

# **Cultivating Political Morality and Public Reason for Deliberative Citizens – Rawls and Callan revisited**

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## **Abstract**

*In this paper, I will argue that the implementation of deliberative democracy needs to be supplemented by a specific political morality in order to cultivate free and equal citizens in exercising public reason for achieving a cooperative and inclusive liberal society. This cultivation of personality is literally an educational project with a robust ethical ambition, and hence, it reminds us the orthodox liberal problem concerning the relation between the state and its citizenship education. Following Callan's reformulation of the political conception of the person, I will argue that Rawls's political liberalism can accommodate the ethical demand of deliberative citizenship. This conception of the person portrays a deliberative civic self which could sufficiently entail those desirable characters, traits, and skills for deliberative practices. Rawls's theory thus paves the way for a framework of deliberative citizenship education.*

**Keywords:** Citizenship Education, Political Morality, Public Reason, Deliberative Democracy, Political Liberalism.

## **Introduction**

In recent decades we saw a revival of the idea of citizenship in liberal democratic societies. It is commonplace to say that the mere representative democracy may not guarantee good governance and a desirable political outcome. Active citizenship has thus become a prominent topic in both political and academic debates. To a certain extent, it seems that we have reached consensus that active civic participation should be put forth as one of the agenda for democratic politics. Against this background, deliberative democracy appears to be the latest transformation of active citizenship that advocates a political participation by a responsive and reciprocal citizenry. Indeed, the past two decades witnessed a rapid development of deliberative democracy theories (Bohman, 1996; Dryzek, 2000; Elster, 1997; Gutmann & Thompson, 1996) and, building on these theories, the emerging of contextual studies of deliberative citizenship and the practices of deliberative institutions (Dryzek, 2010; Fishkin, 2009; Goodin, 2008). Conceivably, the educational field has shared this trend in a similar fashion: essential work on education for deliberative citizenship widely covers both the theoretical articulation of public deliberation (Enslin et al., 2001; Løvlie, 2007; Roth, 2007, 2011) and the teaching of deliberative citizenship (Annette, 2010; Burgh et al., 2006; Fung & Wright, 2003) that makes deliberative democracy to become a dominant strand of active citizenship education.

In spite of the genuine acceptance of deliberative democracy in both political and educational arenas, I think that the fundamental issue relating to deliberative citizenship education still remains and there is room to articulate more clearly the justification of the greater demands on civic virtue and political participation. Deliberative democracy inevitably requires that citizens should have comprehensive set of virtues, aptitudes and dispositions that aims at facilitating the process of public deliberation. This cultivation of personality is literally an educational project underlining robustly ethical ambition (Weinstock & Kahane, 2010). At the same time, it reminds us the orthodox question concerning the role of state on education, that is, is it plausible for the state to promote particular values and virtues under the framework of liberal pluralism? In fact, one may regard active citizenship education as a form of civic republicanism under which the state exerts its influence on citizens' life.

As such, the conceptualization of deliberative democracy should be placed in a wider context of the modern liberal framework. However, one might note the interesting paradox of democratic education: while democratic theory and practice have undertaken a deliberative turn that substantially transformed the paradigm of democratic citizenship education, the theoretical framework of liberal pluralism does not keep up with the pace of this paradigm shift in order to accommodate the ethically demanding democratic citizenship. This paradox poses a critical challenge to deliberative citizenship education. If contemporary liberalism cherishes a socio-political setting that avoids comprehensively defining any individual conception of good life, how could this framework reconcile with a supposedly ethically robust conception of deliberative democracy? Putting it in an educational context – is it possible to teach deliberative citizenship without touching on the conception of the good?

In this paper, I will bridge this theoretical gap between the avant-garde deliberative democracy and contemporary liberalism by re-examining John Rawls's political liberalism. There are two intertwined theses presented in this paper. First, following Eamon Callan's interpretation, I will argue that there is a substantial ethical account for the political conception of the person within Rawls's political liberalism. This relaxes the condition of being purely political for which Rawls believes that it is one of the most important features of political liberalism. In this light, a reformulated political liberalism can accommodate the ethical demands of deliberative citizenship. And this paves the way for an ethically robust civic education. Secondly, I will further articulate the idea of political morality embedded in the conception of the political person in Rawls's theory. There is an essential linkage between the practice of public reason and the cultivation of political morality within the framework of political liberalism. I will argue that this political conception of the person portrays a deliberative civic self which could sufficiently entail those desirable characters, traits, and skills for deliberative practices. The education for deliberative citizens thus should lie within this idea of the person.

