevalence of the kind of community they describe is a fiction. It rests on a myth that looks to the past for reassurance and guidance." Ibid., 150. The disagreement here highlights the differences in the epistemological grounding of liberal individualists relative to that of communitarians. From the standpoint of communitarians, historical veracity may not be crucial. The interpretevistic epistemology of communitarians suggests that the purposes of the "histories" for communities may be somewhat mythologic, in that they are valued for their capacity to provide sentiments of rootedness and commonality.

[87] In the language of liberal individualism, the term "society" often describes the collectivity of persons linked together through social, economic or political ties. In the language of communitarianism, the word "community" is used in an analogous manner, although the word carries slightly different connotations. In my view, the choice of the word "community" by communitarians indicates a desire to emphasize the collegial aspects of collective relationships over the ostensibly depersonal implications of the word "society," as used by liberal individualists. For the purpose of clarity, I use the words "society" and "community"

having been formed in the state of nature. The consequence

is a self as the citizen endowed with inalienable rights

derived from the presocial realm, but which the state must

protect.[88] In utilitarian models, the individual self is

the basis for the model citizen because the individual is

the source of preferences, the fulfillment of which conduce

to happiness.[89] The responsibility of the community and/or

state vis-a-vis citizens is to aggregate these preferences

and use them to guide policy.

As we have seen, the self of deontological ethics is

shaped by presocial propensities which are both positive and

negative. Once in community, the self is transformed into a

citizen through recognition of his/her capacity for

morality, and adherence to societal law.[90] The Kantian

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interchangeably.

[88] "Concern with rights is based largely on the warranted supposition that we have significantly differing ideas of the good and that we are interested in the freedom to put our own conceptions into practice." T. M. Scanlon, "Rights, Goals and Fairness," in Public and Private Morality, ed. Stuart Hampshire (Cambridge, Eng: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 107.

[89] "The only power deserving the name is that of governments while they make themselves the organ of the tendencies and instincts of masses." John Stuart Mill, On Liberty (London: Penguin, 1974), 131.

[90] "To the Idea of freedom there is inseparably attached the concept of autonomy, and to this in turn the universal principle of morality....We see now that when we think of ourselves as free, we transfer ourselves into the intelligible world as members and recognize the autonomy of the will together with its consequence-- morality...." Immanuel Kant, "A Critique of Pure Practical Reason," in The Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), 120-21.

roots of this perspective, as well as the thought of contemporary liberal individualists indicate that movement from solitary individuality to citizenship, via the contract, is a volitional act. This focuses two issues. The first is the importance to human identity of the capacity for choice. Second, community is not such by nature, but by the aggregated effect of these acts.

The capacity for choice is highlighted when Rawlsian individuals emerge from the isolation of the original position to come together in communities. The priority of the right over the good is determinative not only of the capacity of the community to provide justice, but of how individuals will view each other and the collectivity.[91] The Rawlsian self as a citizen is vividly aware of his/her obligations as a "moral person," and of the rights resulting from autonomy,

> [In] a plurality of persons...their fundamental
> interest in liberty and in the means to make fair
> use of it is the expression of their seeing
> themselves as primarily moral persons with an
> equal right to choose their mode of life.[92]

For our purposes, the emphasis on individuality is more crucial than the implications for deontological morality. We are here less interested in obligations derived from the original position than in the place of the individual in the

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[91] "Now in justice as fairness [there is] the priority of right and the Kantian interpretation." John Rawls, A Theory of Justice (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 563.

[92] Ibid., 563.

Rawlsian model. In this regard, the significance of the
individual, as conceptualized here, cannot be over-
estimated. The self outlined in the original position is for
Rawls, "an ideal of the person that provides an Archimedean
point for judging the basic structure of society."[93] When
one considers the clarity of this statement combined with
the influence of Rawls over the past two and half decades,
inception of the term "liberal individualism" and genesis of
the debate in which we are engaged become clearer.

Individualism conceptually defines not only the terms
of justice, but more fundamentally, ontology, and therefore
the type of theory that may be constructed. The totality of
what the community may entail is predicated on this model of
the self,

> The essential idea is that we want to account for
> the social values, for the intrinsic good of
> institutional, community, and associative
> activities, by a conception of justice that in its
> theoretical basis is individualistic.[94]

This illustrates the mutual exclusivity of the communitarian
and liberal individualist conceptions of the self. In the
case of Rawls, the individuated self emerges from behind the
veil to become a member of the just society, and a citizen
of the redistributive state. There are other paths, however,
that the original self of liberal individualism may follow.

Robert Nozick grounds his theory of the minimal state

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[93] Ibid., 584.

[94] Ibid., 264.

in state of nature theory.[95] The degree of individuation of

the self, combined with reliance on state of nature origins,

also results in a community that is created and artificial.

Nozick explains that the only promising way of

"understanding the whole political realm" is to "explain it

in terms of the nonpolitical."[96] Notwithstanding obvious

differences, Rawls' self behind the veil, and Nozick's self

in the state of nature, serve analogous purposes. The self

behind the veil is an autonomous self, stripped of all that

could prevent the making of rational choices. The self in

Nozick's state of nature is a unique being whose

separateness is the credential of his/her capacity as a

moral agent. Both selves are reified models used as first

principles, which consequently become determinative of the

structure of community.[97]

The selves of Nozick, and of Rawls, as prototypes of

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[95] "A theory of a state of nature that begins with fundamental general descriptions of morally permissible and impermissible actions, and of deeply based reasons why some persons in any society would violate these moral constraints...will serve our explanatory purposes, even if no actual state ever arose that way." Robert Nozick, Anarchy, State and Utopia (New York: Basic Books, 1974), 7.

[96] Ibid., 6.

[97] For Nozick, it is the separateness of individuals which precludes a community any more elaborate than the minimal state. The stature and distinctiveness of this self indicate that there are as many "highest goods" as there are people, "Why not hold that some persons have to bear some costs that benefit other persons more, for the sake of the overall social good? There is no social entity with a good that undergoes some sacrifice for its own good. There are only...different individual people with their own individual lives." Ibid., 33.

the citizen are not created with the capacity or need for collective deliberation. If collective decisions are in order, this citizen enters discourse with preferences and opinions fully formed. Since the perspectives of the citizen are formed pre-socially, neither the broadening of viewpoints, nor persuasion, are objectives of political processes. Community serves utilitarian purposes by offering conveniences associated with the division of labor.[98] Rawls' veil of ignorance and Nozick's state of nature theory ascribe dignity to the self based on rationality, autonomy, and uniqueness.

From the standpoint of communitarians, this is unacceptable because it precludes the possibility of a self capable of the bonds upon which the communities (of communitarians) are built.[99] Once again, this illustrates the contrast between liberal individualists and communitarians on the purposes and benefits of citizenship.

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[98] Ibid., 33, 32.

[99] The contrast between liberal individualists and communitarians on this point is drawn succinctly by Michael Sandel: "What is denied to the unencumbered self, [that is, the liberal individualist self], is the possibility of membership in any community...where the self itself could be at stake. Such a community--call it constitutive as against merely cooperative-- would engage the identity as well as the interests of the participants, and so implicate its members in a citizenship more thoroughgoing than the unencumbered self can know." Michael Sandel, "The Procedural Republic and the Unencumbered Self," Political Theory 12 (February 1984): 87. Also, please see Michael Sandel, Liberalism and the Limits of Justice (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 64.

The liberal individualist self as a citizen has need of a political community, in the form of a state, which offers protection from the violation of his/her individual rights. The communitarian self as a citizen needs the community in a much more fundamental sense, since it is constitutive: the community is an overriding variable in the formation of his/her identity and capacity for choice. The antecedent community provides a sense of belonging and grounding in shared understandings which are the fundamental referents necessary for both individual and collective choices. For liberal individualists, society, community, and political institutions are products of interaction between individuals. For communitarians, community is natural, and the self is a product of the positive and ineluctable influence of community. Hence, community is crucial to the identity and development of the self.

The dignity of the self of liberal individualism is revealed in the individual's ability to formulate his/her personal conception of the good.[100] David Gauthier's self constructed outside of community is similar to that of

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[100] For example, "The liberal individual has her own conception of the good." David Gauthier, "The Liberal Individual," in Communitarianism and Individualism, ed. Shlomo Avineri and Avner De-Shalit (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 154; also, "The government must be neutral on what might be called the question of the good life....Since the citizens of a society differ in their conceptions, the government does not treat them as equals if it prefers one conception to another...." Ronald Dworkin, "Liberalism," in Public and Private Morality, ed. Stuart Hampshire (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 127.

Nozick and Stephen Macedo, in this important sense: The

possibility of a change in viewpoint occurs within the self,

rather than in the context of community,

> The good of each person expresses her
> preferences....Thus the liberal individual must
> have the capacity to reflect on her preferences,
> and to alter them in the light of reflection; this
> capacity makes her autonomous.[101]

The influence of grounding theory in a view of individuals

in the state of nature, or behind the veil, is thus

clarified: the separateness of the self who is constituted

presocially is maintained after entrance into a community by

the uniqueness of individual conceptions of the good, which

in turn leads to autonomy of deliberation and reflection,

and individual opinions.

Relevant to our discussion this means that the

individual enters the social realm, including public

discourse, with opinions already formed. Therefore,

transformation of the perspectives of individuals is not one

of the purposes served by community. The pertinent issues

regarding public discourse are substantially different for

liberal individualists than for communitarians. For liberal

individualists, questions regarding what will transpire when

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[101] David Gauthier, "The Liberal Individual," in
Communitarianism and Individualism, ed. Shlomo Avineri and Avner
De-Shalit (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 154. In the
words of Macedo, "The ideal liberal personality is characterized by
reflective self-awareness, active self-control, a willingness to
engage in self-criticism, and openness to change, and critical
support for the public morality of liberal justice." Stephen
Macedo, Liberal Virtues, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990),
251.

the dessemination of information and public dialogue occur include how to encourage citizens to inform themselves, deciding which topics ought to be on the agenda and why, conflict resolution, and avoiding the tyranny of the majority.

For liberal individualists, the initial animating movement of theory is the movement from individuals in the state of nature, or behind the veil, into society. The point which best highlights the differences between liberal individualist and communitarian selves, is that for liberal individualists, this does not result in a self embedded in a specific community of origin, but rather a conceptualization of the self embedded in cosmopolitan society writ large. As Amy Gutmann points out, "Rawls derives principles of justice...from our identification with all free and rational beings rather than with particular communities."[102]

One additional point on the individuated self as the prototype for the citizen: agency and justification are both grounded in the individual. Moreover the rights ascribed to the citizen are inalienable because they are derived from the model of the self in the presocial state of nature. Therefore citizenship is a legally prescribed status. Basic points of consensus are postulated on the premise that they

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[102] Amy Gutmann, "Communitarian Critics of Liberalism," in Communitarianism and Individualism, ed. Shlomo Avineri and Avner De-Shalit (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 125.

are issues on which reasonable people would agree.[103] In this schema, the individual is one of two possible agents, the other being the state. With regard to the conception of citizenship, the structure and purposes of political institutions including citizenship, are justified using the model of the self as the reference point.

The community is subordinate to the individual; when the self joins society, the model of the self generates the prototype of the citizen and the structure of political institutions. The liberal individualist model of the self generates theories of citizenship and democracy in which the individual is equipped only to engage in the second half of the hermeneutic process. Liberal individualism does not provide for the creation of shared understandings, or comprehension of what would explain their existence. Consequently, fundamental agreements which serve as the context for collective reasoning are in the form of codified law. However, the liberal individualist citizen is oriented toward a society which reflects a myriad of different opinions. Indeed, the validity of these differences are validated by the premises of the model of the self. Citizens are geared toward evaluation of the polity relative to their individual interests, and toward the critical appraisal of areas of consensus, where these are impacting public policy.

