

Disagreement, public reasoning, and (non-)authoritarian argumentation

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Which kind of disagreement should we promote? I tackle this question via a reflection on the standard for determining which arguments and reasons are allowed into public debates. Drawing on the works of Maeve Cooke and Michael Gilbert I propose non-authoritarian argumentation as a model for the analysis and evaluation of public argumentation in democracies. I argue for, and explicate, the promotion of disagreement that square a dual-commitment to pluralism and solidarity.

KEYWORDS: disagreement, Maeve Cooke, Michael Gilbert, (non-)authoritarian argumentation, (non-)authoritarian reasoning, pluralism, public reasoning, solidarity.

1. INTRODUCTION

Which kind of disagreement should we promote or discourage? And how to deal with disagreement virtuously? Motivated by a concern for democracy's response to pluralism, I tackle these questions via a reflection on the requirements for public reasoning – the normative standards for determining which contributions are allowed into public debates.

Dissatisfied with democratic theories that focus on elections and the protection of individual rights, I align myself with radical democratic theories, broadly construed, that seek to extend, through public reasoning, citizen participation to multiple spheres of social and political life. These comprise deliberative as well as agonistic theories (e.g. Rawls, 2005; Habermas, 1996; Mouffe, 2000 and 2005), and treat a wide range of processes (deliberation, persuasion, and contestation) as processes of public reasoning conducive for democratic will-formation and grounding democratic legitimacy.

In order not reduce the rule of the people to the rule of the majority, democratic citizens who hold different and conflicting

conceptions of truth, the good, etc., must be capable of relating to and engaging with one another as free and equal political actors. The practice of democratic citizenship, however, depends on citizens sharing a sense of belonging that induces them to reason together and form their collective will. Now, social and political disagreement is pluralism's inevitable companion. Disagreement, however, can undercut the bonds required for public reasoning. The requirements for public reasoning are pivotal in the response to pluralism. Normative regulation of public debate manages the conditions under which citizens are expected to work out their disagreements. When citizens get unjustly excluded and feel ignored or disregarded, their disagreement can turn divisive and undermine their sense of integration. The aim is to promote and sustain a robustly pluralist citizenry capable of disagreeing without undercutting the solidarity democracy requires.

My argument in this paper unfolds in four steps and suggests a way of integrating normative political theory with argumentation theory. The first step (sections 2-4) defends the requirement of non-authoritarian reasoning. Here I also argue that the theoretical articulation of this requirement contains an ineliminable practical moment, which calls for a practical understanding of non-authoritarian reasoning that I construe in terms of "ways of arguing". The second step (sections 5-7) explicates the context, domain of operation, and conditions for non-authoritarian ways of arguing. The third step (sections 8-10) unpacks and sheds light on the representational forms that authoritarian ways of arguing could have in actual social and political controversies. The last step (section 11) combines the theoretical and practical understanding to put forward a model of non-authoritarian argumentation for the analysis and evaluation of public reasoning. Section 12 concludes.

2. TARGETTING REASONS

Positions on the normative regulation of public reasoning have recently been shaped by discussions about the place of religion in the public realm. In these debates, exclusivists (Rawls, 1997 and 2005; Habermas, 2006; Audi, 2011; Quong, 2011), especially Rawlsians, hold that the addressees of public justification are respected as free and equals when reasons that hypothetical free and equal persons would assent to are accounted for. Consequently, citizens are required to restrain their reasons-giving in specific ways, say, by only trading intelligible, accessible, or sharable reasons (Macedo, 2000; Laden, 2001; Freeman, 2007; Cooke, 2017 for a critique). Accordingly, for instance, religious reasons will get excluded from public debates. Inclusivists (Weithman,

2001; Wolterstorff, 2012, Vallier, 2014) respond by arguing against such exclusions (March & Steinmetz, 2018 for a summary).

What interests me in these debates is that both sides presuppose a requirement for public reasoning that targets reasons. It is the content of reasons that determines their type (e.g. religious), and certain types (e.g. non-sharable) get excluded. This necessarily distinguishes between included and excluded reasons and, hence, places emphasis on the substantive content reasons. However, by setting the rules of the debate such that, say, religious reasons are considered non-public, we exclude right from the get go the reasons that speak most to religious persons as embodied and socio-culturally situated selves.