### **Deliberative Citizenship and the Role of Political Morality**

Though the conceptions of deliberative democracy differ from each other in various aspects, they do have certain commonality. By and large, deliberative democracy advocates a form of socio-political institutions that supplements democratic government and helps sustain democratic ways of life, by which free and equal citizens are entitled to voice out their views on public affairs through a process of public deliberation. In contrast to some models of representative democracy which focus on the aggregation of private interests, deliberative democracy affirms mutually acceptable reasons that citizens offer in the process of deliberation, and sees this as the most democratic way to accommodate moral difference in the public sphere and in political institutions. The essence of deliberative democracy thus lies in the spirit of collective decision-making and authentic public deliberation. In other words, it expands democracy from being a formal liberal constitutionalism which basically confine to the scope of individual rights maintenance and representative politics, to a more inclusive and progressive community. Deliberative citizenship needs to be embedded with a conception of political morality as it helps specify the normative constraints and the ethical demands of deliberative agents.

In this regard, the task of deliberative theory of citizenship education is to articulate a sort of political morality in order to facilitate the implementation of deliberative institutions. This political morality inevitably specifies the traits, dispositions, and characters liberal citizens needed in facilitating the due process of public deliberation. Among many other theorizations, Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson (1996) identify some normative principles in which democratic citizens should deliberate with each other when they disagree with one another on issues of public policy. These principles illustrate an account of political morality required for the cultivation of deliberative citizens. They propose that deliberative institutions should respect three conditions – namely *reciprocity*, *publicity* and *accountability* – so as to enhance a due process of deliberation (pp. 347-8). It is noted that they are not only the normative guidelines of deliberative political setting. I argue that the teaching focus of a deliberative civic education syllabus should also rest on these principles and indeed they are also the specific virtues that a deliberative citizen should acquire. To take reciprocity as an example, it is an essential virtue for deliberative citizen to reach collective decision in a fair process of collective reasoning. It helps resolve moral disagreement within deliberation. Reciprocity implies a virtue of accommodation that is unique amongst various forms of collective reasoning. In such a deliberative context, sometimes citizens need to

learn how to suspend their own moral, philosophical or religious beliefs even though they view these as true and fundamental to their own conception of good life. The civic teaching of reciprocity thus emphasizes mutual respect among citizens. When citizens engage in public deliberation, mutual respect portrays the meaning of moral accommodation. This consists of the excellence of flourishing democracy in which mutually respected citizens should be 'self-reflective about their commitments', 'discerning of the difference between respectable and merely tolerable differences of opinion', and ready to change their minds or modify their positions in the process of deliberation (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996: 79).

In this light, being a deliberative citizen is ethically demanding. Ideally, deliberative democracy represents a form of social cooperation among free and equal citizens who are morally responsible and willing to interact reasonably with each other for political affairs. I refer to such a kind of political life as 'citizenship as reasonableness' – a civic life that citizens acknowledged with the political morality to confine themselves in using public reason.<sup>1</sup> Citizens in a deliberative democracy are subject to some normative requirements constrained by the notion of reasonableness. This specifies certain values, skills and virtues necessary for a robust deliberative community. Nevertheless, it is questionable if the citizenship education for deliberative democracy could accommodate with the core values of contemporary liberalism.

Concerning this robust political morality, I argue that there are at least two problems for the liberal theory of citizenship education. First, as mentioned before, the promotion of active citizenship implies that the state has already defined the scope of active civic participation for every citizen in the polity. It specifies that civic life is desirable (as an intrinsic or instrumental good) and that there is a common good that deserves our collective pursuit. This viewpoint of active citizenship raises the problem of neutrality in liberal pluralistic society. If liberal society upholds the idea of pluralism and the virtue of tolerance, what are the grounds for the state to require its citizens to actively participate in public affairs, and how does the government justify a civic education that consists of a robust interpretation of civic virtues for civic engagement? That is to say, liberalism needs to provide a justification for the civic duty demanded for deliberative citizens: Why should citizens in a liberal pluralism value civic participation as one of their conceptions of the good? It is commonly known that liberalism is always vigilant against any sort of manipulation and imposition of values; and it goes against the core liberal argument to determine individuals' conception of the good. There is a theoretical requirement for liberalism to justify why it is morally legitimate for the state to teach particular way of civic life (e.g. deliberative civic participation) in the context of liberal pluralism.

Second, even if liberals agree that civic participation and civic virtue are the constitutive parts of contemporary liberal democratic theory, civic education still needs to address the possible conflicts between the common good and the individual good. Put simply, given that certain liberal virtues are necessary for the functioning of liberal democracy, it is possible to imagine that individual citizens would find some common good defined by the theory of justice contradictory to their own comprehensive moral beliefs. Citizenship education needs to deal with the tension between the common good specified by the theory of justice and the individual good defined by individual comprehensive beliefs. At the end of the day, citizenship is concerned with the moral decision-making of reasonable agents. Especially, when it comes to politically hard cases such as home schooling, abortion, and gay rights, it becomes extremely difficult to reconcile the tension between the public and the private – even though a sound liberal theory of justice is philosophically well justified, it still conceivably raises a moral dilemma for some citizens. The model of deliberative democracy, unsurprisingly, may further intensify this tension.

