Contest, Conflict, and Consensus

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Dissertation principle (D): Dedicated to all those affected

Acknowledgments

A study on deliberation can only succeed if it is embedded in fruitful discursive processes, be they on-topic about the theoretical tensions between deliberation and democracy, methodical issues such as the building of content analytical categories, and statistical challenges posed by the structure of the data. Or be they off-topic about football clubs, movies, cooking and the manifold smaller and lager marvels, beauties, challenges and inanities life has to offer.

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"democracy is more a verb than a noun – it is more a dynamic striving and collective movement than a static order or stationary status quo."
(Cornel West 2004: 68)

I. Introduction

Arguably the biggest demonstration in Britain's history was held on February 15th 2003, when hundreds of thousands of people – police put the figures at 750'000 while the organisers at between 1.5 and 2 millions – poured into Hyde Park to attend one of several demonstrations held around the world against the imminent war against Iraq. The event drew people from various backgrounds, many of whom attended their first public protest rally: "There were, of course, the usual suspects – CND [Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament], Socialist Workers' Party, the anarchists", Euan Ferguson of *The Observer* wrote. "But even they looked shocked at the number of their fellow marchers: it is safe to say they had never experienced such a mass of humanity. There were nuns. Toddlers. Women barristers. The Eton George Orwell Society. Archaeologists Against War. Walthamstow Catholic Church, the Swaffham Women's Choir and Notts County Supporters Say Make Love Not War (And a Home Win against Bristol would be Nice). They won 2-0, by the way. One group of SWP [Socialist Workers Party] stalwarts were joined, for the first march in any of their histories, by their mothers. There were country folk and lecturers, dentists and poulterers, a hairdresser from Cardiff and a poet from Cheltenham" (*The Observer* 16.2.2003).

In the end the protest did not change Prime Minister Tony Blair's stance, who stated: "I do not seek unpopularity as a badge of honour, but sometimes it is the price of leadership. And it is the cost of conviction" (*The Times* 17.3.2003), nor did it avert Britain's going to war, which was in the end the response to the question Bianca Jagger had asked at the rally: "Why listen to President Bush rather than the voices of British people? Why not listen to the voices of reason?" (*The Guardian* 17.3.2003). The government's answer to the challenge by the dissenters quite openly ignored the "power of reason" (Elster 1997: 12) – it was power, political power alone which seemed to dictate the political process. Evidently, any account that places its hopes for democratic emancipation on reason and communication would have to grapple with the fact that more often than not politics does not follow the ideal and that maintaining such a stance in the face of the real world is at least naive.[1] Yet, as we will see on the one hand this view misses not only the central point that normative theories do not aim at describing as accurately as possible the status quo, rather they outline what is a desirable state to be achieved. On the other it also misses reality as it presents a highly restricted view: although Britain did go to war in Iraq, the Chilcot Inquiry set up by Blair's successor Gordon Brown in 2009 sought to identify lessons to be learned for future governments, or to put it more pointedly: it sought to establish whether the reasons on which the government had based its decision to go to war had really been good enough.[2]

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[1] Though, as we will see, Habermas is very well aware that "[c]ommunicative reason [...] falls short of a practical reason aimed at motivation, at guiding the will. Normativity in the sense of the obligatory orientation of action does not coincide with communicative rationality" (Habermas 1996: 5).

[2] Initially, Brown had wanted the inquiry to be held in private, but stepped down from his position and declared that it was the up to the commission's chairman, Sir John Chilcot, to decide whether the inquiry should be held in

What the Chilcot Inquiry tried to identify in practical terms, models of deliberative democracy develop on a theoretical basis. Deliberative democracy is deemed one of the most productive and fruitful areas of political theory (cf. Dryzek 2007) and we can identify already at this point in a preliminary fashion some of its central assumptions: while deliberative theories do not claim that deliberation has an immediate effect on the political process, they show that deliberation is indispensable for the political process to work. A first consequence of this is that democracy is understood as a process in which the participation of citizens but also of other non-established and established, individual or collective actors has a "rational character – that voting, for example, should not simply aggregate given preferences but rather follow on a process of 'thoughtful interaction and opinion formation' in which citizens become informed of the better arguments and more general interests" (McCarthy 1996: ix). Seen this way, political legitimacy is ultimately generated through deliberation, and more important by deliberation of those who are affected by political decisions. This was not the case in 2003 when large parts of the British population felt that their government stood on thin ground and acted against their will as one demonstrator pointed out: "Look about you. That's what this is about; not fierce party politics but a simple feeling that democracy, British democracy, has been forgotten" (*The Observer* 16.2.2003). That feeling was shared by Charles Kennedy, then leader of the Liberal Democrats, who said that "[t]he House of Commons should be given the right it so far has been denied, the right of a vote on whether it believes our forces should be sent into battle" (*The Observer* 16.2.2003). Here, we can further distinguish two basic analytical dimensions which the public disagreement encompassed: the protest was very manifestly directed against the adamant stance taken by government, but it was also directed against a political process which was perceived as going against democratic principles. More precisely, the latter criticism takes issue with the fact that the government had taken the most important decisions in private discussions without involving other institutions or the public.

Our example points to an important relationship: political decisions can only then be said to be legitimate if they have been discussed exhaustively in the public sphere. Indeed, in many normative accounts of the democracy and in particular in the Habermasian approach on which we will base our study, the public sphere is the critical or the radical element of the democratic process. As Nancy Fraser argues, the "idea of the public sphere is indispensable to critical social theory and to democratic political practice. I assume that no attempt to understand the limits of actually existing late capitalist democracy can succeed without in some way or another making use of it" (Fraser 1990: 57).[3] From a deliberative perspective the importance of the public sphere is given not only by its potential of societal integration but also by its legitimating function for the political system, and through its

private or in public (cf. *New Statesman* 23.6.2009). Chilcot said that "[i]t will be essential to hold as much of the proceedings of the Inquiry possible in public, consistent with the need to protect national security and to ensure and enable complete candour in the oral and written evidence from witnesses" (ibid.). The commission itself faced severe criticism not only because none of its members "had high-level military or governmental experience. There are no former chiefs of staff and no one with experience of being in a Cabinet. Those are considerable omissions, given that much of the inquiry's scope will either be military in nature or concern the decision-making processes at the highest level of Government" as the Conservative MP William Hague pointed out (House of Commons Hansard 24.6.2009: 808). Another problematic aspect emerged when it became clear that the Ministry of Defence of the UK had assured the US government that it had "put measures in place to protect your interests during the UK inquiry into the causes of the Iraq war" (*The Guardian* 30.11.2009).

[3] In the introduction to *Between Facts and Norms* Habermas argues that "[e]ven in established democracies, the existing institutions of freedom are no longer above challenge, although here the populations seem to press for more democracy rather than less. I suspect, however, that the unrest has a still deeper source, namely, the sense that in the age of a completely secularized politics, the rule of law cannot be had or maintained without radical democracy" (Habermas 1996: xlii).

roots in the lifeworld of civil society the public sphere is also the locus of the utopian and hence transformational energies of democracy (cf. Calhoun 1992a). As Habermas puts it: "Of course, the potential of unleashed *communicative* freedoms does contain an anarchistic core. The institutions of any democratic government must live off this core if they are to be effective in guaranteeing equal liberties for all" (Habermas 1996: xl, emphasis in the original). If we put public discourse at the centre of the political process, then it is certainly more than a mere "cognitive exercise" of reasoning and arguing as it "brings in the citizens' actual sources of motivation and volition. It thereby generates a 'communicative power' that has a real impact on the formal decision making and action that represent the final institutional expression of political 'will'" (Rehg 1996: xxviii). The legitimacy of political decisions and the emancipatory potential of democratic politics on this view crucially depend on the quality of the debates in the public sphere. And by focusing on the structural properties of communication in the public sphere deliberative theories are able to provide standards of evaluation which allow us to say to what degree a public opinion generated by this process can be thought of a being "considered".

Yet, even if we had a readily available measure for the deliberativeness of public opinion and applied it to the 2003 debate about the UK's going to war in Iraq, we would not be able to tell to what degree the public sphere established by this debate would have to be judged as conforming to the normative standards of deliberative democracy. The problem is that normative theories and deliberative ones in particular require us to take on a comparative perspective, i.e. we can only assess the deliberativeness of a specific debate in relation to another one. Furthermore, we have to be aware that the public sphere is not an unstructured formation but presents itself as a highly contested discursive space dominated by the media (cf. Habermas 1996). If we furthermore focus on the emancipatory dimension of democracy, the comparative perspective is necessarily a longitudinal one, i.e. we would investigate the changing deliberative structures over time in order to assess how the public sphere and with it the discursive dimension of democracy has developed. It is precisely here that the present study ties in as it investigates the discursive transformation of the British public sphere from a diachronic point of view. First, if the quality of democracy is tied to the quality of the public debates which legitimate the decisions of the political process, then we need to investigate these debates from a deliberative perspective. As Habermas states: "the success of public communication is [measured] by the formal criteria governing how a qualified public opinion comes about. [...] The 'quality' of public opinion, insofar as it is measured by the procedural properties of its process of generation, is an empirical variable" (Habermas 1996: 362). And second, if democracy is not a static concept but an on-going process of public reasoning, then it is paramount that we examine how this process has changed over time; only a diachronic approach will allow us to assess where we stand today. We cannot say whether the 2003 debate about the UK's going to war was better or worse than other debates unless we have other points of reference, and in the case of our example it might reasonable to choose a previous debate about British military actions, e.g. the Falklands War of 1982.

Our main research interests are thus on the one hand to identify those components that are central to the deliberative account from an empirical perspective and to reconstruct the changes they undergo over time on the other. Accordingly, our research question is: how has the deliberative quality of political debates in the public sphere developed over time? Since we cannot submit the whole of the public sphere to an analysis as this would stretch

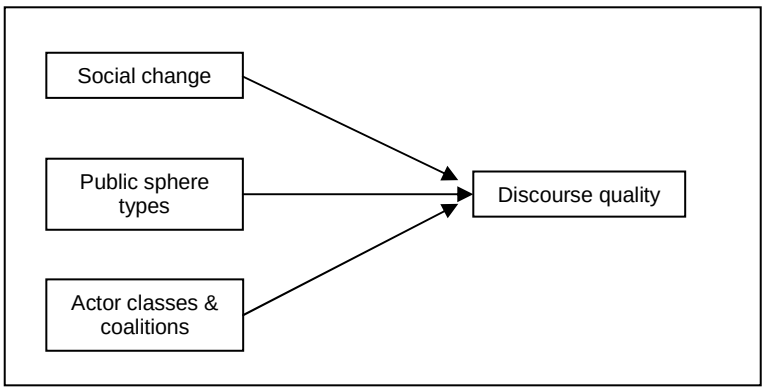
from the conversations in private settings to discussions in civil society organisations, or venues such as bars, concerts, etc., to more formal settings such as the deliberations within political parties, the meetings of the cabinet, the work done by the administration and juries, etc. we will limit ourselves to that instance which dominates the public sphere, i.e. the media. Here again, as we cannot examine all of the media, we will restrict ourselves to a theoretical sample of the major print media outlets (*Leitmedien*, cf. Jarren & Donges 2006) that covers the mainstream spectrum of political positions and arguments. Furthermore, since we cannot cover a large period of time, we will start our investigation in the 1960s and end in the early 2000s, selecting different political debates at specific points in time. And finally, we will choose as the institutional backdrop for our analysis a western democratic nation-state which presents a challenge to deliberative democracy, the UK, as its political institutions are less responsive than those of many other countries. While we will not be able to generalise our results to other democracies, a setting that represents a "tough test" for public reasoning will allow us more clearly to assess where we stand and add a certain sense of robustness to our interpretations; therefore, the United Kingdom is an obvious choice.

Surprisingly perhaps, studies about the development of specific aspects of the public sphere, be they based on deliberative democracy or other normative political theories, are not only rare, they are almost non-existent. This might have to do quite generally with the predominant synchronic orientation of the social sciences which leaves many of the questions of social development to social theorist and historians. As regards more specifically the media, the reason might also be given by the recent shift of the research focus on the internet, which necessarily impedes a more expanded view of communicative change, or makes it simply appear as uninteresting. Change, if it is examined at all in these studies, is mostly identified with the status quo generated through the advent of the digital media, without, however, comparing it in any form to the status ex ante the digital revolution. In contrast to these approaches our point of reference is, albeit in a very restricted and controlled setting, an observation made by Habermas in response to the contributions made at a conference on the occasion of the publication of the *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Habermas 1989) in English: "here [in Western-type societies] a different question arises, one that cannot be answered without considerable empirical research. This is the question of whether, and to what extent, a public sphere dominated by mass media provides a realistic chance for the members of civil society, in their competition with the political and economic invaders' media power, to bring about changes in the spectrum of values, topics, and reasons channeled by external influences, to open it up in an innovative way, and to screen it critically" (Habermas 1992: 455).

While civil society will play a role in our analysis, we will not confine ourselves to an analysis of its status and influence in political debates. Rather, the present study takes a more abstract and general approach. In line with Dennis Thompson we are interested in "trying to discover the conditions in which deliberative democracy does and does not work well" (Thompson 2008: 500). As conditions we can identify three dimensions that are of particular interest in the context of the present project: first, given that we examine the transformation of the deliberative structures in media debates, our main interest is to determine in how far this process is affected by social change. In *Communication and the Evolution of Society* Habermas (1979) argues that learning processes occur not only in the area of objective truth and the scientific-technical world, but also in the realm of the

normative and thereby also in the way we interact with one another. Such learning processes – or to put it more neutrally: transformations – should also have an effect the deliberative structures we examine as they represent the deep normative structures of language Habermas has uncovered in his programme of formal pragmatics (cf. Habermas 1981a, 1981b, 1984a). Second, although the public sphere ideally represents an anarchic discursive space, we can classify political debates according to three major public sphere types they constitute. Very basically, it is plausible to assume that it makes a difference whether a public sphere and the corresponding political process are initiated by civil society, or whether they have their origin in the political-administrative centre. Similarly, although the different debates cover different topics, these can be classified according to the cleavages which they address. Moreover, we can identify with Habermas different normative levels on which debates are conducted: a debate about, say, building new motorways is probably largely dominated by a means-ends relationship and thus situated on a pragmatic level, whereas debates such as the one about the UK's going to war in Iraq are conducted on what Habermas calls an "ethical-political" level or on a moral level. While these three dimensions – public sphere type, cleavage structure, and normative level of the debate – produce too many combinations and hence a sample that would be too large, we can distinguish two specific debate types whose analysis is not only of interest from a theoretical perspective, but which also constitute two widespread types of political conflict in the UK. Third, we are finally interested in the actors and the effect they have on the discursive quality of the debates. After all, at the very basic level it is their interactions which establish and structure the debates in the first place. Here, however, we will not only focus on civil society actor although they play a prominent part from a theoretical perspective, rather the focus will be on the effect of each of the actor classes on the discourse quality. In addition to this, because at the very heart of deliberation lies a theory of intersubjectivity, we will further examine the effect different "discourse coalitions" have on the debates, i.e. alliances of actors which cut across the actor classes by displaying the same discursive position vis-à-vis a third party. In contrast to the other two, this third dimension will not include a developmental perspective as we are interested quite generally in the influence of the actor classes and discourse coalitions, but also because there is no theoretical background that would allow us to deduce hypotheses that would include such a perspective. The figure below summarises our analytical model.

Figure 1: Analytical model



We thus define the discursive quality of mass media debates as a critical measure to determine the legitimacy of political decisions on the one hand and in a developmental

perspective to assess the emancipatory potential of public reasoning and the extent to which it has been realised on the other. Social change, the basic structural properties of the public spheres, and the actor classes and discourse coalitions are in turn the main sources of influence and we will assess what effect they have on the deliberative quality of the debates. We can thus spell out our research question in more detail: our main interest is to determine the size and the direction of the effect social change, public sphere types, and actor classes and constellations have on the discourse quality of political debates.

In order to answer these questions our study will proceed as follows: in chapter two we will present the theoretical background in detail. Given that the analysis is strongly connected to and driven by the theoretical premises of deliberative democracy, we will first retrace the development of the idea of deliberation in political philosophy before presenting the theory in its current form. As we will see, although deliberative models have a common point of departure in the centrality they assign to public reasoning in the political process, they vary from each other considerably. But rather the developing an eclectic approach that seeks to combine the different elements we will opt for the most promising account for the present study represented by the work of Jürgen Habermas. After reconstructing the development of the Habermasian model and its connection to his discourse ethical programme, we will confront it with some of the most commonly raised objections both from other theoretical perspectives as well as from deliberative democrats, which will then lead us to the second theoretical model we need for our analysis, the public sphere. To put it very simply: deliberative theory tells us something about the way interaction between individuals should be structured, but it has little to say about how the political process as a whole should take place. For this part we need a theory of the public sphere, and here again we will first retrace the development of the concept before turning to Habermas' first major work, the *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Habermas 1989). The criticism the approach has received has led him to revise his theory and the notion of the public sphere Habermas develops in *Between Facts and Norms* (Habermas 1996) as part of his account of deliberative democracy provides a fruitful analytical context for the present study.

In chapter three we will first develop the hypotheses with which we will examine each of the three research dimensions outlined above, before reviewing the literature on empirical applications of the deliberative model. As we will see, the analyses so far have produced mixed results, which has to do among other things with the challenge the application of a complex theoretical model such as deliberative democracy poses. We will therefore explore three of the most promising approaches in more detail and take them as the background from which we develop our own instrument of measure, the Discourse Quality Index of the media (DQI_m). Based on a critical reading of Steiner et al.'s (2004) work, the DQI_m takes its inspiration also from a the longitudinal perspective of Ferree et al.'s (2002) study about the abortion discourse in the United States and Germany as well as Dahlberg's (2001a, 2001b) rigorous translation of the central components of Habermasian concept of deliberative democracy. After having developed our content analytical index, we will then build our sample. Here, as mentioned above, our research strategy will consist in specifying two debate types according to public sphere model, cleavage structure, and normative level of discourse, which are characteristic of the country under examination, i.e. the UK. Based on this approach we will then select six debates, two from the 1960s, the 1980s, and the 2000s, which we will submit to the analysis. Because we analyse debates conducted in the media we will not only have to select debates but also have to decide in what kind of media

we will examine them. Since a purely frequentist approach is unfeasible, we will opt for a theoretical sample of newspapers which together cover what we could call the mainstream spectrum of political opinions, though at the same time we will focus on those titles with the largest circulations.

In chapter four we will carry out the actual analysis. This chapter will be subdivided into two main parts, a descriptive qualitative one and the inferential part where we will test our hypotheses. The descriptive part is important in itself as we will explore each of the variables of our index separately and thus the different dimensions of the changing public sphere. It will not only allow us to draw some preliminary conclusions about the possible direction of the development of the deliberative quality of the debates, but above all provide a detailed, in-depth examination of specific aspects of discursive interaction and transformation which we will not be able to submit to an inferential analysis. As such it complements the second part and provides us with important contextual information when it comes to assessing and interpreting the results from the regression models, our main statistical vehicle for the analysis of the hypotheses.

Chapter five, finally, will discuss our findings and relate them back to our theoretical model. As we will see, particularly the results from the inferential part need careful examination as some of them challenge our theoretical assumptions. Moreover, despite its complexity, the deliberative model and the theory of the public sphere which is part of it display a couple of shortcomings that will need to be addressed. The result of this will then also point to further research areas.

II. Democracy, discourse, and the public sphere: The deliberative approach

The research interest of the present study requires a theoretical account of democracy that puts an emphasis on the notion of the public sphere and the discourse by which it is constituted. The most promising theoretical models are in this respect represented by the deliberative approach to democracy as they make public reasoning not only a visible element but the central dimension in the political process. Deliberative democracy is a fast growing field of philosophical inquiry – and increasingly also empirical research – to the extent that Dryzek already in 2000 spoke of a "deliberative turn" in political theory, which broadly follows the linguistic turn of philosophy, and which foregrounds the discursive nature of politics. Regarded as one of the most promising approaches in democratic theory, Dryzek states that "[t]he essence of democracy itself is now widely taken to be deliberation, as opposed to voting, interest aggregation, constitutional rights, or even self-government" (Dryzek 2000: 1). Two years earlier James Bohman (1998) had already seen the "coming of age" of deliberative democracy, which might have been a slightly premature judgement at the time but is certainly justified with hindsight and Bohman undoubtedly more than accurately grasped the dynamic of the field.[1] Indeed, in 2003 the body of work had grown so immensely that Simon Chambers offered a list of key components in order to distinguish who is a deliberative democrat and who is not – surprisingly perhaps, Rawls is not according to Chambers – and by extension and more centrally to identify more clearly what deliberative democracy is, independent of the contributions by specific scholars to political theory (cf. Chambers 2003). Chambers, too, just as Bohman and Dryzek perceived deliberative democracy to have become a mature field of research, having moved "beyond the 'theoretical statement' stage and into the 'working theory' stage" (2003: 307). And in a recent article Dennis Thompson (2008) has called on both empirical researchers and theorists to "proceed with a clearer conception of the elements of deliberation" in the light of the fields growing diversity (Thompson 2008: 498), echoed by Jürg Steiner's (2008) warning against concept stretching with regard to empirical applications of deliberative democracy's potential as a working theory.

If we want to make deliberative theory applicable to empirical research in any fruitful way it therefore seems appropriate to first give a survey of the philosophical field, though the preceding paragraph already indicates that this will necessarily be restricted to some of the major strands. It will also be a selective account in that it will focus more centrally on that model which we will take as a basis for our empirical approach to the measurement of deliberation, i.e. Habermas' (1996) discourse theoretical approach to democracy as presented in *Between Facts and Norms*. In the context of the present study the main advantage of the Habermasian model is that it couples the deliberative procedure with a notion of the political process and the public sphere which allows us on the one hand to locate the role of the media more clearly and which offers on the other distinct normative criteria which can be translated into an analytical instrument.

[1] Interestingly, some of the reasons that compel Bohman to see a coming of age of deliberative democracy, namely the differentiating into different subfields and the broadening of the debate and theory's confrontation with empirical questions, lead Kies (2010) to state that "the deliberative model of democracy is still a blurry and polemical concept in so far as its definition, normative justification, and methods of realization are multiple, changing, and widely criticized" (Kies 2010: 7).

In order to proceed systematically we will divide the chapter thematically in two main parts, focussing first on the development of the idea of deliberative democracy (section 1), before moving on to the more recent approaches (section 2) and in particular the Habermasian account (section 3). We will then confront the deliberative model with some of the most prominent critical positions (section 4). As a part of this we will also introduce Axel Honneth's theory of recognition as it complements the deliberative model and plays a central role in our analysis of the public sphere conceived as a contested discursive space. Indeed, as we will see, that element that gives the deliberative model its radical democratic and critical edge is the very notion of the public sphere. The second part will therefore be devoted to discussing the concept in more depth and first reconstruct historically the importance of the idea of public reasoning, of the public, and of the public sphere in major thinkers since Kant (section 5). Here, we will also discuss Habermas' (1989) first major contribution to the field with *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, including the critical discussion it generated upon its publication both in German in 1962 and almost thirty years later in 1989 in English. We will then conclude this chapter with the procedural concept of a deliberative public sphere as explicated by Habermas in *Between Facts and Norms* and defended more recently (2006) in light of existing empirical research (section 6).

1. Deliberation and democracy: transformation of concepts

This section will first present an overview of the most prominent positions in deliberative theory. While dwelling only briefly on the origin of the idea of deliberation in ancient Greece, we will devote more attention to Kant, Rousseau, Mill, and the pragmatists, above all Dewey, although the main focus will be on the more recent re-invigoration of the approach in the 1980s. Our discussion will not only be necessarily selective with respect to the theorists included, we will also have to content ourselves with focussing more narrowly on those aspects within their vast body of work that touches upon the concept of deliberation and democracy. In the following we will first outline Rousseau's ideas on deliberation (section 1.1.), before moving on to Kant (section 1.2.), Mill (section 1.3.), and pragmatism (section 1.4.).

1.1. Rousseau

Some authors point as far back as the fifth century B.C. in ancient Greece for some of the first traces of a deliberative practice that occupies a systematic place in politics: Pericles is said to have perceived deliberation as a necessary "preliminary to any wise action at all" and Aristotle is credited as the first theorist to allocate deliberation a proper place in his account of politics as he argued that the decision reached by many are better than those arrived at by experts.[2] Of course, despite Aristotle's combining two elements which have had separate traditions before and after, namely deliberation and democracy, we have to be aware that the Athenian democracy is quite different from our modern conceptions, and that it was

[2] For an account of the development of the concept of deliberation within Aristotle's framework see e.g. Wiggins (1975).

particularly restrictive with respect to who counted as a citizen, as theorists such as Guttman and Thompson point out (cf. Gutmann & Thompson 2004: 8).[3]

From the perspective of the present study the point of departure is provided by the Enlightenment thinkers, above all Rousseau and Kant. Rousseau particularly is assessed critically by deliberative democrats as he advocated what we could call deliberation in isolation (cf. Gutmann & Thompson 2004: 4, Manin 1987: 341ff.). First of all, however, Rousseau is to be seen as a radical democrat as he postulated unanimity, i.e. the general will, as the only source of legitimacy; and it is mainly because of this that he is discussed by deliberative democrats.[4] But Rousseau was also enough of a realist to know that the *volonté générale* did not always coincide with the empirically observable *volonté de tous*, i.e. the will of all. The best measure to identify the general will in an imperfect world was to assess how close the observable will of all coincided with the general will, which would be an impossible task were it not for the fact that according to Rousseau the majority would always tend towards the general will.[5] Those who did not agree, i.e. the minority, were on this count simply mistaken as the question put to them was not what they wanted, but what they thought the general will was.[6]

What is problematic from our perspective is not only that Rousseau conceives of civil society as an acting subject writ large, coming into being through "an existential act of sociation" as Habermas (1997: 45) writes, but that he assumes questions of politics to be transparent and of a simple nature and that the moral point of view is therefore easily defined. Deliberation is bypassed as the individual's practical reason is directly tied to the general will. This is so because Rousseau is convinced that the general will only has to be discovered or rather uncovered as it is already determined or given (cf. Manin 1987: 344): "[a]s long as several men in assembly regard themselves as a single body, they have only a single will which is concerned with their common preservation and general well-being. In this case, all the springs of the State are vigorous and simple and its rules clear and luminous; there are no embroilments or conflicts of interests; the common good is everywhere clearly apparent, and only good sense is needed to perceive it. Peace, unity and

[3] Though it is important to see that the hegemony associated with the Athenian democracy was not necessarily an expression of privilege as Hannah Arendt succinctly shows in *The Human Condition* (1998).

[4] Sieyès makes a similar argument when he derives unanimity from autonomy: because man is by nature free, "only relations based on the free act of will of each individual can be established among them" (1789: 15).

[5] This is a stronger argument than the one proposed by Sieyès who, faced with the impossibility of attaining a unanimous will in reality, simply retreated to a majoritarian position, stating that it is the most reasonable – i.e. practical – solution (cf. Sieyès 1789: 38).

[6] The misguidedness of the minority has led some commentators to criticise Rousseau's conception, among them Karl Popper (1980), as favouring the tyranny of the majority, breeding nationalism, and leading to totalitarian forms of democracy. In *The Open Society and its Enemies* Popper (1980: 101) argues that Rousseau's romantic collectivism provides the grounds on which nationalism will later flourish. While there are numerous problematic aspects in Rousseau's thinking, he was rather clear about the relationship of minority and majority, e.g. in his discussion of Grotius' views on how a people chooses its form of government, where he pointed out that before doing so, a people must first constitute itself as a people: "Indeed, if there were no prior convention, where, unless the election were unanimous, would be the obligation on the minority to submit to the choice of the majority? How have a hundred men who wish for a master the right to vote on behalf of ten who do not? The law of majority voting is itself something established by convention, and presupposes unanimity, on one occasion at least" (2008: 8). Rousseau' question is not what lies in the individual interest as he is aware of man's selfishness, but what the general will is, thus suggesting that each should think from an impartial or the moral point of view: "The constant will of all the members of the State is the general will; by virtue of it they are citizens and free. When in the popular assembly a law is proposed, what the people is asked is not exactly whether it approves or rejects the proposal, but whether it is in conformity with the general will, which is their will" (Rousseau 2008: 107). Furthermore, Rousseau makes it clear in the *Discourse on Political Economy* (1988) that because of the impartiality with which the general will is endowed, it protects the individual rather than submitting it to the whims of the majority.

equality are the enemies of political subtleties" (Rousseau 2004: 68f.). As a consequence of this Rousseau uses "deliberation" not as a synonym for cooperative inquiry or quite generally political debate, it designates not the process as Manin (1987) points out, but the product: it is a term for the decision itself.[7] Yet, it is not only the different use which marks the contrast to recent theories of deliberative democracy, more than this, Rousseau objects expressly to communication between citizens, because in line with his view the exchange of opinions and positions could only distort people's articulation of the general will: "the people is never corrupted", he writes, "but it is often deceived, and on such occasions only does it seem to will what is bad" (Rousseau 2003: 17).[8] The reverse side of this is of course that Rousseau and his followers "labour under this moral overburdening of the virtuous citizen" as Habermas points out (Habermas 1997: 45): "[t]he assumption of republican virtues is realistic only for a polity with a normative consensus that has been secured in advance through tradition and ethos" (ibid.). However, this is neither the case for the society in which Rousseau lived, and even less so for the one which was to develop through those who carried his thoughts into the French Revolution:[9]

> if the practice of self-legislation must feed off the ethical substance of a people who already agree in advance on their value orientations, then Rousseau cannot explain how the postulated orientation of the citizens toward the common good can be mediated with the differentiated interest positions of private per-sons. He thus cannot explain how the normatively construed common will can, without repression, be mediated with the free choice of individuals. This would require a genuinely moral stand-point that would allow individuals to look beyond what is good for them and examine what lies equally in the interest of each. In the final analysis, the ethical version of the concept of popular sovereignty must lose sight of the universalistic meaning of Kant's principle of law
>
> (Habermas 1996: 102)

1.2. Kant

Kant, whose theoretical work is set apart in many respects from Rousseau's account of practical reason, centrally for instance in his separation of law and morality, nevertheless admitted that the French philosopher had "set him straight", learning from him in particular that the advancement of mankind did not consist in accumulation of knowledge (alone), but in the "restoration of the rights of humanity" (as cited in Munzel 2003: 43).[10] He was deeply

[7] Cf. also Manin (1987) for a comparison of the positions of Rousseau and Sieyès.

[8] Cohen mentions Fralin's point that Rousseau's conception of citizen assemblies had an educative role which, however, meant that political participation was essentially passive (cf. Cohen1986: 289, Fralin 1978).
Another, more basic point, might be at stake here. We know that Rousseau differs from Hobbes in that he thinks "natural man", who is essentially good, is corrupted by society to become an "artificial man" (cf. Viroli 1988, Hoffman 1963). It might be that Rousseau's deep suspicion about society plays a role here, i.e. his approach to keep individuals separate, or rather: to unite them in their isolation to form a uniform and homogenous body is the best way to preserve a hint of the natural state of man in society.

[9] There is an additional theoretical problem with Rousseau's account as Habermas points out: "if the practice of self-legislation must feed off the ethical substance of a people who already *agree in advance* on their value orientations, then Rousseau cannot explain how the postulated orientation of the citizens toward the common good can be mediated with the differentiated interest positions of private persons. He thus cannot explain how the normatively construed common will can, without repression, be mediated with the free choice of individuals. This would require a genuinely moral standpoint that would allow individuals to look beyond what is good for them and examine what lies equally in the interest of each. In the final analysis, the ethical version of the concept of popular sovereignty must lose sight of the universalistic meaning of Kant's principle of law" (Habermas 1996: 102, emphasis in the original).