While the religious person would be included as a free and equal bearer of rights, she gets structurally-excluded as a free and equal political actor with her own mode of being-political. Her participation in public reasoning requires that she translates, filters out, or distances herself from the resources, experiences, socio-cultural situatedness that constitute and shape her life as a particular member of society.

Concerned about the marginalized in society, post-colonial liberals (Ivison, 2002; Tully, 1995; Thaler, 2009) provide a construal of public reasoning that can remedy structural-exclusion. In reference to Tully (1995, p. 147) and Ivison (2002, p. 111), Chambers writes:

Because discourses are riddled with power, outcomes never have strong claims to legitimacy and the concept of justification itself (e.g. what is to be considered intelligible) is also up for debate. What emerges then is an open-ended process of public accountability punctuated by temporary *modus vivendi* solutions to disagreements (Chambers, 2010, p. 897)

Post-colonial liberals' construal of public reasoning emphasises its role in creating and maintaining democratic citizenship (rather than generating legitimate political authority) and calls for process-based (rather than outcome-based) requirements. They, thus, impose minimal restraints on what counts as public reasons. While they wouldn't maintain that any reason or argument whatsoever is accepted as part of public justification, they "resist defining in advance what that [justification] might mean – leaving it open to participants to struggle with that question" (Chambers, 2010, ft. 15).

The remedy for structural-exclusion lies in (i) not fixing substantive restraints, (ii) committing to open-ended processes, and (iii) entrusting actual (not hypothetical) participants in collectively determining for themselves what temporarily is or is not intelligible, reciprocal, justifiable, etc. To be able to hear oppressed and marginalized voices is a commendable achievement. The worry now,

however, is that we risk an un-checkable majority rule. How to preserve this achievement without being normatively lax? The challenge here is to detect distortions of public reasoning and to check on oppressive majority without defining in advance normative standards and fixing restrictions on what count as reasonable, acceptable, etc.

3. TARGETTING WAYS OF REASONING

The answer lies, I want to suggest, in realizing that citizens' public interactions can be oppressive, dominating, or exclusionary not only due to the sort of standards they intend to instantiate, but also due to "the way in which" these interactions are carried out. This calls for a shift of emphasis from the content to the process of interaction, and hence, to construe public reasoning not as reflecting an already defined understanding of democratic norms, but as a collective process of coming to grips with democratic norms.

Maeve Cooke's "requirement of non-authoritarian reasoning (and acting)" (Cooke, 2007, p. 234) provides what we are looking for. Cooke's requirement springs from the notion of situated rationality as embodying the idea of ethical autonomy, which "rests on the intuition that the freedom of human beings consists in important measure in the freedom to form and pursue their conceptions of the good on the basis of reasons that they are able to call their own" (Cooke, 2007, p. 235).

The point of the requirement is to exclude authoritarian reasoning, formally defined as reasoning that undermines ethical autonomy by violating situated rationality. Given that situated rationality has an epistemological and an ethical dimension, we get the following formulations: a citizen's reasoning is authoritarian when her conception of knowledge, "restrict[s] access to knowledge to a privileged group of people and tend[s] to assert the availability of a standpoint removed from the influences of history and context that could guarantee the unconditional validity of claims to truth and rightness" (Cooke, 2007, pp. 234-235), and/or when her conception of justification "split[s] off the validity of propositions and norms from the reasoning of the human subjects for whom they are proclaimed to be valid" (Cooke, 2007, p. 235).

Recalling the religious person from above, Cooke maintains that "[t]here is no conflict in principle between non-authoritarian reasoning and an orientation towards some 'otherworldly,' transcendent source of validity (for example, God or the good)" (Cooke, 2007, p. 235). In fact, Cooke calls for "open-ended public processes of contestation in which individuals and groups seek to convince others of the value of particular substantive ethical conceptions, cultural traditions and religious beliefs and practices" (Cooke, 2009, p. 91). While citizens can offer

contributions based on their deeply held convictions and identities, they are required to do so in non-authoritarian ways. It is authoritarian reasoning that gets excluded, be it religious, secular, or whatever. The requirement of non-authoritarian reasoning excludes ways of reasoning as opposed to contents of reasoning – it targets the way in which reasons are traded instead of the reasons themselves – and, thus, transcends the debate between exclusivists and inclusivists, for it is inclusive about content of arguments and exclusive about ways of arguing.