Against this background, political liberals like John Rawls (1993) contend that it is possible to justify the principles of justice in a freestanding way, that is, that the theory of justice applies only in the political domain and can be recognized by various reasonable moral, religious and philosophical doctrines in a liberal pluralistic society. Although deliberative democracy, as I believe, takes substantial bearings from Rawls's political philosophy in which his conception of the political person provides a foundation for the sorts of traits and dispositions that should be developed for being a deliberative citizen, I intend to argue that deliberative citizenship requires a relatively robust ethical account for its theorization. That is to say, even for political liberalism, it is necessary to embrace a certain form of political morality in order to justify a liberal conception

of democratic citizenship. In this regard, it is implausible to maintain a morally neutral political state that does not attempt to define any version of the common good (indeed, this could be the core liberal virtues embedded in liberalism in general, such as the ideals of equality, freedom, justice and tolerance).

Building on Rawls, then, I will articulate a liberal framework for constructing a political morality that could fit into an account of the political conception of the person for deliberative democracy. The civic virtues required by deliberative democracy are far more demanding than those required by liberal constitutionalism and representative democracy. A specific study of the formulation of the idea of political person and the domain of the civic self for deliberative education thus is necessary. This is essential for the teaching and learning aspects of cultivating deliberative citizens. It defines the moral requirements for cultivating responsible citizenry for a liberal deliberative polity. The reformulations of Rawls' and Callan's ideas on citizens in this sense would depict an ideal account of deliberative citizen from a moral point of view that can enrich the discussion of the theory of person for the consolidation of deliberative democracy and its citizenship education.

### **Public Reason and the Political Conception of the Person**

It might not be commonly known that Rawls, though in a minimal sense, in his later work adopts the concept of deliberative democracy as the core framework for liberal constitutionalism, by stating that his idea of 'a well-ordered constitutional democracy' should be 'understood also as a deliberative democracy'. His conceptualization is based on the idea of deliberation itself which he claims is the representative procedure for free and equal citizens to articulate reasonable judgment concerning the basic social structure. Rawls argues that public reason should filter the political arguments within society and lead those based on the interest of the common humanity of free and equal citizens to form the basic social structure for liberal democracy. In Rawls's framework, the use of public reason only applies to the deliberation of basic justice, namely the principles of justice that define the basic social structure. He sees public reason as an indispensable part of the creation of ideal democratic citizenship. In applying public reason, 'citizens are to conduct their fundamental discussions within the framework of what each regards as a political conception of justice based on values that the others can reasonably be expected to endorse'. The way Rawls justifies his political liberalism presents an illustration of public reason in a deliberation process. The principles of justice should be perceived as an agreement – in Rawls's term as an overlapping consensus – amongst members of the society.

Rawls's interpretation of public reason as deliberative democracy is not without controversy. The reasoning in his Original Position has been accused of constituting one-man-deliberation. In the case of public reason, there seems to be a similar problem in that Rawls does not pay much attention on the social interaction aspect of deliberation among citizens. Public reason seems to be a singular set of reasoning that every citizen is able to reach whatever motive he or she holds in the first place. In Rawls's interpretation, deliberative democracy is a model for free and equal citizens to come up with a consensus for basic justice; thus public reason in this sense is the medium to lead to the conclusion of basic justice (principles of justice). Regardless of Rawls's advocacy of deliberative democracy, with his seemingly 'anti-social' and 'anti-interactive' interpretation of deliberation, he is (at most) generally seen as a deliberative democrat in a 'thin' sense. However, as I will argue, what makes Rawls essential in the theory building for deliberative education does not merely lie in the manner in which he interprets public reason within his own presentation of deliberation, but also stems from the political morality required for citizens in exercising public reason within the deliberative domain of the political. His emphasis on the sense of justice and reciprocity would become the focal points of the idea of political morality that I want to bring into the discussion for deliberative education. Rawls's rich potential for the development of an education theory lies in what Rawls demands of a political conception of person in exercising that public reason. It sets an ideal type of (deliberative) citizenship that we need to bring into the educational domain. In the following I will argue for a reinterpretation of this conception of the person for deliberative education from Rawls's *Political Liberalism*.

