Introduction

Republicanizing Democracy, Democratizing the Republic

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Republicanism and democracy have had a long and fraught relationship.[1] The idea of the republic, a regime that is the common concern of a people (Cicero 2008, 18, 75), was arguably shaped in opposition not only to monarchy but also to democracy (Urbinati 2012). Many republicans understood democracy as the licentious, violent, and unstable rule of an irrational multitude, a corrupt form of politics threatening to unravel the harmony of the best regime. Republicans have often assumed that the common interest would be best served by giving power to the best citizens or by creating a balance of power that would moderate the ability of the *demos* to carry out its will.

Alongside this tradition of counter-democratic republicanism, there has also been a tradition of democratic republicanism. A host of republican writers, drawing inspiration from Athenian democracy or Roman populism, have sought to empower the majority of the people and endow it with the supreme power of political decision-making (Jefferson 1999; Machiavelli 1997; Nedham 2011; Paine 2000; Price 1991; Rousseau 1997b). While such writers have differed in their normative and institutional commitments, they can be seen as sharing an overarching commitment to the sovereignty of the people, or at least the empowerment of the *demos*.

Thus, the republican tradition has always been conflicted about democratic politics. The modern idea of representative and constitutional democracy (Dunn 2005; Innes and Philp 2013; Manin 1997), which has incorporated key republican ideas, has also inherited from the republican tradition the fear and the hope aroused by the democratization of society. Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* (2010) is a classic example, oscillating between the specter of the tyranny of the majority and a vision of an educated democratic republic.

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This historical tension is still evident in the recent revival of republican political thought. Following a long eclipse of the language of republicanism from the mid-nineteenth century until the mid-twentieth century, political thinkers from Hannah Arendt to Philip Pettit have been drawing on ideas and arguments found in classical, humanist, and early modern thought on republics and developing a vision of public life intended to serve as an alternative to liberalism. The neo-republicans have attempted to offer a distinctive vision of the democratic republic or of republican democracy (Niederberger and Schink 2013; Pettit 2012a; White and Leighton 2008), but they have also been criticized for reproducing and revitalizing the elitism of the republican tradition and its distrust for democratic politics (Maddox 2002; Markell 2008; McCormick 2003; 2011; Urbinati 2010; 2012).

The present volume is a collaborative effort to think through the relation between republicanism and democracy and to chart ways in which republican political thought can make a distinctive contribution to our understanding of democracy in the twenty-first century. Before turning to the essays in this volume, we would like to clarify the basic terms of the debate and set the stage for an investigation of the historical and theoretical relations between republicanism and democracy.

1 The Meaning of Republicanism

In reading early modern and more recent texts, one is struck by the scholarly disagreement about what serves as the ideological core of the republican tradition: is it popular sovereignty as opposed to monarchical rule (Montesquieu 1989)? The empire of laws and not of men (Adams 1776; Harrington 1992; Rousseau 1997b)? Civic virtue (MacGilvray 2011; Montesquieu 1989; Pocock 1975)? A distinct conception of liberty (Pettit 1997; Skinner 1998)?

When considering the republican revival of recent decades, two strands stand out. The civic strand, as we would describe it, has stressed the importance of civic participation in self-government for the realization of individual and communal freedom (Arendt 1958; Bailyn 1967; Dagger 1997; Pocock 1975; Sandel 1996; Wood 1969). The neo-Roman strand has focused on the idea of individual freedom from arbitrary power (freedom as nondomination) and the associated idea of the free state as the constitutive condition of freedom as nondomination (Laborde and Maynor 2008; Lovett 2018; Maynor 2003; Pettit 1997; 2012a; Skinner 1998). Both strands have drawn on the ideas and arguments of early modern writers such as Harrington, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Price, Wollstonecraft, and Kant, but civic republicans have mostly read these texts as continuous with Athenian political thought or with Renaissance

civic humanism (Arendt 1958; Baron 1955; Pocock 1975; Sandel 1996), while neo-Roman republicans have read them as continuous with Roman legal and political thought (Pettit 1997; Skinner 1978). Despite the historical and conceptual relations between the two strands, neo-Roman republicans have distanced themselves from the civic trend (Lovett 2018).