4. THEORETICAL OPENNESS AND (TEMPORARY) PRACTICAL CLOSURE

However, formulating ways of reasoning in terms of ways of arguing runs the risk of conflating the theoretical with the practical understanding of the requirement. In this section I make explicit the inevitable practical moment in the theoretical understanding of non-authoritarian reasoning.

Authoritarian reasoning undermines ethical autonomy, and my concern here will be with instances when a reasoner's employment of authoritarian reasoning undermines the ethical autonomy of those with whom she is interacting; that is, authoritarian reasoning that leads to authoritarian behaviour, to acting in an authoritarian way. This is the domain of being-authoritarian. While states and institutions could be considered reasoning entities, I focus on being-authoritarian in the case of citizens.

The requirement thus applies to citizens' behaviour as they deliberate, persuade, confront, mobilize, contest, justify, etc. The point is to exclude authoritarian behaviour and attitudes by citizens from public debates, say: conversing and acting with others on the basis of a logic-of-force such as imposing one's ideas and views on others, not respecting the will of others, treating them as inferior, treating them as mere followers, treating them as incapable of reasoning, etc. The object of analysis here is authoritarian ways of arguing, which does not necessarily track authoritarian ways of reasoning. While these are connected and can feed on, and reinforce, each other, they do not entail one another. Not only is the road from reasoning to acting typically messy, complicated, opaque and ambiguous; in addition, people can argue in authoritarian ways for all kinds of reasons: due to ignorance or insecurity or simply wanting to dominate or be cruel.

Keeping that in mind, authoritarian reasoning presupposes a concern for ethical autonomy and situated rationality. Formally construed, however, it leaves open what the specific contents of ethical autonomy and situated rationality are. That is, what they mean is not settled abstractly or fixed in advance and for good; we can always

contest particular notions of ethical autonomy and situated rationality and what counts as their violation. As with the post-colonial construal of public reasoning, ethical autonomy and situated rationality are up for debate in “an open-ended process of public accountability punctuated by temporary *modus vivendi* solutions to disagreements” (Chambers, 2010, p. 897, my emphasis).

The challenge of how to stipulate certain norms while being inclusive now reappears but this time in a different configuration. Previously, the target was content-laden reasons. Now, the target is content-free “ways in which” reasons are traded. In the new configuration the challenge arises within a two-pronged structure for the normative regulation of public reasoning. The first prong concerns the content of reasoning: no perspective on the world is considered an ineligible ground, or source of content, for reasons, arguments, and positions. The second prong concerns ways of reasoning: the ways in which participants communicate, deliver, and present their reasons, arguments, and positions is constrained. How is this reconfiguring of the challenge helpful?

At any one point in time when the requirement of non-authoritarian reasoning is being applied, it will express a more or less substantive interpretation of ethical autonomy and situated rationality. On any interpretation, certain ways of giving and receiving reasons will count as authoritarian but no reason will per se be deemed ineligible for trading in public reasoning. Now, any operative interpretation could itself be contested. The breadth/narrowness and intensity/weakness of such contestation will indicate the sort of normative crisis that the society in question faces. In any case, the application of the requirement is destabilized as actual participants struggle to settle on a re-interpretation of ethical autonomy and situated rationality.

Substantive interpretations implicit in the application of non-authoritarian ways of reasoning as a restraint on public reasoning are one step removed from what is being restrained. By contrast, in the previous instance, the expressed content of the criteria (what counts as accessible, justified, etc.) is on the same level of, and tightly connected to, the content of what is being restrained. Being so removed implies that when participants contest the operative interpretation, they are in effect shifting the discussion by raising a different question. They shift from debating policies, laws, etc., to debating how to construe the norm (non-authoritarian reasoning) that is supposed to govern their debating policies, laws, etc. When requirements for public reasoning target reasons, on the other hand, these steps are interwoven, and such a shift is not readily available. The two-pronged structure in the normative regulation of public reasoning creates a space for greater movement in

responding to the dilemma of how to stipulate norms while being inclusive.

The requirement of non-authoritarian reasoning is formally indeterminate in the sense that it always has room for different specifications of the content of ethical autonomy and situated rationality. It is within actual social practices that the requirement becomes determinate. And, in the face of new social and political challenges, previously determined specifications get revised and, through actual contestation and struggles new interpretations emerge and different specifications congeal. We can thus talk of an ineliminable practical moment in the theoretical understanding of the requirement of non-authoritarian reasoning. This marks the end of the first step in our reflection.