Public reason specifies 'the deepest moral and political values' that determine the relationship between constitutional democracy and its citizens and 'their relation to one another'. It implies a set of political values that democratic citizens are required to acknowledge in order to satisfy the criterion of reciprocity that enhances responsible and responsive public life among citizens who hold diverse philosophical and moral beliefs and

religious faiths. Rawls believes that political power exercised in the name of a comprehensive moral doctrine would endanger the unity and stability of the society. This is because the shared understanding of a specific comprehensive moral and philosophical doctrine can only be maintained by ‘oppressive use of state power’. If the justification of liberal state authority lies in a comprehensive moral belief, in Rawls’s examples such as a reasonable form of utilitarianism or Kantian liberalism, it will threaten the legitimacy of state power given the fact that there are various comprehensive doctrines in a liberal pluralist society. Enforcing single comprehensive doctrine as the fundamental justification of liberal state power and its conception of justice is a sort of disrespect to citizens who adopt other moral or philosophical beliefs.

On Rawls’s understanding, a conception of citizenship based on a comprehensive liberalism could not be the legitimate model for a liberal pluralistic democracy. A comprehensive doctrine applies its moral and philosophical beliefs across a wide range of human activities including ‘the values in human life and ideals of personal virtue and character’. It also covers social relations of our ‘non-political conduct’ beyond the political sphere. Despite the fact that comprehensive doctrines have variation in their expansiveness of moral beliefs in limiting the application of ethical requirement beyond the political sphere, Rawls seems to believe that even a partial comprehensive doctrine cannot be the source of political legitimacy under the conditions of pluralism. For a liberal society, it is inappropriate to justify state authority and the duty of civility derived from, say, Kantian ethics or Millian individuality, to those members of society who are not convinced of its foundational principles. Civic education in such a liberal society based on a comprehensive doctrine would inevitably identify specific virtues and ideals of character, which are attributed to the chosen moral doctrine’s category of goods and rights. It requires a pedagogy that upholds the supremacy of certain version of comprehensive liberalism and prescribes its values, be they Kantian or utilitarian, as the source of reference to act against any other comprehensive moral doctrines in civic teaching as well as other subject areas in formal schooling. Rawls claims that taking a comprehensive doctrine as justification for state power (i.e. national curriculum) is problematic.

Rawls believes the framework of political liberalism can deal with the issue of neutrality in liberal pluralistic society. In political liberalism the citizenry does not rely on a presupposed moral conception of the person or specific philosophical doctrine, rather it lies on the public reason of a democratic political culture. Public reason is the source of unanimity on political questions and is applicable to all citizens who wish to participate. It is the reason with which people from different reasonable comprehensive doctrines can agree. In this regard, political education for political liberalism can avoid ‘the oppressive assault on diversity’ as it aims to accommodate the ‘ethical heterogeneity’ in which liberal diversity flourishes under open and free government. Thus, political education intends to teach shared political values that benefit the political community. These liberal values should be recognized by common moral and philosophical doctrines that a reasonable pluralism enhances, that is to say, education facilitating liberal politics should not threaten the faiths and beliefs held by any reasonable comprehensive doctrine. Without subscribing to any specific comprehensive liberalism, political education should promote basic civil rights and liberal values and train up deliberative skills for collective participation in liberal politics. The teaching of citizenship from Rawls’s point of view mainly falls on the emphasis of understanding and exercising public reason. Public reason is the locus in Rawlsian civic education. Callan explains its essential features well. He says,

“A conception of public reason devised within political liberalism does not express any single comprehensive doctrine because it is designed to be compatible with the full range of values that citizens might reasonably endorse. Its perspective is free-standing in that it can be presented and defended apart from the rival doctrine citizens embrace as moral agents outside their civic roles, though their beliefs must nonetheless cohere with the demand of liberal citizenship”

The essentiality of public reason in Rawls’s theory of justice and its justification of citizenship in political liberalism reveal a dilemma in constituting two fundamental virtues – autonomy and tolerance – in liberal pluralistic society. This debate also features in discussions of citizenship education. On a Rawlsian interpretation, the outline of political liberalism seems to successfully develop a solution to the problem, while the notion of public reason can cover the full range of diversity of reasonable pluralism and also set up the basic

agreement for a political constitution. Members who hold different comprehensive doctrines could on the one hand respect each other and tolerate religious, moral and philosophical differences existing in a liberal society. On the other hand, they could still become autonomous beings in choosing their ways of life and conceptions of the good. Citizens can also exercise their full range of liberal freedoms, which are supported by public reason, in pursuing their own projects within a liberal pluralistic society. This represents the political conception of the person that Rawls regards as the ideal form of deliberative citizen. Citizenship education thus is justified from a freestanding point of view that could accommodate the diversity of the good life, as the teaching of public reason is acknowledged from various reasonable comprehensive doctrines.