[10] In very general terms Kant's distinction between law and morality means that the subject acts legally in as far as its actions are in agreement with the law, it acts morally, however, only to the extent that its actions arise out of moral duty and are hence the product of practical rationality.

influenced by Rousseau in his thinking on moral philosophy and as Rousseau maintained that "legislative authority can be attributed only to the united will of the people" (Kant 1999: 119). The important difference in our context is that for Kant the will is not simply something of a veiled given which discloses itself in the act of individuals gathered to becoming a macro-subject. Rather, the will is autonomous insofar as it is only bound by reason: "The will itself, strictly speaking, has no determining ground; insofar as it can determine choice, it is instead practical reason itself" (Kant 1996: 13). The interesting point is then to see how Kant conceptualises practical reason and how the individual relates to it. In agreement with Rousseau, Kant, too, sees freedom not as the individual's independence from law, but given through the individual as the author of law: a free will is the motive and thus the motor of action, but it can only be free to the extent that it is itself not the result of another cause. Autonomy of the subject then becomes visible through the insight into the necessity of having to act in accordance with the moral maxim, even against one's preferences, i.e. it becomes visible in moral duty.[11] Practical reason in turn finds its expression in the Categorical Imperative, of which we will consider the first formulation: "Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law without contradiction" (Kant 1993: 30). Deliberation, here, is not excluded as in Rousseau, though it contrasts from our understanding in that it is rather introspective and solitary. It relies on the individual's faculty to be able to think from the perspective from the other – Goodin (2000) might call it "deliberation within" – and insofar anticipates intersubjective notions of communication, individuation and socialisation as found e.g. in Mead's (1968) symbolic interactionism.[12]

The *Critique of Practical Reason*, however, is not the only place in Kant's vast oeuvre where find a concept of deliberation, however monologic or vague it may be. Bur before we come to this, we have to address a more basic point: in contrast to Rousseau, Kant never wrote a political philosophy. True, Kant wrote *Perpetual Peace* and *The Doctrine of Right*, but as Arendt points out, the ironic tone in the first one betrays that Kant himself did not take it too seriously, speaking of mere "reveries" (Arendt 1992: 7). And as far as the latter is concerned, Arendt thought that it was "boring and pedantic", stating that "[t]he concept of law is of great importance in Kant's practical philosophy, where man is understood as a legislative being; but if we want to study the philosophy of law in general, we certainly shall not turn to Kant but to Pufendorff or Grotius or Montesquieu" (ibid.: 7f.). These difficulties notwithstanding, it is above all thanks to the intellectual effort of Hannah Arendt that we can speak of a political philosophy in relation with Kant, though of course, her account is to be seen as a "free extrapolation from Kant" as Wellmer (1996: 37) states and faces its very

[11] Kant disregards the consequences and side effects of actions as they can be brought about through other motives of action. The moral value of an action thus can only be assessed by its relation to its practical rationality.

[12] Mead's criticism of Kant goes one step further and is very much in the pragmatist vein as he argues that the Categorical Imperative can only serve as a test for established maxims, but it does not tell us how we arrive at them in first place: "Any constructive act is, however, something that lies outside of the scope of Kant's principle. From Kant's standpoint you assume that the standard is there; and then if you slip around it yourself while expecting other people to live up to it, Kant's principle will find you out. But where you have no standard, it does not help you to decide. Where you have to get a restatement, a readjustment, you get a new situation in which to act; the simple generalizing of the principle of your act does not help. It is at that point that Kant's principle breaks down" (Mead 1983: 381). Moreover, Mead criticises Kant for assuming that there is only one way of acting, but that the Categorical Imperative fails if we allow alternatives to come in: "What Kant's principle does is to tell you that an act is immoral under certain conditions, but it does not tell you what is the moral act. Kant's categorical imperative assumes that there is just one way of acting. If that is the case, then there is only one course that can be universalized; then the respect for law would be the motive for acting in that fashion. But if you assume that there are alternative ways of acting, then you cannot utilize Kant's motive as a means of determining what is right" (ibid.). What Mead in effect criticises here is the lack of intersubjectivity in Kant's monological account of ethics.

own problems.[13] We will nevertheless give some space to her thoughts in order to see what kind of deliberative elements can be found in or rather extracted from Kant.

The thought which Arendt develops in her *Lecture on Kant's Political Philosophy*, however, is not so much concerned with the *Critique of Practical Reason* (Kant 1949), or with the aforementioned two other treatises on law and political theory, as we might have thought. Rather, she reconstructs Kant's political philosophy through her reading of the third of his main works with which Kant concluded his critical business: the *Critique of Judgment* (Kant 1987); and it is here that we find an elaborate idea of deliberation. This is remarkable insofar as the *Critique of Judgment* is Kant's work on taste and aesthetics, hence by itself an unlikely candidate as the basis for a political theory. Taste differs fundamentally from scientific or cognitive propositions (pure reason) and moral judgments (practical reason), which according to Kant are not real judgments anyway (cf. Arendt 1992: 72). The crucial point is that aesthetic judgments are not as self-evident as theoretical or practical statements, and we need to communicate with others in order to "court" or "woo" them, as Arendt writes, with our views (cf. ibid.). As a consequence of this Arendt writes that "Kant's account of taste implies a concept of 'intersubjectivity', where the judgement concerned is neither strictly objective nor strictly subjective" (ibid.: 120). We could also say that Kant saw that in contrast to the other Critiques, judgement and taste are experiences that are primarily subjective in nature, and the only way to be able to relate them to others is to transcend one's own subjectivity: "In other words, the nonsubjective element in the nonobjective sense is intersubjectivity. (You must be alone in order to think; you need company to enjoy a meal.)" (ibid.: 67). At times intersubjectivity becomes a concrete concept, e.g. when Kant emphasises that we need the presence of others in order to exercise the faculty of judgment (cf. ibid.: 72ff.). But it is also situated at a more abstract level, as the "sensus communis", which allows us to come to a judgment in the first place. Arendt identifies several elements and maxims which can be thought of as conditions and structural properties of the judging as a process: judging presupposes a community, it also presupposes the communicability of the judgment, the mental act of representation of something that is absent (taste), and the operation of reflection, embodied in the "sensus communis", which takes a particular form in Kant. Other than the common sense the "sensus communis" is "an extra sense [...] that fits us into a community" (ibid.: 70) and is based on three maxims: the maxim of enlightenment (to think for oneself), the maxim of the enlarged mentality (to think from the point of everyone else), and the maxim of consistency (to think in agreement with oneself, without contradiction). It is particularly the enlarged mentality which Arendt takes as the basis for developing a Kantian political philosophy: judgments always concern the particular, and the enlarged mentality allows us to relate the particular, individual, and subjective to the general and universal through reasoning, and while this might in itself not be a political faculty it is easy to see how individuals in a society make use of exactly this maxim to orient themselves. More than this, Kant's insight that judgments must transcend the confines of the subjective and can acquire validity only

[13] Arendt intended *Judging* to become the third part of her work on *The Life of Mind*, but she never came further than the title page as she died before she could complete the book. Beiner (1982) argues that *Judging* was planned as the culmination of her work on the mind and should also have present the solution to some of the theoretical problems of which she had become aware in her work.
Wellmer argues that despite her effort to overcome limitations of Kant's work, Arendt uses a scientistic conception of truth and an overly formalistic notion of rationality which ultimately lead her to a "mythology" of judgment i.e. in her defining judging "as the somewhat mysterious faculty to hit upon the truth [or more generally intersubjective validity] when there is no context of possible arguments by which truth claims could be redeemed" (Wellmer 1996: 38).

through intersubjectivity, i.e. the public use of reason, still forms the core of any account of deliberation or any account that situates the self in society *qua* communication as e.g. Mead.

Kant, however, was no democrat in our sense of the term. For one thing he was explicitly opposed to democracy, though it must be added that the target of his criticism was direct democracy: "democracy is, properly speaking, necessarily a despotism, because it establishes an executive power in which 'all' decide for or even against one who does not agree; that is, 'all', who are not quite all, decide, and this is a contradiction of the general will with itself and with freedom" (Kant 2003: 10). But he was also quite generally against extending suffrage to women, domestic servants, and children. Whereas we would agree that children should indeed not be allowed the right to vote, it is more than just odd from our perspective that women and domestic servants should be excluded from participation in the political process. The reason for this can be found in the requirements citizens have to fulfil according to Kant in order to be able to adopt the role as citizens, of which "civil independence" is the most important in the present context as it states that a citizen owes "his own existence and preservation to his own rights and powers as a member of a commonwealth, not to the choice of another among the people" (Kant 1996: 312). Without extending the discussion much further, the point here is that Kant might not so much have been motivated by anti-democratic sentiments, but rather tried to remain consistent with respect to his theoretical framework.[14] What is important in this respect is that a theoretical account of deliberation does not automatically have to go hand in hand with a theoretical account of democracy. The two are rather separate elements, and we will see that e.g. in Habermas' discourse principle (D) they still can be discerned as distinct dimensions coalesced into one formula.

1.3. Mill

In contrast to Kant, John Stuart Mill presents both an account of democracy and an account of deliberation. He shares with Kant the view that citizens can only be bound by law of which they are the authors. Writing after Kant, he does not display the same scepticism towards democracy, though he is equally aware that the tyranny of the majority could well lead to what Kant called despotism. More than this and in contrast to Kant he sees the danger that this form of despotism could extend beyond the realm of the political into people's interactions with each other in their daily lives – which he considers to be even more detrimental as society and public opinion do not have the status of an elected power. It is here that *On Liberty* ties in, in which Mill argues that "[o]ver himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign" (Mill 1999: 52) and that therefore he cannot be coerced or constrained by either the state or society in his liberties except if he causes harm to others. Central for Mill's conception of liberty are his concepts of the freedom of action and the freedom to opinion, of which the latter one is particularly interesting from our perspective as it includes the freedom of speech. The crucial point here is the instrumental argument Mill offers for the freedom of opinion: "there ought to exist the fullest liberty of professing and discussing, as a matter of ethical conviction, any doctrine, however immoral it may be considered" (Mill 1999: 59) because we can never be sure that the discussion has

[14] In *The Human Condition* Arendt makes a similar point with regard to the Greek polis about the right to participation in political affairs, which depended on the individual as being free from labour (cf. Arendt 1998).

been exhaustive, that all arguments have been considered. Results of debates are thus always arrived at under the assumption of their fallibility, and this is why "[w]e can never be sure that the opinion we are endeavoring to stifle is a false opinion; and if we were sure, stifling it would be an evil still" (ibid.: 60). Mill thus expands Kant's account of legitimacy by connecting the deliberative idea to the democratic idea, and supplements it moreover with an explicit perspective of social learning, which derives directly from his account of public opinion: if the results of debates can always only be taken as temporary products of the exchanges in the marketplace of ideas, then the debates must be on-going as people constantly learn through them.[15]

1.4. Pragmatism

The last strand of deliberative theories we will explore before coming to the current attempts in formulating a theory of deliberative democracy is the work by the pragmatists, not least because they have been of paramount importance in the development of Habermas' thought, above all Peirce, Dewey, and Mead. And while they are all important in their respective contributions, Peirce's notion of consensus theory of truth or Mead's work on intersubjectivity, we will focus here on one aspect of Dewey's account of democracy.

Pragmatism generally shares with Mill's view of deliberation the fallibility of results, even those arrived at by scientific methods. Similarly, Dewey thought that political institutions such as the freedom of thought and the freedom of speech were essential requirements for democracy as they guaranteed the unhindered flow of communication and with it the possibility of bringing forth hypotheses of criticising them. The background for this conception of democracy and deliberation, however, is very different from Mill's and can be found in the role scientific inquiry plays for him as well as for the other pragmatists, particularly Peirce. Dewey was convinced that science and society should interpenetrate each other: "good" science required respect of autonomy, symmetric reciprocity, and discourse ethics because the "*non*-algorithmic standards by which scientific hypotheses are judged depend on cooperation and discussion structured by the same norms. Both for its full development and for its full application to human problems, science requires the *democratization of inquiry*" (Putnam 1994: 216, emphasis in the original) as Hilary Putnam states in his interpretation of Dewey's though co-authored by Ruth Putnam. In short, the truth of a proposition is tied to the social-political context in which it arises and democracy as an idea offers a context which from a communicative perspective might be described as non-distorted. But this is only one side of the process, the other concerns democracy itself and consists in showing that democracy is in need of the scientific method, i.e. of inquiry and experiment. Here again, Putnam succinctly summarises Dewey's view: "The dilemma facing the classical defenders of democracy arose because all of them presupposed that we already know our nature and our capabilities. In contrast, Dewey's view is that we don't know what our interests and needs are or what we are capable of until we actually engage in politics. A corollary of this view is that there can be no final answer to the question 'How should we live' and that we should, therefore, always leave it open to further discussion and

[15] Habermas reminds us that twelve years before Mill published *On Liberty* the German democrat Julius Fröbel very clearly connected the principle of majority rule with the idea of free discussion while holding on to Rousseau's and Kant's idea that the individual can only be bound by law of which he or she is the author. As democratic legislative bodies decide by majority,"[c]onsensus and majority rule are compatible only if the latter has an internal relation to the search for truth: public discourse must mediate between reason and will, between the opinion-formation of all and the majoritarian will-formation of the representatives" as Habermas states (Habermas 1997: 47).

experimentation. And this is precisely why we need democracy" (ibid.: 198). Democracy is here conceived as an on-going experiment, which has no definite result, but which changes and improves constantly – if we adopt the inquisitive attitude of the experimenter. Dewey was clear this social idea of democracy was only imperfectly realised in its existing contemporary forms. His idea of the intertwining of democracy and science was a farther-reaching and richer idea that could not come to the fore even in the best of states, not least because he extended his approach beyond state and society in a narrow sense to include families, schools, the economy and even religion (cf. Dewey 1903, 1916, 1927, 1940). This puts him in stark contrast with some deliberative democrats, certainly with Habermas as we will see.[16] But it would hardly be doubted by any deliberative democrat that in trying to advance democratic inquiry Dewey was right when he diagnosed that main problem for democracies consisted in "the improvement of the methods and conditions of debates, discussion and persuasion. That is *the* problem of the public" (Dewey 1927: 208). Deliberation and democracy are thus not simply joined together, they presuppose one other. Moreover, Dewey's diagnosis shows the central importance of public inquiry and debate for the quality and advancement of democracy, which in turn ties in with the aims of the present study.

Despite having only offered a fragmentary and selective sketch of the idea of deliberation, we have been able to see that deliberation is theorised in many different ways and it is not always tied to the idea of democracy.[17] We will now turn to the more recent developments in the field of deliberative democracy which makes precisely this connection.

2. Deliberative democracy: recent approaches

Although the conceptions of democracy reviewed in the previous section differ substantially from current approaches, most of them incorporate a notion of deliberation or reflection in political decision making. And those which do not such as Rousseau are exactly problematic because of this as they overburden the individuals morally and make unrealistic assumptions about the transparency of their wills, let alone of collectives as in Rousseau. We have also seen, however that accounts of deliberation in moral and political matters can be formulated independently of accounts of democracy, as e.g. in Kant. The more recent idea of a deliberative democracy, a term coined by Joseph Bessette (1980), has (re-)surfaced in the 1980s and combines both dimensions into one theory and one central statement: democratic legitimacy is the result of deliberation. Before we come to characterise the contributions of deliberative democracy in different fields of political theory, we will first sketch what deliberative democracy is in a broad sense (section 2.1.). We will then move on to outline the different areas where deliberative democracy is most active: international

[16] Axel Honneth (1998) has interpreted Dewey's work as offering a notion of democracy as "reflexive cooperation" which he situates between communitarian and deliberative models.

[17] This is also true for Peirce: as Bacon states "Peirce held that the method of science had no application to political questions. In particular, he emphasized the importance of distinguishing the pursuit of the good for society from the pursuit of truth", arguing that "Peirce was no deliberative democrat, for the reason that he was no democrat in any sense of the term; towards the end of his life he described himself as an 'ultra-conservative', 'an old-fashioned Christian, a believer in the efficacy of prayer, an opponent of female suffrage and of universal male suffrage, in favor of letting business-methods develop without the interference of law, a disbeliever in democracy, etc. etc.'" (Bacon 2010: 1078).

relations (section 2.2), public policy (section 2.3), and public law (2.4.). In a next step we will then come to on of the larger differences within the deliberative democratic camp, the dispute between substantivists and proceduralists, as a preliminary step to introduce the Habermasian account (section 2.5). This will finally also allow us to discuss Axel Honneth's notion of recognition as an approach which complements what the proceduralist perspective may lack (section 2.6.).

2.1. Preliminary definition of deliberative democracy

Deliberative democracy is in very general terms understood to be a formal approach for the resolution of democratic conflict and political decision making. We can locate the approach further on the one hand by delimiting it against alternative, i.e. aggregative forms of decision making. As Gutmann and Thompson (2004) as well as Young (2000) show, the aggregative model of democracy takes preferences as givens, very much like Rousseau, it views decisions as accumulated individual preferences without considering the interaction that might take place between participants in the political process, and it has no or only in very weak terms a possibility to evaluate the results of political decisions from a normative perspective, given that it is anchored in rational choice theory. We might add to this, that it also restricts the analytical focus on the act of decision-making itself, and furthermore completely ignores the output side of the political process which also plays and equally important role in the deliberative model, as can be seen from Habermas' analytical distinction between discourses of justification and discourses of application. On the other hand Habermas (1994) argues for deliberative democracy as an own model situated between liberalism and republicanism. While the three models share common assumptions, i.e. the autonomy of individuals, a political community constituted by citizens, and a public sphere anchored in civil society which connects society and the state, each of them has developed into a distinct theoretical account which gives more emphasis to one of these basic components. Without going into too much detail here, the main difference is that the liberal model is one emphasising the negative rights of the individual vis-à-vis the state, the republican/communitarian one is, insofar as it is inspired by Rousseau, based on the idea of a self-governing political community, constituted by moral subjects, which takes the place of the bureaucratic state, whereas the most important characteristic of the deliberative model is the critical role of the public sphere, anchored in a vibrant civil society and the discursive locus of democracy's normative potential which is brought to bear on the political-administrative centre (cf. Habermas 1994).

What is important to bear in mind is that the way deliberative democracy is defined here presents it as a substantive model just as liberalism and republicanism. We will see later, when presenting the Habermasian account as laid out in *Between Facts and Norms* more closely, but also that of Gutmann and Thompson and others, that there is a second reading of deliberative democracy, namely that of promoting or identifying the deliberative element in the political process, independent of the model to which the democracy in question corresponds. On the first reading of deliberative democracy as presented here we can identify in slight variation with Freeman (2000: 382) nine elements that are shared by the different approaches and which distinguish deliberative democracy from other models: (a) citizens and their representatives do not only vote, more important than this they deliberate with one another, and (b) these deliberations inform their judgments (c) about decisions

which are in the public interest, i.e. they increase the common good. The participants of deliberative processes (d) perceive themselves and one another as free and equals, and (e) take part in the political process against the background of basic constitutional rights. (f) Citizens' preferences, i.e. their conceptions of the good, are incongruous, non-determined prior to deliberation and (g) independent of one another and the political purposes. (h) The forming of preferences through deliberation occurs through the exchange of public reasons in contrast to private ones, (i) the public reasons being those which are couched in terms of the common good, which (j) can be identified independent of any concrete political issue as relating to the freedom, the equality, and the independence of citizens. This is rather detailed and in some respects maybe even a somewhat narrow list, but it serves to elucidate the different components of deliberative democracy and how they relate to one another.

This provisional definition also contains different arguments for a deliberative conception of democracy: deliberation forms and changes preferences and makes them more transparent, it includes different perspectives and leads to the participants' adopting the other's point of view, is thus inclusive in particular of minorities and their perspectives, decreases self-interest and increases the use of public-spirited arguments, which on the whole leads to more legitimate decisions and makes them more acceptable even to those who endorse differing views. This takes place against the constitutional backdrop of free and equal citizens; in fact, from a Kantian perspective we could say that it is the use of public reason which makes citizens more free. Apart from this common core, the different approaches vary considerably with regard to the area on which they focus and the way they conceptualise the deliberative procedure. In the following, we will therefore briefly review the different parts of the political process in which deliberative theory has taken an interest.[18]

2.2. Deliberative democracy and international relations

In international relations we can distinguish debates focussing on international or transnational governance on the one hand and supranationally governing bodies such as the EU on the other. As regards the latter, most of the debate has centred on the question of a constitution for the EU, which most deliberative theorists such as Habermas (2004a) and Lacroix (2002), who speak of a "constitutional patriotism", favour (cf. Erkisen & Fossum 2000, Eriksen 2002, Ménendez 2004, Fossum & Ménendez 2005). Habermas argues that a European constitution would enable citizens to identify as participants in a common, supranational project, and it would strengthen quite generally the political framework against what are still very visible the historical origins of the project, namely the common European market, i.e. the economy (cf. Habermas 2004a, 2001). Moravcsik (2006, 2008) in turn argues that the failure of European constitutional reform lies among other things in fact that the currently adopted strategy has ignored basic findings from empirical social science, namely that issues which are perceived as non-salient cannot be made salient by increased participatory opportunities and political rhetoric; public deliberation, trust, identity, and legitimacy cannot be induced from outside.

[18] In line with Chambers (2003) we can broadly distinguish the following fields where deliberative democracy is mainly at work: public law, international relations, policy studies, empirical research, and identity politics, though empirical research perhaps should be characterised as a meta-field as its interests extend to all of the other fields. As the subsection on public law will be concerned with developing the deliberative model more closely, we will put this part at the end of the following sections. The same is the case for identity politics, which we will relegate to that part where we confront deliberative theory with its challenges (section 4.2.).

International relations debates have in turn focused on the democratic deficit we see beyond the nation state in the absence of supranational political bodies. Chambers (2003) characterises the poles of the debate broadly as being composed on the one hand by those who argue that political sovereignty should remain within the confines of the nation state, but that the issues and the perspectives which inform these debates should be global and cosmopolitan (cf. Thompson 1999). On the other hand scholars such as Held (1995) propose new democratic institutions on an international or supranational level. Authors such as Forst in turn propose a critical conception of transnational justice based on a theory of a right to justification (Forst 2001a, 2001b, 2007). Additionally, the critical and central notion of the public sphere in deliberative democracy requires a different theoretical status once we leave the level of the nation-state. Here, Bohman (2004) in the context of the democratic potential of the internet puts forward cautious but optimistic views, Nanz and Steffek (2004) decidedly argue for a transnational public sphere as a prerequisite for global governance, while Fraser points to the fundamental theoretical problem of transnational communication spaces in a globalised world: "[t]he concept of the public sphere was developed not simply to understand communication flows but to contribute a normative political theory of democracy" (Fraser 2007: 7). More than this, in a deliberative account the public opinion arising from the deliberative processes in the informal public sphere holds the political power to account on the one hand and works towards translating its communicative power into administrative power on the other. With no political-administrative centre in place in international and transnational contexts, however, the democratic potential of the corresponding public spheres lacks a point of reference in the political process, or a proper political process in the first place. But the transitional space is also one which is theorised by authors as Dryzek (2005) in the context of divided societies and identities, which have moved beyond the national level in the post-Cold War world order. Here, too, a transnational public sphere is part of the solution proposed from a deliberative perspective which Dryzek considers more feasible than alternative propositions by agonists and consociational democrats (cf. Dryzek 2005).

2.3. Deliberative democracy and public policy

Public policy research was, as Chambers (2003) notes, one of the first fields to turn to the deliberative model. This might have to do with the fact that the changes in the theoretical model are felt most immediately here, the cases under study often provide ideal testing grounds for new approaches, and it is therefore also an area where theorists and empirical researchers often work hand in hand. Chambers writes: "It is in the realm of policy initiative and analysis that deliberative democratic theory is at its most concrete" (2003: 316). Deliberative approaches have worked towards including citizens generally more closely in the process of policy formulation and implementation (Fisher & Forester 1993, Majone 1990, Brouillet & Turner 2005). That is they have designed institutions for these processes on the one hand, e.g. Ackerman and Fishkin's (2002) proposal for a "National Deliberation Day", to be held two weeks before the presidential elections in order to discuss the most important issues in small groups across the country after a nationally televised debate between the candidates; akin in its idea to Fishkin's deliberative opinion polls (1995,

Fishkin & Luskin 2005).[19] Researchers such as Burkart (1994) on the other hand have shown how the public acceptance of policies is increased if they are formulated and implemented according to deliberative principles. The main point in deliberative policy planning is that approaches which have already worked before the deliberative turn towards including more citizens in citizen conferences, etc. can now rely on a more complex and firmly anchored theoretical concept. Yet, as Chambers (2003) points out, we have to be aware that in policy contexts deliberation or consensus are rarely part of the decision rule, rather deliberation encompasses the processes preceding and following the decision – their import on the decision itself is thus rather of a indirect nature.

2.4. Deliberative democracy and public law

The approaches we will confront with each other when turning to the substantivist/proceduralist distinctions in deliberative theory are located in the area of public law, which can be further distinguished into general accounts on the one hand and approaches to constitutional theory on the other. Bessette's work, which has given the discipline its name and which he develops at length in *The Mild Voice of Reason* (1997), is predominantly interested in institutional analysis to determine in how far the US American Congress as the primary locus of deliberation on a national level (still) upholds the idea of deliberation as articulated in the American Constitution. Chambers argues that constitutional theory has to some extent taken its own deliberative turn before political theory in general adopted the new paradigm. Ackerman traces the transformations of the Constitution among other things to what he calls "Publian politics", i.e. a form political action in which public appeals to the common good are ratified by a mass of mobilised citizens who express "their assent through extraordinary institutional forms" (Ackerman 1983: 1022, cf. Ackerman 1993). Ackerman later also argued that from the general point of view of the citizen, deliberation might extend to all matters of importance, but not at the same time: in public life in order "[t]o be a competent social actor, I must constantly engage in a process of selective repression – restraining the impulse to speak the truth on a vast number of role-irrelevant matters so as to get on with the particular form of life in which I am presently engaged" (1989: 20). Sunstein (1986) has for instance analysed in this early period of the deliberative turn in constitutional theory under what circumstances the state's legal interference with private preferences is justified or not and shapes out the role of deliberation as central to that process, although it is also clearly fraught with possible problems: "This understanding is extremely optimistic about the effects of public deliberation. Such deliberation will of course be affected by disparities in power; it may be odd to suggest that those disparities can be remedied through discourse among people who are already victims of the same power relations. But there are many examples of cases in which relations of power, incapable of rational defense, have been revealed as such through public dialogue. Recent civil rights movements on behalf of blacks and women are at least partial examples" (1986: 1155). Without going into more detail about constitutional theory, to which others such as Michelman (1988), Dworkin (1996), Preuss (1995), Tully (1995) have contributed, we can see that examining constitutional questions from deliberative

[19] In deliberative polls a small random sample of people who discuss a public policy issue under "ideal" conditions, the participants receive enough background information for discussions which are led by moderator and in which the develop question that are then posed to experts and politicians (cf. Fishkin 1991).

perspective leads to a broadening of the perspective to include the political process that is tied to them.

2.5. Substantivism vs. proceduralism

It is exactly this perspective which lies at the heart of the general work in political theory and which focuses more closely on deliberative democracy as an account of the political process. We will focus here mainly on the distinction between Habermas (1996) and Gutmann & Thompson (1996, 2004) as they are equally the main representatives of the proceduralist and the substantivist perspectives.[20] Without presenting their perspectives in too much detail here – the Habermasian account will be discussed in more detail below in the next subsection – we can say that there is an internal divide in deliberative democratic theory between those who develop their account mainly on the basis of the procedural aspects of deliberative democracy on the one hand, and those who explicitly include substantive elements. Substantivists such as Gutmann & Thompson argue that although the deliberative model focuses on procedural aspects of politics, it needs to be supplemented or embedded in a wider context and defined through substantive principles which have a value on their own. On their view proceduralists such as Habermas seem "to imply that a provisionally justifiable resolution of moral conflicts in politics depends solely on satisfying the conditions of deliberation" and that they thereby fail to "capture the value of basic rights" (Gutmann & Thompson 1996: 17).[21] Gutmann and Thompson in turn suggest that "even in deliberative democracy, deliberation does not have priority over liberty and opportunity" (ibid.). In order to shape out the differences more clearly, we will first present the substantivist argument against proceduralism and then attempt a moderate proceduarlist defence.

Gutmann and Thompson state that theories "of deliberative democracy consist of a set of principles that are intended to establish fair terms of political cooperation in a democratic society" (2002: 153), which is a view to which all theorists of deliberative democracy could subscribe. They then go on to argue against "pure" proceduralists who "believe that the principles should refer only to the process of making political decisions in government or civil society" (ibid.). The problem with such a view is, according to their position, that at the heart these theories assume that the procedures they explicate can be justified

[20] Other general approaches include among others the contributions made by Dryzek (1990, 2000), Chambers (1996), Bohman (1996), Benhabib (1996a), Cohen (1989), Macedo (1999), with a multicultural perspective Valadez (2001), a pragmatist based conception is advocated by Talisse (2004) and Misak (2000). If Bessette is credited with having coined the term of deliberative democracy, then Manin's (1987) article on political legitimacy and deliberation can certainly be seen as defining the field and giving it its initial direction, drawing on among other things Habermas' even before his own political turn. Rawls in turn, despite his intimate connection to the programme of deliberative democracy evidenced not only by his exchange with Habermas (cf. Habermas 1995,1998a, Rawls 1995, Finalyson 2007, Finlayson & Freyenhagen 2010), but also by his visible influence for instance on Cohen's (1989) approach, is not part of the field in a more strict sense as Chambers (2003), but also Benhabib (1996a) and Saward (2002) point out. Chambers argues that "Rawls does not qualify because, although he discusses some aspects of democracy, his is not a democratic theory per se" (Chambers 2003: 308), while Benhabib (1996a) makes the point that Rawls' notion of public reason is more about specifying its boundaries rather than giving a positive account. Saward (2002) goes even further than this, arguing that Rawls' idea of public reason is essentially non-deliberative or outright anti-deliberative "unless we stretch the meaning of deliberation well beyond what any of the major deliberative theorists intend it to mean" (Saward 2002: 112): at times at least Rawls seems to restrict deliberation to a political elite, the issues to be discussed are limited to constitutional matters and questions of basic justice, and the reasoning process is for the most part monologic.

[21] In fact, they go even further than this, contending that if the proceduralist position holds "that principles such as liberty and opportunity should never constrain these judgments [of participants in deliberations], then discourse theory doe not adequately protect human rights" (Gutmann & Thompson 1996: 17).

independently of any substantive principle.[22] They cite Habermas' theory as an example of a proceduralist position, though they mainly refer to his work on discourse ethics by quoting a passage from *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action* (Habermas 1990a: 94): "All contents, no matter how fundamental the action norm involved may be, must be made to depend on real discourses (or advocatory discourses conducted as substitutes for them)".[23] Pure proceduralism is thus marked by the view that no other but procedural principles count in the process of political decision making: "the principles should not prescribe the substance of laws, but only the procedures by which laws (such as equal suffrage) are made and the conditions necessary for the procedures to work fairly (such as free political speech)" (Gutmann & Thompson 2004: 23f.).[24] Proceduralists are not against substantive principles because they take issue with the content of these principles, rather they think that substantive principles are superfluous to guarantee a political process according to deliberative standards. Furthermore, proceduralists oppose the substantivist notion of deliberative democracy on the grounds that it puts theorists of democracy in the position to define what kind of principles are to be considered as basic rather than citizens themselves.