5. SOCIO-CULTURAL EXCLUSION

On the level of political theory, adopting the requirement of non-authoritarian reasoning acknowledges the importance of religious tradition, values, and principles for the religious person by not disregarding religious contributions right from the get-go merely because they are religious. But, would including non-authoritarian religious contributions into public debate implies their inclusion on the socio-political level? Would they be really heard and genuinely considered?

The answer depends on the dominant thick construal of norms in that society. Think of “reasonableness”: thinly construed as a commitment to freedom, equality, and the “burdens of judgment” (Rawls, 2005). When instantiated in a particular social context, “reasonableness” takes on a thick substantive shape in terms of a commitment to freedom, equality, and the burdens of judgment. For example, responding to climate change by changing individual lifestyle may be considered unreasonable in one context, not doing so may be considered unreasonable in another context. In a context where religious contributions are considered unreasonable, authoritarian, etc., the structural-inclusion of non-authoritarian religious contributions will have little to no impact on their socio-cultural inclusion. Given a dominant group or majority position on a particular issue, non-dominant groups or minoritarian positions are unlikely to be heard, and may be ignored and disregarded. In effect, they are likely to be excluded from the exercise of public reasoning.

Socio-cultural exclusion may reflect social biases and prejudices, but it need not. Society, as a set of historically developed set of practices, is always committed to certain thick articulations of norms and ideals. Unlike structural-exclusion, socio-cultural exclusion is not the result of

how the requirement for public reasoning is theoretically understood. Instead, it is the result of how, on a particular controversial issue, the dominant social group instantiates its commitments. Without revealing the practical import of non-authoritarian reasoning, the requirement will be impotent in practically addressing socio-cultural exclusion.

6. DEMOCRATIC CIVILITY

Socio-cultural exclusion is a reflection of the civic incompetence of members of a dominant group or majority. It is due to these members' failure or unwillingness to listen to the arguments of others, and inability to reconsider their own positions in the face of such arguments, that the marginalized do not get heard. Fundamentally, what socio-cultural exclusion calls for is a certain way in which social members interact and relate to one another in the exercise of public reasoning. This is the domain of democratic civility, and that is where citizen-being-authoritarianism operates.

James Bohman and Henry Richardson offer an account of democratic civility that exemplifies the connection between non-authoritarian reasoning and democratic civility. They write: "In sum, civility for those making arguments requires forthright rather than distanced engagement, and for listeners, it requires open-mindedness in considering anyone's (civilly offered) arguments" (Bohman & Richardson, 2009, p. 272). Here is a summary rendition of their helpful illustrative example of a devoutly religious citizen conversing with an atheist (Bohman & Richardson, 2009, pp. 269-270).

If, when conversing with the religious citizen, the atheist presumptuously and arrogantly argues for a public policy by reference to God's will, the religious can rightly conclude that the atheist is not respectfully engaging with her given the common knowledge that God's will has no normative grip over the atheist. That is the first kind of failure of civility on the part of the atheist; they call it "ad hominem hypocrisy". If alternatively the atheist totally avoids addressing her contender's religious objections to the policy, she would fail to address the religious citizen's real concerns and in effect be treating her as a dogmatic person and pointless to reason with. That is the second kind of failure of civility on the part of the atheist; they call it "cognitive apartheid."

To each of these failures of civility on the side of those making arguments, there are corresponding failures on the side of those listening to arguments. For the first we get "the incivility of closing oneself off to the arguments offered by another", for example, if the religious person does not even consider engaging the arguments of the atheist. And for the second, we get the "incivility of being unwilling to

consider revising his or her position, which is effectively the same as refusing to continue to deliberate” (Bohman & Richardson 2009, p. 272), for example, if the religious is categorically not open to revising her position on a particular political issue.