Public reason, however I argue, is a twofold task. It is an ethical issue on the one hand that public reason needs to specify the moral ingredients of liberal democracy – including the scope of rights, the expansiveness of political freedom, and the moral justification of political sovereignty. Political liberalism as a conception of justice itself is a kind of moral conception in which its content incorporates certain ideals, principles, standards, and values even though Rawls contends that the justification of the theory of justice is political and is not based on any metaphysical assumption. In any sense, as Rawls states, public reason is a representation of the ideal of liberal democracy, as it prescribes the moral domain required for consolidating liberal democratic society and its implementation in political institutions. On the other hand, public reason, situated in the background of democratic culture, should be plausibly constructed (or at least recognised) from the respective standpoints of the diverse of religious, philosophical, and moral beliefs existing in liberal democratic societies. Its free-standing feature allows various rival but reasonable comprehensive beliefs to be accommodated within the ethical domain of liberal democracy. But inevitably it also specifies a standard of civic values that urges each citizen to learn, to recognize and to reconstruct in order for them to become deliberative citizens.

Rawls acknowledges the fact of reasonable pluralism and believes political liberalism is not a theory of truism in either a moral or an epistemological sense. In this light, civic education facilitating this conception of justice could only be justified in the circumstances in which citizens could find reasons within each of their reasonable religious, philosophical or social doctrine to agree with. Civic education upholding public reason could legitimately promote basic civil rights, liberal values, civic duty and political solidarity. Nevertheless, it should be noted that public reason also has a justificatory status in arguing for a liberal democracy in favour of political liberalism. It presents its own moral arguments for citizens to follow. This means that citizens holding various comprehensive doctrines should also affirm public reason from the resource of their own beliefs. Public reason is not self-evident; it should be reconstructed inside various possibly rival frameworks of comprehensive beliefs, each of which may justify public reason with different moral reasons. In this regard, Rawls's assumption regarding the epistemic status of democratic culture that consists of public reason might overlook the ethical dilemma citizens faced in affirming the public reason as reasonable from the civic point of view and at the same time seeing it as rational to comply with in reference to their own comprehensive beliefs.

### **The Sense of Justice and the Burdens of Judgement**

In a Rawlsian political liberal society defined by public reason, citizenship education is literally represented as only requiring the teaching of a minimal set of liberal values and skills to an extent that can facilitate the function of public reason in liberal politics. The characters and dispositions of citizens cultivated for liberal civic life in this model of citizenship teaching seem not to raise any challenge to the practices of various reasonably comprehensive doctrines. However, I would argue that this claim (which Rawls endorses) is mistaken. Despite recognizing 'the fact of reasonable pluralism' in liberal society and claiming political liberalism as the right theory for respecting such a liberal pluralistic condition, Rawls does not pay enough attention to the ethical burden of citizens in maintaining a robust environment for the accommodation of diversity under the notion of public reason. Borrowing from the work of Callan, I argue that Rawls's political liberalism demands a much richer ethical scope for citizenship education. His theory of citizenship requires people to have a specific ethical capacity in exercising public reason. There is also an urgent need to develop a 'thick' version of citizenship theory for liberal democracy if we want to promote a flourishing democratic public life. I believe this reinterpretation of Rawls's theory could constitute an ethical framework for teaching deliberative democracy. His ideas bring insight to the issue of the tension between autonomy and toleration in the context of deliberative

democracy in which citizens are required to actively take part in public life. The further tension between these two concepts raised by deliberative polity could be eased by a reformulation of Rawls's idea of citizenship, as I will elaborate.

Public reason is essential to the practice of deliberative democracy. However, in the due process of public deliberation, public reason unavoidably excludes some forms of comprehensive belief that are at odds with liberal principles. It is because liberal democracy is not obliged to accommodate unreasonable doctrines (such as sectarianism) and does not bother to count their perspectives in reaching the overlapping consensus. In fact, public reason represents a specific form of social cooperation that specifies certain basic rights, liberties and opportunities and also assigns their priority in the distribution among citizens. Public reason thus is not morally neutral or merely a formal reasoning system for decision-making. It is robust in the sense that it embodies the liberal political values that underpin a political conception of justice for liberal democracy. Therefore, public reason should not be seen as a compromise among various existing comprehensive doctrines; it is rather a representation of a specific political morality of the principles of justice that liberal democracy endorses and that every reasonable comprehensive doctrine in liberal society should recognize. During the public deliberation on these essential issues relating to basic justice, citizens have to be equipped with the corresponding knowledge, skills, values, and virtues that enhance their exercise of public reason. Conceivably, the full exercise of public reason is in fact an ideal form of democratic citizenship. It also portrays an ideal form of a political conception of the person for citizenship education with a view to cultivating corresponding liberal democratic skills and characters. As Rawls acknowledges, the understanding of an ideal of public reason is important to conduct oneself to be a democratic citizen. The specific conception of moral powers for exercising public reason in reasonable pluralism is particularly important in Rawls's theory of citizenship. It is also important for maintaining a deliberative democracy and could be one of the first crucial elements of citizenship education. Deliberative citizens somehow need to learn the essentiality of the use of public reason in facilitating the reasonable pluralism that could benefit all of us.