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[103] John Rawls, A Theory of Justice (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1971), 16.

The Liberal Individualist Conception of Citizenship

For liberal individualists, citizens are individuals who leave the state of nature to join a polity. Accordingly, citizenship is the formalization of ties between individuals and the state, and is characterized as a status and a set of rights. Primary issues of citizenship involve who may be a citizen and what the rights of citizenship are. Normative understandings determine the statutory arrangements that guide adjudication when citizens' pursuit of their interests result in conflict.[104] In addition, citizenship institutionalizes the boundary between public and private life, so that individuals may be protected from violation of their rights by others or by the state, and be free to pursue individual conceptions of the good life.[105]

As we have seen, the self of liberal individualism has

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[104] The prospect of conflict is clearly a concern of liberal individualists. In the words of Ronald Dworkin, "citizens have different theories of the good and hence difference preferences....The liberal, as lawgiver, now needs mechanisms to satisfy the principles of equal treatment in spite of these disagreements." Ronald Dworkin, "Liberalism," in Public and Private Morality, ed. Stuart Hampshire (Cambridge, Eng: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 130. Rawls also anticipates conflict, "[J]ustice is the virtue of practices where there are competing interests and where persons feel entitled to press their rights on each other." John Rawls, A Theory of Justice (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 129. For Rawls, conflict may be unavoidable, but adherence to the principles of justice provide a matrix for adjudication and a fair outcome.

[105] "...[T]he case for rights (or moral rules) is seen to rest on their role in promoting maximum utility through the coordination of individual action." T.M. Scanlon, "Rights, Goals and Fairness," in Public and Private Morality, ed. Stuart Hampshire (Cambridge, Eng: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 106.

a personal identity with preferences, interests, and the ability to make appropriate choices. This helps explain why the tenets of liberal society are rights-based and rule-based. Accordingly, the liberal individualist conception of citizenship is oriented toward defining and defending the rights of citizens and outsiders, and determining rules by which this may be accomplished justly. If all individuals have interests, and becoming the citizen of a state guards those interests by transposing them to institutionalized rights, accountability to these principles indicates that states exhibit an openness toward those wishing to become citizens.

Applying for citizenship is thus an action paralleling the hypothetical picture of an individual seeking to conclude a social contract with a state. This analogy is based on a familiar liberal principle: the autonomy of all individuals as rational moral agents is the basis for self-determination. When translated into policy terms, self-determination indicates freedom of migration. As we are seeing, this raises specific questions, such as, on what grounds can liberal states control immigration and limit access to citizenship? Since the tenet of the autonomy of individuals is applied universally rather than selectively, this issue is unavoidable.

When unemployment and inter-ethnic tensions are low, the potential for conflict between the individual autonomy

principle and the corresponding policy of openness to

immigration may not be apparent. However, in the United

States and Western Europe, unemployment, the need for fiscal

restraint, and resurgent nationalism are giving rise to

calls by interest groups and political parties to curb

immigration. This situation is fueling the debate between

liberal individualism and communitarianism because

communitarian arguments for the defensibility of the

physical and ideological boundaries of communities are being

adapted by those calling for tighter citizenship

requirements, and more stringent enforcement.[106]

Since liberal individualist citizenship is a

contractual arrangement defined by the legal definition of

rights, we may deduce that a nation's laws reflect its view

of citizenship.[107] For those already possessing

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[106] The use of justifications of the concept of difference, as found in some communitarian writings, by proponents of hypernationalism and anti-immigration movements are one aspect of the current debate between liberal individualists and communitarians on the topic of citizenship. Examples include Franklin Hugh Adler, "Racism, Difference and the Right in France," Paper delivered at the 1994 meeting of the American Political Science Association; Jasjeet S. Sekhon, "Nationalism, Racism, and Communitarianism," Paper delivered a the 1994 meeting of the American Political Science Association; Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism; Walker Connor, Ethnonationalism; Michael Ignatieff, Blood and Belonging.

[107] As an outstanding recent example of scholarship along these lines, Rogers Brubaker has developed a model for understanding the sources of the citizenship laws of liberal democracies by analyzing nations' self-understandings. This study is historically well-documented and undermines the liberal claim of a grounding in principles which are universally applicable. The implications of Brubaker's model indicate that even among industrialized liberal

citizenship, liberal individualist conceptions build on a contractarian Lockean model.[108] This yields a pragmatic deontology, based on the human need for physical security and the capacity of a state to provide it. The Lockean groundwork is supplemented by Kantian and Rawlsian moral deontology, which emphasizes the self as a moral agent, and the state as morally-defensible because of its ability to enforce law and implement justice. For Rawls, the state is obligated to provide the context for the operationalization of the principles of justice.[109] However, the content of the two principles necessitates redistribution based on judgments regarding equality of opportunity, which in turn

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democracies, substantial differences exist in nations' self-perception, and therefore in citizenship laws. Please see Rogers Brubaker, Citizenship in France and Germany; also Rogers Brubaker, "International Migration: A Challenge for Humanity," International Migration Review 25 (Winter 1991): 946-57.

[108] The most important rights institutionalized by the contract are the right to self-preservation, and the right to preservation of one's property. It is the "fundamental, sacred, and unalterable law of self-preservation for which men entered into society." John Locke, Two Treatises of Government (London: MacMillan, 1947), 197. "The great and chief end of men's uniting into commonwealths and putting themselves under government is the preservation of their property." Ibid., 184.

[109] As we know, the principles of justice are supported by a "thin account of the good." "...[T]he circumstances of justice obtain whenever mutually disinterested persons put forward conflicting claims to the division of social advantages under conditions of moderate scarcity." John Rawls, A Theory of Justice (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 128; also, "The principles of justice have a definite content and the argument supporting them uses only the thin account of the good and its list of primary goods." Ibid., 564.

requires an elaborate state.[110]

Nozick does not use the language of justice and the well-ordered society, but justifies the minimalist state on grounds that, given the diversity and natural rights of persons, it is the fairest arrangement. In this state, not only the state itself, but the responsibilities of citizenship, are minimal. Citizens must be vigilant in preventing the state from evolving into more than what is indicated by a parsimonious list of appropriate functions. The citizen of Nozick's model possesses the latitude to make a broad array of personal decisions, and therefore, to restrict the state to the "narrow functions of protection...."[111] The dignity of the citizen is only ensured under these circumstances.[112]

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[110] Friedrich Hayek contends that application of Rawls' principles of justice will result, inter alia, in problems enforcing citizenship laws: "Rather than admit people to the advantages that living in their country offers, a nation will prefer to keep them out altogether; for, once admitted, they will soon claim as a right a particular share of its wealth. The conception that citizenship or even residence in a country confers a claim to a particular standard of living is becoming a source of international friction." Friedrich Hayek "Equality, Value and Merit," in Liberalism and Its Critics, ed. Stuart Hampshire (Cambridge, Eng: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 96.

[111] Robert Nozick, Anarchy, State and Utopia (New York: Basic Books, 1974), ix.

[112] "The minimal state treats us an inviolate individuals, who may not be use in certain ways by others as means, or tools, or instruments or resources; it treats us as persons having individual rights with the dignity this constitutes." Ibid., 333-34. Also, "[A]s soon as any part of a person's conduct affects prejudicially the interests of others, society has jurisdiction over it....But there is no room for entertaining any such questions when a person's conduct affects the interests of no persons besides

For our purposes, the crucial point here is that for both Rawls and Nozick, the antecedence of the individuated self predicates the model of the citizen, the structure of the state, and the rules and benefits of citizenship. The liberal individualist version of democracy suggests that at each of these strata, all the elements necessary for the operation of the second part of the hermeneutic circle are present. Under these constraints, citizenship is an agreement entered into where state and citizen both have obligations. In this regard, Rawls concentrates on the obligations of the state to provide conditions favorable to implementation of the two principles of justice, and thereby provide equality of opportunity and just distribution of social goods under the condition of scarcity.[113] Nozick focuses on the importance of individuals who, as citizens, are vigilant in deterring the state from becoming unwieldy and intrusive. The state supervises services which afford basic protection and allows each citizen to pursue their

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himself...." John Stuart Mill, <u>On Liberty</u> (London: Penguin, 1974), 141-42.

[113] The two principles of justice are, "First: each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others. Second: social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both (a) reasonably expected to be to everyone's advantage, and (b) attached to positions and offices open to all." John Rawls, <u>A Theory of Justice</u> (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 60.

unique vision of utopia.[114] Nozick's utopia is the epistemological equivalent of Rawls' well-ordered society, since both are idealized constructions of the optimal context in which humans live together.

All of this highlights differences in the liberal individualist and communitarian views of citizenship. The liberal individualist construction of the self and the citizen precludes the possibility that the individual could be constitutively impacted by a community in the communitarian sense. For communitarians, the community is the entity which shapes formation of the interests, preferences, and identities of its members. For communitarians, common membership in a community means that shared understandings facilitate the making of collective decisions.

In Nozick's model it is possible that an individual be born into a libertarian community where the highest value is placed on the ability of each person to chose the appropriate community for him/herself. In this case, the individual may chose to move to a community where citizens acknowledge and nurture mutually-constitutive bonds. But if the individual is already fully constituted, how could

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[114] For Nozick, there are as many utopias as there are individuals, "Utopia is a framework for utopias, a place where people are at liberty to join together voluntarily to pursue and attempt to realize their own vision of the good life in the ideal community but where no one can impose his own utopian vision on others." Robert Nozick, <u>Anarchy, State and Utopia</u> (New York: Basic Books, 1974), 312.

he/she become a part of a community designed to have such an high degree of impact on his/her identity? In short, when Rawls' individual emerges from behind the veil, and Nozick's leaves the state of nature, he/she is already constituted to an extent that makes the kind of ties which communitarians postulate as the bonds between citizens impossible.

The autonomy and individuation of the self, along with the prospect of incommensurable moral claims associated with collective choices, indicate that the state must remain unbiased in its treatment of individuals, and evaluation of policy.[115] Implementation of the principle of neutrality means that a state must gives equal treatment to all citizens, and consider impartially the applications of outsiders wishing to gain entrance and citizenship. In

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[115] Nancy Rosenblum describes the liberal axiom of neutrality as the "deliberate distancing of government, and of justifications for government action, from official recognition of a view of the good life...." Nancy Rosenblum, Introduction in _Liberalism and the Moral Life_, ed. Nancy Rosenblum (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 6. According to Ronald Dworkin, since liberalism is committed to equality, "political decisions must be, so far as it is possible, independent of any particular conception of the good life, or of what gives value to life." Ronald Dworkin, "Liberalism," in _Public and Private Morality_, ed. Stuart Hampshire (Cambridge, Eng: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 127. In an effort to reduce contention over incommensurable claims, liberal individualists sometimes recommend removing contentious issues from the political agenda, (to the extent that this may be possible). "The hope of liberal political theory, and the basis of the most common solutions to the problem of moral conflict in a pluralist society, is that citizens can still agree on principles that would remove decisions about the policy from the political agenda. Liberals typically invoke higher-order principles, such as neutrality and impartiality, that are intended to transcend the disagreement on specific policies...." Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson, "Moral Conflict and Political Consensus," _Ethics_ 101 (October 1990): 64.

addition the state must treat all persons within its borders

equally.