Alongside these two salient schools of contemporary republicanism, additional interpretations of the tradition have emerged, including critical republicanism, which has drawn on Kantian and critical social theory and has focused on democratic processes of justification and recognition (Forst 2013; Habermas 1996; Laborde 2008), popular republicanism, which has emphasized the effective realization of popular sovereignty and power through institutional or extra-institutional means (Aitchison 2017; Bellamy 2007; 2011; Dijn 2018; McCormick 2007; 2011; Chapter 7, this volume; Nabulsi 2015; White, Chapter 13, this volume), radical republicanism, which has highlighted republican concerns with economic and social equality (Anderson 2015; 2017; Gourevitch 2013; 2014; Chapter 9, this volume; White 2011), and market republicanism, which has argued for the realization of nondomination through the mechanisms of the free market (Taylor 2013; 2017). The picture is further complicated by the fact that communitarian critics of Rawlsian liberalism have embraced and appropriated civic republicanism in addressing questions of community, identity, and solidarity (MacIntyre 1981; 1984; Sandel 1982; 1984; 1996; Taylor 1985; 1989; Walzer 1983; for a critique, see Dagger 2004; Haakonssen 2007; Pettit 1996; Viroli 1995).

Since the systematic formulation of the theory of freedom as nondomination (Pettit 1997), the neo-Roman strand has achieved paradigmatic status within contemporary political theory. Its success has been such that most of the recent accounts of republicanism have focused on this particular interpretation of the tradition (e.g., Bellamy 2011; Laborde 2013; Lovett 2018). While the neo-Roman turn has been extremely fruitful for the study of republicanism, there is need for a more general and inclusive definition of republicanism, which would chart well-defined boundaries for the historical tradition while opening up multiple avenues for future research.

Republicanism can be broadly defined as the set of contributions to our understanding of the core ideas and institutions of the republic. The identity of the republican corpus and the lessons that can be extracted from it are a matter for ongoing interpretation and debate. Classical and early modern writers such as Aristotle, Cicero, Machiavelli, and Rousseau are widely acknowledged as having shaped core ideas and institutions of the republic. Core concepts associated with the republic include the common good, popular participation in politics, civic virtue and its corruption, liberty as the absence of arbitrary power, the rule

of law, the mixed constitution, equality, and solidarity. Recent work on civic, neo-Roman, critical, popular, radical, market, and communitarian republicanism define and rank these ideas slightly differently in their efforts to conceptualize the republic.

2 Democracy and the Republic

Similarly to republican political thought, which is based on the historical experience of specific republics such as Rome or Venice, the idea of democracy is based on the historical experience of specific polities – in particular, the democratic regime in classical Athens (Hansen 1991) and modern representative democracies such as the United States of America (Tocqueville 2010). Traditionally, democracy was understood as the direct government of the multitude, but the late eighteenth century had witnessed the invention of representative and constitutional democracy as a political institution and ideal for the moderns (Dunn 2005; Innes and Philp 2013; Manin 1997). In the aftermath of World War II, democracy rose to prominence as the most popular political idea and regime in the Western world.

The success of democracy has not gone without controversy. Democratic theorists have remained divided on such questions as whether democracy is instrumentally or intrinsically valuable, and as whether democracy should be understood as a competitive method for electing rulers (Przeworski 1999; Schumpeter 1984), a process of truth-seeking (Cohen 1986; Estlund 2008; Landemore 2013; Schwartzberg 2015), a method of collective decision-making based on equality among participants (Christiano 2008; Saffon and Urbinati 2013), or an extra-institutional expression of popular will (Laclau 2005; Ober 2008; Wolin 1994).