Given the endorsement of public reason, citizens engaging in fair social cooperation, Rawls argues, are equipped with moral powers representing the virtues of being both rational and reasonable, namely the capacity for a conception of the good and a capacity for a sense of justice. The former portrays a rational being that is able to autonomously define what constitutes as good life, while the latter represents a capacity for citizens to reasonably understand a public conception of justice and to apply it in their political participation. I believe that this infers the specification of political morality in theory of citizenship education. The sense of justice is a willingness to act along with each other on the terms that can be publicly endorsed. Reasonable citizens thus respect the idea of reciprocity. They are ethically endowed with the intention to work with each other in order to comply with rules of justice under a fair social cooperation system. Reciprocity in this sense is also an elementary feature that constitutes the political morality of liberal citizens in a deliberative democracy. Despite being guided by various rational ends, reasonable citizens equipped with a sense of justice can respect each other in processes of political participation, whether in a citizens' forum or at a street protest. Given the deliberative spaces of both institutional and informal civic participation, they mutually acknowledge each other's moral status as citizens to specify the terms of fair social cooperation, to negotiate what constitutes the principles of justice, and to engage in the decision-making process, in recognition of what Rawls calls 'independent validity of the claims of others'. The idea of reciprocity specifies the application of the sense of justice in which Rawls believes to be important in the development of the political conception of the person. It also illustrates one of the core essences of liberal virtue for deliberative democracy.

The idea of the reasonable also identifies another application of the sense of justice for the development of the conception of the person in terms of Rawls's theory of citizenship – the idea of the burdens of judgement. This idea plays a central role in translating Rawlsian liberalism into a theoretical foundation for deliberative democracy. The political conception of the person is essential to reasonable pluralism, as the sense of justice could enhance the reasonable differentiation of diverse doctrines and accommodate them into a public conception of justice. Apart from being reciprocally able to act on and comply with the principles of justice, Rawls claims that citizens with a sense of justice would be willing 'to recognize the burdens of judgement and to accept their consequence for the use of public reason in directing the legitimate exercise of political power in

a constitutional regime'. In a liberal pluralistic society, reasonable disagreement prevails among citizens and a liberal society should acknowledge this as the fact of diversity. Indeed, there are various sources and causes of disagreement. Rawls classifies these legitimate sources as the burdens of judgement for reasonable citizens to take as 'hazards' in the process of exercising their power of reason and judgement in political life. The burdens are those specific sources of divergent judgement and conflict among reasonable citizens that are compatible with the idea of reasonableness. The idea of burdens of judgement signifies the unavoidable imperfection of human reason in public deliberation even though the participants are both rational and reasonable and willing to exercise their sense of justice. These sources include, according to Rawls, the complex and conflicting environment for one to perceive empirical evidence; a wide range of possibility regarding the interpretation and judgement of political and moral concepts among reasonable citizens; and different kinds of normative considerations from different forces to reach an overall assessment on public issues. Rawlsian citizens as both rational and reasonable would sometimes face a predicament in making judgements concerning public affairs, in that on the one hand they wish to accommodate their own rational ends and comply with their comprehensive beliefs, and on the other hand they must still be recognized as reasonable from a public justice point of view.

Most importantly, the notion of reasonable pluralism indicates that the comprehensive doctrine one holds is only one of the reasonable doctrines in a liberal pluralistic society. Due to the acknowledgement of the burdens of judgement, citizens understand that they do not have the grounds to claim their own comprehensive doctrines as true even though they are all affirmed in a liberal pluralistic society. Citizens thus are in an interesting position that on the one hand they affirm one another's comprehensive beliefs as reasonable, but on the other hand they may only believe their own belief is true (in moral or epistemological senses). Citizens acknowledging the burdens of judgement realize that their own comprehensive doctrines play no role in making special claims for public support beyond their own views of their merits. It explains why the burdens of judgement become the necessary 'hazards' for citizens undertaking public deliberation in Rawls's political liberalism. They have to understand the potential conflicts in reaching consensus and learn to be ready to put in extra effort to overcome the burdens in the due course of social cooperation. Rawls argues that acknowledging the burdens of judgement set the limits for reasonable persons to judge what counts as reasonably justified in the public sphere. It also endorses specific forms of liberty of conscience and freedom of speech for political liberalism. This makes clear that state power cannot be arbitrarily used to repress comprehensive views that are not unreasonable. The idea of burdens of judgement thus implicitly suggests a formulation of liberal citizenship to accommodate toleration and personal autonomy.