Categories of rights for differing groups requires

accepting governmental differentiation between groups of

individuals, and of the state as a community with boundaries

which are valid and therefore defensible. In the current

debate on citizenship boundaries are variously considered in

physical and/or ideological terms.[116] The freedom of

individuals as moral agents, and the hesitancy of the state

to impose differing views of the good life emphasize

diversity.[117] But the tenets of liberal individualism offer

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[116] For example, please see Rainier Baubock, "Changing Boundaries of Citizenship: The Inclusion of Immigrants in Democratic Politics," Paper presented at the 1994 meeting of the American Political Science Association; Eric Gorham, "Social Citizenship and Its Fetters," Paper presented at the 1994 meeting of the American Political Science Association; Julie Mostov, "Endangered Citizenship," Paper presented at the 1994 meeting of the American Political Science Association; J.M. Barbalet, Citizenship. Using the premises of liberal individualism, Baubock argues for the inclusion of all persons within the borders of a state to some level of citizenship rights on the basis of their physical presence. Gorham argues for increased specificity in the conceptualization of citizenship by dividing it into four component parts; (one of these categories is moral capacity/civic virtue). Mostov also takes an ideological approach and argues for a strengthening of the liberal concept of citizenship as a means of promoting democratic activity in the form of participation which will keep a check on government. Barbalet is a re-examination of T.H. Marshall's seminal work, Class, Citizenship and Social Development. Barbalet updates observations on the correlation between citizenship on one hand, and socio-economic status (i.e. class), on the other.

[117] Stephen Macedo outlines the interconnectedness of the liberal tenets of autonomy and neutrality, and their implications for the policies of liberal states regarding citizenship: "Autonomy, as a liberal ideal...supports the energetic, self-critical, and independent virtues of liberal citizenship, and would seem to be a prerequisite of flourishing in a diverse, tolerant

little direction for the mediation between communal
subgroups within the state, or between citizens and
outsiders.

For liberal individualists the primary questions which
define citizenship are how to fairly adjudicate between
citizens, how to protect citizens from the violation of
their rights by others or by the state, and how to decide
the bases for access to citizenship. As a consequence,
normative theory and practical policy recommendations are
concerned with the protection of rights, and the formulation
of rules. Justification for protecting rights is derived
either from state of nature theory, (as exemplified by Locke
and Kant), or by application of the greatest happiness
principle, designed to maximize the happiness of the
greatest number of citizens. The latter is of course
grounded in the utilitarianism of John Stuart Mill, and
endorses an analog to individual rights: protection of
individual liberty since it is the means of implementing the
greatest happiness for the greatest number.

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liberal society. Liberalism is generally anti-paternalistic: it
seeks to respect persons with basic reflective capacities and
resists the political promotion of thickly textured common
conceptions of the good life." Stephen Macedo, Liberal Virtues (New
York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 252-53.

Democracy as Essential in the Liberal Individualist Conception of a Well-Ordered Society

The premises of the individual's autonomy and right to self-determination, and the value of neutrality on the part of the polity, mean that liberal individualists must account for why democracy, as a regime type, is the optimal choice. Simply put, why would a state grounded in the tenets of liberal individualism choose democratic political institutions over some alternative? Given the priorities of liberal individualism, democracy is not only an option, but essential to the structuring and maintenance of a well-ordered society. What we consider modern democracy is the favored institutional arrangement of liberalism, but liberal individualism has left a distinctive mark on Western notions of democracy. Hence the term "liberal democracy."

The highly individuated self of liberal individualism is a person with his/her own distinctive notion of the good life. Ronald Dworkin emphasizes that a government must treat all citizens as equals, because each individual's notion of the good life is equally valid.[118] The diversity of liberal selves means that "citizens have different theories of the good and hence different preferences."[119] Individuation

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[118] "I want to argue that a certain conception of equality, which I shall call the liberal conception of equality, is the nerve of liberalism." Ronald Dworkin, "Liberalism," in <u>Public and Private Morality</u>, ed. Stuart Hampshire (Cambridge, Eng: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 115.

[119] Ibid., 130.

indicates autonomy of choice, and this autonomy means "disagreement" will inevitably occur. Dworkin thus concludes that "the liberal needs mechanisms to satisfy the principles of equal treatment in spite of these differences."[120] These considerations frame Dworkin's explanation as to why democracy is the logical choice for liberals,

> The liberal will decide that there are no better mechanisms available, as general political institutions, than the two main institutions of our own political economy: the economic market...and representative democracy.[121]

Representative democracy is useful to liberalism because it provides the mechanisms to mediate conflicts resulting from the plethora of ideas pertaining to the good life.

Judith Shklar similarly asserts that liberals must defend their choice of an appropriate political system. For Shklar, "liberalism has one overriding aim: to secure the political conditions that are necessary for the exercise of personal freedom."[122] The chief requisite for a state committed to liberal goals is that it create the context for

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[120] Ibid., 130.

[121] Ibid., 130.

[122] Judith N. Shklar, "The Liberalism of Fear," in Liberalism and the Moral Life, ed. Nancy Rosenblum (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 21. T.M. Scanlon also emphasizes the importance of individual liberty and autonomy, "To be concerned with individual autonomy is to be concerned with the rights, liberties and other conditions necessary for individuals to develop their own aims and interests and to make their preferences effective in shaping their own lives and contributing to the formation of social policy." T.M. Scanlon, "Rights, Goals and Fairness," in Public and Private Morality, ed. Stuart Hampshire (Cambridge, Eng: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 97-98.

the exercise of individual autonomy. But the most likely
threat to personal freedom is posed by the power of the
state. The paramount goal therefore becomes a state whose
laws grant the conditions for freedom, while at the same
time vesting in citizens the authority necessary to keep the
state in check.[123]

Guided by these concerns, Shklar sees democracy as the
only sensible choice. In a democracy, the rule of law which
provides for diffusion of power, and free elections, with
the resultant accountability of leaders to the electorate,
are the mechanisms of restraint. According to Shklar,
liberalism has not only adopted, but has defined
contemporary democracy. Democracy is essential to the
liberal individualist conception of a well-ordered society
not because of any intrinsic affinity between liberal and
democratic tenets, but on pragmatic grounds,

> The institutions of a pluralist order with
> multiple centers of power and institutionalized
> rights is merely a description of a liberal

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[123] "The original first principle of liberalism, the rule of
law....is the prime instrument to restrain governments." Judith N.
Shklar, "The Liberalism of Fear," in Liberalism and the Moral Life,
ed. Nancy Rosenblum (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989),
37. Shklar's apprehensions regarding governmental power are based
on the potential of the state to intrude into the private sphere,
and on the possibility that the state may itself become an agent of
cruelty and terror. Of course, apprehension regarding the
possibility for the state to misuse its power is widely articulated
in liberal individualist writings. John Locke warned that "tyranny
is the exercise of power beyond right," and would be reflected in
"actions not directed to the preservation of properties of the
people, but the satisfaction of...ambition, revenge, covetousness,
or any other irregular passion." John Locke, Two Treatises of
Government (London: MacMillan, 1947), 222-23.

> political society. It is also of necessity a
> democratic one, because without enough equality
> and power to protect and assert one's rights,
> freedom is but a hope....It is therefore fair to
> say that liberalism is monogamously, faithfully,
> and permanently married to democracy--but it is a
> marriage of convenience.[124]

John Rawls arrives at his choice of democracy as the
preferred political system because of its ability to
transpose the two principles of justice into practicable
form.[125] There is, in fact, a common theme evident in
Shklar, Dworkin and Rawls which offers insight into the
liberal individualist attitude toward democracy: democratic
institutions are chosen for instrumental reasons. Democracy
is a means to an end. When adapted to the priorities of
liberal individualism, democracy has the capacity to protect
individual freedom, to provide for restraint of the state by
citizens, to set as a goal the equal treatment of all
citizens, and to make the principle of maximum equal
individual liberty and the difference principle workable in
terms of policy.[126]

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[124] Judith N. Shklar, "The Liberalism of Fear," in _Liberalism and the Moral Life_, ed. Nancy Rosenblum (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 37.

[125] "...[O]nce we try to find a rendering of them [the two principles] which treats everyone equally as a moral person, and which does not weight men's share in the benefits and burdens of social cooperation according to their social fortune or luck in the natural lottery, it is clear that the democratic interpretation is the best choice among the alternatives." John Rawls, _A Theory of Justice_ (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 75.

[126] In Rawls' writings subsequent to _A Theory of Justice_, justification for the principles of justice is grounded less in neo-Kantian metaphysics, and more in the contention that the

The commitment to protection of the division between
the public and private lives of citizens leads to the
question of whether the aims of liberal individualism and
democracy are fully compatible. Securing "the conditions
necessary for the exercise of personal freedom"[127] is
accomplished by placing individuals' right to privacy (from
state intrusion into their personal lives) as preeminent
among the rights of citizens.[128] If each citizen has
his/her view of the good life, and the good life is lived in
the private realm, this is the logical deduction.[129] One
issue raised by the need for protection from state intrusion

principles are endemic to the democratic political tradition,
"[S]ince justice as fairness is intended as a political conception
for a democratic society, it tries to draw solely upon basic
intuitive ideas that are embedded in the political institutions of
a constitutional democratic regime....Justice as fairness is a
political conception in part because it starts from within a
certain political tradition." John Rawls, "Justice As Fairness:
Political Not Metaphysical," in Communitarianism and Individualism,
ed. Shlomo Avineri and Avner De-Shalit (New York: Oxford University
Press, 189.

[127] Judith Shklar, "The Liberalism of Fear," in Liberalism and
the Moral Life, ed. Nancy Rosenblum (Cambridge: Cambridge
University Press, 1989), 21.

[128] "Liberalism prohibits collective choices from interfering
with personal freedom. Democracy promises that they reflect popular
will. Two competing ends cannot simultaneously be maximized.
Democracy and liberalism part company when collective choices
threaten to interfere with personal freedom, or personal freedom
threatens to interfere with collective choice." Amy Gutmann, "The
Disharmony of Democracy," in Democratic Community, ed. John Chapman
and Ian Shapiro (New York: New York University Press, 1993), 134-
35.

[129] Nancy Rosenblum points out that "every version of liberal
theory draws a boundary between public and private life." Nancy L.
Rosenblum, Introduction, in Liberalism and the Moral Life, ed.
Nancy Rosenblum (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 7.

is that of accountability. Among the reasons that democracy

is the favored choice of liberal individualists is,

democratic forms incorporate channels by which citizens may

hold the state accountable.[130] If elected officials, as

agents of the state, are answerable to the electorate,

citizens will be able to protect themselves from an

overreaching state.[131]

This being the case, it is often difficult for liberal

individualists to explain what could motivate a citizen's

commitment to the state, to a specific community, or to

other citizens at large. The liberal individualist model of

the self leaves little room for an altruism which could

explicate the source of allegiance to a community and a

state, and a commitment to the collective good, (when the

collective good is separate or different from the good of an

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[130] Direct or popular democracy is generally considered unrealistic given the overriding private interests of citizens, and the size and complexity of the modern nation-state. This being the case, liberal individualists have offered a variety of recommendations on ways to maximize meaningful political participation on the part of citizens. Among these: James Fishkin, Democracy and Deliberation; Robert Dahl, Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy; Amy Gutmann, "The Disharmony of Democracy," in Democratic Community.