For the purposes of the present discussion, we would like to stress two central principles of democratic theory. First, notwithstanding Joseph Schumpeter's influential attempt to redefine democracy in procedural and minimal terms (Schumpeter 1984), we take the classical ideal of the power of the whole body of the people (Ober 2008) to be an underlying and unifying principle of democratic thought. Second, democratic government is characterized by the pursuit of equal political liberty, namely the direct or indirect participation of all citizens in making the laws they obey (Saffon and Urbinati 2013; Urbinati 2012).

Based on this brief discussion, it is easy to see where republicanism and democracy intersect – they share a preoccupation with the politics of the people and with popular self-government in some sense of that term. But democrats have prioritized the political equality of citizens, while republicans have prioritized the common good and freedom from

domination. Accordingly, republicans have often preferred the rule of wise and virtuous citizens over political equality and have almost invariably preferred the balanced and mixed constitution over the unchecked power of the majority of the people. Hence the traditional tension, mentioned above, between republicanism and democracy.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the ideal of the republic was democratized and extended to incorporate first the male middle classes and then the male working classes within the political community. French revolutionaries abolished privileges and attempted to imagine a more inclusive republic. The term "democratic republic," which was mostly used, at first, to describe the dangerous democratic experiments made in America and in France (Young 1793), emerged in Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* (2010) as the description of a form of government that holds hope for the future of Europe. Tocqueville's text is a milestone in the democratization of the republic, and at the same time an attempt to republicanize democracy. His emphasis on themes such as the decentralization of power and the cultivation of civic norms represents a classic endeavor to educate democratic society to think in republican terms.

In a similar spirit, the recent republican revival can be read, in retrospect, as aiming to republicanize democracy. The pioneers of this revival were mostly concerned that twentieth-century democratic theory was insufficiently preoccupied with the civic dimension of democratic life. Subsequent work has predominantly called the attention of democratic theorists to problems created by inequalities of power in society. Both trends have been criticized for being implicated in the historical elitism of the republican tradition. Yet there seems to be no inherent reason preventing us from responding to these critiques. We would do well to elicit from the rich intellectual tradition of republicanism whatever inspiration it can offer in rethinking contemporary democracy.

3 The Democratic Prospects of Neo-republicanism

Republicanism and the Future of Democracy presents a series of reflections, criticisms, and constructive propositions on the prospects of the neo-republican research program and its contribution to democratic theory.

Philip Pettit opens the volume with a development of his influential theory and model of republican democracy. In this chapter, for the first time, Pettit clarifies the role that the traditional republican idea of the common good plays in his vision of republican democracy. He reconstructs Rousseau's republican solution for the problem of public domination by the state, a solution that he describes as "democracy of

will," and defends his own alternative model of the democratic republic, which he describes as a "democracy of standards" or a "common-good republic." Defending the idea of the common good against various critiques (e.g., Schumpeter 1984), he argues for an understanding of the common good that is constraining rather than determinative, intersubjective rather than objective, and implicit in practices rather than explicitly recognized. Pettit argues that republican democracy should take the shape of a deliberative democracy centered on the creation of a common good that allows for "the emergence and empowerment of common desiderata and standards that are recognized as relevant on all sides." He ends by stressing the fragility of the institutions that allow this ideal of the democratic republic to be realized.

In Part II of the volume, the reassessment of the neo-republican program starts with rethinking the history of republicanism as productively intertwined with democratic theory. Two historical chapters help us see how republicanism can be used to solve core democratic problems, such as inequality and the tyranny of the majority. Focusing on a new interpretation of Sallust's *War with Catiline* and *War with Jugurtha*, Daniel Kapust shows how the Roman republic, traditionally taken to be the pinnacle of anti-democratic republicanism, was in fact concerned with the inequity and injustice associated with inequality. Contrasting two modes of discourse he finds in Sallust's works, populist republicanism and demagoguery, Kapust aims to show that the Roman republic can provide us with a rhetorical and theoretical model for describing the harmful effects of inequality on specific and concrete manifestations of republican liberty. Such Roman discourse shows us, Kapust argues, that inequality is worrisome insofar as it is contrary to equity, and it ought to be limited because inequitable inequality affects the status of undominated citizens.