Having internalized a conception of knowledge that is atemporal, objective, and impartial, an authoritarian reasoner will be closed to the arguments offered by those who reject, challenge, or attack her position; nor will she be willing to re-consider her position when listening to arguments not in line with her position. Further, this reasoner could comfortably deliver her arguments presumptuously and arrogantly while avoiding addressing the real concerns, needs, or interests of her contender since her conception of justification “split[s] off the validity of propositions and norms from the reasoning of the human subjects for whom they are proclaimed to be valid” (Cooke, 2007, p. 235). Non-authoritarian reasoners, on the other hand, accept and have internalized a conception of knowledge that is temporal, contextual, and partial as well as a conception of justification that respects the autonomous agency of those towards which it is offered. Those reasoners have the requisite conceptions of knowledge and justification to enable them not to close themselves off, and to be willing to reconsider their position, when listening to arguments and also to be forthright rather than distanced when giving arguments.

This, however, may not be enough. Reasoners with the requisite conceptions of knowledge and justification might still be authoritarian in behaviour and attitude in the exercise of public reasoning.

7. NON-FUNDAMENTALIST ATTITUDE

Taking socio-cultural exclusion as the political context for the study of authoritarian ways of arguing, and democratic civility as its domain of operation, I now want to make explicit an agential condition for actually succeeding in being democratically civil.

Individual identities are constructed in and are constituted by the given set of communal norms and practices, at least in significant measure. This means in many cases individual citizens will find a safe haven for their identities within these norms and practices. By not closing themselves to challenging arguments and being willing to reconsider their positions, they open the door for shaking up and disturbing this safe haven. In other words, how they relate to the contingent in maintaining and further developing their sense of self significantly influences their performances as public reasoners. Realizing that aspects of the communal norms and practices shaping their identities and informing their reasoning are contingent, historically situated and in need of revision and maybe revamping, is

neither comfortable nor reassuring and may even feel threatening. Disagreement with those who live according to alternative and conflicting instantiations of the ideals and principles to which they themselves are committed may challenge their identities in more or less profound ways. Thus, even non-authoritarian reasoners might opt for fixing rather than loosening their own particular substantive instantiations of ideals and principles. This is so not because they come to reject non-authoritarian reasoning, but because they more or less consciously are attached affectively to the security of what they know and how they do things.

Consider an American and a German committed to freedom of speech but disagreeing as to whether neo-Nazis are allowed to demonstrate publicly. If both are affectively attached to their respective society's particular way of instantiating freedom of speech, then each of their identities is likely to be similarly attached to the respective instantiations. It is the threat to their identities that makes this disagreement potentially divisive. My contention is that when it comes to social and political controversies, our awareness of, and attitude towards, our own convictions can make all the difference as to whether disagreement turns divisive or not. It hinges on the manner in which we live out in an embodied way the relational space between our commitments to abstract norms and principles and our particular substantiations of these norms and principles.

Consider the existential courage it takes to actually face our contingency, reconsider our position, and step towards what is alien and unknown to us in public contestations. By contrast, taking refuge in our convictions is an existentially easier way out of confrontations and disagreements and can be said to exhibit existential cowardice. The existential courage that non-authoritarian reasoners need in order not to opt for fixing rather than loosening their own particular substantive instantiations of ideals and principles, can be articulated in terms of an ability to inhabit a space between abstract and concrete commitments. Dwelling in this space allows reasoners to distance themselves from their own convictions, from what is particular in their own reasoning, and from their community's substantive instantiation of ideals and principles, without feeling insecure or experiencing a threat to their identity in such a way that makes taking refuge in their convictions appears as the only way out. Reacting to confrontations and disagreements by taking refuge in this way, fits a picture of societal norms as offering a safe haven for identity. Alternatively, the ability to inhabit the space between abstract and concrete commitments goes with a picture of societal norms as a field for discovering, sustaining, challenging, and transforming one's sense of self.

The distinction I am trying to get at concerns an agent's attitude towards her own sense of self. An agent exhibits a fundamentalist attitude when her affective attachment is directly and fixedly anchored onto the particular instantiations of norms. She might, for instance, relate to the particularities of her identity as unconditionally true or valid, or as the only possible way for her to exist. The fundamentalist attitude pinches and constricts, if not closes off, the existential space between abstract and concrete commitments since, adopting it implies that a moving away from the concrete commitment generates insecurity and get experienced as a threat to identity. In contrast, an agent exhibits a non-fundamentalist attitude when her affective attachment to the particular instantiations of norms is mindfully mediated by the abstract forms of norms. There is here a sense of awareness and of an existential appreciation of the place and role abstract norms could play in the process of her identity formation. Accordingly, she relates to the particularities of her sense of self as, simultaneously, the material which currently substantiate abstract norms and the material which she has to re-examine from the conceptual prism of abstract norms as she projects herself into the future. In this way, abstract norms are an enabling vehicle for the agent to parse the particularities in her sense of self, reflect on their historical contingencies as well as their current and future implications, and ask herself which of aspects or parts she is willing to fight for or against. The non-fundamentalist attitude opens and expands the existential space between abstract and concrete commitments since, adopting it implies that a moving away from the concrete commitment is a step or a phase within a larger ongoing process of maintaining and further developing one's sense of self.