[131] Deliberative democracy is one response on the part of liberal individualists to these concerns. Inter alia, deliberative democracy pictures the citizen as an autonomous deliberator, who takes the acquisition of information and implications of his/her political judgments seriously. "The aim of deliberative democracy is not popular rule, but autonomy....The test of a democratic political institution is not direct participation by all but effective accountability of those who make decisions to those who do not." Amy Gutmann, "The Disharmony of Democracy," in Democratic Community, ed. John Chapman and Ian Shapiro (New York: New York University Press, 1993), 144.

individual).[132] If the identity of the citizen is
constituted pre-socially, are there bonds between citizens
which could motivate such commitment? What happens when
private interests conflict with the general good? Under the
premises of liberal individualism we must expect citizens to
prioritize private interests over the public good. To the
extent that filial sentiments and some level of civic
mindedness among citizens are needed for democratic

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[132] The absence of factors which can motivate or explain civic
mindedness in the liberal individualist conception of citizenship
is clearly a matter of concern. I will mention three views which
represent a spectrum of opinions. Robert Nozick does not expect
individuals to set aside private and personal interests to involve
themselves in a public or political realm. One assumption of the
minimal state is that individual and state interests do not
coincide. Citizens enter the social contract only provisionally,
and must maintain the right to evaluate and endorse or reject
virtually all state activities. Please see Robert Nozick, Anarchy,
State, and Utopia. Robert Dahl acknowledges the tension between the
liberal individualistic pursuit and protection of personal liberty
on one hand, and the potential benefits to a democratic system of
citizen involvement and allegiance, on the other. Dahl suggests two
ways of resolving this conflict. One is by sketching a picture of
the public mindedness of civic republicanism, ostensibly to be
fostered through public education. The other is to contend that,
based on invisible hand theories, public and private interests are
not really at odds. Consequently citizens' pursuit of their private
interests will have no detrimental effect on the public good.
Please see Robert Dahl, Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy. Amy
Gutmann also recognizes potential strife between private freedom,
and the need for dedication to the collective good in a democracy.
Gutmann argues that "the real dilemma of modern liberalism...is not
that people are naturally egoistical, but that they disagree about
the nature of the good life." Amy Gutmann, "Communitarian Critics
of Liberalism," in Communitarianism and Individualism, 130. But
Gutmann also entertains an idealistic vision of the nature and
capacities of the self--one which encompasses the possibility that
citizens are willing to learn the skills and interests necessary to
pursue the good of the whole. Please see Amy Gutmann, "Undemocratic
Education," in Liberalism and the Moral Life; "The Disharmony of
Democracy," in Democratic Community; also Amy Gutmann and Dennis
Thompson, "Moral Conflict and Political Consensus," Ethics 101
(October 1990): 64-88.

functioning, the liberal individualist model of the self and the citizen are at odds with the requisites of democracy.

One method of resolving this discord is to apply the assumptions of neoclassical economic theory, where market forces mediate the distribution of goods as citizens pursue individual preferences. Drawing on Adam Smith's depiction of the working of the invisible hand can eradicate the potential conflict between private and public interests. From this perspective, liberal democracy is the unfettered pursuit of self-interest by all citizens. Yet the activities this entails conduce toward the good of the whole. Maximization of the public good is an unintended consequence of individual citizens pursuing private self-interests.[133]

Communitarianism does not incorporate a clear distinction between the social and political realms, both are the domain of the good life and both are public. By contrast, liberal individualism places a stark distinction between the public and private spheres. Conceptions of the good life are formed and pursued in private, while the political is associated with the public. The liberal individualist citizen is geared toward private pursuit of the good life, but expects to live in a well-ordered society. This society is well-ordered not because of what

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[133] "...[T]he case for rights (or moral rules) is seen to rest on their role in promoting maximum utility through the coordination of individual action." Ronald Dworkin, "Rights, Goals and Fairness," in Public and Private Morality, ed. Stuart Hampshire (Cambridge, Eng: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 106.

he/she may contribute to it, but the through the appropriate structuration of institutions, and the order maintained by good laws.

In analyzing communitarian thought we noted implicit assumptions of democracy. In surveying liberal individualist thought we find explicit endorsements of democracy, but of a democracy constructed around the premises and aims of liberal individualism. The constraints indicated by the tenets of liberal individualism permit adaptation of democracy in a manner which suits liberal objectives. Because this version of democracy is grounded in the antecedence of the individual, only a coincidental convergence of interests can explain instances of consensus among citizens. For these reasons, democracy, as conceived by liberal individualists, is limited to the functions associated with the second portion of the hermeneutic circle.

Democracy is essential to liberal individualism because the emphasis on personal liberty necessitates a political system that can be restrained by citizens, which will protect individual rights, and will maintain neutrality by avoiding judgments on differing notions of the good life. Moreover, since democracy places value on citizen input in political decisions, it offers a way of balancing the tendencies for the alienation and fragmentation which result from the need to mould the individuated self into a citizen.

Liberal individualism is an important, if not the predominant, strand of liberalism. Moreover the individualistic aspects of liberal individualism are the source of discord between it and communitarianism.

The Liberal Individualist Citizen and the Well-Ordered Society

For the liberal individualist citizen, citizenship in a liberal democracy is the means of concluding the social contract and formalizing the relationship between the individual and the state. Possessing or attaining citizenship accomplishes several purposes. First, citizenship enables the individual to avail him/herself of the physical security afforded by membership in a nation-state. Second, citizenship in a liberal democracy gives the individual the legal means by which to thwart the state from passing judgment on his/her conception of the good life, and the means to prevent the state from intruding into his/her private life. Third, citizenship in a liberal democracy entitles the individual to just treatment by the state with all other citizens. This may involve equal rights in a minimal state such as the one outlined by Nozick, equal treatment as advocated by Ronald Dworkin, or fair treatment as indicated by the difference principle in a Rawlsian welfare state. Finally, citizenship in a liberal democracy provides the individual with the means of mediating disputes with other citizens.

In communitarianism, democratic processes are evident when communitarians describe a community making collective choices. There are, as we have noted, areas where the values of communitarianism and the aims of democracy are not consonant.[134] This observation also applies to liberal individualism. Democracy is essential to the functioning of a well-ordered society, but the melding of liberal values and democratic processes is problematic. Examining the liberal individualist requisites for forms of governance gives insight into how democracy has become essential to liberal individualism, and what variety of democracy "liberal democracy" is. The priorities of liberal individualism for governance are grounded in respect for the rights of individuals and the need for safeguards against tyranny.

Reconciling these aims with democratic processes puts liberal individualists in the position of arguing that the autonomous and individuated self is not only egoistic, but

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[134] Potential areas of friction between communitarian ideas and democratic functioning include: a model of the self with intrinsic constraints on the extent of autonomous individual deliberation. Second, the particularist and contextualist perspective of communitarianism provides little guidance on the question of how to deal with those outside the community, (whether community is conceived as a subgroup of a state, or the state itself). Third, the possibility of reliance on a natural aristocracy comprised of those with an understanding of virtue and reason, creates the potential for an undemocratic hierarchy of leadership. Fourth, if foundational shared understandings are turned outward to focus on the differences between community members and outsiders, the result can be exclusionary chauvinism, and at worst, hypernationalism and hate-mongering.

altruistic as well. The need for some cohesion among the citizenry that can serve as the framework for democratic decision-making, necessitates explication of how to build some basic solidarity. Normative theory in this area focuses on the ability of individuals to learn the skills associated with democratic citizenship. Such perspectives stress on the benefits of education designed to foster an understanding of political institutions, respect for the rule of law, the value of acquiring political information, and voluntary political participation beyond the act of voting.[135]

An alternative response to the tension between individual autonomy and democratic participation is to acknowledge that citizens are self-interested, and should therefore not be expected to exhibit a desire to engage in public activities. This perspective leads to liberal individualist conceptions of democracy which are minimalistic, where the egoism of the autonomous self is the chief determinant of politics. The citizen is a utility maximizer who pursues his/her vision of the good life privately. The state is a mechanism necessary to provide some level of physical security and guarantees of basic political and civil rights. Accordingly, the goal of equality among citizens is set aside because its

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[135] For selected examples of this, please see: Amy Gutmann, "Undemocratic Education," in Liberalism and the Moral Life; William Galston, "Civic Education in the Liberal State," in Liberalism and the Moral Life; Richard Arneson, "Liberal Democratic Community," in Liberal Community; James Fishkin, Democracy and Deliberation.

implementation would require excessive state apparatus. Democracy is reduced to the requisite of competitive elections with the unfettered functioning of the laws of supply and demand governing distribution.[136]

The centrality of the individual in liberalism is evident in the three historical exemplars as well as contemporary sources. The individual portrayed by Locke has fundamental instincts to preserve him/herself and his/her property. The contract links the self to the state as a citizen and the state is entrusted with protecting the inalienable rights of the citizens. In Kant we see the dignity of the individual grounded in the capacity for choice, and the ability to evaluate prospective actions on the basis of whether they are universalizable. Kant also reflects a liberal individualistic concern with the potential for enmity, and the dire need for established law.

On Liberty particularly reflects John Stuart Mill's emphasis on the importance of freedom for each citizen to express his unique opinion on matters of public importance. However, in the same text, Mill asserts: "No one pretends that actions should be as free as opinions."[137] The liberal individualist model of the self indicates not only political

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[136] Examples here include: Anthony Downs, An Economic Theory of Democracy; Joseph Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy; Robert Nozick, Anarchy, State, and Utopia; Friedrich Hayek, "Equality, Value and Merit," in Liberalism and Its Critics.

[137] John Stuart Mill, On Liberty, 119.

guarantees for personal liberty, but the requirement of political authority capable of maintaining civil order. These two concerns, which are not entirely harmonious either with each other or with the values of democracy, are at the core of liberal individualistic thought regarding citizenship. The individual is the central reference point for conceptions of citizenship and the design of political institutions. The importance of the individual as a moral agent is evidenced in the conceptualization of the self with rights which are inalienable because they are presocial. On these grounds citizenship is a legally ascribed status. As an epistemological foundation, liberal individualists present universalistic first-order principles as those tenets upon which reasonable people would agree.

In the liberal individualist model of democratic citizenship, the diversity of viewpoints are generated by each citizen arriving at his/her preferences and opinions independently. The plurality of interests is anticipated on the basis of the autonomy of individuals. Public discourse is for the purpose of giving to citizens the opportunity to relate these opinions. This degree of individuation means that the liberal individualist citizen is predisposed toward critical appraisal using self-interest as the referent. In short, acknowledgement and expectation of diversity in the citizen body correspond to a particular perspective on democracy, where democracy is associated with what I have

described as the second half of the hermeneutic circle.

Chapter III:

The Self and Citizen of Hermeneutic Democracy as a Mean

Hermeneutic Democracy as a Medium of Communication Between Communitarianism and Liberal Individualism

What can a hermeneutic theory of democracy contribute to debate on the topic of citizenship between liberal individualists and communitarians? Each of these approaches incorporate important facets of democracy in order to document the benefits of the polities which their perspectives would create. For this reason, a hermeneutic theory of democratic citizenship facilitates communication between the two schools of thought, as well as elucidating their strengths and imbalances. As a theoretical reference point, Aristotle advances a hermeneutic model of democracy.

An Aristotelian perspective rebuts the antecedence of either the individual or the community which is fundamental and determinative for communitarians and liberal individualists. A conception of citizenship which draws on the resources of hermeneutic democracy, provides a context for communication between liberal individualists and communitarians because it integrates the socially-constituted and individualistic aspects of the self in a manner which indicates that these two facets need not be mutually exclusive. Similarly, in the hermeneutic model, we

find symmetry between the individual and collective aspects of citizens' involvement in the polity.