Annelien de Dijn investigates, in turn, how several British and American writers on the republic – Price, Adams, and Madison – have dealt with the problem of the tyranny of the majority. In all states – even the most democratic ones – citizens sometimes need to be governed by laws made by others. This creates a difficult challenge for the republican ideal of nondomination, which holds that you can be free only if you are not subjected to the arbitrary will of others. Dijn argues that Price, Adams, and Madison have tried to come up with majoritarian solutions to the apparently intractable problem of the tyranny of the majority. In this regard, the eighteenth-century republicanism that Dijn reconstructs is more democratic than neo-republicanism, which has tended to prefer counter-majoritarian measures.

Thinking more democratically, and therefore more inclusively, has led some contributors to this volume to criticize Pettit's conceptualization of

nondomination. In Part III of the volume, Lida Maxwell argues that the ideal of nondomination, when constructed as independence, is insensitive to the concern of feminist and queer theorists that domination can be sustained not only through dependency, but also through the isolation and privatization that keep individuals from contesting the terms of their domination. Rendering ourselves vulnerable to our fellow democratic actors, she says, is an integral part of democratic politics and may be a condition of fighting domination. Maxwell suggests that rather than asking us to rid ourselves of dependency, neo-republicans would do better to urge us to multiply the sites and the individuals on whom we depend in the risky practices of political action characteristic of democratic politics.

Critical reconsideration of the concept of nondomination also stands at the center of Niko Kolodny's chapter. Neo-republicans have argued that certain ways of being under the power of others are objectionable, but the thesis has been incorrectly interpreted as an objection to domination, according to Kolodny. One problem of the domination thesis is that it makes living under a state objectionable, as the state can always dominate individuals. Kolodny argues that the objection to being under the power of others is best interpreted as a concern about social inferiority to other individuals. Put differently, republicans should be concerned with nonsubordination rather than with nondomination. Building on this reformulation of the core concern of neo-republicanism, Kolodny argues against what he sees as Rousseau's conflation of nonsubordination with democratic self-rule.

Part IV of the volume deals with the compatibility between republicanism and democracy and offers ways to make the relationship between the two a fruitful one. Frank Lovett's chapter takes on the challenge of clarifying the relation between freedom and democracy in the republican tradition. Civic humanists and some deliberative democrats think of democracy as constitutive of republican liberty, so that being free means participating in collective decisions. Instead, Lovett defends the neo-Roman republican view that democracy is a condition for possessing freedom as nondomination. Pettit's reformulated definition of dominating power as power not suitably controlled by those over whom it is exercised makes democracy a logically necessary condition of freedom insofar as states are unavoidable and will deprive their citizens of freedom unless controlled by those citizens themselves (Pettit 2012a). Lovett argues for a pragmatic rather than analytical interpretation of neo-Roman republicanism, which understands democracy to be a condition for republican nondomination simply because, practically speaking, the people are the best guardians of their liberty.

Nadia Urbinati, in turn, demonstrates how the two antagonistic models of republicanism and democratic theory have adapted to one another. She critically examines two prominent examples of republican interpretations of democracy – Pettit's and McCormick's – in order to show how republican and democratic thought can be used to temper each other. She contends that Pettit aims to depoliticize democracy in order to "deflate the partisan spirit of democracy." By contrast, McCormick, who criticizes the oligarchic dimension of republicanism, uses Machiavelli's idea of a conflict between the many and the few as a model for "democratizing republicanism." Urbinati commends both models for attempting to use the best aspects of the two traditions in order to formulate a normatively attractive theory of republican democracy. Building on her recent work (Urbinati 2014), she then sketches her own vision of a representative democracy with a republican character.