The idea of the burdens of judgement is basic to the framework of reasonable pluralism and the exercise of deliberative democracy. It is important to assume that citizens are willing to accept these burdens of judgement in the process of public deliberation. A commitment to being reciprocal – as one of the applications of the sense of justice entailed by Rawls's two moral powers – is not enough to justify a successful use of public reason in fair social cooperation that recognize the autonomous status of reasonable citizens. The willingness to accept the burdens of judgement means that citizens are expected to face the difficulties arising from the fact of divergent comprehensive beliefs in exercising public reason in the public domain. Therefore, they might become morally capable of making concessions concerning their own claim in the face of a dilemma between public reason and their own comprehensive doctrines; or they might be able to adjust their own beliefs or suppress their own ethical values on certain controversial issues when they are required to assess each others' ethical point of view and to weigh different public proposals from an impartial standpoint. The idea of the burdens of judgement becomes a crucial application of the political conception of person in order to facilitate the reciprocal and deliberative features of liberal citizenship in conditions of reasonable pluralism. In other words, the acceptance of the burdens of judgement overcomes the difficulties of accommodating various reasonable but conflicting comprehensive doctrines in the selection of principles of justice. It takes up a critical justificatory force in Rawls's theory of justice and his conception of liberal citizenship.

By introducing this idea, Rawls thinks he can indicate how citizens in a liberal pluralistic society who hold various comprehensive doctrines could agree with a unanimous conception of justice. This line of thinking is that even if citizens can exercise public reason well and are willing to behave reciprocally in the negotiation, one may still challenge the possibility of reaching consensus among irreconcilable comprehensive beliefs. It is



impossible to establish mutual accommodation unless either party makes concession or all parties prefer to leave certain issues unresolved and accept this as the cost of the imperfections of our capacity to reason toward agreement. Indeed, even well-exercised public reason cannot solve some hard cases. Citizens therefore have to prepare for the possibility of discordant opinions and sometimes the vice of unreasonableness during the deliberation process. In this regard, acceptance of the burdens of judgement is a necessary manifestation of reciprocity. It can both explain the irreconcilable disagreement among different ethical doctrines in the use of public reason and justify how reasonable citizens equipped with a sense of justice could overcome (or accept) the burdens in order to achieve mutual accommodation in public deliberation.

That said, the idea of the burdens of judgement somehow completes the notion of Rawls's political conception of person and it describes a more morally vibrant public personhood for both cultivating deliberative citizenship and justifying Rawlsian political liberalism. This is a point that could be further developed in an account of political morality for deliberative citizens. In this light, the exercise of the sense of justice entails the ideas of moral reciprocity and the burdens of judgement that both guide the behaviour of liberal citizens and motivate them to political participation, democratic interaction, and public deliberation. Both ideas formulate the normative qualification for the conceptualization of citizenship in deliberative democracy. In this regard, political liberalism is an ethically robust theoretical framework that could accommodate the teaching of deliberative citizenship. Incorporating the political conception of the person into the framework of reasonable pluralism could be the foundation for specifying forms of political virtues for the idea of citizenship as reasonableness that embodies the core features of political education for deliberative democracy. Rawls's conception of the person could then be instrumental to the theory building of a deliberative 'self' for deliberative democracy.

Nevertheless, the political conception of the person still needs further reformulation, especially in terms of the ethical burden on citizens who are required to suspend their own comprehensive beliefs in public deliberation. It requires citizens who accept the burdens of judgement to be willing to make the distinction between public and private spheres, so that they can exercise the power of public reason to address public issues, while rejecting the same reason for matters which are non-civic or private. This raises concerns regarding the application of Rawls's theory of citizenship to an actual context of deliberative democracy. It is difficult to imagine citizens not reasoning about essential public affairs in accordance with their own comprehensive doctrines if there is no particular version of political morality guiding this interaction, on the basis of which citizens are supposed to reach just and fair decision in a deliberative institutions. Even assuming the acknowledgment of the burdens of judgment, it still seems too unrealistic to expect that any person would or could develop such a compartmentalized way of interpreting public reason and preserving personal belief respectively. Callan thus correctly argues that Rawls's political conception of person cannot entail its enforcement, unless it has an ethical ground behind the idea of the burdens of judgement.<sup>2</sup> This challenge could also been taken further in the educational development of certain ethical endowments of reasonable citizens in order to facilitate their interaction in deliberative politics.