As outlined in the Introduction, a hermeneutic model conceives of democracy in terms of a two part circle of dialectical processes. As the essential ingredient, public dialogue is the context for exchange of opinions and making decisions on issues at hand. In the first part of the hermeneutic circle, such discourse is grounded in the interests which citizens share as co-members of a political community. Fundamental areas of common concern and consensus are the framework for public dialogue. This portion of hermeneutic processes reinforces fundamental areas of concord in the democratic polity by nurturing remembrance and perpetuation of norms. In the first half of the hermeneutic circle we see the activities of the socially-constituted aspects of the self, and the evidence of the impact of community on the identity of the individual.

The second portion of the circle of hermeneutic democracy is utilization of perspective gained in the discussion of proximate issues to examine foundational agreements and their premises. Collective critical self-analysis is grounded in the commitment of each citizen to evaluate trends in community thinking and the caliber of decisions which the polity is making. This part of the hermeneutic cycle sustains the vitality of democratic processes by averting the potentially detrimental influence

of unexamined assumptions and outmoded precedents. While we anticipate that some voices will have more influence than others, the dynamics of critical self-appraisal ensure that deprivileged viewpoints and marginalized interests will continue to find their expression. In the activities associated with the second half of the hermeneutic circle we see the impact of individual citizens on the community, and the individuated, autonomous self in action.

In short, I am presenting a hermeneutic model of democratic citizenship as founded in Aristotelian thought, and endorsing its usefulness as a means of analyzing the citizenship debate between liberal individualists and communitarians. The central axiom of Aristotle's hermeneutics is the merit of balance and moderation as exemplified by the mean. Specifically, the principle of the mean generates symmetry on two axes. First, between the theoretical and the practical. Second, between the politics of the self and the politics of the community. As a result, using this model, we are able to give balanced consideration to the concerns of both the individual and the community and to maintain conceptual linkage between theory and practice in a manner precluded in communitarian and liberal individualist models.

In communitarianism, the concept of community is reified to the point that it is difficult to grasp, or even deduce, a concise notion of what "community" is meant to

convey. In liberal individualism, this applies to the abstracted model of the individual. The self which is initially conceived in a presocial context is an idealized hypothetical construct which precludes a coherent transposition of the individual into society, or establishment of a logical point at which to move from the realm of theory to practice. Using the principle of the mean affords an equilibrium between consideration of theory and practice and the individual and the community, making it possible to observe and discuss theory and practice, and/or the individual and the community without conflating them, or giving one half of either pair priority over the other. The contrast between this stance, and the effects of antecedence for liberal individualism and communitarianism, is clear. The premises of liberal individualism constantly pull in the direction of the importance and options of the individual. Similarly, the assumptions of communitarianism push this perspective toward an emphasis on the privileges and prerogatives of the community.

In a hermeneutic model of democratic citizenship, the individual is constituted not only by membership in communities, but the community is constituted by its members through members' interpretation and understanding of it. Hence, the relationship between the individual and the community is dynamic and transformational, as opposed to static and positional. The individual and the community are

reciprocally constituted, mutually reinforcing, and the relationship between them remains in a state of flux because they are continuously influencing, redefining, and thereby recasting each other. From the hermeneutic perspective, democracy is conceived of as both a means and the end--the method and the ideal. In this way, the hermeneutic model of democracy establishes a linkage between theory and practice, since means and method apply to practical realm, end and ideal to the theoretical.

In a hermeneutic view of democratic citizenship, citizens are constitutive of the polity. And the converse also obtains: the polity is constitutive of the citizens because its laws shape behavior, and because of the many ways in which the design of its institutions impact the proliferation and tenor of associational relationships. In addition, the language of democracy has constitutive influence. The modes and norms of communication affect the manner in which interests are expressed, the formation of interests, and the likelihood of conflict resolution.

The impact of language as constitutive of community life and political norms is frequently overlooked. Of crucial significance to the interactive communication associated with democracy are the fundamental premises that no subjects are taboo, and that citizen involvement is encouraged. In other words, the first norm of democratic language is that neither perspectives nor solutions are

rejected out of hand. This grounding is compatible with the principles of democracy, and with hermeneutic epistemology. The consequence is epistemological pluralism, meaning that the fairness of democratic discourse and the legitimacy of the decisions it yields are derived directly from its inclusiveness. In short, seeing democracy in terms of hermeneutic processes affects an enhanced, comprehensive understanding of the purposes and consequences of dialogue. This is a primary reason for the usefulness of the hermeneutic model of democratic discourse in functioning as a medium of communication between liberal individualists and communitarians.

Aristotle affirms that democratic processes are enhanced by seeking the broadening of perspectives which results from the political participation of a diverse assortment of citizens. The value of moderation is affirmed, but so is a mindset of openness to the development of innovative options. Moreover, these qualities are desirable not only in the self, but also in the arrangement of the polity,

> ...virtue is a mean...and the best life must be
> the middle life, consisting in a mean which is
> open to men of every kind to attain. And the same
> principle must be applicable to the virtue or
> badness of constitutions and states. For the
> constitution of a state is in a sense the way it
> lives.[138]

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[138] Aristotle, <u>The Politics</u> (London: Penguin, 1962), 1295a34; the word rendered "constitution" here is <u>politeia</u>. It is worth noting the inadequacy of constitution, or any other single English

Considered in this light, "constitution" connotes both what

coheres, that is, the _politeia_, and what facilitates the

coherence, that is, the citizens.[139] A significant point in

distinguishing the hermeneutic democratic model of

citizenship from the liberal individualist and communitarian

models is that virtue is a mean, not an ideal understood in

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word, as a translation. _Politeia_ conveys an expansive conception of the city encompassing social, political, and economic networks and norms--virtually all modes of associative relationships including those between the citizens and the polis. "It is a fairly logical development that _politeia_ should come to denote the civil community and public life. What is harder to explain is why it assumed the sense of "constitution"; indeed, at first--and not infrequently later--it is used in such a way that it can also be translated "citizenry." Christian Meier, _The Greek Discovery of Politics_ (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), 171. This is not a case of linguistic sloppiness, or underdevelopment. Attic Greek has at least eight words which must all be translated into English as "knowledge." The point I would like to emphasize here is the conceptual integration of the interests of the citizens with those of the polity. Aristotle conveys this in the overt message of this passage; it is also strongly suggested when we consider the connotations of the language.

[139] This reflects a balancing of stances at several levels because the mean is not merely an external rule-of-thumb. The mean is the epistemological fulcrum as well as the guide for practical application. According to Aristotle, individual citizens internalize the mean and use it as the foundational methodology for self-development and the making of choices. Moreover, the mean can be used by citizens as a guide for collective reasoning and decision-making. The mean is introduced in the _Nicomachean Ethics_ as a method for the making of individual choices: "...[A]ny discussion on matters of action cannot be more than an outline and is bound to lack precision; for...there are no fixed data in matters concerning action and questions of what is beneficial....And if this is true of our general discussion, our treatment of particular problems will be even less precise, since these do not come under the head of any art which can be transmitted by precept, but the agent must consider on each different occasion what the situation demands...." Aristotle, _Nichomachean Ethics_ (New York: MacMillan, 1962), 1104a.

absolute terms, but a rather a proximate point of balance.[140]

The context of seeking the mean is indicative of the epistemological nature of political knowledge in the hermeneutic model: the mean is not used with an absolute and moralistic conception of virtue as the referent. So in reference to what is the mean moderate? The mean is the point of moderation "relative to us."[141] Humans in the collective sense of the political community are the

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[140] "We are not conducting this inquiry in order to know what virtue is, but in order to become good, else there would be no advantage in studying it." Ibid., 1103b. This reflects Aristotle's interest in immanent guidelines for personal development and positive self-transformation. The mean is an immanent guideline, not an elusive target or an absolute, transcendent ideal, (as, for example, "virtue" becomes in the schema of Alisdair MacIntyre). Using the principle of the mean indicates locating the path of moderation and equilibrium, whenever possible, from among available and feasible options. Aristotle acknowledges that finding a mean is not possible in every instance. What he emphasizes is the benefit of an mindset which avoids extremes: "Not every action nor every emotion admits of a mean." Ibid., 1107a; "The first concern of a man who aims at the medium should, therefore, be to avoid the extreme...." Ibid., 1109a.

[141] "We may thus conclude that virtue or excellence is a characteristic involving choice, and that it consists in observing the mean relative to us, a mean which is defined by a rational principle, such as a man of practical wisdom would use...." Ibid., 1106b. The mean is flexible, not guided universalistic premises. To explicate this Aristotle compares how the mean operates in contrast to strict adherence to written laws: "...[A]ll law is universal, but there are some things about which is it is not possible to speak correctly in universal terms....And this is the very nature of the equitable, a rectification of law where law falls short be reason of its universality...For where a thing is indefinite, the rule by which it is measured is also indefinite...so a decree is adapted to a given situation." Ibid., 1137b.

reference point.[142] What is right and true, is so with regard to the citizens because we are the ones on whom the implementation of decisions have bearing. This also reflects the hermeneutic perspective on the nature of democracy because the interests of citizens are the sole reference point of justification and legitimacy. As a result, determinations are made and political authority is justified without appealing to rationality, absolute truths, or self-evident "facts." The Aristotelian model of hermeneutic democracy is person-centered as well as community-centered. Observations and suggestions are made in the context of the feasible and accessible with regard to particular individuals and an actual community, rather than, (as with communitarians and liberal individualists), by appeal to reified notions of the community or the individual.

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[142] The perspective we find here on the capacity of humans to gain political wisdom and the immanent nature of political knowledge is reflective of a number of texts produced in fifth and fourth century Athens. The Homeric tradition and its legacy in the dramatic and philosophical works of democratic Athens are consonant with what we find in Aristotle. One familiar example: "Numberless are the world's wonders, but none more wonderful than man....Words also, and thought as rapid as air, he fashions to his good use; statecraft is his....O clear intelligence, force beyond all measure...." Sophocles, "Antigone," (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977), Scene I, Ode I. Also, "Man is the measure of all things." Plato, "Theaetetus" 16 Ode, in The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations, ed. Angela Partington (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 530.

The Democratic Self as a Mean

Let us examine the sense in which the self of the hermeneutic model is both socially-constituted and autonomous. In Aristotle we find the socially-constituted self and the autonomous individual integrated in the democratic citizen-- probably the most pivotal observation on the social disposition of the self is that "man is by nature a political animal."[143] The conception of "political" here is quite broad. "Political" is a transliteration indicating that having to do with the polis.[144] In Aristotle's perspective the socially-constituted and autonomous aspects of the self are not contradictory, are rather features of a multi-faceted but integrated self functioning in a democratic polity. The Aristotelian perspective of the democratic citizen reflects

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[143] Aristotle, The Politics (London: Penguin, 1962), 1253a1. Several passages from Aristotle illustrate the sense in which the self is depicted as socially-constituted. These can be, and have been, cited in such a way as to establish an association between Aristotle and communitarians. Upon closer inspection we will see that this interpretation is skewed since it only tells half the story.

[144] Politikon zoon may be rendered as: "A being whose nature it is to live in a polis." Please see Aristotle, The Politics (London: Penguin, 1962), 1253a1 and 1253a7, and accompanying translation note by Trevor J. Saunders. This picture of the human also appears in the Nichomachean Ethics, and is, perhaps, clearer in that version: "...[M]an who lives with parents, children, a wife, and friends and fellow citizens, since man is by nature a social and political being." Aristotle, Nichomachaen Ethics (New York: MacMillan, 1962), 1097b; please see also, Ibid., 1297b. Martin Otswald points out: "The term polis covers our concept 'society' (for which the Greeks had no independent word), and politike is the science of society as well as the science of the state." Martin Otswald, translator and editor, Ibid., 313.

characteristic moderation and symmetry: the identity of the self is a balanced combination of socially-contingent and autonomous factors. The democratic self of Aristotle can serve as a mean in the debate between liberal individualists and communitarians because Aristotle models an individual in which the politics of the self incorporate both facets of the hermeneutic circle.