The fashion an agent's affective attachment to the particular instantiations of norms takes, determines whether or not this attachment will short-circuit her ability to actually be democratically civil. It is in times of individual and/or collective crisis that it is most significant to operate within the picture of societal norms as a field for self-realization and identity-formation, which allows for and can (re-)invigorate the mediating powers of abstract commitments. What follows after that is up for actual reasoners. Whether the German and American citizens should hold on to their respective particular instantiations of freedom of speech remains an open question. The idea is that as their disagreement unfolds they should strive not to fall into the trap of societal norms as a safe haven, and to struggle to revive the alternative picture so that their disagreement becomes an opportunity for each to learn about themselves and about the other, and to transform or be transformed; rather than dogmatically try to dominate by defensively imposing one's own or one's community' particular convictions and substantive instantiations.

The non-fundamentalist attitude is a dynamic state of being towards, or relating to, one's own identity and ways of reasoning that becomes pivotal at times of crisis. When at work, it supports and facilitates the development and the exercise of democratic civility. While I would not say that it has the status of virtue proper, it surely can have a significant contributing role in agent's actually being democratically civil. As a self-relation, an attitude towards oneself, that could facilitate and make possible a variety of virtues (civic, argumentative, intellectual), I would rather construe it as a meta-virtue. This marks the end of the second step in our reflection.

8. WHAT IS ARGUING AND ARGUMENTATION?

Authoritarian ways of arguing are the practical articulations of citizen-being-authoritarianism. As ways of arguing they are about the performance of the practice of arguing. We saw in the previous three sections that authoritarian ways of arguing should be considered in the context of socio-cultural exclusion, that they can be understood in terms of democratic civility, and that as such they require citizens to adopt a non-fundamentalist attitude. Now I ask: what are the representational forms that authoritarian ways of arguing could have in actual social and political controversies? To answer this, we need a definition of arguing. For this, I draw on Michael Gilbert's construal of argument and argumentation, which provides a helpful landscape of ways of arguing.

The focus of argumentation theory, according to Gilbert, is "on argument as an interactive enterprise occurring between persons" (Gilbert, 1994, p. 160). As he forcefully put it, "we are obligated to treat argument as a human endeavor rather than a logical exercise", and thus, "we must make room therein for those practices used by actual arguers" (Gilbert, 1997, p. 77). What this effectively means for Gilbert is that we "need to shift the focus from the argument to the arguer, from the artifacts that happen to be chosen for communication purposes to the situation in which these artifacts function as a component" (Gilbert, 1997, p. 46). More specifically, Gilbert defines an argument as "any exchange of information centered on an avowed disagreement" (Gilbert, 1997, p. 104). 'Information' here refers to "views and beliefs" and "the more indirectly information so construed can be exchanged, the broader is the sense of argument it isolates" (Gilbert, 1997, p. 104).

Gilbert's broad construal of argument is tied to a separation of "the normative from the descriptive" (Gilbert, 1997, p. 77). Gilbert maintains a thorough distinction between argumentation theory's task of analyzing arguments and its task of evaluating arguments (Gilbert, 1997, pp. 35-36, 39, 89). He is keen not to let normative presuppositions regarding what is a good, bad, persuasive, or convincing argument

determine the descriptive categories for the analysis of actual argumentation. As far as description is concerned, “the subject of investigation is the determination of exactly what goes on in an argument, not what should go on in an argument” (Gilbert, 1997, p. 39).

9. GILBERT’S TOOLS AND HIS LANDSCAPE OF WAYS OF ARGUING

The framework that Gilberts provides us with for capturing how people do in fact argue construes argumentation as multi-modal, position-based, and goal-oriented.