Substantivists by contrast hold that the proceduralist approach is insufficient and that moreover proceduralists themselves rely on substantive principles. First, the substantivists argue that deliberative democracy has to guard itself against unjust outcomes: not every result which is the product of a (more or less) deliberative process is automatically justifiable and in line with basic democratic assumptions. Proceduralists, however, are forced to consider every outcome of the deliberative process as legitimate. Because of this substantivists assert that "[t]hose rights that are fundamental to human agency, dignity, or integrity (freedom of religion, racial non-discrimination, and so on) need to be secured, along with rights related to the procedural aspects of democracy (such as the right to vote)" (ibid.: 24). The minimalism of the purely procedural approach comes at the price of indifferent towards the results of deliberation. Second, procedural principles have a substantive content: "If majority rule is better than minority rule, it must be for moral reasons. These reasons refer to such values as free and equal personhood, the same values that support substantive principles" (ibid.: 25). Therefore, Gutmann and Thompson conclude, procedural approaches do not occupy a privileged theoretical position, the principles on which they are based must be equally open to deliberation as substantive ones, i.e. both kinds of principles are to be treated as provisional.

While Gutmann and Thompson's critique rightly points out the substantive dimension of procedural approaches, their account is flawed in three important respects: (a) Gutmann and Thompson make Habermas more of a proceduralist than he really is, while (b) at the same time they are less substantivists than one might think at first, which also means that the difference between proceduralists and substantivists is not as large as it may seem,

[22] See also their *Democracy and Disagreement* (1996: 17ff.).

[23] Axel Honneth, quoting the same passage, reconstructs Habermas development in a detailed way: while in his original programme of a theory of formal pragmatic meaning Habermas had tried to interpret the concept of the ideal speech situation as bringing out the outlines of an ideal life form, he later abandoned the idea with his discourse ethical programme. As Honneth argues, the quoted passage shows not only that the ideal speech situation loses its meaning in delineating an ideal life form, but also in drawing the contours of a just order of society (see below, cf. Honneth 1986).

[24] As Gutmann & Thompson (2004: 23) put it: "Pure proceduralism holds that principles should apply only to the process of making decisions in government or civil society". The last part is a bit odd as Habermas as one of their preferred example of pure proceduralism would probably maintain that ideally political decisions come about as part of the connection of civil society and the government through the public sphere (see below).

while they ignore that (c) substantive models are faced with potential problems which can only be overcome by incorporating the procedural dimension at the heart of it.

Ad (a): Gutmann and Thompson, despite writing in 2002 and 2004, fail to take into account the very substantial transformation of Habermas programme from a discourse theory of morality which seeks to explicate in discourse ethical terms the moral point of view to a theory of ethical discourse as part of Habermas' political/legal turn (cf. Finlayson 2005). The passage they quote is from the "first phase" so to speak, published in German in 1983 (Habermas 1983a), while his mature position is developed during the "second phase". They thus largely gloss over the significant development that distinguishes the discourse ethical programme from *Between Facts and Norms*, and they further ignore Habermas' chapter in Bohman and Rehg (1997) on "Popular Sovereignty as Procedure" (Habermas 1997: 35-65), where he explicitly states that procedures are always embedded not only in substantive contexts, but that they also presuppose an existing political culture and a rationalised lifeworld that meets the political apparatus halfway: "It is precisely the deliberatively filtered political communications that depend on lifeworld resources – on a liberal political culture and an enlightened political socialization, above all on the initiatives of opinion-building associations" (Habermas 1996: 302). Although Habermas does not name substantive principles such as basic liberty and fair opportunity which are central to Gutmann and Thompsons' account, it seems clear that his approach relies on some sort of substantive principles and a political culture which is based on them. Above all, however, in *Between Facts and Norms* Habermas develops the view that public and private autonomy are co-original, i.e. the right of individuals to take part in the political process and the possibility to develop and bring in the debate their own conceptions of the good life presuppose one another: as Rehg explains Habermas' idea "the internal relation between private and public autonomy requires a set of abstract rights that citizens must recognize if they want to regulate their life together by means of legitimate positive law. This 'system of rights', which each concrete democratic regime must appropriately elaborate and specify, delineates the general necessary conditions for institutionalizing democratic processes of discourse in law and politics" (Rehg 1996: xxvii). Based on his elaboration of the notion of positive law, legitimacy as a discursive process, the legal form, and the discourse principle, Habermas first introduces three categories of rights that define the status of legal persons:

1. Basic rights that result from the politically autonomous elaboration of the *right to the greatest possible measure of equal individual liberties*.

   These rights require the following as necessary corollaries:

2. Basic rights that result from the politically autonomous elaboration of the status of a *member* in a voluntary association of consociates under law.

3. Basic rights that result immediately from the *actionability* of rights and from the politically autonomous elaboration of individual *legal protection*.

(Habermas 1996: 122, emphasis in the original)

Habermas argues that these three categories of law simply derive from applying the discourse principle to the medium of law. The rights they embody, however, should not be

understood as negative rights vis-à-vis the state as they organise the relationships of individuals prior to a legally organised state authority. Rather, they guarantee the private autonomy "in the sense that these subjects reciprocally recognize each other in their role of *addressees* of laws and therewith grant one another a status on the basis of which they can claim rights and bring them to bear against one another" (ibid.: 123, emphasis in the original). It is only with the fourth category of rights that citizens also become the authors of the law, while the fifth category makes explicit what the other four imply:

> 4. Basic rights to equal opportunities to participate in processes of opinion- and will-formation in which citizens exercise their *political autonomy* and through which they generate legitimate law.
>
> 5. Basic rights to the provision of living conditions that are socially, technologically, and ecologically safeguarded, insofar as the current circumstances make this necessary if citizens are to have equal opportunities to utilize the civil rights listed in (1) through (4).
>
> (Habermas 1996: 123, emphasis in the original)

Without going into any more detail about Habermas' conception of private and public autonomy, we can see that while there may exist deliberative democrats of the proceduralists vein Gutmann and Thompson have in mind, the label "pure" is certainly not applicable to Habermas. To be sure, he is clearly more on a proceduralist side than Gutmann and Thompson, but he has moved away considerably from the position suggested.

Ad (b): Just as much as Habermas is not a "pure" proceduralist, so Gutmann and Thompson are not "pure" substantivists; in fact their positions are closer than is indicated by the complementary terminological opposition. Two very similar quotes of Gutmann and Thompson's approach will suffice to reveal the proximity of their positions: in discussing the differences between substantivists and proceduralists they state that both substantive and procedural principles "need to be treated as morally and politically provisional [...]. Procedural and substantive principles should both be systematically open to revision in an on-going process of moral and political deliberation" (Gutmann & Thompson 2004: 26). Now, this is precisely where their account meets that of Habermas as developed in *Between Facts and Norms*, and while he does not make the explicit distinction between substantive and procedural principles, the conception of the deliberative process is conceived in a way so as to allow participants to raise all topics of their concern – which obviously excludes neither substantive nor procedural aspects. Two years earlier Gutmann and Thompson had already argued that even substantive principles "are to be treated as morally and politically provisional" (2002: 154), thus showing their sensitivity towards the potential problem of a strong substantivist position which would uncouple certain principles from the deliberative process and hence undermine the plausibility of the approach. While a strong procedural position would deny the legitimacy of principles which precede deliberation, so equally a strong substantivist position would have to claim that certain principles cannot become the topic of deliberation. This leads us to the third point.

Ad (c): The substantivist position is faced with one central problem: its principles can only become justified fundamental norms of action as the result of deliberation, and they are only defendable through deliberation. That is, because there are no external, independent

criteria to confer legitimacy, the ultimate fall-back position is always a discursive one – as is also evidenced on a meta-level by the debate between substantivist and proceduralist positions itself which is conducted on procedural rather than substantive grounds: Gutmann and Thompson make extensive use of the argumentative procedure rather than pointing to irrevocable substantive principle, because it is the only way the sceptic could be convinced. We might view liberty and fair opportunity, to which Gutmann and Thompson refer repeatedly, as taken for granted principles, and if someone questions them we might support them through even more basic principles. But against the objections of the persistent sceptic we will necessarily have to enter a discourse in which the justifications of our principles are tested.[25] This is not contrary to Gutmann and Thompsons' view of provisionally justified principles, but it helps to elucidate the relationship between discourse and its outcomes, and it also shows that rather than arguing for a priority of one over the other, the idea of co-originality might be a more promising approach.[26]

2.6. Discourse ethics and recognition

The only conceivable "strong" substantivist alternative to the approach by Gutmann and Thompson would consist in a theoretical account which extracts specific principles from the deliberative procedure and offers an independent justification for them, and which thus would not have to rely again on deliberation for its justification. This is essentially how Axel Honneth (1992) develops his theory of recognition which is based on Hegel's early Jena writings but takes equally Habermas' discourse ethics as its point of departure. Indeed, Honneth's starting point is the motivational deficit which he discerns in discourse ethics and of which Habermas is well aware when he writes that moral insights deriving from discourses have only a weak motivating force (cf. Habermas 1991: 135): communicative reason "pertains only to insights – to criticizable utterances that are accessible in principle to argumentative clarification – and thus falls short of a practical reason aimed at motivation, at guiding the will" (Habermas 1996: 5). This, however, means that the discourse ethical enterprise has to rely on external presuppositions and that more worryingly it can only partially elucidate the reasons why actors would prefer reaching understanding to strategic action.

Honneth (1986) argues that while discourse ethics does not directly imply a notion of the good life, it requires the theoretical anticipation of a principle of social justice. Honneth's main argument is that Habermas' move towards a more modest conception of discourse ethics that no longer aims at elucidating an ideal form of life leads to an inconsistency in the theoretical architecture of the approach. Discourse ethics conceived this way has neither something substantially to say about questions concerning the good life, nor about questions of a just society. With Habermas' retreat to a position where "[a]ll contents, no matter how fundamental the action norm involved may be, must be made to depend on real discourses (or advocatory discourses conducted as substitutes for them)" (Habermas 1990a: 94) he also abandons the early hopes related to the interpretation of the ideal speech situation as bringing forth the shape of an ideal life form (cf. Habermas 1984a, 1985a:

[25] A corollary problem of a strong substantivist ethics which claims universal validity is that "as long as such an ethic makes substantive statements, its premises remain confined to the context in which particular historical or even personal interpretations of the self and the world arose" (Habermas 1996: 64).

[26] For a critical assessment of Habermas' conception of co-originality see for instance Honig (2001), Mouffe (2000). Cohen (1999) develops an alternative account in line with deliberative democracy, while Rummens (2006) explicates the normative and moral presuppositions which the conception implies.

161).[27] Discourse ethics tries to justify the transformation of the Kantian principle of universalisation on which the Categorical Imperative rests, into a rule of argumentation by illuminating the communicative presuppositions the actors must necessarily make if they want to participate in a practical discourse. Yet, discourse ethics does not incorporate these idealisations into its own foundations, for then it would have to say something about the social contexts which allow these discursive processes to take place at all. In other words, in Habermas' transformed programme the only purpose of the formal principles is to justify the discursive procedure, but not to adjudicate the social contexts in which it is embedded. From Habermas' point of view this, of course, would impair discourse ethics' impartial point of view which is based on the very fact that it is a purely formal procedure. Otherwise, those norms of justice which make the conditions of discourses possible would have to be part of the discourse ethical inventory. Only that society could then be judged as just which allocates its members in its normative infrastructure the presuppositions of practical discourses.

Honneth's point is that discourse ethics contains precisely such implications from which we can derive a substantive notion of justice. The positive aspects of freedom, i.e. the equal chance for all to participate in practical discourses presupposes that all have equal access to social information and cultural traditions of education which are necessary to make not only their voices heard, but to bolster their moral convictions with arguments in the exchange with others. What is particularly important in the present context, however, is that the equal opportunity of participation as a discourse ethical presupposition requires a certain amount of social recognition and self-respect. We can only enter a practical discourse if we can safely assume that we are accepted as serious and competent participants. With social recognition and self-respect we touch on two forms of recognition which Honneth later (1992, 2003) elaborates further, mainly based on Hegel's work in Jena on social philosophy and Mead's notion of intersubjective identity-formation and socialisation. Reinterpreting Hegel through Mead's perspective allows Honneth to present the contours of a theory of social change and development which is driven by the struggle for recognition. Without presenting his account in detail, Honneth postulates the striving for social recognition as an anthropologically given universal factor because it allows individuals to form their identities, in other words intersubjective recognition is essential to the realisation of the self. Drawing on Hegel's early writings Honneth defines love, morality and law, as well as solidarity as the three distinct domains which a theory of recognition

[27] Indeed, in 1985 he speaks of a methodical illusion, saying that the utopian content of a communication community shrinks to the formal aspects of an undamaged intersubjectivity; he views the term of the ideal speech situation as misleading in this respect (cf. Habermas 1985a: 161).
The ideal speech situation is a theoretical concept to elucidate his pragmatic theory of truth, more specifically to reconstruct those assumptions that underlie the force of arguments to establish consensus. This leads Habermas to the stipulation of those formal assumptions we make when we enter a discourse: such a discourse is free from external and internal constraints in the sense that all potential participants of the discourse (1) must have equal chances to use communicative speech acts to start and continue discourses, (2) they must have equal chances to make assertions, interpretations, suggestions, declarations, justifications, and explanations as well as to problematize, justify, or refute their validity claims so that no opinion may be removed from critique, (3) only those speakers are allowed to take part in discourses who have the same chance of using what Habermas refers to as "representative speech acts" as this guarantees that speakers are truthful towards themselves and that they can make their inner, subjective nature transparent to others, (4) only those speakers are allowed to take part in discourse who have the same chance of using "regulative speech acts" with which they establish their relationships with the other participants, i.e. to command and resist, to allow and forbid, to make promises and accept them, to render and demand account, etc. (cf. Habermas 1984a: 174ff.). To be sure, these idealisations are counterfactual, but, as Habermas argues, we cannot but anticipate them whenever we enter a discourse. As such they are empirically effective and this is also why they can be taken as a critical standard against which we can judge real-world discourses – though in this case we need to take on a comparative perspective (see below the chapter on the methodology of deliberation).

must address. While love is only of secondary importance in our context, law and morality are based on the principle of equal rights and thus play a decisive role in the individual's development of self-respect: only if the law and we ourselves treat others as equals can they develop a sense of morally autonomous individuals and hence see themselves as interlocutors which are taken seriously. By contrast, solidarity is based on mutual esteem which in turn contributes to the development of self-esteem, i.e. the positive assessment of one's abilities and characteristics which are perceived as socially valuable.[28] Without developing Honneth's account much further, we can see that it can be used critically to assess the degree to which the conditions of intersubjective recognition are fulfilled. And as we will see, while on the one hand the political process is marked in several cases by severe forms of disrespect, the structural transformation of the public sphere is to some extent also driven by the struggle for recognition of social groups.

3. Deliberative democracy: the Habermasian perspective

The advantage of choosing a Habermasian perspective is threefold: first, Habermas clearly understands his conception as a contribution to the discourse theory of democracy which reconstructs the basic communicative structures that constitute political processes as democratic and deliberative.[29] Second, his deliberative model therefore ties in with his earlier work on communicative action, but also with his accounts of the structural transformation of the public sphere, as well as his theory of social evolution, which can be re-interpreted from a deliberative perspective (cf. Habermas 1989, 1981a, 1981b, 1976).[30] And third, Habermas' account provides an elaborate model of the political public sphere which connects the deliberations in the different parts of society to the political-administrative centre and ultimately gives the theory its critical edge.

Habermas' conception of deliberative democracy can generally be read as the answer to the question how political legitimacy is possible in the modern nation-state. In contrast to other theorists such as Cohen (1989) who in one of the first formulations of the deliberative procedure in similar vein to Dewey extends democratic deliberation to all matters that affect society, Habermas clearly restricts its scope to political issues (cf. Habermas 1996). Habermas argues convincingly that on the one hand democratic procedures depend on embedding contexts which they cannot regulate themselves, on the other such functional systems as the economy are not governed by communicative action or discourses aimed at reaching a common understanding, but by the participants' strategic actions oriented towards success.[31] For these reasons deliberative politics is unable to become an all-pervasive structure that encompasses social complexity in its totality (cf. Habermas 1992a: 370).

The subtitle of *Between Facts and Norms*, *Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, reveals that Habermas ties his idea of a deliberative politics intimately to the legislative process as a whole instead of focusing on single aspects or arenas of it.

[28] Self-respect has to do with equality, i.e. with having an equal status, whereas self-esteem is based on the uniqueness of each individual (cf. Honneth 1992).
[29] Habermas situates his model between liberalism and republicanism (cf. Habermas 1994).
[30] With regard to social evolution this concerns above all Habermas' point that societies not only learn in cognitive-technical areas but also on a moral-practical terms.
[31] Money is the non-linguistic "steering medium" of the modern economy, whereas administrative power that of the administration (cf. Habermas 1981a, 1981b, 1992a).

Comparing this work to the *The Theory of Communicative Action* (Habermas 1984b, 1984c) or the discourse ethical programme the question arises why law becomes so eminently important that we can speak of a political/legal turn. This development is all the more remarkable since Habermas argues that ordinary language works as a communication medium "below the threshold of functionally specified codes" (Habermas 1996: 55) and thus maintains that society's subsystems do not only observe each other as Luhmann would have it, but that there is real communicative contact between system and lifeworld (cf. Habermas 1996, Teubner 1988, 1989).[32] Of course, Habermas is well aware of the pitfalls of his argumentation as in *The Theory of Communicative Action* and even before following Parsons he conceptualised money and administrative power as non-linguistic steering media. This, however, would mean that the all-pervasiveness of ordinary language, i.e. its ability to cut through subsystems, has severe limitations. And it is precisely because of this that law becomes so important for Habermas' whole research programme as law is able to connect to all other subsystems: "[f]or translations into special codes, [ordinary language] remains dependent on the law that communicates with the steering media of money and administrative power" (Habermas 1996: 56). Law in turn is tied to ordinary language through the legislative process and the public sphere by which it is constituted on the one hand and discourses of application on the other.

Between Facts and Norms marks Habermas' "political turn" and thus the transition away from a discourse theory of morality as formulated in his contributions to discourse ethics, which in turn had followed his normative grounding of language and a formal pragmatic theory of meaning. Because the political turn can be read as the transformation of a moral into a political theory, we will first examine the discourse ethical enterprise in more detail. Discourse ethics is the attempt to explicate the preconditions of a cognitivist ethics following the footsteps of Kant and his Categorical Imperative after the linguistic and hence the intersubjective turn. Because Habermas conceives regulative validity claims in analogy to constative validity claims he can use the "ideal speech situation", in which claims to truth are assessed, as a guiding line for his construction of how the moral point of view can be explicated: "Just as 'true' is a predicate for the validity of assertoric sentences", he argues, "so is 'just' a predicate for the validity of the universal normative sentences that express general moral norms. For this reason, justice is not one value among others" (Habermas 1996: 153). It is therefore not theoretical discourses, but practical ones where moral principles are adjudicated. Interpreting Kant's Categorical Imperative under these conditions, Habermas formulates the universalisation principle (U) which states that a norm is only valid if "[*a*]*ll* affected can accept the consequences and the side effects of its general observance can be anticipated to have for the satisfaction of everyone's interests (and these consequences are preferred to those of known alternative possibilities)" (Habermas 1990a: 65, emphasis in the original). (U) is often referred to as a rule of argumentation because like the Kantian Categorical Imperative it specifies how moral norms are adjudicated. It is an attempt to reconstruct the moral point of view for a cognitivist ethics by extracting or rather making plausible its elements from the very presuppositions of communication

[32] Habermas' more general point here is to argue against Gunther Teubner, who in his view shuns the consequences of his discussion of the role of law in society and so fails to overcome the theoretical restrictions posed by systems theory.

themselves.[33] In contrast to Kant, however, we clearly can see the intersubjective element and the influence above all of Mead and his notion of ideal role-taking.

Habermas' discourse theoretical update of the Kantian Categorical Imperative, however, is not enough for his discourse ethics to work. We still need to know *how* we arrive at justifying moral principles. The way in which this occurs is explicated in the discourse principle (D): "Only those norms can claim to be valid that meet (or could meet) with the approval of all affected in their capacity as participants in a practical discourse" (Habermas 1990a: 66). As with (U), (D) is to be seen from an intersubjective perspective, i.e. it is not the result of a purely hypothetical and hence ultimately monologic, discourse but makes the justification of moral principles dependent on the exchange of reasons in a real dialogue or debate. We can also see that (D) already incorporates both dimensions the deliberative and the democratic one. The democratic perspective is given by (D)'s requirement that the validity of a norm depends on the participation of all those who are affected by it. The deliberative perspective in turn is given by the second requirement that the participants engage neither in conversations, nor other non-deliberative forms of talk, but in practical discourses. Kant's practical rationality is here transformed into communicative rationality within discourses that seek to clarify normative questions.[34] As Habermas has outlined in his formal pragmatic programme, practical discourse is conceived in analogy to theoretical discourse: if normative rightness can be conceived of in analogy to truth, then the rightness of norms must be justifiable in a similar way to claims to truth, that is by the participants' suspending all outer and inner constraints as well as contingent influences except for the "unforced force of the better argument" (Habermas 1996: 306), which ultimately means that the participants bring to bear the formal structures of discourse itself. These idealisations are counterfactual, to be sure, but they are mutually anticipated by the participants of a discourse and therefore operationally effective (cf. Habermas 1984a: 180). The discourse principle (D) is thus a decision procedure which under idealised circumstances leads to the participants' accepting a rationally motivated consensus; it "falls in line with *deontological* moral theories insofar as it points toward a reconstruction of the intersubjectively binding character of 'ought' claims" as Rehg writes (Rehg 1997: 31, emphasis in the original).

Of course, the question immediately arises why practical – or theoretical – discourses have to result in a consensus, given that this can seem unlikely even under ideal circumstances and that it is rarely achieve in reality. From Habermas' point of view the idea of consensus, which he first developed in connection with his consensual theory of truth, can simply be seen as being in line with his notion of communicative rationality and the associated formal pragmatic theory of meaning. As Habermas states "we understand a speech act when we know the kinds of reasons that a speaker could provide in order to

[33] As Rehg (1997) points out, just as the hypothetical construction of the ideal speech situation has received considerable criticism, so too (U) has been met with scepticism. Above all, there is no clear deduction in terms of a proof of (U), and Rehg in his own work admits that "[o]ne can at most clarify the ideas behind (U) and render it plausible as an idealization" (1997: 15). See also Finlayson (2000) who argues that Habermas' original attempt to provide a justification of (U) has given way to the weaker programme of giving an elucidation of the principle, which in turn, however, depends on his theory of modernisation.

[34] As Habermas explains: "Communicative reason differs from practical reason first and foremost in that it is no longer ascribed to the individual actor or to a macrosubject at the level of the state or the whole of society. Rather, what makes communicative reason possible is the linguistic medium through which interactions are woven together and forms of life are structured. This rationality is inscribed in the linguistic telos of mutual understanding and forms an ensemble of conditions that both enable and limit. Whoever makes use of a natural language in order to come to an understanding with an addressee about something in the world is required to take a performative attitude and commit herself to certain presuppositions. [...] Communicative rationality is expressed in a decentered complex of pervasive, transcendentally enabling structural conditions, but it is not a subjective capacity that would tell actors what they *ought* to do" (Habermas 1996: 3f.).

convince a hearer that he is entitled in the given circumstances to claim validity for his utterance – in short, when we know what makes it acceptable" (Habermas 1998b: 232). We can see that there is a strong conceptual connection between validity, justifiability and meaning, and that furthermore embedded in language is a telos of reaching understanding and therefore consensus.[35] Yet, as Rehg correctly argues, such an argumentative move is too quick, as "linking the validity of norms with their justifiability does not yet answer the following more general, complex question: *who* gets to justify *which norms* on the basis of *what kinds* of reasons?" (Rehg 1997: 34). Different normative domains may be in need of different forms of justifications and include different actors. The question also reveals a clear historical dimension as Habermas himself acknowledges that traditional and modern discourses can be distinguished not least because they involve different forms of reasoning, which means that in the final analysis (D) must draw its support from a theory of modernity (cf. Rehg 1997: 34, Finlayson 2000, Habermas 1979a). While we cannot reconstruct Habermas' full argument here, he develops an account of social evolution which is not Hegelian in the sense that the historic development we see is the result of a necessity, but rather that history provides the context in which certain forms of cooperation and learning can occur, leading possibly to a preference for conflict resolutions which rely on discourse rather than violence. Such learning processes are irreversible as Habermas argues: "insights cannot be forgotten at will; they can only be repressed or corrected by better insights" (Habermas 1990b: 84).

What is more important for our present discussion is the analogy between theoretical and practical discourses which thus far have been constructed as analogies, though with important differences (cf. Habermas 1984a). In developing his discourse ethics Habermas realises that there is a further difference which leads to an important internal differentiation within practical discourse: admitting that the term discourse ethics might be misleading he argues that his discourse theory refers in different ways to pragmatic, ethical, and moral questions (cf. Habermas 1991: 101). In other words, the question "what should I do?" is unspecific only to the extent that it is not applied to concrete contexts, but practical reason – i.e. practical discourse – is confronted with different tasks once it refers to specific situations.[36] In situations that are specified under a pragmatic perspective we are confronted with questions of practicability, appropriateness, etc. in very common sense terms as when our car is broken, when we have a cold, or when we do not know what to cook. These problems have to be solved if we want to achieve certain results, they are thus marked by a means-ends relationship, though the ends can equally become the topic of reflection. Ethical problems in turn touch on our identities and concern what kind of life we want to lead. Questions such as what subjects to study, or contemplating one's interests and wishes, etc. reveal such an ethical dimension of self-conception and self-development. They touch centrally on our lives and identities as they imply serious choices between values which define who we are, thus referring to the classical notion of the good life. The "ought" that is assessed on this level is on the one hand not based on subjective perspectives of means and preferences, though it commands no absolute validity on the

[35] See also Albrecht Wellmer's (1989) succint analysis in "Was ist eine pragmatische Bedeutungstheorie? Variationen über den Satz 'Wir verstehen einen Sprechakt, wenn wir wissen, was ihn akzeptabel macht'" as well as his *Ethik und Dialog* (1986) and "Konsens als Telos der sprachlichen Kommunikation?" (1992), where he defends a weak reading of understanding as the telos embedded in human communication, i.e. as expressing a formal pragmatic theory of meaning, against a strong reading which leads to a consensus theory of truth and the ideal speech situation.

[36] See for the following analysis of the different normative dimensions Habermas (1991: 100ff.).

other. If, however, our actions and interests collide with those of others the meaning of "ought" changes again: for now we seek to adjudicate problems impartially, i.e. from a moral point of view. In contrast to the ego perspective of both pragmatic questions implied by the means-ends rationality and to some extent also ethical questions, we adopt a different perspective when we test our maxims in Kant's sense against those of others as now we have to adjudicate whether they can be generalised to regulate our interactions. The moral dimension explicated by the Categorical Imperative means that we have to judge a norm of action from the point of view of all possibly affected, and in contrast to pragmatic and ethical questions the "ought" now carries an unconditional force; it is not a choice but a duty (Habermas 1991: 100ff.).

Habermas' programme of discourse ethics has, of course, not gone unchallenged. In the present context two related criticisms are of particular importance: despite the significance of the discourse ethical programme for modern societies, Habermas has little to say about where to find these institutions of practical discourse or how they could be formed, etc. In line with this but from a different perspective Albrecht Wellmer (1986) makes the point that Habermas' – and Apel's (1973, 1975) – programme is not Kantian enough, in the sense that Habermas' discourse theory falls back behind Kant's distinction between law and morality. Though Habermas deals with the question of institutionalisation as early as 1983, arguing that institutional discourses do not contradict the counterfactual elements of discourse but are in fact based on these very assumptions underlying argumentation, he remains on the whole rather vague (cf. Habermas 1983a: 102).[37] An additional problem is posed by the fact that his distinction between system and lifeworld has troubling consequences for the scope of discourse ethics, given that the system is constituted entirely by instrumental rationality, integrated functionally by the unintended consequences of action patterns (1981b: 179), which differentiate in modern societies into the economy and the administrative system, both of which operate through the non-linguistic "steering media" of money and power and are thus detracted from practical reason.

It is above these challenges that lead to Habermas' political turn in *Between Facts and Norms* and the central importance of law and the legislative process.[38] While Habermas maintains the distinction between pragmatic, ethical, and moral discourses, he now sees them as related to one another in the way that we can cross over to a higher level of discourse whenever we fail to reach agreement on the current level. The pragmatic level is the lowest level and here we still deal with means-ends relations, but now in the context of political problems, e.g. whether shops should stay open until midnight. Failing to reach an agreement on this level means that we can either leave our disagreements unresolved, or we can move on to the next level of discourse, the ethical-political one. Disagreement about opening hours of shops might be tied to different conceptions of what the good society should look like, how it should treat the workforce and what citizens in their roles as customers can expect. In short, the ethical level of the individual's good life as conceived in

[37] In the introduction to *Between Facts and Norms* Habermas explicitly addresses this issue, stating that with the argument he presents he hopes to "refute the objection that the theory of communicative action is blind to institutional reality – or that it could even have anarchist consequences" which had been raised among others by Bubner (1992) and Höffe (1987) (Habermas 1996: xl). The title of Habermas' (1988) article "Morality and ethical life: Does Hegel's critique of Kant apply to discourse ethics?" reveals his own awareness of the possible problem as Hegel argued that because Kant's Categorical Imperative was based on a strict separation between is and ought, his moral principle had nothing to say about how moral insights are realised in practice. See Finlayson (1999) for a critical assessment of Habermas' attempt at overcoming these problems.

[38] He thereby also articulates a different perspective from that found in *The Theory of Communicative Action* (Habermas 1981a, 1981b), where law and system have at best an ambivalent status.

discourse ethics now is translated into the question of a society's identity and what the good society is. If we again fail to reach understanding on this level, we can still move on to the level of moral discourse, where we adjudicate norms of action from an impartial point of view. Moreover, Habermas is well aware that most political questions have a complexity that requires a discussion on all three levels, though in political debates usually only one discursive aspect is foregrounded at the time. It is important to note in this context that Habermas insists on a priority of the right over the good, i.e. of the moral over the ethical, even as his interests move on to political and legal theory. On the one hand it is Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development which makes itself felt here, though more centrally than this and particularly important in the context of Habermas' democratic theory is the fact of pluralism: moral discourses, he argues, "aim at the impartial evaluation of action conflicts. In contrast to ethical deliberations, which are oriented to the telos of my/our own good (or not misspent) life, moral deliberations require a perspective freed of all egocentrism or ethnocentrism" (Habermas 1996: 97). Because ethical questions concern the conception of the good from particular point of view, when such views conflict they cannot be resolved on the ethical-political level. Rather, the participants have to move on the moral level of argumentation where such conflicts are judged from an impartial point of view, in other words in moral discourses "we examine how we can regulate our common life in the equal interest of all. A norm is just only if all can will that it be obeyed by each in comparable situations" (Habermas 1996: 161).

In addition to this, although consensus still retains is status as regulative idea that is empirically effective, Habermas now takes a more complex, and realistic, approach to conflict resolution, writing that "[o]ppositions between interests require a rational balancing of competing value orientations and interest positions. Here the totality of social or subcultural groups that are directly involved constitute the reference system for negotiating compromises. Insofar as these compromises come about under fair bargaining conditions, they must be acceptable in principle to all parties, even if on the basis of respectively different reasons" (Habermas 1996: 108). If relations of social power cannot be neutralised, then the participants can switch to a bargaining mode, which takes place under fair conditions and results in a negotiated agreement. Here, the discourse principle comes to bear only indirectly, namely in defining the procedures of the bargaining process from the point of view of fairness which in turn have been justified in a moral discourse. The important point is that "[f]air bargaining, then, does not destroy the discourse principle but rather indirectly presupposes it" (Habermas 1996: 167).[39]

This, however, is not discourse ethics' only transformation. In the context of a democratic theory discourses become deliberations and the discourse principle is translated into a principle of democracy:

> The idea of self-legislation by citizens, then, should not be reduced to the *moral* self-legislation of *individual* persons. Autonomy must be conceived more abstractly, and in a strictly neutral way. I have therefore introduced a discourse principle that is initially indifferent vis-à-vis morality and law. The discourse principle is intended to assume the shape of a principle of democracy only by way of legal institutionalization. The principle of democracy is what then confers legitimating force on the legislative process. The key idea is that the principle of democracy derives from the interpenetration

[39] As a consequence of this compromise cannot replace moral discourse, and hence political will-formation cannot be reduced to compromise (Habermas 1996: 167).