Each of the facets of the self upholds and explains the functioning of a corresponding half of the hermeneutic circle. The socially-constituted aspects of the self acknowledge the impact of the communal environment in identity formation, and are cognizant of the commonality of shared understandings. This self is the citizen when he/she is inclined to participate in public discourse and collective reasoning, as well as activities which build or celebrate the bonds of common membership. The socially-constituted self corresponds to the first half of the hermeneutic circle. The autonomous and individuated aspects of the self appreciate the diversity among individuals that is validated by the uniqueness of each, and the many ways in which personal choices have impacted identity and individual self-understanding. The individuated self as the citizen is inclined to engage in individual reflection especially with regard to the assessment of the premises and consensuses which seem to be guiding the day-to-day decisions of the polity. The autonomous facets of the self correspond to the

self as a citizen taking a role in the second half of the
hermeneutic circle.

The model of hermeneutic processes articulated by
Aristotle reflects a distinctive view of the sources and
purposes of agreement in the citizen body, and one which
speaks to the concerns of both communitarians and liberal
individualists. Aristotle observes, "[H]umans...have
perception of good and evil, just and unjust. It is the
sharing of a common view in these matters that makes a
household and a state."[145] Such assumptions can be linked
to liberal individualists as well as to communitarians.
Liberal individualists argue repeatedly that consensus on
fundamental issues is the foundation of socio-political
relations.[146] What distinguishes the views of liberal

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[145] Aristotle, The Politics (London: Penguin, 1962), 1253a7.

[146] For example, Gutmann, Dahl and Dworkin, appeal to the
existence of agreement on basic principles which can function as
the moral foundation and fundament consensus crucial to the
establishment of political institutions: "...the basis of the most
common solution to the problem of moral conflict in a pluralist
society, is that citizens can still agree on principle...higher-
order principles that are intended to transcend disagreement on
specific policies...." Amy Gutmann, Ethics 101, (October 1990): 64.
"For even though a democratic country cannot possibly eliminate
political conflicts over particular issues, a country's fundamental
regulative principles and structure might receive such widespread
support as to survive particular controversies." Robert A. Dahl,
Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy (New Haven: Yale University Press,
1982), 161; also, "Polyarchy is a function of consensus on
the...norms...." Robert A. Dahl, A Preface to Democratic Theory
(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), 76. "The liberal,
therefore, needs a scheme of civil rights, whose effect will be to
determine those political decisions that are antecedently likely to
reflect strong external preferences...." Ronald Dworkin,
"Liberalism," in Public and Private Morality, ed. Stuart Hampshire
(Cambridge, Eng: Camgbridge University Press, 1978), 134.

individualists on this point is that reason, or some
permutation of self-evident truth, is the source of
foundational consensus. For communitarians, the sharing of
ascribed attributes are the basis of collective values. In
the hermeneutic model, public discourse energizes a fluid
and dynamic public discourse, which in turn yields workable
agreements on both immanent and fundamental issues.

The relevant point here is that consensus for liberal
individualists, and shared understandings for
communitarians, fulfill parallel purposes. For
communitarians, the community itself, as the vehicle for
understanding norms and traditions, is the source of shared
understandings. It is on the source of consensus and shared
understandings that liberal individualists and
communitarians disagree. The hermeneutic perspective
democratic citizenship is clearly distinct from the other
two models on the nature, source, and function of basic
agreement. Aristotle refers to the "sharing of common views"
in the context of the polis' ability to make judgments on
everyday issues. The context of this section is a discussion
of the polis as an association which includes the analogy
that useful is to just as harmful is to unjust. The
immanence of this perspective is illustrated in that the
unjust is unjust because it is harmful, and the just is just

because it is useful.[147] Once again, harmful and useful are gauged using citizens' perception of their proximate interests as the referent. The hermeneutic model of democratic citizenship emphasizes the doable and the tangible over the ideological and the abstract.

The significance of humans as the reference point is further underscored by remembering that the hermeneutic self is neither an idealized nor reified self. With regard to the self, Aristotle remarks that speech, not intelligence, is the distinguishing feature of humans, because it permits the articulate expression of ideas.[148] Although intelligence is the means of theoretical reasoning, only (some form of) speech makes the transmission of any idea, whether concrete or abstract, possible. This stance is concordant with the epistemological perspective of the polity in the hermeneutic model. The polis is not founded on, nor does it justify its existence on, the basis of revealed or transcendent truth. The conceptual grounding of the city is the perspectives, discourse, and decisions of the citizens. Within this framework citizens have the latitude to construe "the good

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[147] "Speech...serves to indicate what is useful and what is harmful, and so also what is just and what is unjust. For the real difference between humans and other animals is that humans alone have perception of good and evil, just and unjust, etc. It is a sharing of a common view in these matters that makes a household and a state." Aristotle, The Politics (London: Penguin, 1962), 1253a7.

[148] Ibid., 1253a7.

life" in a variety of ways.[149]

For Aristotle, excellence of character cannot be generalized across the citizen body because individuals differ in function and opinion, "a state is made up of these and many other sorts of people besides, all different. The virtue of all the citizens cannot, therefore, be one...."[150] This statement is all the more significant considered in light of Aristotle's emphasis on virtue and excellence of character. Citizens may be more inclined to agree on fundamental but abstract issues such as good and evil, justice and injustice. These foundational areas of concord facilitate the functioning of the first half of the hermeneutic circle. At the same time, Aristotle recognizes a broad diversity of beliefs on pivotal foundational political questions such as what the state is, and what constitutes a citizen. This plurality of ideas promotes the processes of the second half of the hermeneutic circle. The hermeneutic approach does not seek to transcend political conflict because it affirms the legitimacy of the contestability of

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[149] This point also undermines the linkage between Aristotle and communitarians. As we have observed, Aristotelian teleology in the context of the good life is grounded in the citizens' view of their collective self-interest as a reference point, rather than a transcendent or universal perspective on "the good." This is the context of the observation that, "[W]hile the state came about as a means of securing life itself, it continues in being to secure the good life." Ibid., 1252b27.

[150] Ibid., 1277a5.

such issues.[151]

To communitarians, communities provide citizens with the context for forming and acting on collectively determined concepts of the good. Once again we find an epistemological equilibrium because these concepts of the good are also of constitutive significance to the community. "Good" in these terms may be "good for" in an Aristotelian sense, or "the good," in a Platonic sense. From an Aristotelian perspective the community is viewed teleologically: the community is good for helping citizens to achieve their collective and individual aims (that is, their _telos_). Therefore, the community is the means to the end. From a Platonic standpoint, a properly arranged community is good in itself, and is consequently an end in itself. In either case, the content and focus of citizens' concepts of the good are inherently social. The universal and transcendent notions of the good which are produced by the antecedence of the individual or the community, respectively, are simply absent from the hermeneutic model.

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[151] "In considering the varieties and characteristics of constitutions, we must begin by looking at the state and asking what it is. There is no unanimity about this....So also we must ask, Who is a citizen? and, Whom should we call one? Here too there is no unanimity, no agreement as to what constitutes a citizen...." Ibid., 1274b32-1275a2. "The state consists not merely of a plurality of men, but of different kinds of men; you cannot make a state out of men who are all alike." Ibid., 1261a22. Aristotle's tongue-in-cheek critique of the level of unity advocated by Plato also illustrates this point, "...it may be an admirable state of affairs where 'all' say the same thing, it is nevertheless impossible." Ibid., 1261b16. Aristotle is here referring to Plato, The Republic, 462c.

A Hermeneutic Model of Citizenship as a Mean Between Liberal Individualism and Communitarianism

At the most fundamental level, Aristotle's polity exhibits the mean in a balance between concern for the individual and concern for the political community. In the current debate between communitarians and liberal individualists, Aristotle therefore provides not simply an alternative, but a middle ground. The hermeneutic approach precludes the constraints of the dualism which is so pervasive in the debate between liberal individualists and communitarians. When a hermeneutic model is applied to the issue of the self as citizen, the mean connotes balance in the symmetry between the politics of the self and the politics of the community.

As we might expect, citizenship is central in the Aristotelian schema. Citizenship is a significant context for the interdependent functioning of the socially-constituted and individuated aspects of the self. Virtually all discussion of humans in the collective sense, in The Politics, centers on the characteristics of citizens and their public/political activities.[152] In answering the question of "what constitutes a citizen," Aristotle focuses on the requirement that a citizen be capable of functioning in two alternating roles, "...the virtue of a citizen of

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[152] Although this is a central theme throughout, the individual in the public sphere is explicated in Book III of The Politics, when Aristotle poses the question, "what constitutes a citizen?". Ibid., 1274b32.

repute seems to be just this--to be able to rule and be ruled well."[153] The tendency to distinguish between leaders and led is deemphasized by the certainty that each citizen will both rule and be ruled at various times. This discounts the common distinction between the rulers and the ruled, as well as reducing the grounds for differentiation on the basis of expertise or authority between the speaker and audience in political discourse.[154]

The dialectics involved with communicative interaction in this format create the milieu for egalitarian dialogue. Analyses of the documented ordinances regarding leadership and debate in the Athenian polis provide an historical means of visualizing the terms of democratic political discourse, where both sides of the hermeneutic circle are in evidence.[155] What we find in Aristotle is insight into the ideological substructure of the statutes which governed public discussion. This is, in a sense, more fundamental in that it informs us of the attitudes and norms that resulted in the codification of rules for office holding and public

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[153] Ibid., 1277a25.

[154] A citizen speaking in the Assembly may be one who is being ruled, just as easily as one who is ruling. Moreover, even if a speaker is an elected official or a person filling a position determined by lot, the position filled is one which a variety of citizens have held and will hold.

[155] Outstanding examples here include Christian Meier, The Greek Discovery of Politics, Josiah Ober, Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens, and Philip Manville, The Origins of Citizenship in Ancient Athens.

debate.

The hermeneutic model of the self incorporates the dynamics of a citizen body which validates and examines fundamental areas of consensus in the polity. Public discourse builds on and questions shared understandings. Foundational areas of agreement are not grounded in a utopian view of the self, or a mystical understanding of community. Rather, the hermeneutic aspects of democratic functioning tend to recast citizen's interests in the direction of consensus. Communicative interaction not only reveals preferences but molds and shape them,

> For even where there are many people, each has some share of virtue and practical wisdom; and when they are brought together...so also do they become one in regard to character and intelligence.[156]

This illustrates an intrinsic good of hermeneutic democracy: it creates a context in which citizens will expect to be influenced positively by fellow citizens.

Accordingly, the source of citizens' respect for decisions made in a democratic manner is not the rightness of written laws, but the reciprocal nature of public discourse.[157] While the democratic citizen engages in autonomous reflection, he/she also retains an attitude of flexibility regarding his/her own inclinations,

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[156] Ibid., 1281a39.

[157] "For the equitable is held to be right, and equity is right going beyond written law." Aristotle, The Art of Rhetoric (London: Penguin, 1991), 1374a.