Multi-modal. Gilbert argues that in order for a descriptive model to account for the different dimensions at work in actual argumentation, we need “modes” of “evidence, warrant, backing and presentation that allow us to identify forms of argument that are actually used” (Gilbert, 1997, p. 78). In total, he identifies four modes: logical, emotional, visceral, and kisceral (Gilbert, 1997, p. 79). To each of these modes there are corresponding types of arguments. “Logical arguments are based on an appeal to the linear patterns that lead us from one statement, or set of statements, to a claim.” Emotional arguments “demonstrate how we feel about certain claims or aspects of the argumentation procedure, and communicate emotional reactions through a variety of means to a dispute partner. In addition, emotions are sometimes used as warrants or data for claims.” Visceral arguments “are primarily physical and can range from a touch to classical non-verbal communication, that is, body language, to force” (Gilbert, 1994, p. 171). Finally, kisceral arguments employ “that mode of communication that relies on the intuitive, the imaginative, the religious, the spiritual, and the mystical” (Gilbert, 1994, p. 173).

Position-based. According to Gilbert, “claims are best taken as icons for positions that are actually much richer and deeper” (Gilbert, 1997, p. 105). A position “is a matrix of beliefs, attitudes, emotions, insights, and values connected to a claim” (Gilbert, 1997, p. 105). Accordingly, we come to understand a position by uncovering what is attached to a claim. More interestingly, Gilbert explains that we get to achieve persuasion by impacting the entire position, otherwise “the opponent will simply shift ground to a different aspect or part of the position when pushed in one direction” (Gilbert, 1997, p. 105). Significantly, Gilbert continues, as claims get traced in argumentation to uncover the positions attached to them, both arguers and their opponents could gain insight “as to the extent and nature of the positions under discussion” (Gilbert, 1997, p. 105). This could “include a wide range of material from straightforward consistency claims [...] to the hidden fears and insecurities an arguer has that make holding a given position seem natural” (Gilbert, 1997, p. 106). One can say that

positions represent the embodied and socio-culturally situated self which multi-modal argumentation is supposed to descriptively capture.

Goal-oriented. Shifting the center of argumentation from claim to position, it becomes possible for contending arguers to settle the truth of, and accept, a claim while their same argumentative exchange is still going on. Sticking to claims we might remain at the surface without reaching the depth of a contender's position. That explains why Gilbert indicates how complex an arguer's goals can be. Not only might an arguer have an inconsistent set of goals (Gilbert, 1997, p. 70), but she might not even be aware of her goals (Gilbert, 1997, p. 71). Gilbert distinguishes between "what an arguer wants to achieve" (task goals) and "the maintenance of the interaction itself" (face goals) (Gilbert, 1997, p. 67), and indicates that both goals are determined "in a broad and general way" by motive goals which "delimit [...] the sort of goals one considers and acts upon as well as the sorts of actions one might use to obtain the goals" (Gilbert 1997, 68). Moving from the level of arguers to the activity of argumentation, Gilbert takes agreement to "the most general goal" (Gilbert, 1997, p. 136), which he construes as an evaluative standard of 'coalescence'. Coalescent argumentation, as a 'normative ideal', "involves the joining together of two disparate claims through recognition and exploration of opposing positions." (Gilbert, 1997, pp. 102-103).

How does Gilbert's argumentation model help my claim in this paper that we should shift focus from the content of reasons to ways of arguing?

First: Gilbert's shift from the argument to the arguer parallels this paper's shift from reasons to ways of arguing. Both indicate a move from content to context. Interestingly, Gilbert often uses the term "situated" to refer to the context of argument and to actual arguments, which suggests multi-modal argumentation as a practically-grounded extension to the notion of situated rationality.

Second: Gilbert's broad construal of argument is most fitting for analyzing actual social and political controversies, especially intractable ones. What is often at issue in such controversies is less the correctness of facts and more the significance of these facts for contending parties. Controversies about facts are surely important, especially at times of "fake news" and "post-truth" politics but, it would be a mistake to operate as if getting clear on the facts will resolve political controversies. Gilbert's focus on "views and beliefs" directs our gaze to attitudes about facts, which aligns with position-based argumentation.