> of the discourse principle and the legal form. I understand this interpenetration as a *logical genesis of rights*, which one can reconstruct in a stepwise fashion. One begins by applying the discourse principle to the general right to liberties – a right constitutive for the legal form as such – and ends by legally institutionalizing the conditions for a discursive exercise of political autonomy. By means of this political autonomy, the private autonomy that was at first abstractly posited can retroactively assume an elaborated legal shape. Hence the principle of democracy can only appear as the heart of a *system* of rights. The logical genesis of these rights comprises a circular process in which the legal code, or legal form, and the mechanism for producing legitimate law – hence the democratic principle – are co-originally constituted."
>
> (Habermas 1996: 121f., emphasis in the original)

On the one hand the mechanism of producing law becomes the central part of a theory of deliberative democracy, on the other Habermas also takes into account that law has Janus-faced nature which allows it not only to connect system and lifeworld, but furthermore and primarily reflects the two basic attitudes actors can take on vis-à-vis law and the political process. Law's tension between facticity and validity is mirrored by the performative and the objectifying attitude of actors, though the relationship between law and the actors' attitude is not one of identity. Very basically "[m]odern law presents itself as Janus-faced to its addressees: it leaves it up to them which of two possible approaches they want to take to law. Either they can consider legal norms merely as commands, in the sense of factual constraints on their personal scope for action, and take a *strategic* approach to the calculable consequences of possible rule violations; or they can take a *performative* attitude in which they view norms as valid precepts and comply 'out of respect for the law'" (Habermas 1996: 448, emphasis in the original).[40] What is important from our point of view when we look at the process of the genesis of legally binding norms of action is that the tension between facticity and validity is translated into one between positivity and legitimacy, whose "moments combine in the mutual penetration of legal form and discourse principle, as well as in the Janus faces that law turns toward its addressees on the one side and its authors on the other" (Habermas 1996: 129). The genesis of law thus takes place on the side of the validity, i.e. as the outcome of the political process, and hence presupposes a performative attitude by the actors. On a theoretical level it furthermore requires a translation of the concept of practical discourse into a procedure that is conducive to mobilising the communicative freedom of actors discussing disputed norms of action. If legitimacy is thus tied to deliberation, Habermas observes, then "the discursive level of public debates constitutes the most important variable" (Habermas 1996: 304).

[40] Performative and objectifying attitude coincide with the two basic modes of action in Habermas' social philosophy, i.e. communicative and strategic: "for the person acting strategically, it [the legal norm] lies at the level of social facts that externally restrict her range of options; for the person acting communicatively, it lies at the level of obligatory expectations that, she assumes, the legal community has rationally agreed on" (Habermas 1996: 31).

Habermas finds a promising proposal for such a procedure in Cohen's (1989) approach to deliberative democracy, though in contrast to Cohen Habermas does not see the deliberative procedure as a model for all social institutions (cf. Habermas 1996: 305).[41] Cohen (1989, cf. Habermas 1996: 305f.) defines the deliberative procedure as:

(a) an argumentative exchange of reasons and information

(b) which is inclusive and public and where all those affected by the decision have equal chances to participate

(c) which is free of external constraints, i.e. the participants are autonomous and only bound by the presuppositions of communicative rationality

(d) which is equally free from internal constraints to the extent that every participant has the same chance of contributing to the debate by raising topics, suggesting or criticising proposals, etc. The yes/no positions of the participants are thus only governed by the unforced force of the better argument

(e) which aim at a consensus that is rationally motivated, though given the pressure of time they may be concluded through the majority rule. In this case the results are still connected to the reasoning processes and the may be revised if the minority succeeds in convincing the majority of its position

(f) touching on all matters that can be regulated in the equal interest of all, which also includes and private topics

(g) and allows participants to interpret their wants, needs, and preference changes and extends to pre-political matters and attitudes.

Of course, Habermas is well aware that the so designed deliberative procedure constitutes an ideal that cannot be realised in the "real world". However, at the same time he holds that it is a counterfactual ideal which the participants in the political process anticipate, and it thus constitutes the communicative core structure of the political process on which all other forms of opinion formation and decision making are modelled. At its heart (deliberative) democracy is thus based on discourse ethical principles and hence on the formal pragmatic premises of communication.

But Habermas' account does not stop with the reconstruction of the deliberative procedure for in itself it says nothing about how the communicative processes of society as a whole are structured. In other words, models of deliberative democracy not only have to find an answer to the question of how the interaction in institutional settings ought to be organised, they also have to present a notion of democratic deliberation as a political process which shows how the single deliberative arenas are linked with one another.[42]

[41] Cohen's approach also lacks the internal differentiation of normativity Habermas develops in his discourse ethics (see above). As Cohen draws at least some of his inspiration from Habermas, it is of little wonder that his notion of deliberative democracy and the deliberative procedure in particular fits in so neatly into Habermas' own account.

[42] Here Habermas' goes beyond most other approaches which develop the deliberative model exclusively as an institutional practice. The linking of deliberative arenas partly corresponds to what Dryzek calls "discursive designs" (cf. Dryzek 1987, 1994).

Habermas complements the deliberative model with a perspective of politics which connects the loosely organised periphery of civil society with the politically administrative centre. The central component of this process is the public sphere which we will examine in more detail further below. Before we come to this, however, we first have to address some of the criticism with which deliberative models of democracy have been confronted.

4. Deliberative democracy: challenges and counterchallenges

Despite the invigorating impulses that come from the different deliberative approaches to democracy, and despite the "deliberative turn" in political theory, the deliberative paradigm has not gone unchallenged. In this section we will review some of the most prominent criticism. Nearly all of the objections raised against deliberative models of democracy take issue with some form of restriction which the deliberative account presupposes, promotes, or which it unwittingly harbours. Critique of deliberative theory has been voiced from many different quarters of social and political theory, including rational and social choice, diversity and agonistic theories of democracy, and post modern or post structuralist challenges in general. As we will see, although these provocative rival accounts raise important points which theorists of deliberative democracy must address, they do not fundamentally undermine the deliberative approach. But they help to broaden the perspective and thereby deepen our understanding of the political process.[43] In the following we will first discuss what could be termed "general challenges" (section 4.1.) and the move on to more specific concerns voiced by agonistic models and difference democrats (section 4.2.), rational and social choice (section 4.3.), before coming to the perhaps most provocative challenge of Habermas' account by other deliberative democrats who argue that the conception he presents has lost its critical edge (section 4.4.)

4.1. General challenges

Probably the main criticism that can be levelled against deliberative democracy, above all in the variants spelled out by Habermas and Cohen, is that it simply presents an unrealistic account of the democratic process: the deliberative procedure might not overburden the individual morally as for instance Rousseau does, but it quite clearly overburdens the political process. By shifting the burden of idealisations, so to speak, the basic problem that idealisations are unrealistic is not solved. In such general terms the objection is less of a critique than a misunderstanding. Deliberative democracy is a normative theory and therefore by its very nature has never attempted to provide a realist account of the political process. More important, it is precisely its normativity and concomitant idealisations, or what we could call the utopian thrust in Habermas' approach, which gives the theory its critical bite. The counterfactual idealisations provide the yardstick with which we can measure and critically assess the reality of the political process, though of course any such assessment makes only sense in relation to others, and less in relation to the utopian standard itself. In fact, what Bohman (2000) proposes as a theory of systematically distorted

[43] For the following also see Rosenfeld & Arato (1998) as well as Deflem (1996).

communication makes exactly use of this aspect, namely that we can identify the problematic aspects of the political process by using the critical dimension of deliberative democracy as a measure.

Another variety of this criticism is aimed in particular at the Habermasian version and mixes the notion of the ideal speech situation with his deliberative account of democracy, taking it to postulate the concrete ideal of a society to be realised. While we have seen that in the 1970s Habermas did entertain tentative thoughts going in this direction, he has long since abandoned such a path. In fact, Gutmann and Thompson's criticism is directed against Habermas being a pure proceduralist who has nothing to say about how concrete forms of life and society could be conceptualised in more substantive terms. Habermas in turn has stated that "[n]othing makes me more nervous than the imputation – repeated in a number of different versions and in the most peculiar contexts – that because the theory of communicative action focuses on the social facticity of recognized validity-claims, it proposes or at least suggests, a rationalist utopian society. I do not regard the fully transparent society as an ideal, nor do I wish to suggest *any* other ideal – Marx was not the only one frightened by the vestiges of utopian socialism" (Habermas 1982: 235, emphasis in the original).

A similar criticism, but pointing in a different direction attacks deliberative democracy as being premised on the ideal of a harmonious lifeworld, which misses the point for although in Habermas' conception the lifeworld is integrated through communicative action, this does not imply that it is a space free of conflict (cf. Heinrich 1999). First, as regards the communicative structure of the lifeworld Habermas clarifies that "society presents itself as a symbolically structured lifeworld that reproduces itself through communicative action. Naturally, it does not follow from this that strategic interactions could not emerge in the lifeworld. But such interactions now have a different significance than they do in Hobbes or in game theory: they are no longer conceived as the mechanism for generating an instrumental order" (Habermas 1996: 524, footnote 18). Second, already in 1983 Habermas made a strong case for civil disobedience as the "litmus test for the democratic constitutional state", which clearly belies the seeming harmony implied by his social and political philosophy (Habermas 1983b, see also Habermas 1996: 382ff.). And finally, as Markell argues, on Habermas' "account of discursive democracy, a legitimate democratic system is not only compatible with agonistic action but actually *requires* it" (Markell 1997: 391, emphasis in the original). Indeed, if deliberation is taken to be a mode of conflict resolution with other means than violence, then it logically presupposes the existence of some form of conflict prior to the actors' entering deliberation. As Habermas puts it: "The paradoxical achievement of law thus consists in the fact that it reduces the conflict potential of unleashed individual liberties through norms that can coerce only so long as they are recognized as legitimate on the fragile basis of unleashed communicative liberties. […] Social integration thereby takes on a peculiarly reflexive shape: by meeting its need for legitimation with the help of the productive force of communication, law takes advantage of a permanent risk of dissensus to spur on legally institutionalized public discourses" (Habermas 1996: 462).

4.2. The challenge posed by agonistic and difference models

A more radical form of this type of criticism aims at the outcome of the deliberative procedure, i.e. consensus. Chantal Mouffe is a representative of this strand when she states that "the impediments to the Habermasian ideal speech situation are not empirical but ontological and the rational consensus that he presents as a regulative idea is in fact a conceptual impossibility. Indeed it would require the availability of a consensus without exclusion which is precisely what the agonistic approach reveals to be impossible" (Mouffe 2007: 3f.). Elsewhere Laclau and Mouffe argue that the very notion of antagonism forecloses consensus and "a fully inclusive 'we'" (Laclau & Mouffe 2001: xvii), and Mouffe makes the point very clear when stating that "[t]o negate the ineradicable character of antagonism and aim at a universal rational consensus – that is the real threat to democracy. Indeed, this can lead to violence being unrecognized and hidden behind appeals to 'rationality', as is often the case in liberal thinking" (Mouffe 1996: 248). Parts of this criticism have already been addressed, so it will suffice here to point out the most important answers. First, however, we need to present Mouffe's own position more closely in order to be able to shape out the differences.

Mouffe advocates a notion of "agonistic democracy" which she develops in distinction to merely aggregative models of the Schumpeterian type on the one hand and liberal models on the other, though it is already unclear at this stage what she understands by liberalism, given that she seems to conflate it with deliberative democracy *tout court* and here in particular with Rawls and Habermas, the main targets of her criticism (cf. Mouffe 2000).[44] According to Mouffe pluralism is not primarily marked by diversity, but by "power and antagonism and their ineradicable character" (Mouffe 2000: 21). This is what she refers to as "the political", and this is what she sees as the main challenge any theoretical account of democracy has to answer. Her aim is not to exclude or repress what she sees as a social given, rather her approach is to integrate power and transform or "tame" antagonism. Taking the ineradicable value pluralism in modern societies and hence the permanence of political conflict for granted, she argues that the task of "politics", understood here as "the ensemble of practices, discourses and institutions which seek to establish a certain order and organize human coexistence" (Mouffe 2000: 101), is to domesticate political conflict in such a way to allow a transition from enemies to adversaries. The difference is that enemies need to be destroyed, whereas adversaries contest each others' ideas on the grounds of mutual respect, allowing and promoting passions and the diversity of democratic voices. The result of this "agonistic" conception of democracy is a hegemonial order which can be challenged at any time and which derives its legitimacy from the mere fact that "if any power has been able to impose itself, it is because it has been recognized as legitimate in some quarters" (Mouffe 2000: 100).

From this perspective Mouffe's three major criticisms of deliberative approaches to democracy is that they fail to grasp the conflictual nature of "the political" and "politics", that they are "trying to fix once and for all the meaning and hierarchy of the central liberal-democratic values" (Mouffe 2000: 93), and that they exclude passions by prioritizing logical-rational argumentation. We will first respond to these challenges and then come to some the

[44] As Habermas situates his conception of deliberative democracy between liberalism on the one side and republicanism on the other, this also means that he rejects some of the assumptions of liberalism: he does not endorse the view that rights belong to pre-political individuals, that individual freedom is the main value of the membership of a political community, and that the state should remain impartial with regard to the justification of policy proposals or the application of laws (cf. Finlayson 2005: 112).

problematic issues which beset the agonistic perspective itself. The charge that deliberative theory – or liberalism for that matter – is blind to conflict is rather hard to follow, given that deliberative approaches are conceived as models of conflict resolution as we have already remarked above. They thereby presuppose conflict, without it there would be no need for deliberation; we switch to practical discourse when we question or contest validity claims: "[s]ome basic disagreement is necessary to create the problem that deliberative democracy is intended to solve" as Thompson (2008: 502) puts it.[45] The only statement deliberative democrats make in this respect is that deliberative accounts are able to process conflict in a better way than the existing alternatives. Moreover, they do not require actors to deliberate all the time: given the dual character of law and of the actor's attitudes, deliberative theory leaves room for bargaining between actors oriented to success and willing to cooperate when they fail to reach agreement.

The charge against consensus which deliberative models posit in different conceptual distinctions is even less plausible.[46] For one thing, consensus, deliberative disagreement, etc. are again part of the heuristic ideal of the deliberative model which allows us to assess and compare real world political processes, and moreover to do so precisely to reveal hidden mechanisms of power which are at work (see above). Related to this, deliberative models would be inconsistent without such a notion for then we would not be able to assess when a political process has properly ended: if a model of political conflict resolution fails to extend its theoretical account to the decision stage, how are we to know to what extent the parties have been able to resolve their conflict? Clearly, deliberative theory would lose all of its critical bite if it were to declare the deliberative procedure to mean e.g. that some actors are allowed to speak some of the time and raise certain issues and that some actors will decide when the discussion ends. Furthermore, Mouffe herself relies on consensus as decision procedure, though she refers to it as a "conflictual consensus" for it can only be seen to be temporary for conflict might continue as to how to interpret the ethico-political principles to which she subscribes, i.e. freedom, equality, and toleration (cf. Mouffe 2000). But this characterisation hardly differs from most notions of consensus deliberative theory offers, including Gutmann and Thompson as well as Habermas who is very clear that every decision taken is only provisional as in post-traditional societies there are no longer ultimate reasons.[47]

The third objection concerns a seeming paradox of the deliberative model: although it aims at including all those affected by norms of actions, the rationalistic nature of

[45] In fact, at least as far Habermas is concerned, he seems to share common concerns with Mouffe for he states that "the constitutional state has a twofold task: it must not only evenly divide and distribute political power but also strip such power of its violent substance by rationalizing it. The legal rationalization of force must not be conceived as taming a quasi-natural domination whose violent core is and always remains uncontrollably contingent" (Habermas 1996: 188). This passage echoes very strongly Mouffe's attempt to "domesticate" antagonism by transforming it into agonism. Habermas also states: "If we find ourselves confronted with questions of conflict resolution or concerning the choice of collective goals and we want to avoid the alternative of violent clashes, then we *must* engage in a practice of reaching understanding, whose procedures and communicative presuppositions are not at our disposition" (Habermas 1996: 310, emphasis in the original).
In elucidating the role of aesthetics in Habermas' project, David Ingram (1991) by referring to Martin Seel (1985) makes the point that "reconciliation", one of the central terms that runs through the work of the different generations of the Frankfurt School, "need not imply elimination of conflict and utopian closure", but that aesthetic experience "seeks *freedom* for *renewable* experience" (Ingram 1991: 103, emphasis in the original).

[46] The more basic problem with Mouffe's strategy is that either we can charge deliberative democracy with excluding conflict from its theoretical architecture, or we can criticise that it relies on consensus as its decision mode. Both criticisms together, however, reveal a certain amount of argumentative inconsistency as consensus presupposes a status quo *ex ante* characterised by disagreement and hence by conflict.

[47] Similarly, what Habermas, relying on Klaus Günther (1988), refers to as discourses of application resembles very much what Mouffe has in mind when she says that the conflictual consensus needs to be interpreted according to the basic ethical-political principles.

deliberation privileges merely a select few, a deliberative elite so to speak. In addition to this, deliberation's rationalism oppresses the role of passions which according to Mouffe are necessary to sustain democracy. If we adopt a Habermasian perspective we can see that the charge of excessive rationalism – and Mouffe is by far not the only one to level it against the deliberative programme – is mostly based on a misguided reading of what communicative rationality means. To be sure, as Thompson (2008: 502) points out, not every act of communication or not every raising of a validity claim, to use Habermas' terminology, is to be qualified as deliberation: everyday conversations and political discussions are not deliberation oriented towards decision. But within the conceptual frame of what counts as deliberation participants are free to use all kinds of speech acts and validity claims: constative, regulative, and expressive ones.[48] It is certainly true that the realm of the expressive and the aesthetic is underdeveloped in Habermas' theory compared to the other dimensions, yet at the same time he is very explicit about the status of passion and emotions when he states that "[f]eelings seem to have a similar function for the moral justification of action as sense perceptions have for the theoretical justification of facts" (Habermas 1990a: 50).[49] Michael Neblo makes the additional point that "for Habermas, the opposite of reason, in his technical sense, is not emotion, but rather unlegitimated power" (Neblo 2007: 531). At most we can say that deliberative models give not the same explicity emphasis to emotions as they do to practical reason (in a narrow sense), but that is not Mouffe's charge.[50]

Having addressed the criticism voiced from an agonistic perspective, it might be useful to examine some of its core assumptions more closely. Rather than being a "radical" model of democracy, as Mouffe and Laclau purport it to be (1985), their account of agonistic democracy is at best what Habermas (1987) refers to as neo-conservative in his discussion of postmodern and poststructuralist thinkers. While several problems and inconsistencies emerge with the agonistic model of democracy on a closer reading, one of the main and most serious difficulties is that it oscillates between democratic commitment and relativism: if any hegemonial order is justified by virtue of it being in power, which Mouffe's notion of legitimacy implies as we have seen, then how can we be sure that the order in power is a democratic one, and how can we judge whether it is better or worse than another order? Even more worrying than this, there is no legitimate basis for criticising or replacing an order because its very being in power renders it automatically legitimate. There is thus

[48] Here, the only limitation would consist in validity claims that are idiosyncratic to the extent that speaker and hearer fail to reconstruct under what conditions a speech act could be made acceptable: "idiosyncratic expressions follow rigid patterns; their semantic context is not set free by the power of poetic speech or creative construction and thus has a merely privatistic character" (Habermas 1984b: 17).

[49] As David Ingram writes: "It is hard to imagine anyone associated with the Frankfurt School whose work, in manner of form as well as content, is so far removed from the aesthetic as that of Jürgen Habermas" (Ingram 1991: 67). Still, Ingram (1991) argues that for Habermas, just as for his more literary inclined predecessors Adorno, Benjamin, Maruse, and Löwenthal, the aesthetic dimension represents "the utopian anticipation of an emancipated and reconciled form of life" (Ingram 1991: 67). For the role of the aesthetic in Habermas see above all his essays on modern and postmodern architecture (Habermas 1985b), on Walter Benjamin (Habermas 1979b), more generally *The Theory of Communicative Action* (Habermas 1984b, 1984c) as well as *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* (Habermas 1990b), David Ingram's (1991) article "Habermas on aesthetics and rationality", Pieter Duvenage's (2003) *Habermas and Aesthetics*, Martin Seel's (1985) *Die Kunst der Entzweiung: Zum Begriff der Ästhetischen Rationalität*, as well as Albrecht Wellmer's (1985) excellent work in interpreting Adorno from a Habermasian perspective.

[50] Furthermore, one of Mouffe's primary interlocutor here would be Hannah Arendt who, critiquing Rousseau, thought that it was dangerous to build a political order on compassion as it effaces plurality, breeds political violence as experienced by the revolutionary terror in France, and can properly lead to a perpetuation of violence in the form of a reign of terror (cf. Arendt 1990)

neither a normative standard nor related to this a developmental/emancipatory perspective of society and democracy, just a perennial change. To be sure, Mouffe does endorses liberty, equality, respect, and toleration, but it is not clear how within her theoretical architecture these principles acquire a privileged position. If everything can be called into question any time, if identities and beliefs are never fixed as she claims, and if power transformed into hegemony equals legitimacy, then there seems to be no refuge for basic principles in her conception of agonistic democracy – not even, ironically enough, for the basis of all things political, antagonism.

This is a problem with which all normative-procedural theories are confronted when they introduce principles which lie outside the procedure itself and cannot be plausibly derived from it. Certainly, Mouffe envisages the transition from antagonism to agonism as a process where these principles come into play, but why individuals should adhere to them in the first place remains an unresolved issue. They might be sustained by the passionate commitment she posits against the rationalistic orientation of deliberative models. But this move simply shifts the problem without solving it, for we do not know how these passions come about, that is we either have to rely – as Habermas does – on a lifeworld that meets the political process halfway or we have to develop a motivational account based on an anthropological universal category such as Honneth's theory of recognition. Mouffe does neither one nor the other. More than this, passionate commitment itself can only be explained by taking recourse to rational argumentation in a broad sense, which does not invalidate the role of emotions, etc. but shows that the two dimensions are intertwined in more complex ways than either the deliberative or the agonistic models are able to explicate at the present stage of theoretical development. On the whole then, neither the agonist challenge nor the alternative it proposes are very convincing.

The expressive-aesthetic dimension of speech is also a point raised by those who argue from the perspective of "difference democracy" as for instance Iris Young (1996). The main concern here is that rational argumentation is biased in the sense that it privileges one form of talk over other forms and thus systematically excludes those who are less proficient and have less experience in the art of debate, i.e. generally those with a lower education or those with a different cultural background where e.g. story-telling plays more central role in relating one's views. Moreover, deliberative democracy excludes all those interpretations, world views and feelings about an issue that cannot be readily translated into rational argumentation. What difference democrats then seem to uncover is that despite its seeming openness and transparency the deliberative model constitutes a distorted communicative framework – a verdict that could undermine both the central aim of deliberative democracy as well as the empirical usefulness of the model.

Difference democrats are certainly right when they assert a broad notion of rational argumentation which extends beyond the formal-logical forms of argumentation. But this stands in no contradiction to communicative rationality as defined above, which is not restricted to formal argumentative utterances but part of a pragmatic theory of meaning which places intersubjectivity at its core and thus extends its scope to all that is intersubjectively communicable or in other words all that is amenable to a shared understanding. Apart from this, there are two general problems with the difference democratic position. First, just as a narrowly defined notion of rational debate systematically privileges some people over others, so do the alternatives which difference

democracy proposes: narratives, testimony, poems, etc. are all biased forms of communication as they privilege those who are particularly good at them. Second and more fundamentally, stories, poems, etc. only make sense as a particular form of deliberation if the hearer can reconstruct the speaker's intentions, i.e. the validity claims that are raised by a poem or a story. Yet, if speaker and hearer do not succeed in establishing the intended meaning, the participants are ultimately only left with the option of reverting to discourse as that mode of communication where the validity claims in question become themselves the topic: "Thus argument always has to be central to deliberative democracy. The other forms can be present, and there are good reasons to welcome them, but their status is a bit different because they do not *have* to be present" as Dryzek points out (Dryzek 2000: 71). This is not to say that the communicative core of the deliberative model is necessarily in some sense prior to other forms of communication, but simply that discourse is the fall-back position when other forms of communication fail.

4.3. The challenge by rational and social choice

Rational choice theory's basic objection to deliberative democracy is that it ignores or marginalises the fact that political acting is above all strategic, i.e. individuals seek to maximise their predetermined preferences.[51] In contrast to deliberative democracy's emphasis of the communicative dimension with its goal of reaching a mutually shared understanding, rational choice seems to grasp the true nature of the political – pushing through one's interests in a contest for power – while it unmasks the deliberative element as serving merely as a cover for the legitimation of what are essentially self-interested actions. Yet, however accurate this view seems to depict our daily experience with political processes, rational choice's conception of the individual as an egoist pay-off maximiser rests on a questionable basic assumption about human nature. For in order to be consistent the theory has to presuppose that people's preferences are somehow predetermined and invariant and thus do not change in the course of social or political interaction. This is a rather strong behaviourist position which seems hardly plausible in itself nor does it appear to be an accurate description of social and political reality.[52] Deliberative democracy in contrast not only offers an explanation for the genesis of preferences and their internal structure, but more importantly also uncovers those elements of the interaction – i.e. the institutional design – that might permit preference transformation (cf. Goodin 2000; Habermas 1996; Gutmann & Thompson 1996).[53]

Social choice theory's criticism of deliberative democracy in turn has among other things focused exactly on the transformative character of the deliberative procedure. Social choice

[51] The egoist dimension underlying rational choice should, however, not be read as forbidding altruistic orientations altogether. It simply postulates that as individuals we try to realise our preferences in the best possible way, but it does not prescribe the content of these preferences. If altruistic goals happen to be part of a person's set of preferences, then increasing that altruistic moment is entirely in line with the basic tenets of rational choice.

[52] In its classical version rational choice theory follows the footsteps of Skinner's radical behaviourism (cf. Scott 2000).

[53] This is not to say that preference transformation is an unavoidable or necessary effect of deliberation; if we find out in discussion that the reasons we have for our position are indeed the better ones than those our opposites offer we will certainly not be compelled to change our view. But deliberation in this case still has the effect of producing "enlightened preferences": our position has been scrutinised and tested against other views in an argumentative exchange so that it is more robust now, and we might even have found new reasons in support of our view.

theory does not question so much the relevance of deliberative practices, but rather points to the fact that deliberation – if broadly institutionalised – can have counterproductive effects with regard to its aims. For rather than reaching a unanimous consensus, debate and discussion might actually uncover further differences between the participants or lead to awkward preference cycles so that finding agreement on purely deliberative grounds becomes impossible. Yet, as Dryzek clearly points out deliberative democracy rather seems to work in the opposite direction and thus reduces multiply peaked preference orderings by uncovering underlying dimensions (cf. Dryzek 2000). Of course, deliberation can just as well increase issue dimensions and options, but it need not lead to complicating the political process, nor is such an aspect constitutive of the deliberative idea. What is more, we have to see that in the case issue dimensions do increase during a discussion this is not a result artificially induced by the deliberative process. Rather, deliberation can help to uncover and articulate lines of conflict and disagreement – and in its ideal state it can then make them amenable to a discourse which leads to a consensual solution.

4.4. The radical challenge

This is a challenge that applies exclusively to Habermas' *Between Facts and Norms* and is mostly voiced by fellow deliberative democrats. The issue here is not whether Habermas is too much of a proceduralist or not, but whether his account of democracy is still radical enough. Prominent voices such as those of James Bohman (1994) and William Scheuerman (1999) think not so; they contend that Habermas' theory has lost its critical edge and taken a turn towards the conservative side of liberalism. The main thrust of their scepticism is directed against the radical element in Habermas' account, i.e. the role of the informal public sphere, whose conceptual space is too narrow to be able to play a decisive, emancipatory role in a political process that is dominated by the administrative system. Moreover, on the level of the theoretical architecture they think that Habermas gives too much weight to systems theory.[54] We will try to dispel Bohman's and Scheuerman's criticism by recovering the radical core in Habermas' approach, which will lead us to the central role of the public sphere in the model of deliberative democracy.[55]

Much of the confusion on the part of deliberative democrats of the likes of Bohman and Scheuerman might be due the fact that Habermas does not spell out a theory of democracy by extracting or extrapolating an account of democracy and its institutions from his discourse theoretical basis. Rather, he adopts the reverse strategy by taking the modern nation-state as a given and trying to answer the question how under these circumstances a radical, i.e. discourse ethical, notion of legitimacy can be accommodated and defended. As Grodnick puts it: "[t]he great ambition of Between Facts and Norms is to make radical democracy compatible with a political system that resembles our own" (Grodnick 2005: 395). This obviously leads to difficulties in separating the descriptive from the normative parts in Habermas' theory, yet as we will see Habermas is able to preserve democracy's radical core.

[54] Thomas McCarthy (1985) and Hans Joas (1986) represent two other critical voices in this context who perceive Habermas' use of systems theory as both dangerous and unnecessary.
[55] For the following see Stephen Grodnick's (2005) excellent article.

Based on the diagnosis of Robert Dahl (1989) Habermas concedes that modern societies are too complex to be regulated discursively in all their aspects, deliberative politics would be overburdened cognitively as citizens lack the necessary operative knowledge (*Steuerungswissen*).[56] This is not entirely a new line of argumentation, for as a result of his exchange with Niklas Luhmann in the 1970s Habermas becomes aware that societies cannot be controlled, penetrated, made transparent, and function by relying on the illocutionary forces of language alone. Complex societies are differentiated into subsystems and unburden actors from direct control by introducing specific "steering media", two of which – administrative power and money – are uncoupled from language and hence the lifeworld.[57] Furthermore, Habermas is also aware that the political system and the legislative process, despite relying on public opinion, is not controlled directly by communicative power: "Discourses do not govern. They generate a communicative power that cannot take the place of administration but can only influence it" (Habermas 1992b: 452). The resulting relative autonomy of the administrative system is something that Bohman and Scheuerman view critically. Yet as Grodnick points out: "[w]e should not make too much of this administrative autonomy, and yet this is Scheuerman and Bohman do. They do not clearly distinguish the technical autonomy of administrative systems from their lack of independence in all other areas. In other words, Habermas concedes only one point: technical operations of administrative organizations are beyond the immediate control of the public sphere, but in all other capacities they are subordinate bodies" (Grodnick 2005: 396). Indeed, Habermas is very clear about the relationship between law, legitimacy, and communicative power: "In the system of public administration, there is concentrated a power that must always regenerate itself anew out of communicative power. Thus the law is not only constitutive for the power code that steers administrative processes. It represents at the same time the medium for transforming communicative power into administrative power. The idea of the constitutional state can therefore be expounded with the aid of principles according to which legitimate law is generated from communicative power and the latter in turn is converted into administrative power via legitimately enacted law" (Habermas 1996: 169).