> Deliberation operates in matters...whose outcome is unpredictable, and in cases in which an indeterminate element is involved. When great issues are at stake, we distrust our own abilities as insufficient to decide the matter and call on others to join us in our deliberations.[158]

The hermeneutic processes of Aristotelian democracy nurture the capacity for individual citizens to be persuaded by other members of the polity.[159] Unlike communitarianism which depicts amicable relations between citizens on the bases of hereditary characteristics, the hermeneutic model explains the collegial features of community as being the consequence of citizens' involvement in both halves of the hermeneutic processes.

Once again we note a contrast with the liberal individualist approach where interests are communicated through the relatively private act of voting, and with the communitarian notion which presupposes consensus based on common membership. In hermeneutic democracy, public discourse is the framework for the disclosure of preferences. Consequently, the aggregation of opinions and interests does not take place in a vacuum, but neither is agreement assumed. Because interest aggregation is carried out through collective dialogue and deliberation,

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[158] Aristotle, <u>Nichomachean Ethics</u> (New York: MacMillan, 1962), 1112b.

[159] "For while opinion is no longer a process of investigation but has reached the point of affirmation, a person who deliberates...is still engaged in investigating and calculating something not yet determined." Ibid., 1142b.

preferences are impacted. The influence of public debate is, for individual citizens, a deeper understanding of alternative viewpoints, and for the political community, a more fully informed consensus.

As we have seen, Aristotle does not entertain an idealized notion of the self, nor does he make fantastic claims as to the expected capacities of democratic citizens. Nevertheless, we find an expectation that the citizen body will make good decisions. The politikon zoon, is a citizen who, in concert with other citizens, makes the best possible choices on public matters, "...[E]ach individual will indeed be a worse judge than the experts, but collectively they will be better, or at any rate no worse."[160]

On what grounds does Aristotle expect the political community to abide by policy choices made in a collective manner? The answer here is twofold. The first explanation is what we have just outlined: the attitude of the citizens is such that they will expect democratic discourse to produce appropriate decisions. The legitimacy and authority of such determinations are based on the inclusiveness of public discourse and the "collective wisdom" of the citizenry. The second defense for this claim is the influence of democratic education.[161] Education in the Aristotelian schema refers

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[160] Aristotle, The Politics (London: Penguin, 1962), 1282a14.

[161] "...[A] state is a plurality, which must depend on education to bring about its common unity." Aristotle, The Politics, 1263b29. "In matters that belong to the public, training

to childhood education in the sense of instruction, as well as to the educative benefits of democratic participation.[162]

With regard to questions of structural and institutional balance, the hermeneutic model indicates that equilibrium is achieved by the mixing of regimes.[163] For Aristotle, politeia is context-specific, reflecting a

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for them must be the public's concern. Ibid., 1337a11. For Aristotle's discussion of this please see Book VII of The Politics, particularly chapters i and ii. The importance of public education on the topic of citizenship in democracies is, of course, a current topic. Please see, for example, Benjamin R. Barber, An Aristocracy of Everyone: The Politics of Education and the Future of America (New York: Ballantine Books, 1992); James S. Fishkin, Democracy and Deliberation: New Directions for Democratic Reform (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991); Eric B. Gorham, National Service, Citizenship, and Political Education (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991); Amy Gutmann, "Undemocratic Education," in Liberalism and the Moral Life, ed. Nancy L. Rosenblum (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 71-88; Carole Pateman, Participation and Democratic Theory (Cambridge, ENG: Cambridge University Press, 1970), especially Chapter 2 and Conclusion; Michael Walzer, "The Civil Society Argument," in Dimensions of Radical Democracy, ed. Chantal Mouffe (London: Verso, 1992).

[162] "...[P]ractical wisdom deals with particular facts...is common to both kinds, (i.e. practical and political wisdom), and is concerned with action and deliberation." Aristotle, Nichomachean Ethics (New York: MacMillan, 1962), 1141b. "Practical wisdom is concerned with particulars...and knowledge of particulars comes from experience." Ibid., 1142a. Also, please see Aristotle, The Politics (London: Penguin, 1962), VIII.i-iii.

[163] Please see Aristotle, The Politics, III.vii and IV.ix. The organizational schema which Aristotle advocates for the polity is not, strictly speaking, democracy, but politeia, because it is a more balanced form. In the six cell matrix, politeia denotes rule by the many in the interest of the many, (whereas democracy denotes rule by the poor in their own interest). Unfortunately, we use the word democracy to describe what Aristotle meant by politeia, losing the capacity to distinguish between the original meaning (except by resort to unwieldy descriptions of class-based and/or economically-determined interests).

combination of the three right forms of government in a manner appropriate to a specific political community.[164] In contrast to the particularism and moderation of the hermeneutic model, liberal individualism and communitarianism reflect asymmetry in the relationship between the individual citizen and the polity, in matters of priority and precedence.

The liberal individualist premise of the antecedence of the individual combined with the probability that the state could use its power to violate individual rights means that allocation of power becomes the essential function of politics. Moreover, this allocation incorporates the potential for coercion, especially because power is scarce, and trade-offs are zero-sum.[165] We have noted in the

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[164] Please see Ibid., IV.ii and IV.xi. Although Athens is central in Aristotle's observations, his interest in the written constitutions and political practices of other poleis is quite apparent. Perhaps Aristotle's own status facilitated his ability to gain some detachment by which to make the comparative observations we have in The Politics. Aristotle was from Stageira in Macedonia, and resided in Athens at various points in his life as a resident alien. Please see Introduction by T. A. Sinclair in ibid.

[165] One of the concerns expressed by liberal individualists over the implications of communitarianism is the potential for the emphasis on community to evolve, (in terms of practical policy), into a relative loss of power of individual citizens. Examples of this include Sartori who writes: "In the city-communities of antiquity, liberty was not expressed through opposition to state power--for there was no state--but through participation in the collective exercise of power. But once we have a state that is distinct from and ordained over, society, the problem is reversed, and a power of the people can only be a power taken away from the state." Giovanni Sartori, The Theory of Democracy Revisited (Chatham: Chatham House, 1987), 291. Richard Arneson inquires whether power trade-offs between individuals and the state are zero-sum, or in practical terms, does augmentation of a sense of

hermeneutic model a balancing of the allocation of power between the citizens and the nation-state, without presupposing that this is a zero-sum trade-off. The rules of Pareto optimality do not apply because of the manner in which the interests of the city and the citizens are integrated. The language of hermeneutic democracy does not set up a conflict of interests between the individual and the community, as do liberal individualists. But neither does hermeneutic democracy finesse the issue of political conflict, as communitarians do by presupposing unity resulting from common membership. In the hermeneutic model, that which benefits the individual citizen will also benefit the whole, and vice versa. Pursuing the welfare of the citizen and the polity is one endeavor, obviating the likelihood of power struggles between the citizens and the collectivity.

In the hermeneutic model, citizens do not see their interests as being separate from, much less contradictory

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community and the actual prerogatives of community result in a decrease of the power and choices of individuals? Please see Richard J. Arneson, "Liberal Democratic Community," in <u>Democratic Community</u>, eds. John W. Chapman and Ian Shapiro (New York: New York University Press, 1993), 191-95. From a communitarian standpoint, Thomas Moody charges that liberal individualists are inextricably trapped by the constraints of Pareto optimality, "To see the issue as the individual 'versus' the society is to endorse a particular Hobbesian-liberal world view about the relationship between individuals and their societies. It is to endorse the belief that this relationship must be a zero-sum game where what one party gains the other loses." Thomas Moody, "Liberalism and an Eccentric Communitarianism," in <u>The Liberalism-Communitarianism Debate</u>, ed. C.F. Delaney (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1994), 98.

to, those of the polis. The distinguishing feature of the hermeneutic model here is that integration of public and private interests is not effected by an idealized depiction of human nature.[166] For Aristotle, the merging of the interests of the citizens with those of the polis is a fragile and dynamic consolidation continuously nourished through the dialectics of public discourse and citizen participation. The practical prescriptives which advocate communicative interaction between the citizens, facilitate the balancing of the respective values of theory and practice, speech and action, the letter of the law and the spirit of the law, and the interests of citizens and those of the polity.

One of the impediments to communication between liberal individualists and communitarians is a preoccupation with rights. Liberal individualists are concerned with individual rights and communitarians with the rights of the community. The view of democratic citizenship expounded by Aristotle has much to offer in this regard. The Aristotelian perspective disaggregates the concept of rights, demonstrating instead a concern with the issues of citizenship, human fulfillment, the socio-political

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[166] For examples of perspectives where such a union of the interests of the individual citizens with those of the community is based on an idealized view of both individual and polity, please see, Alisdair MacIntyre, "The Privatization of Good," in The Liberalism-Communitarianism Debate, ed. C.F. Delaney (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1994); also, Leo Strauss, The City and Man (Chicago: Rand McNally and Co., 1964), 93-113.

community, and the relationship between the individual and the city-state.

The pertinent distinction here between Aristotelian hermeneutics and both communitarianism and liberal individualism is not an absence of the language of rights, but that the individual and the polis are not considered separately. They are not evaluated on different bases, and neither takes precedence over the other. For our discussion of citizenship, this means that neither the individual nor the polis could be of primary, or secondary importance. Therefore decisions regarding membership take into consideration what is optimal for both citizens and community. While acknowledging that the individual and the polity are distinct, the model of the self does not place the individual at odds with the polity, (as with liberal individualism), and the model of the polity does not place it at odds with the individuality of citizens, (as with communitarians). Simply put, the actual connection between collective and individual welfare is the reason for the theoretic bond between the citizen and the polity. In a hermeneutic theory of democratic citizenship based on Aristotle's perspective, theory itself is pragmatically grounded, being built on practical observations rather than hypothetical constructs and thought experiments.

In The Politics for example, the bond between the individual and the polis is both the context of establishing

conceptual foundations and framing everyday issues. Moreover, this approach is entirely consistent with an understanding of the human as a <u>politikon zoon</u>, and the polis as a composite organism. The polity is an organic whole made up of citizens. Practically speaking, the association of citizens constitutes the polis. With regard to epistemology, the same association exists on the perceptual level between the citizens and the state. The aggregated preferences and collective decisions of the citizens are the interests and actions of the polis. Interpreting this observation as an assertion that the interests of the polity are more important than those of individuals is to view it through a lens of modernity that distorts it considerably. As we have observed, in Aristotle's schema the importance of the interests of the state relative to those of citizens is a moot point. The phrase "democratic state" could be considered a contradiction in terms because the fundamental characteristic of the democracy, (that is, <u>politeia</u>), is that it is stateless.[167]

A modern interpretation which equates antecedence with precedence suffers from the effects of the dualism which

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[167] This point is made by Giovanni Sartori in <u>The Theory of Democracy Revisited</u>, 278-80. Indeed, Aristotle describes the authority of the citizenry in such a way: "For the people have made themselves masters of everything and administer everything through decrees of the Assembly and decisions of the law courts, in which they hold the power." Aristotle, <u>The Constitution of Athens</u> (New York: MacMillan, 1974), 41.2.

tends to force observations and conclusions toward polarized or even extreme positions. Aristotle's adherence to the principle of the mean has a moderating effect generally lost on contemporary audiences. The approach found in Aristotle integrates and balances components which modern thought tends to view as competing or mutually exclusive. As we have seen, interests of citizens and of the state are not viewed separately from a hermeneutic standpoint. In addition, the politeia, (what I refer to as democracy), is advocated as optimal, not in terms of being a distinct form, but because it combines and integrates the desirable characteristics of other regime types.[168]

Citizens in each of the three models under consideration are undoubtedly impacted by the type of political community to which they belong. Lines indicating the direction of influence between citizens and the polity must be drawn in both directions because not only do individuals determine the arrangement of the polity, but the characteristics of the polity shape the expectations and behaviors of citizens. In hermeneutic theory, the description of the public and political self, that is, the citizen, is associated with democracy as the corresponding

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[168] "There must therefore be as many constitutions as there are arrangements of the superiorities and differences between parts. But they are commonly reckoned to be two...democracy and oligarchy....But our own classification is better, as well as more accurate, because the well-formed constitutions are...the harmonious and well-balanced mixture." Aristotle, The Politics (London: Penguin, 1962), 1290a3-1290a13.

regime type,

> A citizen will necessarily vary according to the
> constitution in each case. For this reason, our
> definition of citizen is best applied in a
> democracy....[169]

We have noted that the relationship between citizens and the liberal individualist state are the likely to be adversarial. The reasons for this are evident. First, the state is required to adjudicate the conflicts that arise from individuals' pursuit of their personal objectives under the condition of scarcity. Second, the state is cast in two conflicting roles: it is assigned to protect the freedom necessary for the exercise of personal liberty, while it is also the most likely assailant of this preeminent right.