John P. McCormick alerts us to challenges that Pettit's and Urbinati's models of republican democracy have not yet properly overcome. The major shortcomings of their models, he argues, are their electoral and counter-majoritarian features. The central concern of democratic republicanism, according to McCormick, should be addressing "the threat posed to common liberty by wealth." In order to address this problem, he argues, republicans need to render secondary concerns with the tyranny of the majority and to breach with the standard of formal political equality. Instead, they should focus on promoting institutions that empower the poor and enable them to share rule equitably with the rich. To this end, McCormick suggests that we employ populist means to democratic ends, defending the idea of a progressive, democratic populism whose goal is the establishment of procedures and practices that enhance popular self-rule.

Part V of the volume is concerned with some of the "untapped resources" (Anderson, Chapter 10, this volume) that republicanism offers for addressing problems of domination in social and economic interactions. Alex Gourevitch, Elizabeth Anderson, and Robert Taylor chart three different approaches toward addressing problems of domination in such interactions: the strike as a means of democratic insurgency against domination; constitutional design of a free workplace government; and spurring competition and resourcing exit.

Gourevitch's chapter suggests that one of the neglected contributions of the republican tradition to democratic theory is the practical means of emancipation that it offers. Instead of merely specifying the ideal conditions of a republican constitution, he argues, we should democratize our reading of the republican tradition by focusing on its contribution to the politics of resistance to domination in non-ideal conditions.

Gourevitch considers the modern workplace as a site of domination and the republican case for a right to strike as part of an insurgent tradition of democratic politics intended to resist domination.

Anderson argues that, historically, both republicanism and liberalism have failed to address the domination of wage-workers, yet both traditions offer resources for constitutional design of a free workplace government. The chapter offers to apply the liberal differentiation of spheres of authority as well as two distinctively republican ideals – the common good and the mixed constitution – to the workplace. Anderson argues that both ideals can be realized through a mixed constitution of the workplace based on the model of codetermination. By allowing workers to be represented on a council and on the corporate board, she argues, codetermination gives both workers and management an institutionalized voice, and it ensures the common good of all participants.

Leaning in yet another direction, and continuing his recent work (Taylor 2017), Taylor argues that democracy is only one means among others for restricting arbitrary power, and that a different, economic model of republicanism can be more effective in securing nondomination. Looking at domination in the family, in the workplace, and in states within a federation, Taylor argues that policies that spur competition and resource exit from abusive relationships can advance freedom as nondomination as effectively or more effectively than social-democratic approaches. Thus, for example, Taylor suggests that states could offer dependent women vouchers for job retraining or relocation or offer them temporary basic income as means of "resourcing marital exit" from abusive relationships.

Finally, Part VI of the volume addresses yet another area where some of the resources offered by the republican tradition have been slowly coming into view: the pursuit of nondomination beyond the boundaries of states. While some have argued for more cosmopolitan models of republicanism (Bohman 2004b), Richard Bellamy argues in this volume (Chapter 12) that the republican value of nondomination cannot be realized without state sovereignty. This, however, should not be a cause for assuming that republicanism has nothing to contribute to democratic theory in a globalized world. Taking the example of the European Union as his central case study, Bellamy defends "the alternative of a republican association of sovereign states that allows sovereign states and their peoples to mutually regulate their external sovereignty in non-dominating ways."

Stuart White's chapter looks beyond the state to the politics of networked horizontalism expressed in Occupy Wall Street, the *Indignados*, and other social movements. His premise is that many real-world democracies like the UK and the USA fail to realize the ideal of republican democracy, partly because there has been a shift toward more oligarchic

power in recent decades. White joins Gourevitch in considering republicanism as a political practice in non-republican polities. His chapter focuses on the potential for horizontalist political action to prefigure, defend, support, and foster republican politics. White suggests that in the twenty-first century, the traditional republican notion of the active citizenry can take new social forms, integrating new modes of communication and technology and going beyond the historical boundaries of nations to address transnational obstacles to republican democracy.