Communicative power in turn is generated from public opinion and hence the public sphere. The degree of radicalness of Habermas' account of deliberative democracy thus hinges on his conception of the latter. Habermas proposes a two-track model of the public sphere which connects a "weak", informal public sphere to a "strong", formal one: the informal public sphere is based in the associational networks of civil society where social problems are identified, articulated and from where the discursively formed opinions slowly move upwards until they reach the legislative-administrative complex, i.e. the strong public (see below for a more detailed account). One of the central points of Habermas' approach is to show that the weak public is not so weak after all: for this conception to work the chances of participation must be distributed equally, in other words resources which grant access to discourses on the one hand and equivalent discursive resources on the other. Furthermore, if the informal public is to connect to the formal one it also entails that society must be organised in a way so as to mobilise participation, initiate discourses, and connect

[56] In fact, for Dahl citizens' access to operational knowledge is one of the most pressing problems of modern democracies as it is the precondition for opinion formation.
[57] Cf. Habermas & Luhmann (1971).

them to the formal complex of the political process.[58] Quite clearly, the picture we get here is far removed from a mere descriptive inventory of existing democracies, it certainly is not conservative, nor is it leaning towards liberalism. On the contrary, the communicative freedom citizens must enjoy, the anarchic structure of the informal public sphere and its revolutionary nature (cf. Grodnick 2005: 401) in terms of the communicative and emancipatory potential it must be able to unleash, as well as the responsiveness of the formal political institutions depict a radical vision of democracy. At the heart of the model lie the "currents of communication and public opinion that, emerging from civil society and the public sphere, are converted into communicative power through democratic procedures" (Habermas 1996: 442). It is thus the informal public sphere which is decisive for the generation of democratic legitimacy and which carries the promise of social emancipation: "In the proceduralist paradigm, the public sphere is not conceived simply as the back room of the parliamentary complex, but as the impulse-generating periphery that *surrounds* the political center: in cultivating normative reasons, it affects all parts of the political system without intending to conquer it. Passing through the channels of general elections-and various forms of participation, public opinions are converted into a communicative power that authorizes the legislature and legitimates regulatory agencies, while a publicly mobilized critique of judicial decisions imposes more-intense justificatory obligations on a judiciary engaged in further developing the law" (Habermas 1996: 442, emphasis in the original).

This radical account of democracy notwithstanding, critics such as Scheuerman would argue that the depicted role of the informal public sphere has an effect on the political system only in times of crisis while in the *courant normal* of daily politics its role is marginal at best. However, as Grodnick (2005) convincingly shows, Habermas operates with a different notion of crisis which does not refer so much to the effects of a single social catastrophe as to a loss of legitimacy of the political system. This occurs when law is illegitimate, which in turn is the result of the severing of the two public spheres from each other or the erosion of the lifeworld's communicative resources. This is not to say that the members of civil society are or should be constantly engaged in the law-making process. But when interests and opinions conflict fundamentally as in moral questions, citizens must be able to take on the role of the authors of law through their discursive contributions and the public sphere that they constitute and they must be able to see themselves as the addressees of legitimate law.

Contrary to the charge of conservatism Habermas' approach to deliberative democracy thus reveals to be very much in line with his unfinished project of modernity, though the radical edge is now accommodated within a descriptive account of the modern nation-state. This is not to be interpreted as a sign of resignation, but as the attempt to locate more clearly the emancipatory moment within the political process. And it is precisely "the subjectless forms of communication that regulate the flow of discursive opinion- and will-formation in such a way that their fallible results enjoy the presumption of being reasonable" (Habermas 1996: 301) where the emancipatory potential, popular sovereignty, and legitimacy can be found – in one word: in the public sphere.

[58] The last point also means that the media play a central role in Habermas' account as we will see in more detail below.

Having reconstructed the deliberative dimension of democracy in terms of the development of the idea, its status in more recent theories, as well as the challenges to the concept, our discussion has shown that the public sphere is the radical element of the deliberative approach. We will therefore present the concept in more detail in the next section, which will also allow us to elaborate in more detail the role of the media.

5. Democracy and the public sphere

In line with the approach taken to elucidate the concept of deliberative democracy, we will first present the transformation of the concept of publicity, the public sphere, and public reasoning in Kant, Hegel, Marx, and liberalism as represented by Mill and Tocqueville as those thinkers most clearly associated with the bourgeois public sphere (section 5.1.) before turning to Habermas' (1989c) influential account as formulated in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (section 5.2.).[59] The criticism of Habermas' initial conception (section 5.3.) will then lead us to the notion of the public sphere as part of his political theory of deliberative democracy (section 5.4.).

5.1. Transformations of concepts: Kant, Hegel, Marx, and Mill

5.1.1. Kant

We have already seen that the publicity plays a great role in Kant's notion of deliberation and marks one of those points where he clearly departs from Rousseau. Indeed, in *Perpetual Peace* Kant goes as far as saying that "we may give the following proposition as the *transcendental formula* of public right: 'All actions relating to the rights of other men are wrong, if the maxims from which they follow are inconsistent with publicity'" (Kant 1903: 185, emphasis in the original). Putting Hobbes' dictum *auctoritas non veritas facit legem* on its head, politics and the law which it brings forth have to be publicly defendable, i.e. they have to conform to public reason. As Habermas states, Kant conceives the process of reasoning itself as non-political, the aim is merely to rationalise politics in the name of morality (cf. Habermas 1990c: 178f.). As Kant himself puts it: "[t]his principle [of publicity] must be regarded not merely as ethical, as belonging to the doctrine of virtue, but also as juridical, referring to the rights of men. For there is something wrong in a maxim of conduct which I cannot divulge without at once defeating my purpose, a maxim which must therefore be kept secret, if it is to succeed, and which I could not publicly ackowledge [sic.] without infallibly stirring up the opposition of everyone" (Kant 1903: 185). Davis (1992) argues that the public Kant has in mind here is not an actual one, rather his principle of publicity, similar to the Categorical Imperative, is to be understood as a hypothetical test.

At the same time, the test takes on very concrete forms when Kant states: "Why has a ruler never dared openly to declare that he recognizes absolutely no right of the people opposed to him? [...] The reason is that such a public declaration would rouse all of his subjects against him; although, as docile sheep, led by a benevolent and sensible master, well-fed and powerfully protected, they would have nothing wanting in their welfare for which to lament" (Kant 1979: 155f.). This test of publicity is not as hypothetical as the

[59] It is for this reason that Dewey is omitted from our reconstruction of the place of the public sphere in philosophical thought, though his *The Public and its Problems* (Dewey 1927) certainly presents an influential account that anticipates in some respect the notion of the public sphere we find in deliberative theory.

principle itself and it shows that more than with the Categorical Imperative Kant was aware that "real-world" publicity had indeed an effect on law and the political process. The necessity of a real public becomes even more evident in Kant's *What does it Mean to Orient Oneself in Thinking?* (Kant 1998) where reason itself is given the form of a cooperative and hence public endeavour: "[c]ertainly one may say, 'Freedom to speak or write can be taken from us by a superior power, but never the freedom to think!' But how much, and how correctly, would we think if we did not think, as it were, in common with others, with whom we mutually communicate!" (Kant 1949: 303). More than this, publicity understood in this form is the principle of both the legal system and the process of enlightenment which becomes apparent when Kant argues that while an individual may find it difficult to free her- or himself from immaturity, "[t]here is more chance of an entire public enlightening itself" (Kant 1991: 55).

In our context it is important to see that Kant not only connects reasoning to publicity, in a certain sense he also anticipates the distinction between communicative and strategic action and the domesticating function of the former over the latter: the ruler cannot position his self-interest openly against that of the people, even though he may be convinced of the priority of his interests; he has to abide by the rules of public reason at least to a certain extent. This is an important point for it shows Kant's awareness that the organisation of a state could not be based on moral philosophy alone. As Hannah Arendt states, in contrast to Aristotle who assumed that a good man can be a good citizen only in a good state, Kant tries to show how a bad man can be a good citizen in a good state. Again, publicity is the key here as Kant formulates the problem in the following way: "[t]he problem of the formation of the state, hard as it may sound, is not insoluble, even for a race of devils, granted that they have intelligence. It may be put thus: 'Given a multitude of rational beings who, in a body, require general laws for their own preservation, but each of whom, as an individual, is secretly inclined to exempt himself from this restraint: how are we to order their affairs and how establish for them a constitution such that, although their *private dispositions* may be really antagonistic, they may yet so act as a check upon one another, that, in their *public relations*, the effect is the same as if they had no such evil sentiments'" (Kant 1903: 154, emphasis added). As Arendt argues, the bad man is not the on who wills evil but the one who makes an exemption for himself, and the key idea here is secrecy as Arendt points out: "they [the devils] could not do it publicly because they would obviously stand against the common interest" (Arendt 1992: 18). It is the public conduct on which Kant places his hopes, and which extends to the discursive conduct. Of course, despite its appeal the theory suffers from several shortcomings, not only because Kant's conception of publicity is rather undemocratic as we have seen further above as it relies on a notion of private autonomy which excludes women, servants, and children. He also presupposes a "great purpose of nature" as Arendt states, which works behind the individuals' and the state's back towards the progression of enlightenment.

5.1.2. Hegel

Hegel does not take issue with the latter assumption, but with the liberal foundation of Kant's theory, or rather he confronts it with his empirical observations. Public reasoning, or public opinion as Hegel refers to it, has on the surface the same conceptual locus as in Kant's theory: it is the thoughts, judgments, and beliefs of the individuals, which based on their freedom together form the public opinion and hence the political will: "The role [Bestimmung] of the Estates is to bring the universal interest [Angelegenheit] into existence [Existenz] not only in itself but also for itself, i.e. to bring into existence the moment of subjective *formal freedom*, the public consciousness as the *empirical universality* of the views and thoughts of the *many*" (Hegel 1991: 339, emphasis in the original). The problem for Hegel is that he becomes acutely aware of the limitations of the role of public opinion in the political process due to its deep ambivalent nature – which reflects his own ambivalent stance towards the idea and the reality of bourgeois society. Hegel defines public opinion in § 316 in the *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* in the following way: "[f]ormal subjective freedom, whereby individuals as such entertain and express their *own* judgements, opinions, and counsels on matters of universal concern, makes its collective appearance in what is known as *public opinion*. In the latter, the universal in and for itself, the *substantial* and the *true*, is linked with its opposite, with what is *distinct* in itself [dem für sich Eigentümlichen] as the *particular opinions* of the many. This existence [Existenz] [of public opinion] is therefore a manifest self-contradiction, an *appearance* of cognition; in it, the essential is just as immediately present as the inessential" (Hegel 1991: 353, emphasis in the original). Although Hegel writes in the addition to § 316 that "[w]hatever is to achieve recognition today no longer achieves it by force, and only to a small extent through habit and custom, but mainly through insight and reasoned argument" (ibid.), the suspicion against the nature of public opinion is evident. On the one hand public opinion defines that dimension of practical reason which he inherits from Kant, on the other hand the reasons people bring forth are very often far removed from representing a common interest, voicing merely particular concerns. Summarising these two currents which constitute public opinion Hegel states that "[p]ublic opinion therefore embodies not only the eternal and substantial principles of justice [...] As soon as this inner content attains con-sciousness and is represented [zur Vorstellullg kommt] in general propositions (either in its own right [für sich] or for the purpose of concrete reasoning [Räsonnieren] on felt needs and on events, dispensations, and circumstances within the state), all the contingencies of opinion, with its ignorance and perverseness, its false information and its errors of judgement, come on the scene" (Hegel 1991: 353).[60] The consequence of this is that "[p]ublic opinion therefore deserves to be respected as well as despised – despised for its concrete consciousness and expression, and respected for its essential basis, which appears in that concrete consciousness only in a more or less obscure manner" (Hegel 1991: 355).[61]

[60] In paragraph § 317 he quotes among others Goethe: "Zuschlagen kann die Masse, da ist sie respektable, *Urteilen gelingt ihr miserabel*" (Hegel 1991: 354, emphasis in the original. Translation: in fighting the masses are respectable, but in their judgements miserable).

[61] From our point of view Hegel draws a somewhat dubious conclusion from this: "Since it contains no criterion of discrimination and lacks the ability to raise its own substantial aspect to [the level of] determinate knowledge, the first formal condition of achieving anything great or rational, either in actuality or in science, is to be independent of public opinion. Great achievement may in turn be assured that public opinion will subsequently accept it, recognize it, and adopt it as one of its prejudices" (Hegel 1991: 355). The addition to § 318 makes the point even more explicit: "Every kind of falsehood and truth is present in public opinion, but it is the prerogative [Sache] of the great man to discover the truth within it. He who expresses the will of his age, tells it what its will is, and accomplishes this will is the great man of the age. What he does is the essence and inner content of the age, and he gives the latter actuality; and no one can achieve anything great, unless he is able to despise public opinion as he

Hegel's main problem with Kant's conception but also with his own, as evidenced by his ambivalent stance towards public opinion, is the irredeemable tension between what he perceives as the fiction of practical reason and the facticity of its social constitution in a divided bourgeois society: "[t]he *possibility of sharing* in the universal resources – i.e. of holding *particular* resources – is, however, *conditional* upon one's own immediate basic assets (i.e. capital) on the one hand, and upon one's skill on the other; the latter in turn is itself conditioned by the former, but also by contingent circumstances whose variety gives rise to *differences* in the *development* of natural physical and mental [geistigen] aptitudes which are already unequal in themselves [für sich]. In this sphere of particularity, these differences manifest themselves in every direction and at every level, and, in conjunction with other contingent and arbitrary circumstances, necessarily result in *inequalities in the resources and skills* of individuals" (Hegel 1991: 233, emphasis in the original). And although he does not draw the consequences that Marx later will, Hegel anticipates his diagnosis, writing that "[w]hen a large mass of people sinks below the level of a certain standard of living – which automatically regulates itself at the level necessary for a member of the society in question – that feeling of right, integrity [Rechtlichkeit], and honour which comes from supporting oneself by one's own activity and work is lost. This leads to the creation of a *rabble*, which in turn makes it much easier for disproportionate wealth to be concentrated in a few hands" (Hegel 1991: 266, emphasis in the original). As Habermas argues, the ineradicable conflict of interests between the classes of which Hegel was aware means that in the end public opinion is always particular, i.e. private opinion and subjective belief (cf. Habermas 1990c: 197), giving rise to the spectre of individuals who "present themselves as a *crowd* or *aggregate*, unorganized in their opinions and volition, and [...] become a massive power in opposition to the organic state" (Hegel 1991: 342, emphasis in the original).

But Hegel's conception of the public and public opinion also loses the critical function with which Kant had endowed it, becoming an instance of social integration, or better assimilation to the interests of the state, which is only weakly veiled by Hegel's emphasis on its educational purposes. An organic society is above all an orderly society, so it seems, and the order is dictated from above: "The provision of this opportunity of [acquiring] knowledge [Kenntnissen] has the more universal aspect of permitting *public opinion* to arrive for the first time at *true thoughts* and *insight* with regard to the condi-tion and concept of the state and its affairs, thereby *enabling it to form more rational judgements on the latter*. In this way, the public also becomes familiar with, and learns to respect, the functions, abilities, virtues, and skills of the official bodies and civil servants. And just as such publicity provides a signal opportunity for these abilities to develop, and offers them a platform on which they may attain high honours, so also does it constitute a remedy for the self-conceit of individuals and of the mass, and a means – indeed one of the most important means – of educating them" (Hegel 1991: 352, emphasis in the original). It is not the practical reason of morality as the product of deliberating citizens which generates the legitimacy of law: because Hegel constitutes the state as the guardian of morality (*Sittlichkeit*) the state itself becomes the source of its own legitimacy, separating general opinion from subjective belief,

here and there encounters it" (ibid.). Hegel's position might be partly explained by the fact that although he is aware of what we would call communicative and strategic elements of public opinion, he lacks the conceptual means to distinguish one from the other, although he later writes that the freedom of public opinion is "also guaranteed by the indifference and scorn which shallow and malicious talk quickly and inevitably brings down upon itself" (Hegel 1991: 356). Yet, here again, we are provided with no further information of how shallow and malicious talk is ultimately identified.

so that public opinion formation in the end risks of becoming an exercise in tautology. Without mentioning Kant by name, though it is clear to whom he refers, Hegel thus states: "There was at one time a great deal of talk about the opposition between morality and politics and the demand that the latter should conform to the former. In the present context, we need only remark in general that the welfare of a state has quite a different justification from the welfare of the individual [des Einzelnen]. The immediate existence [Dasein] of the state as the ethical substance, i.e. its right, is directly embodied not in abstract but in concrete existence [Existenz], and only this concrete existence, rather than any of those many universal thoughts which are held to be moral commandments, can be the principle of its action and behaviour. The allegation that, within this alleged opposition, politics is always wrong is in fact based on superficial notions [Vorstellungen] of morality, the nature of the state, and the state's relation to the moral point of view" (Hegel 1991: 370).

5.1.3. Marx

Marx sees right through Hegel's restaurative attempts as he is well aware that the pathologies Hegel has discovered are no aberrations of the ideal path of social development but inherent properties of the bourgeois society itself (cf. Habermas 1990c: 201). He thus further radicalises the confrontation of the idea of public reason with its empirical manifestation, though he differs fundamentally from Hegel in terms of the consequences he draws from the comparison. He unmasks the seeming independence of autonomous individuals, the reasoning of property-owners as mere ideology, as the facade of society, behind which lurk the deep contradictions by which it is constituted. On this reading public opinion becomes false consciousness operating in the interest of the bourgeoisie: society's emancipation from traditional forms of authority and legitimacy does not have the effect that the interaction between private people is free from power, as Habermas argues in reconstructing Marx' diagnosis, they are just transposed, as it were, to become the structuring property between owners and wage earners (cf. Habermas 1990c: 203).

Marx' critique does more than settling the scores with Hegel, in fact his account can be seen as a first attempt to assess the idealised presuppositions in Kant's conception of public reason vis-à-vis the reality of his own time. It is above all what deliberative theory has labelled the freedom of external and internal constraints which Marx sees fundamentally violated: the public sphere lacks the accessibility and hence the inclusiveness it needs to be able to mediate between society and the state. He therefore embraces the struggle for the extension of suffrage as a politicisation and democratisation from below, which allows him to articulate the deep contradiction at the heart of the established system: "When, however, the French bourgeoisie began to realize in every pulsation of society a menace to 'peace', how could it, at the head of society, pretend to uphold the régime of unrest, its own régime, the parliamentary régime, which, according to the expression of one of its own orators, lives in struggle, and through struggle? The parliamentary régime lives on discussion, – how can it forbid discussion? Every single interest, every single social institution is there converted into general thoughts, is treated as a thought, – how could any interest or institution claim to be above thought, and impose itself as an article of faith? The orators' conflict in the tribune calls forth the conflict of the rowdies in the press; the debating club in parliament is necessarily supplemented by debating clubs in the salons and the bar-rooms; the representatives, who are constantly appealing to popular opinion, justify popular opinion in

expressing its real opinion in petitions. The parliamentary régime leaves everything to the decision of majorities, – how can the large majorities beyond parliament be expected not to wish to decide? If, from above, they hear the fiddle screeching, what else is to be expected than that those below should dance?" (Marx 2009: 51).

Habermas very succinctly summarises Marx' point: "to the extent that non-bourgeois strata penetrated the public sphere in the political realm and took possession of its institutions, participated in press, parties, and parliament, the weapons of publicity forged by the bourgeoisie were pointed against itself" (Habermas 1989: 126). In the end, the non-bourgeois strata do nothing else than prosecuting the Kantian claim, so to speak, in that their struggle is aimed at establishing the preconditions which would allow practical reason to become institutionalised in public debate in order to rationalise political power. Yet, this is not the endpoint of Marx' vision: the enlarged audience of the public sphere and the levelling of class differences would have the effect that "the public power will lose its political character" (Marx 1983: 52), as political power in the sense Marx understands it is the power one class wields over the other. Marx' public sphere would therefore be constituted by citoyens rather than bourgeois, and because the state is identical with society, rendering any mediation between them obsolete, the interaction in the public sphere would thus become informal and personal, i.e. private (cf. Habermas 1989: 129).

5.1.4. Liberalism

Before concluding this section we will briefly examine the different account liberalism gives of the public sphere and public opinion. Here, in contrast to Marx and socialism in general, the public sphere mediates the interests of private persons vis-à-vis the state, though it is no longer based on the idea of a bourgeois publics sphere in the classical sense. Liberalism is confronted with the extension of the public sphere to new strata, which means that the function of the public sphere consists neither in the discovery of truth nor in the moral consensus of all, but in the struggle of competing group interests. It appears that liberalism's main concern relates to the unintended consequences it has helped to create: while liberals such as John Stuart Mill fervently support the extension of suffrage, it is precisely this aspect which transforms the public sphere decisively: what were heretofore private conflicts now become public ones which press for political solutions. Mill is very well aware that the cooperative search for consensus is threatened to be subverted by the tyranny of the majority and its interests, i.e. that the discursive principle of the public sphere is at risk. The problem of liberals such as Mill and Tocqueville is somewhat similar to Hegel's, though with a decisive twist. Whereas Hegel was ambivalent about the role of public opinion, particularly as he became aware that considered opinions existed alongside mere subjective beliefs, for whose distinction he lacked a criterion, liberalism is faced with a different difficulty, namely the effect of opinions.

Simplifying the point in order to shape out the distinctions more clearly, we could say that whereas Marx focuses on the conditions for the genesis of the public sphere and Hegel to some extent more on the content, liberals tend to emphasise the outcome of the process. Tocqueville was clearly worried that because of the social transformation processes men "are readier to trust the mass, and public opinion becomes more and more mistress of the world. [...] Public opinion has a strange power. [...] It uses no persuasion to forward its beliefs, but by some mighty pressure of the mind of all upon the intelligence of each it imposes its ideas

and makes them penetrate men's very souls. The majority in the United States takes over the business of supplying the individual with a quantity of ready-made opinions and so relieves him of the necessity of forming his own" (Tocqueville 1969: 399f.). The crucial point here is that the tyranny of the majority and the loss of the critical dimension of the public sphere, that is the dissolution of the moral point of view into particular perspectives, also has the consequence that the minority no longer has the possibility of changing the status quo. In this situation, liberalism offers two solutions: not being able to go back to Rousseau and declare the will of the majority as the *volonté générale*, Mill advocates a notion of toleration in the public sphere as public opinion has lost its own critical measure. But toleration alone does not solve the problem that Mill sees in the "identity of position and pursuits" which results in "an identity of partialities, passions, and prejudices" (Mill 2003: 80).[62] Though Mill is quick to argue that he is not against the tyranny of the proletariat but against any form of domination by a majority, be they shopkeepers or squires, Habermas assesses Mill's interpretation as reactionary as it reacts "to the power of the idea of a critically debating public's self-determination, initially included in its institutions, as soon as this public was subverted by the propertyless and uneducated masses" (Habermas 1989: 136). Liberalism's second answer is therefore clear: it limits the influence of the masses through the principle of representation. Political decisions should accordingly be made by a select and educated few as part of a restricted and controlled public, a mechanism which guarantees the desirability of the outcomes while it subverts at the same time the very principles liberals such as Mill had had in mind when he wrote *On Liberty*.

After this survey of the role the public sphere plays in some of the most prominent and important accounts of moral and political theory, we will now turn to one of the most influential analyses Critical Theory has to offer: Habermas' *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. Although the notion of the public and in particular in conjunction with the role of the media also plays a role in Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Habermas' study is the first work of the Frankfurt School which puts the notion of the public sphere at its centre. Published in German in 1962, the public sphere would later become the one of the guiding notions of Habermas' work, finding repeated expression in his analysis of contemporary society and leading to an important reformulation in *Between Facts and Norms* (1996) and more recently to a more detailed specification in his article on "Political communication in media society" (2006).

In the following, we will first introduce Habermas' original account in its most relevant aspects for the present study, then turn to examine some of the criticism, including thereby Nancy Fraser's (1990) contribution which introduces the distinction between "weak" and "strong" publics, and present finally Habermas' reformulation in his approach to a deliberative model of democracy, whose critical edge ultimately relies, as we have seen above, on a radical concept of the public sphere.

[62] This also shows Mill's deep ambivalence towards his own defence of the freedom of speech in the sense that he is doubtful whether speech, i.e. deliberation, yields any critical effect in terms of rationalising power. Rather it seems that he assumes opinions to be pre-determined and immune to change, which of course renders a conception of politics based on the articulation of opinions suspicious: against Bentham he argues that since public opinion has been made the strongest power, "enough has been made for it: care is henceforth wanted rather to prevent that strongest power from swallowing up all others" (Mill 2003: 81).

5.2. Rise and fall of the bourgeois public sphere

The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere is Habermas (1989) first major work as a critical theorist.[63] As a broadly situated interdisciplinary study of the changing structure and functions of the public sphere since its coming into existence in its modern form in the coffee houses, clubs, and salons of the 18th century, Habermas immanent criticism uncovers the utopian potential at work in the bourgeois idea as well as the pathologies with which it is beset and which ultimately lead to its decline (cf. Finlayson 2005). The critical reconstruction of the different ideas and realisations of the public sphere are centrally important for Habermas because the public sphere, the public and publicity are notions which lie at the heart of moral and political theory on the one hand, while on the other the struggle for their realisation and transformation drives the development of society. In short, the public sphere enshrines the very idea of Enlightenment and therefore of modernity itself, and as such it is influential for Habermas' own development as philosopher.[64]

Although *Structural Transformation* already shows a clear theoretical distance to the authors of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Habermas' study can be seen as the first systematic attempt to provide a theoretical conception of society as a whole in which the notion of public opinion finds a central place and which thus meets the demand made in the foreword to the *Group Experiment* (Pollock 1955, cf. Wiggershaus 2001: 617). In very general terms we can say that in his study Habermas traces the rise and fall of the idea of the public sphere, which is closely tied to the development of bourgeois society where it originates for the first time in its modern guise. To be sure, publicness or publicity are not an invention of modernity as in the feudal society they were attributes of status and authority, they were representational in character, creating an aura, though without separating private from public: "[i]n itself the status of the manorial lord, on whatever level, was neutral in relation to the criteria of 'public' and 'private'; but its incumbent represented it publicly. He displayed himself, presented himself as embodiment of some sort of 'higher' power" (Habermas 1989: 7). The important point is that it was a representation not for but before the people: "[w]hen the territorial ruler convened about him ecclesiastical and wordly lords, knights, prelates, and cities [...] this was not a matter of an assembly of delegates that was someone else's representative. As long as the prince and the estates of his realm 'were' the country and not just its representatives, they could represent it in a specific sense. [...] The staging of the publicity involved in representation was wedded to personal attributes such as insignia (badges and arms), dress (clothing and coiffure), demeanor (form of greeting and poise) and rhetoric (forms of address and form discourse in general) – in a word, to a strict code of 'noble' conduct" (Habermas 1989: 7f.).

In contrast to this, the modern public sphere is based on a separation from private and public and arises out of the literary public, from which it inherits its distinct discursive form and which in turn bears continuity with the representational publicity of the courts. Habermas argues that the bourgeois public sphere evolved from the new form of private experiences found in the conjugal family's intimate domain, from which the necessities of

[63] Ironically, Habermas' *Habilitationsschrift* was the reason why he left the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt and joined Wolfgang Abendroth at the University of Marburg. Horkheimer thought that Habermas was too radical and had for some time wanted to get rid of him, requiring that he did a study on judges before he would be allowed to work on his project. As a result Habermas left. Writing to Adorno, who would have liked Habermas to stay and promote him to a professor, Horkheimer stated candidly: "He probably has a good, or even brilliant, career as a writer in front of him, but he only would cause the Institute immense damage" (as cited in Wiggershaus 1994: 555).
[64] See also Habermas' own assessment in this respect in his commemorative lecture upon being awarded the Kyoto prize (Habermas 2004b).

life (cf. Arendt 1998) had been banned: "[t]o the degree to which commodity exchange burst out of the confines of the household economy, the sphere of the conjugal family became differentiated from the sphere of social reproduction" (Habermas 1989: 28). As cultural products became more accessible in reading rooms, theatres, and at concerts, culture itself became the topic of conversations and "provided the training ground for a critical public reflection still preoccupied with itself – a process of self-clarification of private people focusing on the genuine experiences of their novel privateness" (ibid.: 29). These experiences were processed in critical-rational fashion which was modelled on the art of debate found in the courtly society, and it is thus in the coffee houses, salons, and table societies (*Tischgesellschaften*) of the towns where we find a public sphere *in nuce*. Habermas writes: "[t]he heirs of the humanistic-aristocratic society, in their encounter with the bourgeois intellectuals [...] built a bridge between the remains of a collapsing form of publicity (the courtly one) and the precursor of a new one: the bourgeois public sphere" (ibid.: 30). Independent of both the economy and the state, the free public discussions of citizens started crystallising around and bringing forth a normative conception of the common good through the articulation of the citizens' needs and interests.

The transformation of society through the advent of the third estate gave rise to a bourgeois public sphere in the 18th century. It broke with the established arrangement of dividing power and negotiating agreements as "[a] division of power by means of the delineation of the rights of the nobility was no longer possible within an exchange economy – private authority over capitalist property is, after all, unpolitical. Bourgeois individuals are private individuals. As such, they do not 'rule'" (Habermas 1974: 52). The important point here is that the rising bourgeoisie did thus not so much attempt to get its share in power, it challenged the very principle on which the existing power was based by submitting it to the principle of supervision, i.e. "that very principle which demands that proceedings be made public (*Publizität*). The principle of supervision is thus a means of transforming the nature of power, not merely one basis of legitimation exchanged for another" (ibid.). Anchored in civil society the public sphere transmits the needs of society to the state and holds it accountable through critical discussion, i.e. it rationalises political power through the compelling insight (*zwingende Einsicht*) of the public use reason. It thereby relies increasingly also on one specific instrument to make public reasoning manifest, namely the press. Habermas reconstructs the bourgeois public sphere as the coming together of private people who claim "the public sphere regulated from above against the public authorities themselves, to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labor" (ibid.: 27).

The normative dimension of public opinion arising from the public use of reason thereby refers on the one hand to the critical function it fulfils in rationalising political power, but it also refers to the very structures which give rise to it in the first place on the other. Habermas therefore assesses the bourgeois public sphere as both an idea and an ideology. It is in an idea as we have seen above insofar as public reason lies at the heart of the moral and political theory from Kant to Mill as well as obviously at the heart of social change itself. But already Hegel and more vociferously Marx denounced the idea for what it really was to them, namely mere ideology. True, the idea of the bourgeois public sphere as a collective exercise of articulating and defending through critical-rational argumentation the common good is based on inclusiveness and equality: first, accessibility means that no-one should be excluded from participating, second differences in status should play no significant role in

what is, third, to be conceived as a cooperative critical-rational search for the common good. In reality, however, the picture is rather different: property and education appear as the precondition for participation in the critical discussions in coffee houses and salons, i.e. most women as well as the masses of the poor and uneducated, whose tyranny Mill feared, were excluded. This is the context in which Habermas' makes his main argument, holding that despite its many shortcomings in practice, the utopian thrust of the idea of the public sphere remains untouched. More than this, he also shows this moment to be present in the bourgeois conception of humanity in the private and intimate sphere: "In the form of this specific notion of humanity a conception of what existed was promulgated within the bourgeois world which promised redemption from the constraint of what existed without escaping into a transcendental realm. This conception's transcendence of what was immanent was the element of truth that raised bourgeois ideology above ideology itself [...]" (Habermas 1989: 48). Similarly, the idea of the public sphere as the discursive space of universal access and unrestricted critical discussion has remained a cornerstone of subsequent theoretical development. Furthermore, however transitory, partial and scattered the public sphere took on real forms in the 18th century, much of the social development since then can be read in terms of a struggle to realise the underlying idea of the public sphere, which also includes movements explicitly ignored by Habermas such as Chartism in the United Kingdom in the mid-19th century. That is, the public sphere remains to this day a regulative idea and as such it is empirically effective: "publicity continues to be an organizational principle of our political order. It is apparently more and other than a mere scrap of liberal ideology that a social democracy could discard without harm" (Habermas 1989: 4).