These tensions put liberal individualists in the position of explaining how the propensity for discord between citizens and the state can be minimized. One common solution is to dilute the influence and involvement of citizens by strengthening institutions and the prerogatives of political officials. Cooperative relations between citizens and the state are promoted by encouraging citizens to leave ruling to the leaders, while citizens remain free to pursue their social and economic interests privately.[170]

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[169] Ibid., 1275a34-1275b5.

[170] Among the most popular versions of this perspective: "First of all, according to the view we have taken, democracy does not mean that the people actually rule in any obvious sense of the terms 'people' and 'rule.' Democracy means only that the people have the opportunity of accepting or refusing the men who are to rule them." Joseph A. Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism and

This approach avoids dealing with alienation between citizens and the state, but still accentuates the sources of the rift since it makes the state appear even more distant and domineering. By contrast, our analysis suggests that strengthening the hermeneutic and discursive aspects of democracy by preventing a rift between citizens and polity.

There is a corresponding imbalance in the communitarian model of citizenship. The foundation of the communitarian polity is shared ascribed attributes which ostensibly produce solidarity and common interests. However, this places the community in an awkward position. The only means of evaluating citizens is their continuing agreement with the community's traditional premises. A good citizen is one who accedes to the traditional premises of his/her community. We are once again faced with a problem arising from ambiguity among communitarians regarding leadership. Who is entrusted with definitively interpreting fundamental shared understandings? Bonds based on non-elective characteristics are the foundation of the political community, but communitarians do not specify the limits of political authority or the means of reestablishing these bonds.

The result is the possibility that concerns regarding solidarity could be "manipulated ideologically to produce a

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Democracy (New York: Harper and Row, 1942), 284-85.

sentiment of commonality,"[171] even when there are legitimate conflicts arising from a variety of other interests.[172] The negative potential is that community leaders could attempt to strengthen internal cohesion by emphasizing differences between those within and outsiders. Communitarianism leaves open the threat that influential individuals may reinforce solidarity among members with contentious rhetoric, or even through actions designed to foment conflict with nonmembers. As history and current events indicate, this produces a negative and hollow political agenda based in exaggerated differentiation and truculent posturing.

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[171] Mark Warren observes the potential for communitarian premises to be used to orchestrate an artificial form of consensus, "This is where communitarians are often culpable, and this is why expansive democrats insist that self-transformation in the direction of commonality must occur through democratic dialogue--the context in which ideologically manipulated commonality is least likely to survive." Mark Warren, "Democratic Theory and Self Transformation," American Political Science Review, 86 (March 1992), 21.

[172] If the communitarian emphasis on the human need for belonging and solidarity is combined with nationalism, the result could be an ideological grounding for a virulent form of right-wing authoritarianism. Possible negative repercussions of the combination of communitarianism and nationalism are under discussion by those who study resurgent ethnic nationalism. On this topic, please see Benedict, Imagined Communities; Walker Connor, Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); Jaskeet S. Sekhon, "Nationalism, Racism and Communitarianism," Paper presented at the 1994 annual conference of the American Political Science Association, New York; Michael Ignatieff, Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1993).

Conclusion

The project undertaken here has been to show how a hermeneutic model of democracy and citizenship can serve as a medium of communication in the debate between liberal individualists and communitarians. Hermeneutic theory facilitates substantive communication between the perspectives of liberal individualists and communitarians by drawing out implications of the emphasis they each place on significant facets of democracy. At the foundational level, a hermeneutic approach integrates the socially-constituted and individualistic aspects of the self in a manner which indicates that they are not mutually exclusive and that neither merits a position of antecedence relative to the other. As a result, hermeneutic theory offers to liberal individualists and communitarians the means of moderating intractable premises regarding the self and enhancing the democratic facets of citizen activity evident in each of the models. Finally, hermeneutic democracy renders a theory of citizenship which stands out as a balanced and conciliatory alternative in the debate between liberal individualists and communitarians.

The hermeneutic model conceives of democracy as a two-sided process, where the first half sees shared

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understandings and culture as constituting the individual,
and the second half sees individuals, in all their
diversity, as constituting the matrix of shared culture and
understandings. This perspective is grounded in processes
which reinforce both halves of the hermeneutic circle. The
first half consists of citizens, as a body, using shared
understandings to gain perspective and make judgments on
proximate issues. In the second half, citizens as individual
deliberators engage in analytical evaluation of the polity,
and reevaluation of areas of consensus and the quality of
decisions. The hermeneutic theory of democracy also
maintains a symmetry between the politics of the democratic
self and the politics of the democratic community by
balancing consideration of individual citizens <u>vis a vis</u> the
polity, based on conceptual equilibrium between a self that
is socially-constituted while also an autonomous agent.

From the vantage point of hermeneutic theory, unity,
conformity of belief, and intellectual homogeneity, like
democracy itself, are all matters of degree. Following the
mean by keeping a balance in expectations and in the pursuit
of these characteristics is of the essence. From descriptive
as well as normative standpoints, shared understandings do
not produce the collectivism found in communitarianism.
Rather, the equilibrium of hermeneutic theory suggests how
an heterogeneous body of citizens are capable of functioning
in concert. While immoderate individuation, both in ideas

and practice, suggests undesirable fragmentation, overdrawn endorsements of solidarity yield unfounded expectations and exaggerated visions of unity.

The democratic citizen in Aristotelian thought is one who is autonomous yet social, capable of articulating self-interest yet involved in a network of different social relationships, aware of personal and private needs but inclined to weigh heavily what he/she perceives to be the good of the collectivity. In short, the democratic citizen has diverse roles and, of equal importance, many contexts of fulfillment. The multi-faceted identity of the democratic self yields a concept of interest more elaborate than that which appears in either liberal individualism or communitarianism. The hermeneutic model of the self is depicted in the framework of varying capacities, interests, relationships, and spheres of fulfillment.

In comparing the hermeneutic model of citizenship derived from Aristotle with those of liberal individualists and communitarians we see that by beginning with constrained conceptions of the self, the latter two become bound to specific expectations of behavior, and therefore to certain social structures and political institutions. If the individuation of citizens is based on the notion that their primary interests are prepolitical, the society and institutions which such persons create will be designed to deal with atomistic functioning and conflict resolution. By

the same token, if the community of origin is conceived as constitutive of the individual on the basis of ascribed attributes, a level of consensus and harmony will be assumed which is superficial because it ignores the contingencies of disagreements that result from valid differences in convictions and choices.

I have argued that the hermeneutic model of democracy and democratic citizenship grounded in Aristotle is useful in many respects. Obviously, contemporary states present dilemmas which must be addressed. The complexity and size of modern states tend to remove them from discourse and direct contact with citizens. Under these circumstances, the likelihood for prospective policy to be perceived in terms of a power trade-off between state and citizens increases dramatically. In the debate between liberal individualists and communitarians these concerns appear as disputes over the relative importance of individual rights and community rights. Will either set of rights be violated, and will the potential good that could be accomplished by implementation of a prospective policy outweigh the damage done by any abridgement of rights? The language of hermeneutic democracy once again serves as a medium of communication here by disaggregating the concept of rights, reducing the tendency toward polarization, and advancing a more multifarious approach to the conceptualization of democracy and the

actual process of democratization.[173]

In addition to clarifying the issues which divide liberal individualists and communitarians, examining a hermeneutic model of democratic processes provides an accessible version of democratic theory. The hermeneutic model of democracy incorporates a flexibility and particularism in its fundamental perspective which results in a transportable and widely-applicable approach. The benefits are significant: the hermeneutic model of democracy provides a cross-cultural and transnational model of democratic citizenship which does not consider democracy a static or monomorphic type, but rather emphasizes the essential aspects of democracy in a manner which remains sensitive to the broader contexts of specific conditions. Understanding ways of implementing democracy, and impediments to democracy, has become even more valuable in the wake of the cold war. A global increase in the proportion of democracies, and widespread efforts toward further democratization make this clear.

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[173] Among others, James Fishkin, Michael Walzer, William Sullivan, Jean Cohen and Carole Pateman propose ways of reconceptualizing democracy and respiriting democratization within the large scale nation-state. While acknowledging the undemocratic implications of the unwieldy state, Cohen and Pateman propose that the project of democratization be approached by furthering democratic rules, and practices (especially participation), within a variety of spheres. This includes realms which are social and economic as well as those which are overtly political. In Cohen's schema the aim is a "plurality of democracies." Please see Jean Cohen, "Discourse Ethics and Civil Society," Philosophy and Social Criticism 14 (1988): 315-37; also, Carole Pateman, Participation and Democratic Theory.

A hermeneutic approach affords the context for a substantive dialogue between liberal individualists and communitarians because of its ability to communicate on common ground with each of the other two perspectives. Critiquing the dissension between liberal individualists and communitarians from this standpoint indicates the following. Constrained by the model of the socially-constituted self and the emphasis on shared understandings, communitarians prioritize the first phase of hermeneutic democracy, while neglecting the second. Motivated by the individuated model of the self and the assumption of a citizen body with a plethora of diverse individual opinions, liberal individualists stress the second phase of hermeneutic democracy, to the detriment of the first. Communitarians and liberal individualists each portray a fragmented half of the hermeneutic circle, inert as a result of having been disengaged from the other. The hermeneutic model characterizes democracy as an ongoing cycle of immanent processes.

Communitarians accentuate the importance of using shared understandings as a foundation from which to resolve practical questions. Liberal individualists stress the capacity of autonomous individuals to question both the appropriateness of prosaic decisions and the implications of the premises which underlie them. For communitarians, the result is dialogue deficient in democratic legitimacy

because of the aversion to examinination of the shared understandings and precedents which serve as guidelines. For liberal individualists, the result is fragmentation of the community, and emphasis on differences since there is no way to explain agreement except on coincidental bases.

An hermeneutic model of democratic citizenship avoids these imbalances, while incorporating significant facets of the respective strengths we see in liberal individualism and communitarianism. Because its epistemological grounding is flexible and inclusive, a hermeneutic model of democratic citizenship is capable of nurturing not a detente, but an entente, between the liberal individualist and communitarian perspectives. This model achieves balance by avoiding the confines imposed by either/or approaches. At the level of the politics of the self, a hermeneutic model of democratic citizenship desists from adopting a heavily constrained view of the individual. For this reason, it circumvents the resultant dualism which narrows the spheres of action which will purportedly be fulfilling to citizens, and which ultimately determines the structuration of institutions. The hermeneutic model of democracy provides both a theory and practical recommendations regarding citizenship which retain individuality within commonality.

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