Third: The connection between (a) the reasons or warrants we give for a claim and, (b) our attachment to that claim. Gilbert's theory does not take that connection for granted. It problematizes it. Differently put, the power of a contribution to public reasoning to alter a

contender's beliefs on a particular political issue, depends not only on the epistemic, inferential or evidential force of that contribution, but also, and maybe mainly, on that contender's already held attitude towards that particular political issue, or the political agenda or orientation within which it fits.

10. MULTI-MODAL PERFORMANCES?

I have articulated citizen-being-authoritarianism in terms of democratic civility. Failures of civility are authoritarian ways of arguing. Unlike content-laden reasons, ways of arguing are content-free. Nevertheless, ways of arguing manifest qualities, states, and attitudes such as "arrogance", "avoiding addressing the issue", "closing oneself to objections" and "unwillingness to revise." And in so doing, they express and reflect the communicative stance of the arguer. For instance, how arguers carry themselves, when they speak, how they listen, their tone, how and when they joke or interrupt, etc. indicate whether the arguer is being dismissive, absorbed, indifferent, etc. This in turn reveals whether the arguer is merely treating her contender as a mean to an end, or whether she is genuinely concerned about what her contender thinks and feels.

Gilbert's tools are helpful for giving us access to the various representational forms through which ways of arguing can manifest qualities, states, and attitudes. Gilbert provides several examples showing how the same propositional content may be expressed in a variety of different modes (Gilbert 1997, 80–88). In a similar way, the same qualities, states, and attitudes may be expressed in a variety of different modes. Gilbert's tools can help us identify the various representational forms that "ad hominem hypocrisy", "cognitive apartheid", and other incivilities could have. They enable us to see the multiple different ways in which authoritarian performances of argument occur. An arguer's arrogance or unwillingness to revise her position can be performed in a logical, emotional, physical, and kisceral modes. With Gilbert's descriptive argumentation model, we can construct the landscape within which authoritarian ways of arguing instantiate in multi-modal performances.

11. NON-AUTHORITARIAN ARGUMENTATION

"Non-authoritarian argumentation" combines a multi-modal account of argumentation on the descriptive level with a requirement of non-authoritarian reasoning on the normative level. It may be defined by its object of analysis (ways of arguing in terms of democratic civility), and

its ultimate goal (creating, preserving, and developing a certain kind of citizen-citizen relationship).

Non-authoritarian argumentation does not use multi-modal argumentation to categorize ways of arguing. Instead, it uses it to better capture the representational forms that failures of civility could have in actual social and political controversies. It consequently gains an encompassing framework for uncovering the subtleties of how ways of arguing could be undermining the ethical autonomy of contending parties.

Non-authoritarian argumentation does not take a stand on fallacious arguments. It is actual arguers that determine for themselves what is or is not a convincing, persuasive, or effective argument or reason. The norm it imposes is neutral with regard to such assessments. Non-authoritarian reasoning aims towards establishing and nourishing a citizen-citizen relationship that is geared towards coming to grips with democratic norms, that occur in all-inclusive-content debates, and that requires communicative stances reflecting an interest in discovering self and other, and in transforming as much as in being transformed. Non-authoritarian reasoning does not assess particular ways of arguing as good or bad but evaluates them in terms of their ability to channel the pluralism/solidarity tension into a productive rather than destructive tension.

12. CONCLUSION

I have argued for construing public reasoning as a collective process of coming to grips with democratic norms, rather than as a space that reflects an already defined understanding of democratic norms. I defended non-authoritarian reasoning as the normative standard for regulating citizens' contributions to public reasoning. Focusing on the citizen-citizen (rather than state-citizen or institution-citizen) dimension of democratic citizenship, the relevant form of non-authoritarian reasoning is citizen-being-authoritarianism, which I articulate in terms of authoritarian ways of arguing. Authoritarian ways of arguing have socio-political exclusion as their political context, democratic civility as their domain of operation, a non-fundamentalist attitude as an agential condition, and can be instantiated in multi-modal performances. The way my argument unfolds highlights a symbiosis between the theoretical and practical understandings of non-authoritarian reasoning. By drawing on normative political theory to provide the first understanding and on argumentation theory to provide the second, this paper has integrated those disciplines. Finally, and going back to the original questions, I have argued that disagreements that square the dual-commitment to pluralism and solidarity should be

promoted and that dealing with disagreement virtuously presupposes and is dependent on us adopting a non-fundamentalist attitude.

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