As Habermas focuses on the development of the bourgeois public sphere and the idea on which it is based his analysis ultimately becomes one of its decline. The reason for the fall of the public sphere, however, is not so much due to its extension to non-bourgeois strata of society – this would be in line with the public sphere's own idea. Rather, the topos is one which Habermas will later formulate as the opposition of system and lifeworld and the threat of colonisation of the latter by the former.[65] In *Structural Transformation* the corresponding pairing is the public sphere anchored in bourgeois civil society which is slowly but irreversibly undercut on the one hand by a state that increasingly extends into the public sphere as well as on the other by the logic of an economy in which the press and the media in general are embedded as goods. Both developments threaten to undermine the resources of critical reasoning and hence the resource on which the discursive public sphere is built. The further advancement of capitalism leads to the "social question" (*soziale Frage*), i.e. to conflicts that arise out of the social grievances as the side effects of the capitalist mode of production itself. In this phase the bourgeoisie uses the public sphere strategically, having previously been the motor of social and political change, to mask the increasing antagonism and perpetuate the status quo; the common interest thus becomes identical with the interest of a particular class. The separation between public and private erodes as social conflicts reflecting the different premises of the private sphere are articulated as

[65] Habermas thesis of the colonisation of the lifeworld broadly follows Weber's theory of modernity, in particular his diagnosis of the increasing bureaucratisation, which Habermas interprets as a gradual process of functional media such as money and administrative power invading the lifeworld. The problem is that these media cannot fulfil the lifeworld's central task of cultural reproduction, social integration, and socialisation, which means they generate pathological side effects in that they erode the lifeworld's symbolic resources. In our context the consequence is an administratively induced drying out of the public sphere, i.e. strategic action marginalises and suppresses communicative action, the public sphere's primary mode of integration (cf. Habermas 1981b: 471ff.).

demands in the public sphere, which loses its character as a discursive space free of domination. The failure of the market to regulate itself as stipulated by liberal theory leads to increased interventionism by the state and consequently to an interpenetration of state and society, which in turn undermines the very basis of the liberal public sphere.

Along these lines Habermas' central thesis of the re-feudalisation of the public sphere describes a process that sees on the one hand the media, the basic institution of the public sphere, becoming increasingly commercialised: "[n]ot only the private economic interests of the individual enterprise gained in importance; the newspaper, as it developed into a capitalist undertaking, became enmeshed in a web of interests extraneous to business that sought to exercise influence upon it. The history of the big daily papers in the second half of the nineteenth century proves that the press itself became manipulable to the extent that it became commercialized. Ever since the marketing of the editorial section became interdependent with that of the advertising section, the press (until then an institution of private people insofar as they constituted a public) became an institution of certain participants in the public sphere in their capacity as private individuals; that is, it became the gate through which privileged private interests invaded the public sphere" (Habermas 1989: 185). The state's reaction to this trend in the form of increased control over the new electronic media, i.e. radio, film, and television, does not solve the problem, but turns "private institutions of a public composed of private people into public corporations" (ibid.: 187). It thus contributes to further subverting the original basis of the publicist institutions: "[a]ccording to the liberal model of the public sphere, the institutions of the public engaged in rational-critical debate were protected from interference by public authority by virtue of their being in the hands of private people. To the extent that they were commercialized and underwent economic, technological, and organizational concentration, however, they have turned during the last hundred years into complexes of societal power, so that precisely their remaining in private hands in many ways threatened the critical functions of publicist institutions. [...] Whereas formerly the press was able to limit itself to the transmission and amplification of the rational-critical debate of private people assembled into a public, now conversely this debate gets shaped by the mass media to begin with" (ibid.: 188).

On the other hand Habermas sees the increasing use of public relations as a concomitant factor apt to undermine the critical potential of the public sphere. The threat is given by the fact that whereas advertisements are tied to private producers who target private consumers, public relations addresses public opinion as a whole directly while hiding his or her business intentions in order to be able to engineer consent among the public (cf. Habermas 1989: 193f). "Publicity once meant the exposure of political domination before the public use of reason; publicity now adds up the reactions of an uncommitted friendly disposition. In the measure that it is shaped by public relations, the public sphere of civil society again takes on feudal features. The 'suppliers' display a showy pomp before customers ready to follow. Publicity imitates the kind of aura proper to the personal prestige and supernatural authority once bestowed by the kind of publicity involved in representation" (ibid.: 195). It is mainly special interest associations and political parties which undermine the public sphere by turning publicity into a commodity that can be made: "[p]ublicity work is aimed at strengthening the prestige of one's own position without making the matter on which a compromise is to be achieve itself the topic of *public discussion*. [...] Public relations do not genuinely concern public opinion but opinion in the sense of reputation. The public sphere becomes the court *before* whose public prestige can

be displayed – rather than *in* which public critical debate is carried on" (ibid.: 200f.). More than this, to the degree that political parties become themselves part of the system of special-interest associations and lose sight of their historical basis as parties of opinions, the status and function of parliament as society's central institutional locus of formal debate is severely weakened.

On the whole then, public relations, the changing nature of the political actors and institutions, the commercialisation of the media, and the rise of the consumer culture together form a syndrome which leads to the irreversible erosion of the public sphere. In drawing this consequence Habermas shows great proximity to Horkheimer and Adorno's diagnosis in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Nevertheless, he sees a more complex dynamic at work, for on the one hand he argues that the erosion of the public sphere is a process perpetuated by organisations, taking on the form of a manipulative publicity staged in front of a mediatised audience. On the other hand he maintains that the social-welfare state still adheres to the idea of the public sphere which relies on the members of the audience to initiate a critical process of communication (Habermas 1990c: 337f.). The degree of democratisation then is the degree to which the utopia of public reasoning remains not only fiction but becomes factually relevant. Against much of his own analysis Habermas thus argues that not all is lost: on the one hand he places his hopes on an increase of the level of the forces of production "in the face of which it is not unrealistic to assume that the continuing and increasing plurality of interests may lose the antagonistic edge of competing needs to the extent that the possibility of mutual satisfaction comes within reach" (Habermas 1989: 234). Additionally, in relation to the potential of global destruction which increases together with the means to satisfying needs the diverging interests lose much of their antagonism. The difficulty with this sketched possible development is that both trends do not necessarily and certainly not directly affect the basic structure of the public sphere. This problem is addressed by Habermas as he brings the tendency of re-feudalisation to the point by stating that "with the linking of public and private realms, not only certain functions in the sphere of commerce and social labor are taken over by political authorities but conversely political functions are taken over by societal powers" (Habermas 1990c: 231). The organisations' procuring of "plebiscitary agreement from a mediatized public by means of a display of staged or manipulated publicity" can only be broken by the transformation of a liberal constitutional state into a social-welfare state, Habermas argues, but more important still by extending the mandate of publicity "from the organs of the state to all organizations acting in state-related fashion" (ibid.: 232). Habermas envisions as a solution a democratisation on the middle level of society, i.e. of the organisations themselves where he locates part of the cause for the declining public sphere so that "a no longer intact public of private people dealing with each other individually would be replaced by a public of organized private people" (ibid.). It is thus the revitalised internal public spheres of special-interest associations and political parties which would then guarantee that even under social conditions which might no longer allow the emergence of a consensus about the common good, the formation of a political compromise could still be said to be legitimated by its internal relation to the public reasoning processes within and between the various formal and informal institutions.

The main problem of this outlook is that it is rather uncoupled from the rest of Habermas' analysis. Although the direction of possible development he sketches is not implausible, at this stage Habermas still lacks the theoretical means to ground it more firmly and hence to

make it more compelling than a mere speculative alternative. Kellner (2000) argues that the strategy of immanent critique led Habermas' as well as Horkheimer and Adorno' analyses in a *cul-de-sac* as "there was no institutional basis to promote democratization, and no social actors to relate theory to practice and to strengthen democratic social movements and transformation" (Kellner 2000: 269). This is not necessarily so, but Habermas' retracing of the Enlightenment idea of the public sphere certainly remains unconnected to a detailed theoretical account of what this emancipatory potential consists of outside its specific historical constellation and how it can become the core of a social or political theory. Habermas himself is well aware of this shortcoming as he writes in his response to a collection of critical articles published on the occasion of the translation of *Strukturwandel* into English: "On the basis of the theoretical means available to me at the time, I could not resolve this problem" (Habermas 1992b: 441), continuing to explain that "[t]he perspective from which I inquired into the structural transformation of the public sphere was linked to a theory of democracy indebted to Abendroth's concept of a socialist democracy evolving out of the democratic, constitutional welfare state. In general, it remained captive of a notion that became questionable in the meantime, i.e., that society and its self-organization are to be considered a totality. [...] But the presumption that society as a whole can be conceived as an association writ large, directing itself via the media of law and political power, has become entirely implausible in view of the high level of complexity of functionally differentiated societies" (ibid.: 443). To a certain extent, these theoretical problems have been the topic of part of Habermas' work since *Structural Transformation*.

5.3. Criticism of *Structural Transformation*

Upon its publication in German in 1962 as well as almost thirty years later in English in 1989 Habermas' diagnosis has provoked numerous critical reactions. In the following we will focus on some of the most prominent ones which have also led to Habermas' reformulation of the notion of the public sphere in *Between Facts and Norms*. The charges against single aspects, the theoretical and historical basis of the of the public sphere, its transformation and the consequences Habermas draws from it come from such diverse fields as liberal theory, systems theory, Marxism, feminism, history, and critical theory itself (section 5.3.1). While we will be able to mention some this criticism only in passing, we will present the contributions of Nancy Fraser (section 5.3.2.) and Niklas Luhman (section 5.3.3.) in more detail as they have had the most profound impact on the development of the notion of the public sphere in Habermas' work.[66]

5.3.1. General criticism

Most of the criticism voiced by liberals, feminists, and historians focuses on the historical aspects of Habermas' account of the bourgeois public sphere. Liberals such as Jäger (1973) argue that Habermas forms an inaccurate amalgam out of his reading of 18th and 19th century philosophy, social history and political theory, leading him to depict the contours of a public sphere which as such never existed: public opinion did not have the role Habermas postulates, and politics was not characterised by the search for a rational consensus but rather by bargaining and compromise of interests. By contrast Glotz (1968) detects an

[66] For the following see Hohendahl (1979), Calhoun (1992b), Fraser (1990), Wingert & Günther (2001).

unacknowledged elitism on the part of Habermas so that he necessarily has to interpret the transformation of the public sphere as a process of erosion, while he underestimates at th same time the broadening of the public sphere through the inclusion of non-bourgeois strata on the one hand and the mass media on the other. According to Glotz, the liberal public sphere is still intact or it would be, if on the one hand public figures such as intellectuals made the right use of the mass media and if on the other scholars such as Habermas would not disparage the entertainment function of the media as threats to the public sphere.

The objections of historians and feminists go in a similar direction as the concerns voiced by Jäger, but they point to more fundamental flaws in Habermas' study: Ryan (1992) and Eley (1992) in particular show not only that Habermas presents an idealised account of the historical genesis of the public sphere, but that despite its liberal basis, it was in fact constituted by several mechanisms of exclusion, i.e. the exclusion of other classes and above all the exclusion of women.[67] Contrary to Habermas' thesis of the accessibility of the early bourgeois public sphere, the salons, clubs, and coffee houses were frequented only by a small male elite, whose "universal discourse" was not so much the realisation of an utopian promise, but simply a marker of difference (cf. Fraser 1990): "there is a remarkable irony here", states Nancy Fraser accordingly, for "[a] discourse of publicity touting accessibility, rationality, and the suspension of status hierarchies is itself deployed as a strategy of distinction" (Fraser 1990: 60). This does not mean that other classes, ethnicities, or women were excluded *tout court* from the public sphere as for instance the work of Mary Ryan on women in 19th century America shows, but it was clear that they had to take different routes if they wanted to take part in public politics. The upshot of these analyses therefore is that contrary to its claims, the bourgeois public sphere is an ideological construct as it was based on the systematic exclusion of specific groups.

5.3.1. Nancy Fraser

This is also a point Nancy Fraser (1990) endorses. Being a critical theorist herself, however, her aim is not so much to detect historical inaccuracies, but to reconstruct a feasible notion of the public sphere for analysing the emancipatory possibilities and limits in "actually existing democracies" by taking Habermas' account as a basis and confronting it with its conceptual shortcomings. Fraser sees four main problematic assumptions which underlie Habermas' study: the bracketing of differences in status, the notion of a single, overarching public sphere, the restriction of discourses to debating the common good, and the clear separation between civil society and the state. It is in these dimensions that she proposes conceptual alternatives in order to renew the critical edge of Habermas' theory.

First, Fraser argues that the bourgeois public sphere's claim to open access does not go far enough, even if it has led to the gradual inclusion of formerly excluded or disenfranchised social groups and strata. Yet the inclusion, i.e. the breaking down of external constraints, is only one part, the other concerns the internal constraints, i.e. the bracketing or suspension of status inequalities. Exclusions based on status become only

[67] A similar point is made by Wiggershaus when he writes that Habermas was unaware of Kirchheimer's work before the national socialists took over power in Germany where he had analysed constitutions and constitutional realities, resulting in the insight that forms of functioning democracy had only ever been possible on the basis of an invulnerable hegemony of a ruling class. In particular, Habermas seemed to shy away from making the dependency of the democratic system on the distribution of power in society an explicit topic (cf. Wiggershaus 1988: 620).

visible in the process of the discursive interaction and Fraser makes the point that they are more difficult to overcome for "[i]nsofar as the bracketing of social inequalities in deliberation means proceeding as if they don't exist when they do, this does not foster participatory parity" (Fraser 1990: 64). In line with Habermas' discourse ethics she contends against Habermas' conception of the public sphere that "it would be more appropriate to unbracket inequalities in the sense of explicitly thematizing them" (ibid.). More than this, as inequalities of status are based on systemic social inequalities, it is necessary to eliminate the latter in order to generate parity with regard to the former. While she does not go as far as demanding the same income for everyone, she makes the case for a material equality that is "inconsistent with systemically-generated relations of dominance and subordination" (ibid.: 65).

Second, Habermas' concept of a single, monolithic public sphere is not only historically inaccurate and gives a misguided account the social and political transformation processes that have taken place. A singular public sphere is also undesirable from a normative point of view as runs counter to critical theory's aim to locate the democratic potential in today's late capitalist societies. Here, Fraser argues for what we could call an openness or accessibility of the various public spheres in themselves, and more important for the openness of these different public spheres for each other: "in stratified societies, arrangements that accommodate contestation among a plurality of competing publics better promote the ideal of participatory parity than does a single, comprehensive, overarching public" (ibid.: 66).[68] While dominant groups will still retain some of their hegemony, a multiplicity of public spheres works clearly at their disadvantage as their spheres are challenged by what Fraser calls "subaltern counterpublics" (ibid.: 67). She is quick to emphasis that counterpublics are not automatically more virtuous, the aim is merely to ground the struggle about plural conceptions of the common good in a more equal framework. Furthermore, in contrast to the bourgeois public sphere which is solely occupied with debating the common good, a multiplicity of publics also allows social groups to articulate their distinct social identities.

Third, as Jane Mansbridge (1990) has argued in her criticism of the republicanist view, deliberation need not necessarily be about the common good. The objection is readily comprehensible from a deliberative perspective as Habermas' conception of the bourgeois public sphere seems to imply that people already know what the common good is. This, however, is a very unlikely view, even under the conditions of class and gender hegemony. Rather, the aim of critical-rational discussion (*Räsonnement*) consists among other things in shaping out the outlines of what the common good could be. In other words, the bourgeois public sphere "works against one of the principal aims of deliberation, namely, helping participants clarify their interests, even when those interests turn out to conflict" (Fraser 1990: 72). Fraser goes further than this, because in the absence of a predetermined common good the deliberative process may not even be able to generate enough common ground, particularly when the conflicts of interests run deep. In the absence of any such certainty, there is then "no warrant for putting any strictures on what sorts of topics, interests, and views are admissible in deliberation" (ibid.). As Fraser points out, this is again in line with the development in Habermas' own work since *Structural Transformation*.

[68] Fraser turns to Eley (1994) when answering the question of how these different public spheres could be brought in connection to one another. Eley's "structured setting" bears resemblance to what Dryzek refers as "discursive designs" (cf. Dryzek 1990).

Finally, the strict separation of state and civil society is not only unfavourable for public debate, Fraser claims, it outright undermines the very principle of the public sphere. On a classical liberal reading civil society comprises the capitalist economy organised by private people on which the state has only limited influence. Yet, as we have seen, in this way the state would only protect the interests of the dominant bourgeois elite and therefore undermine socio-economic equality and hence the very preconditions on which access to and participation in the public sphere are based. On a different reading civil society designates all nongovernmental or "secondary" associations which are neither part of the economy nor the administration. This interpretation points in the direction of Habermas' own hope that the democratisation of organisations could reinvigorate the public sphere, though he did not distinguish what kind of organisations he had in mind. The discourse of these civil society organisation have no binding force, they form a weak public which set apart from state and economy and which generates public opinion in the form of critical commentary on authorised decision-making. In contrast to this, the strong public defines exactly the formal bodies within the state which are characterised by opinion formation and decision-making, i.e. the parliamentary complex. With parliamentary sovereignty, Fraser argues, the clear distinction between the associational civil society and the state is blurred as the discursive centre of the state performs a reduplication of the opinion formation processes. It is important to see, however, that a blurring of the boundaries is not equivalent with abolition, for then the public and public opinion would effectively become the state itself and civil society could no longer exercise its critical function.

5.3.3. Niklas Luhmann

While Fraser seeks to renew the Habermas' approach by overcoming conceptual difficulties and thus making the theory feasible for a critical analysis of contemporary societies, Luhmann's (1970) criticism from the perspective of systems theory aims at showing that the collective function Habermas still sees for public opinion has become an impossible task under late modern conditions. For Luhmann it is not about renewing the promise of Enlightenment but about adapting the model to a society differentiated into particularised subsystems. Against Habermas' faith placed in the critical role of organisations Luhmann argues that public opinion "cannot be simply reproduced organizationally because organizations depend precisely on that segmenting of consciousness, and therefore they can realize neither these structural premises nor the corresponding experiences on which rests the supposition of a critical public opinion" (Luhmann 1970: 5). While Luhmann does not deny the possibility of collective social communication right away, he takes a more reserved stance, arguing that it could only come into being under special circumstances given by unifying themes. Common good, rational-critical debate, and consensus are by contrast discharged as they can no longer fulfil their functions in a complex system. All that remains for a sociological analysis of public opinion is to identify those mechanisms which generate attention on the one hand and those which lead to decisions on the other. Moreover, since the attention span of the public is only of a limited nature, collective communication can only work if it is constantly presented with new issues, which in the final analysis means that the public sphere loses its rational-critical role both as its function and as its historical basis.

Public debate can only identify issues which must then be processed by specialised organisations as the public cooperative search for the common good would necessarily overburden the public sphere. Habermas' diagnosis of a decline of the Enlightenment idea enshrined in the liberal public sphere is hence naïve from Luhmann's point of view, who is more concerned with its changing function as a result of social transformation. It is above all the integrating function of public opinion which interests Luhmann: in a society increasingly differentiated into specialised subsystems public opinion "must be able to encompass the difference between politics and non-politics and, thus, also the relative remoteness and incomprehensibility of details in the process of political decision-making" (ibid.: 26). Here we can see that although coming from a different theoretical side, Luhmann joins Fraser in his dismissal of a public writ large, i.e. a collective subject. On the whole then, while Luhmann may not object to the account of the structural transformation of the public sphere given by Habermas in principle, he maintains that in late modern societies the idea of Enlightenment is out of step with social development, and the normative dimension is not so much utopian as simply unimportant for answering the question of how complex societies can be integrated.

6. The deliberative public sphere

As we have seen the public sphere occupies a central role in Habermas' model of deliberative democracy. Indeed, as Grodnick (2005) argues, it is that element which gives the theory its critical edge. The central question thus is how Habermas has answered the challenges posed by his critics. Partly, they have already been answered by the development of Habermas' theory as Fraser notes with respect to inclusiveness, i.e. the absence of external and internal constraints, as well as in Habermas' broadened understanding about the topic of the debates, which need not merely revolve around (a preconceived notion of) the common good. Similarly, Habermas' engagement with systems theory, in particular exemplified by Luhmann's approach, has led him to a more complex perspective of society as comprising a lifeworld and a system component which are connected to each other, though *pace* Luhmann he retains a dual perspective of participant and observer. As Weber's notion of value spheres already shows, in modern societies the system has not only undergone a process of differentiation into various subsystems, Habermas argues by drawing on Parsons' system theoretical approach that in particular the bureaucratic administration and the economy are steered by the non-linguistic media of power and money. What is of additional importance for Habermas' theory in this context is that through his reading of Piaget (1999) and above all Kohlberg (1981) he adopts the perspective that social change is on the one hand not only externally induced through system dynamics, and that on the other the associated learning processes do not only take place in objective-technical terms, but significantly also in the normative dimension.

Pulling together these different theoretical strands, how does Habermas depict the public sphere within his theory of deliberative democracy? In line with the development of Habermas' programme of modernity as an unfinished project where the normative structure of language and its inherent *telos* of reaching understanding becomes more and more central, he shapes out more clearly the procedural nature of the political process. As we have seen in the discussion of deliberative theory, law obtains crucial importance as it is

that medium which communicates with all other subsystems of the late modern, complex society. The question then is how law's authority is legitimated, and it is here that the public sphere comes into play. While on an abstract level Habermas depicts the process still as a connection between lifeworld and system, it is now clearly less monolithic and unitary, and in line with Faser's criticism the sharp separation of civil society and the state is weakened: there is no direct causal link between the two, though the two domains are still characterised by specific functions and communicative logics, particularly as far as the administrative complex is concerned.

But Habermas' account does not stop here, for this basic model still says nothing about the direction that the relationship between civil society and the state takes. Adopting Cobb, Ross, and Ross' (1976) agenda building typology, Habermas distinguishes three basic forms the political process can take: the "inside access" model defines a political process where the initiative comes from the political centre and the issue under debate remains very much contained there, while the public is excluded from participation and may merely be informed about the results of the process. The "mobilisation" model takes the same point of departure, but here the proponents seek the support of certain groups outside the political centre and thus mobilise the public sphere, either in order to be able to put an issue on the formal agenda or to implement a political programme. It is only in the third case which is desirable from the point of view of deliberative theory as in the "outside initiative" model the initiative lies with civil society, which transmits its issues to the political centre, where they are then formally treated, through the pressure of public opinion.

This general conception of the directions of the political process presents a considerable difference to the public sphere depicted in *Structural Transformation* and it also shows Luhmann's influence in that the possibility of civil society gaining influence through public opinion is rather restricted. It might be that it is these modifications which have led other deliberative democrats to judge Habermas theory as conservative. In line with this modest view Habermas conceives of an ordinary and an extraordinary mode of problem-solving and a corresponding circulation of power. The overburdening of citizens with operational knowledge means that for the most part problems are articulated and solved by the centre in what following Peters (1993) can be referred to as a routine mode: the election campaigns conducted by parties, the bureaucracy's preparation of laws to be passed by parliament as well as the judgements delivered by courts all follow established patterns. It is only in cases of conflicts that these semi-closed routines become open and the political system switches to an extraordinary mode of problem-solving. It is here that civil society and the pressure of public opinion it generates through the public sphere have a chance to make themselves felt and can initiate a political process of which they are the addressees.

Habermas is aware that even on this reading he places a considerable normative burden on civil society. Following the work of Cohen and Arato (1994) as well as Fraser's suggestion he no longer conceives of civil society as based on private individuals but as what could be best described as associational networks of organisations which promote the generation of an informal public opinion: "[t]he expectations are directed at the capacity to perceive, interpret, and present society-wide problems in a way that is both attention-catching and innovative. The periphery can satisfy these strong expectations only insofar as the networks of noninstitutionalized public communication make possible more or less spontaneous processes of opinion-formation. Resonant and autonomous public spheres of this sort must

in turn be anchored in the voluntary associations of civil society and embedded in liberal patterns of political culture and socialization; in a word, they depend on a rationalized lifeworld that meets them halfway" (Habermas 1996: 358).[69] The public sphere is neither an instance of social order, nor a framework of norms with specialised roles and competences, nor can it be conceived as a system as it is characterised primarily by permeable boundaries. At best it can be characterised as "a network for communicating information and points of view (i.e., opinions expressing affirmative or negative attitudes); the streams of communication are, in the process, filtered and synthesized in such a way that they coalesce into bundles of topically specified *public* opinions" (ibid.: 360, emphasis in the original). As the lifeworld it is reproduced through communicative action and as it does not prioritise any of the validity dimension which are the basis of specialised systems such as science, morality, and art, it is thus communicatively open, and it must be so if it is to be open to the different kind of impulses which it filters and processes.

Habermas argues that what makes the public sphere distinct from other institutions is the communicative structure which generates a social space: "[e]very encounter in which actors do not just observe each other but take a second-person attitude, reciprocally attributing communicative freedom to each other, unfolds in a linguistically constituted public space. This space stands open, in principle, for potential dialogue partners who are present as bystanders or could come on the scene and join those present" (ibid. 361). The more communication becomes detached and independent from such concrete and episodic instances of public spaces, the more the abstract nature of the public sphere comes to the fore which connects scattered readers, listeners, or viewers mainly through their interaction with the media. Similarly, Habermas posits that such generalised communication structures (re-)produce meaning which is equally generalised, i.e. it is disengaged from the thick contexts in which it first appears. At the same time, however, the informal public sphere of the weak public does not have to take decisions, it merely articulates preferences, opinions, and beliefs which are filtered into affirmative and negative contributions. The important point here is how Habermas defines "public opinion", a term which he had left somewhat weakly denoted in *Structural Transformation*. In deliberative terms public opinion refers to both "the controversial way it comes about and the amount of approval that 'carries' it" (ibid.: 362). William Rehg's translation is a bit unfortunate here, for we lose a significant portion of the original meaning where the "controversial way" is given as "die Art ihres Zustandekommens" (Habermas 1992a: 438) which could roughly be translated as "the way it [public opinion] comes about". On this reading public opinion has two components: a quantitative one which is given by the rate of approval, and a qualitative one given by the discourse quality on which the opinion is based, though Habermas is quick to emphasise that public opinion "is not representative in the statistical sense. It is not an aggregate of individually gathered, privately expressed opinions held by isolated persons. Hence it must not be confused with survey results" (Habermas 1996: 362). More important than the mere quantitative aspect is the requirement that the discursive process has been exhaustive. Habermas makes the point very clear when he states that "the success of public communication is not intrinsically measured by the requirement of inclusion either but by

[69] Cohen and Arato take their cue not from Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* (Hegel 2008) as one could assume, where the notion of civil society finds its first modern expression, but cite more immediate sources: while the empirical underpinning is furnished by their own research conducted on civil society movements, the theoretical grounding comes from Gramsci's distinction between "political society" and "civil society" (cf. Cohen and Arato 1989; Cohen 1983; Arato 1981; Bobbio 1979; Gramsci 1996).

the formal criteria governing how a qualified public opinion comes about. The structures of a power-ridden, oppressed public sphere exclude fruitful and clarifying discussions. The 'quality' of public opinion, insofar as it is measured by the procedural properties of its process of generation, is an empirical variable. From a normative perspective, this provides a basis for measuring the legitimacy of the influence that public opinion has on the political system" (ibid.). This is, in a nutshell, what the present study will attempt to do within the limited boundaries of its setting.

It is important to emphasise that there is no simple, causal relationship between public opinion on the one hand and political power on the other. Public opinion can only generate influence which in turn becomes relevant insofar as it has an effect on the convictions and the actions of authorised members of the political system, i.e. the strong public, such as MPs, civil servants, etc. Influence is thus the critical communicative component for which the different actors compete, and although political influence and reputation play certainly a role, the success of the speakers in a political process depends on their ability to convince the hearers, i.e. the audience. And while public opinions can be manipulated they cannot be "publicly bought nor publicly blackmailed" (ibid.: 364), or in other words: as public opinion rests on communicative action it cannot be generated through overt strategic action. The public sphere in the Habermasian sense can only come into existence in terms of articulating and negotiating social problems if it is connected to the communicative contexts of those affected. The lifeworld in turn has "the appropriate antennae [for social problems], for in its horizon are intermeshed the private life histories of the 'clients' of functional systems that might be failing in their delivery of services" (ibid.: 365). As a consequence of this Habermas now defines the distinction between the realm of the public and the private differently and more abstractly: it is no longer marked by specific topics or relationships, but by different conditions of communication, i.e. the private sphere is not to be seen as a hermetically sealed space, rather the communicative infrastructure connects the private to the public and directs the flow of topics between the two domains. The contemporary public sphere is not anchored in the private sphere of the bourgeoisie, but in a civil society which explicitly excludes the realm of the economy, that is the very basis of the public sphere of the bourgeois type in Habermas original study. He now defines civil society as being "composed of those more or less spontaneously emergent associations, organizations, and movements that, attuned to how societal problems resonate in the private life spheres, distill and transmit such reactions in amplified form to the public sphere" (ibid.: 367). Based on Cohen and Arato's (1994) work he lists the following four defining criteria which distinguish civil society from both the state, the economy as well as other functional systems: plurality (informal institutions such as families, groups, associations, etc.), publicity (cultural and communicative institutions), privacy (in terms of the development of identity and morality), and legality (which guarantee the independence of civil society from other societal domains) (cf. ibid.: 367f., Cohen & Arato 1992, 1994). At the same time Habermas is aware that civil society can only provide the basis or the starting point of a public sphere conceived as a process, and it is not even its most obvious element, he contends, though it is indispensable as the communicative resource of political legitimacy. Habermas' main point therefore consists in showing that his conception of civil society and the public sphere are not merely normatively desirable, but that they are empirically relevant. Equipped with a more complex theoretical framework, he thus returns to answer the question he had posed himself in *Structural Transformation*, namely how it may be possible in our contemporary society for

"the public [...] to set in motion a critical process of public communication through the very organizations that mediatize it" (Habermas 1989: 232).

As a communicative process, the public sphere retains its status as an intermediary structure located between the political system on the one hand and the lifeworld as well as the other the functionally specialised systems on the other. As a structure, Habermas states, it "constitutes a highly complex network that branches out into a multitude of overlapping international, national, regional, local, and subcultural arenas. Functional specifications, thematic foci, policy fields, and so forth, provide the points of reference for a substantive differentiation of public spheres that are, however, still accessible to laypersons (for example, popular science and literary publics, religious and artistic publics, feminist and 'alternative' publics, publics concerned with health-care issues, social welfare, or environmental policy). Moreover, the public sphere is differentiated into levels according to the density of communication, organizational complexity, and range – from the *episodic* publics found in taverns, coffee houses, or on the streets; through the *occasional* or 'arranged' publics of particular presentations and events, such as theater performances, rock concerts, party assemblies, or church congresses; up to the *abstract* public sphere of isolated readers, listeners, and viewers scattered across large geographic areas, or even around the globe, and brought together only through the mass media" (Habermas 1996: 373f., emphasis in the original).