Thus, despite its rich potential to develop an account of political morality for deliberative citizenship, Rawls's interpretation cannot satisfy the ethical demand on deliberative citizens. Assuming citizens' 'nominal assent' to the burdens of judgement in the theory of citizenship is not enough to reach reasonable pluralism. It is necessary to construct an ethical endowment for deliberative citizens to cultivate a sense of justice that could entertain a partial comprehensive conception of the person. On this basis a 'thick' version of citizenship education is indispensable. It can enforce an 'active acceptance of the burdens of judgement' which could promote 'active and psychological disposition' in order to create fair social cooperation with 'mutual forbearance and respect' and at the same time could accommodate citizens' preservation of rational beliefs in the non-civic spheres. A substantial ethical account of reciprocity is necessary for the cultivation of deliberative citizens. Gutmann and Thompson's theory of deliberative democracy, for instance, would be an essential reference for specifying the content of political morality and the deliberative virtues required in actualize a deliberative polity. It is not surprising, then, that a robust deliberative democracy does not only rely on well-established political institutions; it may, in a more fundamental sense, literally depend on the ethical transformation of the citizenry.

## **Conclusion**

Rawls's interpretation of his own theory – by claiming a shift to political liberalism – mistakenly believes that the neutrality problem in political philosophy as well as the theory of citizenship education has been well addressed. There is a substantial ethical demand embedded in the political conception of the person and hence, Rawls's idea of the burden of judgement needs to be reformulated in order to make sense of his political liberalism and to well acknowledge the neutrality problem of citizenship education. The ideal citizenship portrayed in this framework can therefore accommodate a civic education carrying robust interpretation of civic virtues. In Rawls's account, we note that public reason constitutes one of the core elements of civic learning in a polity of liberal pluralism. Public reason is a form of reasoning about political values and virtues that are shared by free and equal citizens no matter which comprehensive doctrines or ideas about the meaning of their lives they hold privately. On this, an account of political morality is indispensable to the formation of deliberative citizenship, as it requires reasonable citizens to suspend their own comprehensive beliefs for the purpose of common good. Therefore, the blueprint of political liberalism aims to develop a cordon around public affairs whereby the political sphere is seen as a branch of the reasonable, while citizens in the civil society and the private sphere can define their rational domain on their own. It is the task for deliberative citizenship education to cultivate such political conception of the person that is capable of exercising the compartmentalization of values between the public and the private.

In any case, it is undesirable to believe that it is conceptually possible to formulate an ideal type of political liberalism in which incommensurable value systems could be reconciled into a single political conception without touching on any serious ethical predicament. Emphasizing a certain version of liberalism as 'merely' political within reasonable pluralism would blur the ethical credentials of liberal democracy and neglect its ethically demanding standard. On the basis of these two factors about the Rawlsian political liberalism, the problem at stake is how to ensure that citizens act reciprocally and are willing to bear the burdens of judgment. A deliberative citizenship education needs to specify an account of political morality about virtues like reciprocity, mutual respect, and toleration in order to cultivate a civic self for deliberative political participation (Gutmann and Thompson illustrate a good example). Indeed, Callan briefly mentions the idea of political morality but does not elaborate it further. He instead takes the route of analyzing the ideas like care, community, and patriotism in order to assure the presence of solidarity amongst citizens and sees this as the way to develop a vibrant citizenship and inclusive community (Callan, 1997).

This paper focuses on the justification of cultivating political morality for deliberative citizenship in a context of liberal pluralism. I do not intend to argue how political liberalism could become deliberative democracy, rather I would like to illustrate that political liberalism has the capacity to accommodate an ethically demanding deliberative citizenship, especially on its formulation of the conception of political person. In this light, we will see the potential of Rawls's work in developing a framework for educating deliberative citizens and how the idea of deliberative democracy could fit into the framework of contemporary liberalism.<sup>2</sup> To this end, his ideas are essential for developing a theory of the person for deliberative democracy as Rawls's theory paves the way to an ethically robust citizenship education for deliberative democracy which might be out of his expectation.

## **Notes**

1. While John Rawls identifies his theory of justice as 'justice as fairness', Eamonn Callan in his interpretation of Rawls in terms of political education uses 'citizenship as fairness' to describe the ethical capacity that should be developed to facilitate Rawlsian liberalism. Nevertheless, I would prefer the phrase 'citizenship as reasonableness', as this pinpoints the focus on the reasonable domain that deliberative citizens should develop their ethical capacity.
2. It is because the political conception of person in Rawls's interpretation is too 'lax' to generate an ethically pluralistic citizenry that could be capable to develop the necessary active and psychological disposition to tolerate diverse comprehensive beliefs (Callan, 1997, p.30).

3. Having said that, the claim of deliberative citizenship does not have to take a Rawlsian form. It can be a version of ethical liberalism as expressed, for example, by Ronald Dworkin in “The Foundations of Liberalism”. But every version of liberalism needs to construct its account of conception of the person, especially for those who wish to incorporate their claims into a model of deliberative democracy.

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