The mass media connect and structure issue specific discourses that are scattered in different smaller and larger public spheres which remain porous for each other and which according to Habermas "ground a *potential for self-transformation*" (ibid.: 374, emphasis in the original); an autonomous public sphere is thus characterised by undistorted communication processes that are rooted in or initiated by civil society and retain a connection to the lifeworld. The central role of the media in modern societies means that a new form of power takes shape: the power of the media is given by their function in reducing social complexity, and communicative influence in the public sphere hence in the first instance depends upon passing the media's mechanisms of selection. As a consequence of this, elite actors commanding larger resources (both allocative and authoritative in Giddens' sense) and anticipating the media's logic of selection through professionalised communicative contributions have an advantage over loosely organised, weakly financed organisations operating at the margins of the political system. Although Habermas follows to some extent the critique of mass communication based on the theory of the culture industry as displaying an increased personalisation and the gradual replacing of information through entertainment, which results in the de-politicisation of public communication, he maintains that the autonomous public sphere is not a mere utopia. As far as the media are concerned the professional code of journalist, their ethical self-conception as well as the legal context in which they are embedded "express a simple idea: the mass media ought to understand themselves as the mandatary of an enlightened public whose willingness to learn and capacity for criticism they at once presuppose, demand, and reinforce; like the judiciary, they ought to preserve their independence from political and social pressure; they ought to be receptive to the public's concerns and proposals, take up these issues and contributions impartially, augment criticisms, and confront the political process with articulate demands for legitimation" (ibid.: 378). Now, this is not so much a substantial ethical code of the journalistic profession as it simply spells out the basic insights of deliberative theory in the context of the media and the role of the journalist. In a complex dual position where the

media are both discourse providers and participants, they do not only organise the dominant part of the public sphere by integrating different actors and their positions, they also take part in it through their own contributions and thus also act as discursive representatives of actors and/or positions.[70]

Although it is an empirical question to determine to what extent structures of power and strategic action shape the public space, the plurality of the media system which at least to some extent contributes to a certain degree of responsiveness and a plurality of positions as well as the dual role of journalist means that there are chances for a deliberative public sphere to come into being under certain conditions. Habermas takes the realist view that the *courant normal* of politics corresponds mostly to a public sphere of the "inside access" or the "mobilisation" type which equally describe a public sphere at rest. Yet, in a situation of crisis actors from civil society can play a more active role and may indeed have a significant effect on the political process as larger issues of the past decades such as the debates about the risks of nuclear energy or genetic engineering, the continuing impoverishment of the Third World, etc. show (cf. Habermas 1996: 381). The central point is that according to Habermas a public sphere constituted through the initiative of civil society "activates an otherwise latent dependency built into the internal structure of every public sphere, a dependency also present in the normative self-understanding of the mass media: the players in the arena owe their influence to the approval of those in the gallery" (ibid.: 382). A further effect of this is that the public sphere displays a dual discursive structure in the sense that on the one hand it constitutes itself around social problems in the form of specific issues as their focal points, on the other it always also has itself as a permanent (sub-)topic: "with each important contribution, public discourse must keep alive both the meaning of an undistorted political public sphere as such and the very goal of democratic will-formation. The public sphere thereby continually thematizes itself as it operates, for the existential presuppositions of a nonorganizable practice can be secured only by this practice itself" (ibid.: 486). It is only because of this dual nature of the public sphere that we a structural transformation is possible at all, i.e. that we can reconstruct normative learning processes which systematically affect the basic discursive properties.

[70] Cf. Dryzek (2008) for the concept of discursive representation.

The deliberative public sphere thus describes a process dominated by the mass media which connects civil society to the political centre and through which communicative power is transformed into political influence. In a more recent article, Habermas (2008a) depicts this process as illustrated in the table below.[71] He is aware that deliberation "is a demanding

Figure 2: Arenas of political communication

Modes of communication	Arenas of political communication	
Institutionalised discourses and negotiations	Government, administration, parliament, judiciary, etc.	Political system Institutions of the state
Mass communication in scattered public spheres supported by the media	Published opinion ← Media system ← Politicians, Lobbyists, Civil society actors ↓ ↑ Audience → Opinion poll results	Political public sphere
Communication among addressees	Arranged and informal relationships, social networks and social movements	Civil society

(cf. Habermas 2008a:165, author's translation)

form of communication" (Habermas 2006: 413) though he maintains that the burden is lessened as deliberation is at the same time a discursive practice that is embedded in the "*daily routines* of asking for and giving reasons. [...] An implicit reference to rational discourse – or the competition for better reasons – is built into communicative action as an omnipresent alternative to routine behaviour" (ibid., emphasis in the original). Still, the general increase in political communication in Western societies has not automatically led to an equal increase in deliberation – quite on the contrary: Habermas cites the lack of face-to-face interaction as well as the lack of reciprocity between speakers and hearers as defining features of the political process. Against this sombre view, exacerbated by the media's role "to select, and shape the presentation of, messages and by the strategic use of political and social power to influence the agendas as well as the triggering and framing of public issues" (ibid.: 415), Habermas makes the case that the mediated political communication does not have to correspond to the deliberative ideal, given that it connects different arenas marked by different communicative structures. Deliberation in the public sphere is also relieved of the burden to have to reach a consensus – or any other form of decision. Generally, the different functions of deliberation consist in mobilising and pooling relevant issues and required information as well as specifying interpretations, in processing contributions argumentatively and thus in providing a spectrum of pro and contra positions, and hence in contributing to considered opinions which in turn are connected to the outcome of formally correct decision procedures. Habermas now makes the point that "[i]n view of the legitimation process as a whole, the facilitating role of the political public sphere is mainly to

[71] In *Between Facts and Norms* Habermas illustrates the deliberative process as follows: "Moving in from this outermost periphery, such issues force their way into newspapers and interested associations, clubs, professional organizations, academies, and universities. They find forums, citizen initiatives, and other platforms before they catalyze the growth of social movements and new subcultures. The latter can in turn dramatize contributions, presenting them so effectively that the mass media take u p the matter. Only through their controversial presentation in the media do such topics reach the larger public and subsequently gain a place on the "public agenda." Sometimes the support of sensational actions, mass protests, and incessant campaigning is required before an issue can make its way via the surprising election of marginal candidates or radical parties, expanded platforms of "established" parties, important court decisions, and so on, into the core of the political system and there receive formal consideration" (Habermas 1996: 381).

fulfill only the first of these functions and thereby to prepare the agendas for political institutions. To put it in a nutshell, the deliberative model expects the political public sphere to ensure the formation of a plurality of considered public opinions" (ibid.: 416). Public communication can only fulfil this task if the institutional part of the political process remains open to the inputs of civil society in a way that promotes the anarchic structure and "the unruly life of the public sphere" (ibid.: 417). Of course, civil society is in the weakest position, yet public opinion cannot be controlled at will, not even by influential actors, as all participants have to "play be the rules of the game" (ibid. 420). As a precondition for the rules of the game to become established and effective, the media system needs to be self-regulating and independent from the other functional systems in order to be able to connect civil society and the political-administrative centre through the public sphere. Furthermore, the public sphere and the political process as a whole still have to rely on what Habermas has termed a lifeworld that meets politics halfway, and which he now specifies as an inclusive civil society that empowers its members to public political debates which in turn should preserve their deliberative aspects so as not to transform into a colonising mode of communication (cf. ibid.).

We can thus see that the public sphere occupies a central role in the Habermasian approach to deliberative democracy. While giving the theory its critical edge, Habermas' notion of the public sphere as changed considerably compared to the initial formulation and has indeed overcome most of the obstacles raised by the various critics. At the same time it has also become clear that the theoretical account can only elucidate the analytical dimensions of the political process. It remains an empirical question to what extent the public sphere can fulfil its deliberative function and how this has changed over time. It is therefore to this question that we will now turn.

III. Between theory and empirical application: The methodology of deliberation

In his "Further reflections on the public sphere", the response to the critical interventions published in *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Calhoun 1990b), Habermas' argues that in Western societies "voluntary associations are established within the institutional framework of the democratic constitutional state. And here a different question arises, one that cannot be answered without considerable empirical research. This is the question of whether, and to what extent, a public sphere dominated by mass media provides a realistic chance for the members of civil society, in their competition with the political and economic invaders' power, to bring about changes in the spectrum of values, topics, and reasons channelled by external influences, to open it up in an innovative way, and to screen it critically" (Habermas 1990: 455). Although the present empirical study cannot provide answers to all of these questions, we will attempt to analyse more closely that variable which is central to the deliberative process in the public sphere, i.e. the quality of public opinion, which we will locate in the discourses constituted by the media. Given that the deliberative approach connects political legitimacy to deliberation, "the discursive level of public debates constitutes the most important variable" (Habermas 1996: 304). Accordingly, in this chapter we will thus be concerned with establishing an analytical framework that allows us to translate the theoretical concepts into an empirical measure.

In order to do so, the chapter will be divided into three main parts. As the present study attempts a close translation of the Habermasian model of deliberative democracy, we will first derive our hypotheses from the theoretical premises. They are conceived as a set of explanatory factors, i.e. as possible dimensions of effects on the quality of the discourse (cf. Steiner et al. 2004) and will guide the analysis and hence the further methodological considerations (section 1). Second, we will review the existing literature on empirical approaches to deliberation in general and develop our instrument on the basis of a close reading of three of the most promising approaches in particular, while staying close to the theoretical model (section 2). And third, we will then present in more detail the object of our research, i.e. the institutional context of the UK, the sampled debates as well as the newspapers from which we draw out data (section 3).

1. Potentials and possibilities: Hypotheses about the quality of public reasoning

The theoretical account reveals that the deliberative and hence emancipatory potential of the public sphere is closely tied to the presence of different enabling or restricting conditions. The inferential part of the empirical analysis will therefore examine more closely the degree of their influence, and the hypotheses we derive from the theoretical account in this section thus map out different basic dimensions of possible effects. We will specifically analyse the effect of three of these factors: social change (i.e. time), public sphere type, and actor classes and coalitions.

As we are quite generally interested in the emancipatory potential of the public sphere, social change is the first of these major factors; indeed, *Structural Transformation* can be

read as the reconstructive effort to chart out the effect of social and political change on the public sphere (section 1.1.). The second main factor is given by the type of public sphere since of the three models Habermas distinguishes only one can be seen as having a truly positive effect on the deliberative quality, namely the one which originates at the periphery (section 1.2.). Related to this but on a more general level lies, last, the question about the influence of specific actor classes and coalitions: much of the discursive quality of the public sphere in Habermas' model depends on the presence of civil society, though it is not clear whether civil society makes the public sphere automatically more deliberative – it is rather their presence and their views which seems to count, independently of the public sphere type (section 1.3.). In the following, we will derive a set of hypotheses for each of these dimensions in turn.

1.1. The transformative power of social change

If we want to analyse the emancipatory potential of the discursive dimension of the public sphere we very basically need to take on a comparative perspective: as deliberation in the real world necessarily always falls short of the ideal standard, it only makes sense to assess real deliberations against each other. Furthermore, the emancipatory potential of the public sphere suggests a transformation process which takes place on different levels so that if we want to uncover some of these processes the comparative perspective to be taken is essentially is a diachronic one: we will therefore mainly compare the discursive quality of the public sphere over time. The idea is that in this way we can conceive of the structural transformation of the public sphere's discursive quality as reflecting and promoting social change. One problem here, however, is that the theoretical account presents us with a rather ambivalent picture of the direction of this process: Habermas' work seems to oscillate between pessimism as evidenced by his analysis in *Structural Transformation* on the one hand, and the moderate optimism of *Between Facts and Norms* on the other.

Though Habermas' *Habilitationsschrift* tentatively opens up the possibilities for alternatives on both a theoretical and a practical level in the concluding paragraphs, it is only since *Communication and the Evolution of Society* (Habermas 1979a) that he explicitly espouses and systematically develops a notion of normative learning processes which it itself the result of language moving to the centre of Habermas' theoretical efforts. Still, even in the *Theory of Communicative Action* (1984a, 1984b) his stance remains somewhat ambivalent, as the emancipatory potential of communicative action which reproduces the lifeworld is constantly threatened by systemic imperatives which undermine the possibility of social integration. To be sure, Habermas relies on Jean Piaget's (1999) and Lawrence Kohlberg's (1981) work in developmental psychology and moral development already in *Communication and the Evolution of Society* to help explain the developmental dynamics and logics at play in the transformation of society and the associated learning processes combining action and systems theory. But it is only with his work on discourse ethics that normative learning processes grounded in intersubjectivity become more firmly anchored in a changing theoretical model that brings the public sphere back to the centre stage in *Between Facts and Norms*.

Deliberative democracy's emancipatory potential rests on the idea of a political public sphere generated by the free exchange of opinions, sentiments and arguments uttered by actors who take on a performative stance vis-à-vis claims to norms of action. The outcome of

such a process is not only an Act of Parliament, but also knowledge: knowledge in a substantive sense about the issue under discussion, yet more important for our purposes it is also knowledge about the formal properties of that very process. Democratic emancipation thus describes collective learning processes which result not only in the betterment of specific disadvantaged groups, but which necessarily also extend to the normative structures of the political process itself: "Following Arendt's lead, Albrecht Wellmer has underscored the self-referential structure of the public practice issuing from communicative power. This communicative practice bears the burden of stabilizing itself; with each important contribution, public discourse must keep alive both the meaning of an undistorted political public sphere as such and the very goal of democratic will-formation. The public sphere thereby continually thematizes itself as it operates, for the existential presuppositions of a nonorganizable practice can be secured only by this practice itself", as Habermas states (Habermas 1996: 486).[1] Or put in very simple terms, if democratic legitimacy is generated by deliberation, then to improve democracy means to improve deliberation, to paraphrase Dewey's dictum (see above). These processes of social self-transformation, to use a more neutral term, develop only very slowly, in particular with regard to the changing of the formal structures of the political process, which is why a diachronic perspective is so central to the present study. The crucial point is that these processes of transformation are not arbitrary and that their results are reintegrated into them: "One feature of this enlightenment is the irreversibility of learning processes, which is based on the fact that insights cannot be forgotten at will; they can only be repressed or corrected by better insights", as Habermas (1990b: 84) writes in *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*. In other words, deliberation might not be the dominant mode in the political process, but it lies at the heart of it and its irreducibility as well as the irreversibility of the learning processes it induces affects in turn the spectrum of possibilities of strategic modes of action. This gives us on the whole a more positive outlook on the effects of social change, and against much of the empirical evidence collected so far we can thus formulate our first hypothesis as follows:

H_1: Social change has a positive effect on the discursive quality of political debates so that their deliberativeness increases continuously throughout the decades.

The important point here is to see that we conceive of these transformations on a rather abstract level: they do not necessarily designate explicit knowledge, i.e. we will not analyse the specific insights Habermas sometimes seems to have in mind when he speaks of collective learning processes. Our hypothesis targets a different, more basic level of the public sphere, i.e. the discursive structure itself.

Moreover, because our sample will be composed of different debate types, it makes sense to include some of their properties in the analysis already at this point as this allows us to examine the different effect social change might have on them. From a theoretical point of view it is clear that "outside initiative" public sphere models are the only ones that carry the

[1] In a certain sense we could say that one leads to the other: the betterment of specific groups increases their chances to participate in the political process, and the participation in the political process in turn increases their chances for a substantial betterment of their situation. There are, however, examples where neither one nor the other is the case and we will closely examine one such example and the dynamics of structural exclusion which are at work.

possibility of establishing a truly deliberative process. By contrast, "inside access" and "mobilisation" models must be seen as distorted versions. "Outside initiative" models should therefore display a higher degree of deliberative transformation, i.e. of transformation processes that work to further increase the discursive quality. We can therefore postulate the following:

H_{1a}: The positive effect of social change is greater for "outside initiative" models that for "inside access" or "mobilisation" models.

As we will use regression analysis to test the hypotheses regarding the effect of social change, a greater effect means that we expect both the fit of the regression model as well as the strength of the effect to be higher for "outside initiative" public sphere types than for the other two types.

Having thus spelled out our research interest in two hypotheses about the effect of social change on the discursive quality of public debates, we can now turn to the second dimension, which focuses more specifically on the role the public sphere types.

1.2. The effect of public sphere types and cleavage structures

As the theoretical model has revealed, if we conceive of the public sphere as a discursive process, we can basically distinguish three different public sphere types according to their origin and the course these discourses take: the "outside initiative" model corresponds most closely to a deliberative process on the macro-level of society, taking its starting point in the periphery and ending in the political-administrative system, whereas the "inside access" model represents the opposite as it excludes the periphery for the most part of the process. The "mobilisation model" in turn is situated between the two others in terms of its deliberative potential, originating as the "inside access" model in the political-administrative centre, but explicitly encompassing the informal public sphere and hence relying to some degree on the inputs from civil society.

Discourses, however, are not only structured according to the public sphere type they embody, the also crystallise around specific issues as their focal point. We can then further distinguish these issues according to the level of practical discourse (pragmatic, ethical-political, moral) which is foregrounded, and the cleavage structure to which is corresponds. On the whole, however, if we wanted to analyse each combination of these dimensions (public sphere type, level of practical discourse, cleavage structure) this would result in an overblown research design. We will therefore restrict the analysis to two specific and wide-spread debate types, while being aware that other forms of debates exist as well.[2] Our first debate type is a combination of the "outside initiative" public sphere model, a pragmatic discourse level, and a material cleavage, whereas the second type is given by a

[2] While the reverse combinations, i.e. centre-driven material debates and cultural debates initiated by the periphery, also occur, the classification chosen here represents historically grown debate types (cf. Lipset & Rokkan 1967). See also below the discussion of the institutional context.

"mobilisation" or an "inside access" model, an ethical-political level of discourse, and a cultural cleavage as summarised by the table below.

Table 1: Debate types

	Public sphere type	Discourse level	Cleavage
Debate type 1	"Outside initative"	Pragmatic	Material
Debate type 2	"Inside access" "mobilisation"	Ethical-political	Cultural

This approach has the further advantage that we can ground our hypotheses more firmly in the existing literature on cleavage structures. Research on social cleavages sees social conflict as the driving force behind the genesis of party systems and voter behaviour and thus ties in with Honneth's account of recognition.[3] For our purposes we can take the first and still one of the most influential works in the field, Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan's seminal study on "Cleavage structures, party systems, and voter alignments" (Lipset & Rokkan 1967) as a point of departure. It is important to see that for Lipset and Rokkan not just any type of social conflict automatically constitutes a cleavage, rather such struggles have to meet three criteria in order to become politically salient: cleavages follow a line of division according to one significant characteristic such as socio-economic status or a demographic factor, it must be clear for individuals on which side of the cleavage they are situated, and, most important for Lipset and Rokkan, the cleavage has to become resonant with the political parties which articulate competing positions on it. We can see that from a deliberative perspective Lipset and Rokkan downplay one dimension related to social conflict which the present study addresses, namely the public dimension, i.e. the discourses crystallising around the cleavages and constituting a corresponding public sphere. While Lipset and Rokkan undertook to compare the genesis of conflict structure in modern nation-states and connected their findings to the establishment of party systems and their voters, we are mainly concerned with the first of these aspects, the public articulation of it.[4] Their broad based comparative study both in diachronic and synchronic perspective yields a cleavage typology which we can simplify to two generic types, the material divide on the one hand and the cultural one on the other, which lie at the heart of most political conflicts and which also allows us greater flexibility when we building the sample (cf. Lipset & Rokkan 1967). As Lipset and Rokkan emphasise in their classification, concrete conflicts rarely conform to one of the ideal cleavage types identified, which also true in our context: some of the discourses conform more strongly to one of the dimensions than others.

Our first hypothesis addresses the basic difference between material/peripheral debates on the one hand and cultural/centre debates on the other, and it is indeed the public sphere type which defines its direction. Based on the central importance of civil society in Habermas' deliberative model and the corresponding "outside initiative" public sphere type, i.e. its communicative structure and its potential to induce society-wide learning and transformation processes, we can assume that those debates where the periphery is more

[3] Indeed, in a certain sense their study can be read to anticipate on an empirical level what Honneth later comes to postulate as the normative dimension of social evolution: the struggle for recognition (see above).
[4] Of course, the political parties and their voters also play a role in this study, but its focus is wider, given that the primary interest concerns the public sphere, which is co-constituted by parties and voters, but not exclusively defined by their communicative interaction.
Lipset and Rokkan's sample consists of ten Western democracies, Spain enters the set as an "erstwhile competitive" but authoritarian system, while Brazil and Japan were added for contrast (cf. Lipset & Rokkan 1967: 2).

strongly involved in the articulation of interests, needs, wishes, etc. correspond more closely to the deliberative ideal. By contrast, since according to our typology cultural debates originate in the centre, we expect them to represent instances of power-ridden rather than autonomous public spheres and therefore to display systematically lower levels of deliberative quality compared to the material issues.[5] We can therefore postulate:

H_2: Cleavage structure and public sphere type have a significant effect on the discursive quality of political debates to the extent that on the whole material/periphery debates achieve a higher discursive quality than cultural/centre ones.

In addition to this, as we have hypothesised in the section above, social change and the structural transformation of the public sphere work towards an improvement of deliberative quality. And we have also postulated that this development takes place to a higher degree in the "outside initiative" than in "mobilisation" or "inside access" discourse types. From the complementary perspective of the analytic dimension foregrounded in this section this means that we expect discourses originating in civil society to systematically display a higher deliberative quality than those which are initiated by the centre. We can thus state:

H_{2a}: Cleavage structure and public sphere type have a significant effect on the discursive quality of political debates to the extent that material/periphery debates achieve a higher discursive quality than cultural/centre ones in each decade.

This hypothesis combines a synchronic and a diachronic perspective as we compare the two discourse types per decade, but through this comparison we will also be able to see what differences in the deliberative quality become statistically significant.

We can now turn to our third and final set of hypotheses which capture more directly the dimension Habermas has in mind when he speaks e.g. of the "outside initiative" public sphere, namely the influence of civil society and other actor classes on the deliberative quality.

1.3. The effect of actor classes and actor constellations

Although deliberation and legitimacy become "subjectless", as Habermas points out, as sovereignty is desubstantialised and "[e]ven the notion that a network of associations could replace the dismissed 'body' of the people – that it could occupy the vacant seat of the sovereign, so to speak – is too concrete" (Habermas 1996: 486), actors still play a substantial role. For the emancipatory potential of society is located in very specific terms in the possibility of a public sphere to unleash and channel the communicative potential residing in the lifeworld of civil society. In this section we will therefore turn precisely to that

[5] When building the sample we will see that it is almost never the case that debates "originate" at the periphery or in the centre in the proper sense of the term. Rather, they can be said to be driven by one or the other pole in the political process at the time of observation.

source of influence which is most immediately related to what is central in a given discourse but remains ultimately detached from it on a theoretical level when we talk about sovereignty – i.e. the actors. The important point is that while legitimacy and sovereignty are subjectless, the grounds from which they arise are constituted by subjects, by their struggle for recognition, their articulation of their wishes and interests, and their contestation of the status quo.

Civil society is so pre-eminently important for a deliberative account of the political process because it is that place in society which is governed by free associations and networks, because it is responsible for social integration and reproduces the communicative infrastructure of the lifeworld, and because as a result of these aspects it is the only place whose legally protected anarchic nature, independent of administrative and economic relations, is able to generate the deliberative impulses necessary for political legitimacy, to hold actors and institutions accountable, and to transform the structures of political institutions and processes (cf. Habermas 1996: 330). In other words, civil society is "the social basis of autonomous public spheres" (Habermas 1996: 299) which rationalise political power. Its potential to influence the political system, in however modest ways, hinges on that central dependency which is built into every public sphere, namely that "the players in the arena owe their influence to the approval of those in the gallery" (1996: 382). Much of the normative weight of the deliberative model is thus carried by the public sphere and the most important actor which gives rise to it in its autonomous form, civil society (cf. Habermas 1996: 461). This is already apparent in Habermas' historical reconstruction in *Structural Transformation* where he retraces the importance of the bourgeoisie in establishing a discursive public sphere and with it a utopian ideal of political discussion. In a certain sense *Between Facts and Norms* takes the historical idea seriously and spells out its normative content under conditions of the modern nation-state. The role formerly occupied by the debating bourgeoisie in the clubs and coffeehouses of 18th century France and England are now replaced with the communicative potential of civil society in a deliberative public sphere dominated by the media.

In line with Habermas we can distinguish four different actor classes: two are representatives of what he refers to as the system, i.e. the political-administrative system and the economy, a third actor type is given by the media as they organise the public sphere and at the same time take part in it, while the fourth class is represented by civil society (see below for a more detailed account). Given that most of the deliberative potential of the public sphere rests with the latter actor type, we can postulate the following relationship:

H_{3a}: Irrespective of time and cleavage structure, civil society has a beneficial effect on the discourse quality of the debates.

If civil society is the locus of the emancipatory potential of the public sphere and democracy, then the reverse is true for the representatives of the system: the more

they are present the more the public sphere transforms from an autonomous into a power-ridden type. Accordingly, we assume:

H_{3b}: Irrespective of time and cleavage structure, economic actors and the political-administrative system have a detrimental effect on the discourse quality of the debates.

Though Habermas is very ambivalent about the status of the media in *Structural Transformation*, seeing them as both agents of emancipation and repression, he adopts a different position in *Between Facts and Norms* where he characterises them as the "mandatary of an enlightened public" (Habermas 1996: 378). In line with this we thus state:

H_{3c}: Irrespective of time and cleavage structure, the media have a beneficial effect on the discourse quality of the debates.

While it is important to determine the degree and the kind of effect of the different actor classes on the deliberative quality, these hypotheses fail to capture the intersubjective moment: discourses are always debates between actors, therefore the way they relate to one another becomes of central importance for their development. Our analytical instrument allows us to distinguish four different illocutions (statements, demands, criticism, support), three of which are particularly interesting in the context of their effect on the deliberative quality. We can define the relationships established by the illocutions more narrowly as "discourse coalitions" whenever actor A and actor B establish the same discursive relationship vis-à-vis actor C. As here we are primarily interested in the coalition type we can differentiate support coalitions from demand and criticism coalitions. Whereas it is difficult to further distinguish demand from criticism coalitions on a theoretical level, we can expect support coalitions to be more conducive to the cooperative enterprise of public debate. We therefore assume:

H_{3d}: Irrespective of time and cleavage structure, the beneficial effect on the discursive quality of speech acts couched in terms of agreement is higher than those which assert demands or voice criticism.

Having thus spelled out the general research interest in more concrete terms, we can now move on to the next part in this chapter, which will first survey the existing literature on empirical applications of the deliberative model, before we then develop the analytical instrument for the present study. We will thereby combine a close reading of the core of the theoretical account on the one hand with a critical analysis of the most promising empirical approaches on the other.

2. From ideal to real: The empirical measurement of discourse quality

In this section we will present the methodological approach in more detail and discuss its central component, the Discourse Quality Index for the media (DQI_m). Similar to the theoretical body of work the range of the various empirical approaches points in the same direction, but there exist significant differences between them and it is important to devote some attention to these distinctions in as far as they relate to the construction of our own analytical instrument. Some of the differences arise out of the research interest as well as the object domain of the studies, while some are due to diverging interpretations of the theoretical framework, and it is these differences which are important above all.

In the following we will summarise the existing empirical research in the field of deliberative democracy according to their area of interest: political institutions, the media and mass communication, and civil society (section 2.1.).[6] We will then focus in more detail on three approaches from which the present study draws most of its inspiration: with Ferree et al.'s diachronic analysis of the abortion in the United States and Germany we share a similar research interest, while the work of Steiner et al. (2004) as well as that of Dahlberg (2001a, 2001b) will prove essential for developing the single dimensions of our analytical instrument (section 2.2.). Based on this discussion we will then present our own approach at translating the complex theoretical foundations into an empirical measure of the deliberative elements of political discourse (section 2.3.).

2.1. Empirical approaches to deliberation

In this section we will present existing empirical approaches to the study of deliberation. For some time the complexity of the theoretical framework has seemed to impede a straightforward application in real-world contexts: Delli Carpini, Cook, and Jacobs (2004: 316) writing in 2004 stated for instance that "[u]fortunately, empirical research on deliberative democracy has lagged behind theory", and one year later Ryfe assessed that "[t]he literature on deliberative practice is still in its infancy, and its answers to these questions are by no means definitive" (Ryfe 2005: 50). Three years later, however, Thompson concluded that political scientists had realised that deliberative democracy had advanced to the most active area of political theory (cf. Dryzek 2007), the result being "a profusion of empirical studies, now more numerous than the normative works that prompted them" (Thompson 2008: 498).

Our following overview of the empirical work will take the stages of the political process as a broad guideline for classifying the different studies, i.e. we will distinguish those that investigate deliberation in civil society or have the deliberation of citizens as their object of study (section 2.1.1.), those that analyse deliberation in (civil society) organisations (section 2.1.2.), the analyses of the discursive quality of the media (section 2.1.3.), and finally the deliberative potential of political institutions on the national level and in international

[6] Not surprisingly, this structure mirrors in a simplistic form the Habermasian concept of the political process. As a consequence of this we will only mention in passing those studies whose main interest lies on jury deliberations. The scope of the present study as well as much of the interest of the theoretical and empirical work is on the political process leading up to legislation, thereby ignoring for the most part discourses of "application" (*Anwendungsdiskurse*) which come into play once legislation has been passed and where the judiciary occupies a central role (cf. Habermas 1996).

contexts (section 2.1.4.). We will restrict the presentation to the main results of the studies, while the critical engagement with their methods will be the topic of the next section.

2.1.1. Citizens

The origins of an ideal deliberative political process at the periphery of civil society are studied by researchers such as Brady (1999) who investigates political participation from a deliberative perspective in the sense of talk among citizens, reporting that only in 16% of the cases adults said they discussed politics with friends "often", while 37% did so "sometimes"; between 28% ("often") and 32% ("sometimes") in turn tried to persuade others of their points of view in the context of voting. Equally focussing on this conversational context Bennett, Fisher, and Resnick (1995) found that on average Americans discussed politics between 1.5 and 2.5 times a week, though at the same time half of the respondents had not talked about politics in the past week, indicating that political issues are not at the centre of the individual lifeworld.

Cook, Delli Carpini, and Jacobs (2003) and Delli Carpini, Cook, and Jacobs (2003) paint a slightly more positive picture, their national survey showing that 68% discussed public issues face-to-face or on the phone at least a few times a month, while 25% did so in formal or informal meetings, and 24% chose an internet or instant-message based "conversation", though only 4% participated in an online forum. Price, Cappella, and Nir (2002) go one step further by showing that the exposure to disagreement can have positive effects on "deliberative opinions", by which they mean "the ability to ground one's viewpoints, not only in supportive arguments but also in an understanding of the kinds of arguments that others might make in taking an opposite stand" (Price, Cappella & Nir 2002: 107).

In this first category of research we can also summarise those studies which do not attempt to investigate political discussion of citizens in its everyday settings through e.g. surveys, but which conduct experiments to uncover the deliberative dynamics at work. Cappella, Price, and Nir (2002) analysed the role of the argumentative repertoire in the experimental setting of online discussions. They found that social capital is conducive to political participation, more precisely respondents with a greater argumentative repertoire were more inclined to take part in the deliberations, and they actively participated to a greater degree in the discussions than those who commanded a smaller argumentative spectrum. Moreover, their results show that "[a]rgument repertoire is affected by deliberative group interactions. Both the act of deliberating and the substance of conversations can be efficacious in elevating argument repertoire" (Cappella, Price, Nir 2002: 87). Or in other words, deliberations have a cognitive learning effect, both for the participants as well as for the group.

The most prominent work in the related area of group discussions comes from James Fishkin's "deliberative polls" which can be seen as an attempt to realise the counterfactual elements of the ideal speech situation in an experimental context. In deliberative polls participants discuss real-world issues in small discussion groups over several days, have access to detailed information, experts and policymakers: "The goal is to create a counterfactual public opinion resting on a good deal of information and serious consideration of competing perspectives", as Iyengar, Luskin, and Fishkin (2003: 1) put it. In this way, deliberative polling aims at narrowing the gap between the shortcomings of opinions aggregated by ordinary polls and the demanding ideal of a considered public

opinion spelled out by deliberative democracy. While the implications of these experiments are numerous, in the present context the important point is that they induce learning processes, they can lead to a change in preferences and voting intention, and above all that these two aspects are related: the changes are not the result of group pressure, but of gains in information (cf. Fishkin & Luskin 2005; Luskin, Fishkin & Jowell 2002).

Against these positive outlooks Delli Carpini, Cook, and Jacobs (2004), summarising an extensive body of research on small group deliberations, state that "discussion tends to move collective opinion in the direction of the preexisting views of the majority [and] support for majority opinion tends to increase after group discussion because majorities, simply because of their size, can offer more novel, valid, and/or convincing arguments" – which is in the end little more than a sophisticated version of the tyranny of the majority argument.[7] At the same time, Mendelberg (2002) finds support in his survey for situations where minorities successfully challenge the majority to consider alternatives to the established opinions, to reflect on new information and to try to understand the minority's point of view, i.e. to make use of the idea of the enlarged mentality Kant develops.

Marques and Maia (2010) analyse discussion groups that consist of beneficiaries of a Brazilian income transfer programme, shaping out the merits of everyday conversation by showing how it is interrelated with political discussion. Investigating the interactions in these discussion groups, they find no confirmation that "only political discussions are useful for the cooperative solving process of public problems. Everyday political conversations help citizens exercise their communicative abilities in order to participate and take the risks of public debating" (Marques & Maia 2010: 629). Their main point is that communicative power does not only come into being in an organised public, but equally originates from "ordinary, invisible, and politically poor citizens who struggle to survive and modify existing power relations in society" (ibid.). Their contribution lies in showing that everyday conversation is a precondition for political (public) discussion and that it is not restricted to administered political events such as general elections, but occurs on a daily base. Politics is thus more deeply entrenched in the lives of "ordinary" people that a top-down approach would be able to reveal, though their deliberativeness also depends on their exposure to the media, i.e. larger amounts of political information and differing points of view.

Arguably the biggest challenge to this view as well as all those who paint a positive picture of the place of deliberation and political engagement in people's daily lives comes from Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (2002) who coin the term of "stealth democracy" to summarise their findings. Based on survey data on public attitudes and against normative ideals of civic engagement and some of the empirical evidence discussed so far, Hibbing and Theiss-Morse argue that most people are content with leaving political decisions to an elite: "Stealth democracy would not seem to be democracy at all. But we believe it is and here is why. While people are not eager to provide input into political decisions, they want to know that they could have input into political decisions if they ever wanted to do so. In fact, they are passionate about this. But the difference between the desire to influence political decisions and the desire to be able to provide input if it were ever necessary to do so is substantial" (Hibbing & Theiss-Morse 2002: 239). More than this, they take an explicit critical stance towards the positive effects of deliberation other theorists and researchers suggest: "real-life deliberation can fan emotions unproductively, can exacerbate rather than diminish power

[7] Cf. the work by Burnstein, Vinokur, and Trope (1973), Burnstein and Vinokur (1977), Vinokur and Burnstein (1978) Moscovici & Zavalloni (1969), Myers & Lamm (1976), and Schkade, Sunstein, Kahneman (2000).

differentials among those deliberating, can make people feel frustrated with the sys-tem that made them deliberate, is ill-suited to many issues and can lead to worse decisions than would have occurred if no deliberation had taken place" (Hibbing & Theiss-Morse 2002: 191).[8]

On the whole, there is thus no conclusive evidence which would support one specific theoretical view, rather the findings suggest a more complex picture. This will also be the case when we turn to the other areas that researchers interested in the status of deliberation and have investigated.

2.1.2. Organisations

Chambers' (1999) study of citizen conferences debating the various issues surrounding the constitutional impasse in Canada shows that "[a]dvocates of quite extreme positions were willing to sign on to 'consensual' documents that reflected the general tenor of the weekend-long debates" (Chambers 1999: 4). The debates excluded in particular what deliberative theory terms external and internal constraints, i.e. equal access to and equality in the debates. Against this positive experience, the dynamic of the referendum campaign took on a quite different discursive, anti-deliberative, form: "The great disappointment was focused on the calibre and tenor of the debate. Lacking was the openness and flexibility of the conference participants, that is, the willingness to revise claims, to make them fit with one other, now perceived as equally legitimate, claims. Instead, the referendum campaign appeared to harden positions" (ibid.: 4).

While Chambers' findings point to a discrepancy in terms of deliberative quality between what we could call a "dry run" and the actual political process, the results of Eliasoph's (1998) study are in a certain way even more challenging for deliberative theory as she does not investigate extraordinary or artificial settings, but the interaction of citizens in voluntary associations, recreational and activist groups. Although 53% of American attended the meetings of such organisations several times a year, they mostly seemed to engage in *Avoiding Politics*, as the title for her book summarises the findings succinctly: citizens tried to evade political conversation, above all in its public-spirited form, and even if they started valuing deliberation, they relegated it to realm of the private rather than viewing it as practice for public settings.

These findings echo one of the first analyses in the field, conducted by Jane Mansbridge (1983) before the term deliberative democracy had gained any currency: in *Beyond Adversary Democracy* Mansbridge argues that deliberation occurs mainly in small groups characterised by close social ties, but that this kind of interaction becomes more problematic in public contexts, where the ties between the participants are loose and inequalities between them substantial. One of Mansbridge's interviewees reported that for some participants a town meeting was such a daunting prospect that they simply did not attend as speaking in public "does take a little bit of courage. 'Specially if you get up and make a boo-boo. I mean you make a mistake and say something, then people would never get up and say anything again. They feel themselves inferior" (Mansbridge 1983: 60). As a result of this the ratio between those who attend and those who speak is disproportional in

[8] Though see Dryzek (2007), who criticises their methods, arguing that at times the empirical evidence Hibbing & Theiss-Morse cite suggest the opposite of what the conclude.

many aspects as for instance nearly half of the attendees are female, but only roughly a third of the contributions are made by women (cf. Mansbridge 1983).[9]

Ryfe (2002) in turn maps the practices of 16 organisations devoted to the discussion and deliberation of political issues. One of the problems they face is their openness: given that their members self-select the organisations are marked by very homogenous debating cultures, or in other words they lack the diversity necessary for deliberation. The other problem they are confronted with is that they often define their goals in terms of action, though this "forces organizers to walk a delicate line. One the one hand, participants (and funders) often approach the group as a forum for real political change. On the other, the product of deliberations rarely reaches the level of policy-making arenas" (Ryfe 2002: 366).

Donaghey (2008) investigates the status of deliberation in a working group in the context of industrial relations, but finds the concept of deliberation to be of only little value. This is not surprising, given that the economy is one of the two subsystems steered by non-linguistic media where additionally the participants are usually defined by asymmetries of power. It is hence only to be expected that bargaining is the standard mode of conflict resolution. Connelly, Richardson, and Miles (2006), examining the policy decisions in rural governance settings in the UK conclude that the legitimacy generated by deliberative arenas are most immediately based on the idea of representation, whereas deliberation plays only a role for those who are directly involved.

2.1.3. Traditional and new media

Ferree et al. (2002), Gerhards (1997), and Gerhards, Neidhart, and Rucht (1998) examine the abortion discourses in German and US newspapers between the 1970s and the 1990s and we will discuss their approach in more detail below. It represents one of the few studies that takes a comparative perspective in a double sense by assessing the changes in discourse diachronically over time and synchronically between two countries. What is of interest in our context is their evaluation of the public sphere against four different models of democracy. Without going into great detail here they find only little support for the discursive model of the public sphere which is mainly derived from the writings of Habermas and Gutmann & Thompson. Though they do not go as far as building an explicit index that measures the discursive quality of the debate (see below), they do specify a set of criteria that measures some the central dimensions of the different models. And on these criteria the discourses in both countries are better explained by the other models; this is particularly the case for the juxtaposition of the discursive and the liberal public sphere in Gerhards (1997).

The study of Costain and Fraizer (2000) to some extent extends the view offered by Feerree et al. as they investigate the media portrayal of second-wave feminist groups between 1980 and 1996 and show among other things the contexts in which they become the topic of coverage. They show that while civil rights was dominant topic in the 1980s, it gave way to abortion in the 1990s as the most frequent and controversial issue reported in relation to feminist groups (cf. Costain & Fraizer 2000).

[9] This is strictly speaking an institutional setting, but Mansbridge also analyses the communicative nature of a workplace setting, and the town hall in contrast to the empirical literature on institutional settings we will discuss below, constitutes a meeting place between civil society and institutional politics.

Maia (2009) understands newspapers as a forum for civic debate, in which reasons are exchanged, though under the conditions of a mediated public sphere, i.e. in the context of the selection and production mechanisms of the media. Building on the work of Bennett et al. (2004), Maia identifies four deliberative criteria: accessibility and characterisation of participants, the use of arguments, reciprocity and responsiveness, and the reflexivity and reversibility of opinions. Analysing the discourse about the referendum for banning the sale of firearms in Brazil in two newspapers, she shows that instrumental politics goes together "with critical argument exchanges in a public debate situation. The aim of political discussion in the referendum was to choose among propositions of norms. Regardless of their particular interests and communicative strategies, representatives of each front – and many people in favor and against the ban – acted as if they accepted the obligation of justifying their views" (Maia 2009: 330).

Page's (1996) study *Who Deliberates* concentrates, as the title suggests, on the aspect of inclusiveness in mediated deliberation. Conducting three case studies he concludes that of those actors involved in the events only few get a voice in the news coverage by the media, and those who do are part of an elite, i.e. established actors such as public officials or experts. A second source of distortion in the public debates arises from the editorial lines taken by the different media such as the *New York Times*, which are not only apparent in the op-ed pages and guest columns, but extend to the news stories themselves. Page concludes from his evidence that "*certain media outlets [...] actively shape political discourse to their own purposes*" (Page 1996: 116, emphasis in the original).[10] Moreover and because of this, the mainstream media – just their official experts – are sometimes out of touch with citizens or quite generally with those who are affected by the events reported. News journalism as analysed by Page might be intellectually stimulating, but it ignores the values and concerns of those whose lives it purports to inform, or so the conclusion seems to be. Page also documents that in such cases, though very rarely, citizens may respond to the distorted coverage, bypass the mainstream media and voice their concerns through alternative communication channels such as talk radio programmes or the internet. Despite this largely negative results Page finds that under conditions of media competition and diversity, and so "long as useful information is available and is publicized by at least some highly visible cue-givers and opinion leaders, ordinary citizens have the skills and the motivation to sort through contending views and pick (or reshape) those that make sense and are helpful" (Page 1996: 123).

Most attention has been given recently, however, to the new forms of communication resulting from the digital revolution. The advent of the internet has not only deeply affected the way we think about public communication, it has also influenced the agenda of empirical research as the bulk of investigations into the media and deliberation is nowadays devoted to the analysis of blogs, internet fora, etc.[11] As in most other areas, so here, too, research has produced ambivalent findings: Fraefel & Häussler (2009) for instance find that deliberation in Swiss online fora prior to two referenda on the bilateral treaties between Switzerland and the EU is grossly imbalanced with regard to gender: "Among the 380 users whose sex could be assumed on the basis of their username (57.4%), only 3.7% were

[10] Though see Hart for a different account of media reporting. Based on the data of his study he concludes that "[t]he media are not as bad as some claim. I could detect no overarching favoritism here. Instead, the press adhere to news norms with considerable dedication" (Hart 2000: 103).

[11] For a detailed overview see Kies (2010: 95) who takes the dimensions of his measure of deliberativeness as a classification criterion for the existing research.

women" (Fraefel & Häussler 2009: 7).[12] At the same time, however, actors with no clearly visible voting intention were more numerous on the web (41.1%) than in dialogic radio and television programmes (7.5%), which means that the "unforced force of the better argument" might have a better chance online than offline. In turn, the equality of participation – measured in terms of number of contributions per participant – is more even in television and radio programmes than on the web, where only a minority contributes more than once to the debate.[13]

Kies' (2010) in-depth analysis of the communicative interaction in the online forum of the Radicali Italiani, an Italian left-libertarian party, shows that the digital platform "is, in many respects, exemplary insofar as it is highly frequented, it is characterized by a dynamic and qualitative debate, and it fulfills several functions that are extremely useful for the party members" (Kies 2010: 141). As Kies points out, the functions fulfilled by the forum were not predetermined but have evolved through its use by the participants, resulting in "an information function, a formative function, a political recruitment function, a militant function, an e-consultation function, and a community function" (ibid.). Despite these positives assessments, when it comes to the deliberativeness of the forum, the picture changes somewhat: the inclusiveness is only limited and reflects an "institutional tpye of plurality" defined by a dominance of educated male supporters of the party with a strong interest in politics – the latter aspect might not be surprising, given that the participants self-select to become members of the forum. The debates these participants conduct are dominated by a minority which, moreover, appears be somewhat prone to a certain degree of rudeness in their exchanges, which is also the result of the absence of censorship. In turn, the contributions of some of the executive members of the party seem to ensure that the participants take the discussions seriously and that the standard of the debate is maintained. The second case Kies examines is an electoral experiment, so to speak, in the Issy-les-Moulineaux district council elections in 2005 which were held exclusively online – including the election campaign. Though Kies is able to draw some positive conclusions from the analysis, the main result seems to be that of the 1'440 registered voters only three per cent became involved in the experiment, which clearly has to be judged as critical – not only from the perspective of deliberative theory.

Analysing the Minnesotat E-Democracy project Dahlberg (2001a) concludes that it "has been able to overcome many of the shortcomings of other cyber-forums and develop a space for online public discourse that in many ways approximates the public sphere conception. It has maximized its autonomy from state and corporate interests, stimulated reflexivity, fostered respectful listening and participant commitment to the ongoing dialogue, achieved open and honest exchange, and provided equal opportunity for all voices to be heard" (Dahlberg 2001a). Maynor (2009) in turn analyses the rising blogosphere in the United States against the ideals posited by deliberative democracy and finds that although blogging has the ability to extend the repertoire of political practices of citizens it is presently

[12] It must be added, though, that women were also underrepresented in dialogic formats such as interviews and discussion programmes on television and radio devoted to the two issues, where they accounted for only 16.5% of the participants (cf. Fraefel & Häussler 2009)

[13] See also Daum, Fraefel, and Häussler (2007) for a more detailed view.

conceived too narrowly which restricts its effectiveness to constitute a digital deliberative forum.[14]

2.1.4. Parliament and international relations

Surprisingly perhaps, only few studies have addressed so far what is not only the centre of political decision-making according to the deliberative model but to most political theories in general, i.e. the parliamentary-administrative complex; after all, former Labour PM Clement Attlee famously held the view that "[d]democracy means government by discussion" (as cited in Theakston 2005: 18).[15] Steiner et al. (2004) are a notable exception, which we will also discuss in more detail below.[16] They focus on parliamentary and commission debates in Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Germany and the United States and apart from Ferree et al. (2002) thus offer the only comparative study of deliberative practices so far, though they restrict the comparison to the synchronic dimension. They are interested in two aspects: first, they ask whether and how systematic differences in the institutional design affect parliamentary debates and second, what kind of consequences the deliberative quality of the debate has for the concrete outcomes of these processes. To put their research design in simple terms: in the first case the deliberative quality is the outcome variable, whereas in the second case it has the role of the explanatory variable. As for the first aspect, Steiner et al. find that discourse does indeed matter when for instance issues are only weakly polarised or when the decision-taking process is close to unanimity. But perhaps more important they show that quality of discourses is not a one-dimensional construct, but a multi-layered phenomenon which can score high on some dimensions while simultaneously achieving rather low scores regarding other aspects. This has obviously troubling consequences for political theorists as Thompson (2008) admits: "The theory falters not because current democracies fail to realize its values but because one of its values cannot be fully realized without sacrificing one of its other values. Such a conflict is especially disturbing if the principles are equally indispensable to the theory. Standard trade-off techniques and pluralist approaches then offer no ready solution" (Thompson 2008: 512). The results of Steiner et al. display a more reserved picture for the second aspect: rather than deliberation itself, it is the predetermined preferences of the majority which have the

[14] Habermas himself has recently taken a somewhat sceptical position about the democratic potential of the internet as part of the political public sphere: "The Internet has certainly reactivated the grassroots of an egalitarian public of writers and readers. However, computer-mediated communication in the web can claim unequivocal democratic merits only for a special context: It can undermine the censorship of authoritarian regimes that try to control and repress public opinion. In the context of liberal regimes, the rise of millions of fragmented chat rooms across the world tend instead to lead to the fragmentation of large but politically focused mass audiences into a huge number of isolated issue publics" (Habermas 2006: 423). In short, according to this view the internet's democratic usefulness is restricted to those cases where it crystallises around public issues articulated through the quality press (cf. ibid.). While this view has certainly its merits we also have to see that the internet is fundamentally different from radio, television and newspapers in that it gives at least theoretically those a voice which otherwise have to rely on representatives in order to participate in the public discourse. The deliberative potential of the internet in terms of discussion forums might then very basically consist in the fact that it is closer to civil society and thus enlarges the inclusiveness of the public sphere – not necessarily its deliberativeness in rational-argumentative terms.

[15] The full quote, however, reveals that Attlee held a rather ambivalent stance towards deliberation, for he said: "Democracy means government by discussion, but it is only effective if you can stop people talking" (as cited in Theakston 2005: 18).

[16] Other studies as the work of Uhr on the Australian parliament take a broad institutional-theoretical perspective (cf. Uhr 1998).

most substantial effect on the outcomes and the degree to which these can be called "just" (cf. Steiner et al. 2004, Spörndli 2004).[17]

In international relations, Müller (1995), Risse (1999, 2000), Ulbert and Risse (2005) among others have examined the role deliberation can play. This is an important, and in many ways underdeveloped area, also from a theoretical perspective: most political theories including the deliberative approach take the nation-state as their explicit or implicit point of reference. The theoretical problems we encounter once we move beyond national boundaries have only recently received substantial attention, including particularly from our perspective the role of the public sphere (cf. Brunkhorst 2002; Fraser 2007; Habermas 1998c; Joerges 2002; Outhwaite 2006; Schmalz-Bruns 1999). As Ulbert and Risse (2005) show in their study on international negotiations, argumentation clearly has a place in these processes, and it is not only restricted to mere regulatory questions: crucially, it also plays a role in distributive issues where we might expect strategic interests, asymmetries of power and hence bargaining to dominate the participants' orientations. In fact, one of their main insights is that arguing and bargaining, though they might separated on an analytical level, tend to go together in practice.[18] This is echoed to some extent by Risse's work on the domestic differences we find in the internalisation of human rights norms in domestic contexts. Distinguishing between three modes of norm internalisation, i.e. imposition through bargaining and instrumental adaptation, habitualisation and institutionlisation, and finally argumentation and the raising of moral consciousness, Risse argues that "each process is necessary to achieve the internalization of international norms into domestic practices" (Risse 1999: 530). At the same time, and as conclusion of his claim, Risse states that although arguing is a necessary condition for the internalisation of human rights norms, it is not a sufficient one, the process also has to rely on the other two components, i.e. institutional preconditions on the one hand and pressure from below through domestic opposition and from above through transnational advocacy networks. Only in this way can what is at first a purely strategic commitment – Risse somewhat misleadingly calls it "rhetorical action" (Risse 1999: 552) – lead to argumentative "self-entrapment", i.e. to a state where actors and their actions are increasingly bound by the argumentative rationality in which they are embedded (see also Risse 2000).

On the whole, the literature on the place, status, and quality of deliberation in its different social and political settings paints a complex and ambivalent picture: on the one hand certain circumstance seem to be favourable to deliberation, which in turn yields positive effects in terms of legitimacy, knowledge, learning processes, transformation of social structures, etc. On the other hand, the apathy of people, their limited understanding of political issues, and the power structures which characterise the political process seem to inhibit deliberation or even to undermine its very preconditions.

While we will discuss critically the methods of the most important empirical approaches for the present study as well as some of their results in the following section, a couple of general remarks are in order here. The first concerns the notion of deliberation itself: as

[17] This part of their study is based on the analysis of discussions of the German Mediation Committee (*Vermittlungsauschuss*), which meets in private and tries to find solutions when the political process between the two chambers of the Bundestag is blocked because of fundamental disputes between them.

[18] In cases of a more or less equal distribution of power the finding is not surprising from a theoretical point of view as here strategic action, i.e. bargaining, can only be successful to the extent that it emulates communicative action (see also Holzinger 2005 for an application of the distinction to a local mediation process).

Chambers remarks, "nearly everybody these days endorses deliberation in some form or other (it would be hard not to)" (2003: 308). The problem is that not everyone understands the same thing when referring to deliberation: "The language and concepts of deliberative democratic theory have filtered into many discourses and debates. But not all appeals to or endorsements of deliberation can be considered deliberative democratic theory" (ibid.). As Thompson puts it: "it is important to recognize that deliberative democracy includes many kinds of political interactions other than deliberation. But we can more clearly retain the connection to the central aim of deliberative theory if we treat these other activities as part of a larger democratic process, rather than as instances of deliberation per se" (Thompson 2008: 502).[19] This point applies to studies such as those of political conversation by Marques and Maia (2010), though they make it clear that they investigate forms of communication which feed into but are not themselves to be considered deliberation.[20] Thompson further criticises that "empirical studies typically begin with a concept of deliberation and a list of benefits it is supposed to produce. These are sometimes drawn from one or two theories, often modified for the convenience of the research" (Thompson 2008: 500f.).[21] However, some studies such as Page's examination of American newspapers, as elucidating as the results are, show more basic flaws as they hardly rely on any concept of deliberation that goes beyond common sense assumptions of democracy and public communication. Page, for instance states – in brackets – that deliberation is "reasoning and discussion about the merits of public policy" (Page 1996: 2) and justifies this truncated definition as being "widely used in the literature", though he admits that "it fuzzes over a number of issues concerning precisely what deliberation is and what it does" (ibid.: 13, fn. 5). Clearly, while depending on our research interest we might favour one over the other account of deliberative theory, we certainly need some notion of the concept in order to guide our analyses.[22]

A more specific point concerns the studies of web deliberation. Though their results are important, here more than in the other areas there is a need for a next step in research. This does not have so much to do with expanding the analyses to include social media, but to become more aware of the role of the internet in the political public sphere. While the deliberative quality of online fora or blogs is interesting in itself, the basic promise of the digital revolution is to grant greater inclusiveness of the voices of those who most disadvantaged in accessing to the public sphere – the actors from civil society. Three decisions for future research appear to be particularly important: first, the rather than investigating fora of political parties (cf. Kies 2010), the focus should shift to what Kriesi (2004: 189) refers as "challengers", i.e. as actors without institutionalised – or to put it more generally: privileged – access to political power, i.e. decision procedures. Second, we have to expand the focus and see that the potential of deliberation is not so much about online communication, but resides in the possibility of online communication to generate spill-over

[19] Thompson defines this central interest of deliberative theory as follows: "In a state of disagreement, how can citizens reach a collective decision that is legitimate?" (Thompson 2008: 502).

[20] In relation to conversation Thompson states: "'Everyday talk' and other forms of political discussion may contribute to developing citizens' political views and their capacity to make political decisions, and thus create conditions that support deliberation [...]. But ordinary political discussion should be distinguished from decision-oriented deliberation so that the relationships between the practices can be systematically analyzed" (Thompson 2008: 502).

[21] In a similar vein Steiner (2008) warns of concept stretching, i.e. of considering every form of talk as being an instance of deliberation.

[22] Page is not the only example of an approach that is only loosely based on theoretical notion of deliberation: works who implicitly rely on a concept of deliberation or some of normative theory which has mediated communication at is heart includes the studies by Hart (2000), Iyengar (2000), McAdam (2000), Costain and Fraizer (2000).

processes either into the national media, which still lead the political debate, or directly to the political-administrative system. And third, it is likely that not single online actors, but a network of challengers succeeds in generating such spill-overs (cf. Zimmermann 2007; Pfetsch & Adam 2011). We should therefore expand the focus to investigate online networks rather than seemingly isolated actors: as Zimmermann (2007) points out, the most basic characteristic of online communication is its networked property, i.e. the fact that information is directly linked to other information, and consequently actors to other actors.

After this review of the existing literature on empirical approaches to deliberation we will now examine three of these studies in more detail – Ferree et al.'s analysis of the abortion discourse in the United States and Germany, Dahlberg's work on the internet, and Steiner et al.'s investigation of parliamentary discourse – as they are of particular importance in the context of our project. As our aim is to develop an analytical instrument that is based on a rigorous reading of the theoretical premises, the focus will be mainly on the methodical translation of the central dimensions of the deliberative model.

2.2. Abortion discourse, the internet, and the DQI: Three points of reference

In this section we will focus on three approaches whose analytical instruments are based on a close reading of the theoretical background and which have therefore a guiding function for the present study. We will first discuss more closely the approach taken by Ferree et al. (2002), Gerhards, Neidhardt and Rucht (1998) as well as Gerhards (1997), not only because they test in how far different theoretical models of democracy correspond to the empirical reality, but also because they conduct a diachronic analysis and therefore share a common interest with the present study (section 2.2.1.). Dahlberg's (2001a, 2001b) research, though it concerns mainly the internet, is important as he distinguishes very clearly the different analytical dimensions that are essential if we want to explore political discourses in the informal public sphere (section 2.2.2.). The work of Steiner et al. (2004), Steenbergen et al. (2003), Bächtiger (2005), and Spörndli (2004), finally presents us with a sophisticated translation of the theoretical notion of deliberative quality into a content analytical measure. The idea of their Discourse Quality Index (DQI) can be taken as a point of reference and clearly is the main source of inspiration for our investigation of the deliberative quality in the public sphere (section 2.2.3.). In the following we will critically discuss each of the approaches. The focus will necessarily be above all on the logics behind the operationalization of the theoretical construct; the empirical results will only be included where they help to elucidate a methodological point.

2.2.1. Deliberation in a diachronic perspective: *Shaping Abortion Discourse*

The works of Ferree et al. (2002), Gerhards, Neidhardt, and Rucht (1998) as well as Gerhards (1997) are the outcome of a larger project that investigates the development of abortion discourse in the United States and Germany between 1970 and 1994. They choose to analyse abortion discourse for practical as well as theoretical reasons: it is first of all a larger debate spanning over several decades in both countries, a necessary condition for

such a broad based comparative analysis. But it is also an issue where social transformation processes are more readily apparent than perhaps in other debates as it involves to a substantial degree members of civil society, above all women as well as social movements, apart from political parties, governments, the administration and the judiciary. Moreover, from a Habermasian perspective we could say that it is an issue that involves all levels of practical discourse at some stage, the practical, the ethical-political, and very centrally also the moral one.

It is important to see that some of the criticism voiced above also applies to this study: it is not strongly embedded in either a deliberative or any other account of political theory. Rather, the general approach taken by the authors is largely based on an empirical theory of the various political forums and arenas which make up the public sphere and hence public discourse. This is not problematic *per se* as for the most part Ferree et al. are not testing a specific theory, they are primarily interested in retracing the frame changes that shape the debate. But it does, of course, have consequences when they come to that part in the book where they assess which democratic model corresponds most closely to the empirical data. They distinguish four different strands of normative political theory: (1) *representative liberal models* of theorists such as John Stuart Mill (1861), Edmund Burke (2001), but also Joseph Schumpeter (1994) and Anthony Downs (1957), (2) *participatory liberal theory* which has its roots in Rousseau's idea of direct participation and includes scholars such as Hirst (1994), Barber (2003), and Michels (1966), but also Jane Mansbridge (1983), (3) *discursive theory*, by which they essentially mean the deliberative approach as developed by Cohen (1989), Habermas (1996), and Gutmann and Thompson (1996), though they also include communitarians such as Amitai Etzioni (1998), and finally (4) *constructionist theory*, characterised by a critical approach inspired by the work of Michel Foucault and comprising the work of theorists such as Nancy Fraser (1989), Seyla Benhabib (1996a), and Iris Mario Young (1990).

Without questioning their categorisation which from the perspective developed in this study is rather surprising, there are two basic flaws concerning the logics behind their planning of the test that have to be addressed. First, although they test normative theories, Ferree et al. unwittingly end up treating them as descriptive accounts, which is evidenced by the fact that they conclude their test by discussing which of the theoretical models fits the data best.[23] To draw such conclusions seems rather implausible given that the deeper meaning of normative models, at least as understood in this study, consists in providing an idealised account of an "ought" state of society, which we can use to analyse to what extent the "is" of the status quo differs from it. In other words, if reality falls short of matching normative theory, this is not a problem of theory, but one of reality: "The objection prompted [...] that deliberative theory is not realistic [...] has never impressed normative theorists. They believe that it misses the point. Theory challenges political reality. It is not supposed to accept as given the reality that political science purports to describe and explain. It is intended to be critical, not acquiescent" (Thompson 2008: 499). Second, Gerhards (1997), but to a certain extent also Gerhards, Neidhardt, and Rucht (1998) and Ferree et al. (2002) characterise the different normative models in such a way that the discursive model is the most demanding one in terms of its normative criteria in contrast to the others. It is therefore of little wonder that we find that the other models correspond more closely to

[23] This flaw is even more pronounced in Gerhards' (1997) who tests the liberal model against the Habermasian deliberative model.

reality (cf. Peters 2007). For the purposes of the present study we are particularly interested in their analysis of the discursive model, which we will therefore examine more closely.

The discursive model is defined by Ferree et al. through a set of criteria which they operationalize as empirical variables: inclusion, mutual respect, civility, dialogue, and closure, by which they mean that debates are not terminated by decisions but through the consensus the participants have reached. Whereas the criterion of inclusion is rather straightforward, civility and mutual respect are more problematic. The question that arises in this context has not so much to do with the operationalization of the concept, but more basically whether civility, or politeness as it is referred to in most sociolinguistic literature (cf. Watts 2003), really captures an important aspect of the deliberative model.[24] At least as far as Cohen and in particular Habermas, to whom they often refer, are concerned the deliberative procedure contains no explicit dimension of civility, and introducing it nevertheless in the analysis in the end shows the difficulties into which we can run when we combine elements of different approaches, even when they belong to the same tradition or field. It must be added, however, that Ferree et al. introduce the notion of civility mainly because it is part of the liberal philosophical tradition, and they state clearly that deliberative democracy employs a weaker variant of the concept (cf. Ferree et al. 2002: 210, 230). The main reason why Ferree et al. – and also Steiner et al. as we will see – introduce civility as an analytical category in connection with the deliberative model is that in their discussion they do not only rely on Habermas but also draw on the work of Gutmann and Thompson (1996, 2004), who develop the notion of "mutual respect" as a central category of their approach.[25] And as Ferree et al. observe: "It is worth noting that Gutmann and Thompson make repeated efforts to define the boundaries of what is acceptable discursive practice more broadly than in the Habermas version" (Ferree et al. 2002: 220). Indeed, as Gutmann and Thompson put it: "We do not assume that politics should be the realm where the logical syllogism rules" (Gutmann & Thompson 1996: 4) and hence in one of the earliest formulations they state that "[s]ince in a pluralist society citizens are likely to continue to hold competing comprehensive views, the principles of democracy must provide some guidance for living with fundamental moral disagreement. Reciprocity, as we develop the idea, provides this guidance by setting standards for practices of mutual respect, which we call principles of accommodation" (Gutmann & Thompson 1996: 54f.).[26] The problem here is that although Habermas' concept certainly does not prohibit the participants of a discourse to maintain a certain level of mutual respect and civility, the norm as such plays no central role in his model. In fact, his work on civil disobedience as the "litmus test" for democracy rather points in the direction of what we might refer to as "robust" democracy, where norms

[24] As we will see below, if we want to conceptualise civility or respect, it is best done by taking a sociolinguistic approach as it better allows shaping out the interactive dimension of the construct (also cf. Watts 2003).
[25] Interestingly, civility as element of deliberation plays no role in Gerhards' 1997 article, while it is introduced in brackets in Gerhards, Neidhardt and Rucht one year later (1998: 37) and only becomes a category in its own right in Ferree et al. (2002).
[26] In *Democracy and Disagreement* Gutmann and Thompson (1996) provide no in-depth discussion of how far their deliberative model differs from Habermas' one as it their book was published in the same year that the English translation of *Faktizität und Geltung* (1992) appeared.

of civility and respect might sometimes (have to) be temporarily suspended (cf. Habermas 1985d, see also Bächtiger 2010).[27]

Dialogue, the next variable, "measures the presence of speakers with opposing views in the same article" in Ferree et al.'s analytical instrument, and they note that "[t]his is, at best, a measure of potential dialogue, and the extent to which it is realized depends on whether in such a forum speakers are actually any more likely to engage with each other's arguments" (Ferree et al. 2002: 240). Additionally, a more direct measure examines the extent to which positions are refuted: "The rebuttals variable defines the utterances as dialogic when they refer to and argue against ideas they oppose" (ibid.: 241, emphasis in the original), e.g. "the fetus is not a human person" would represent such a rebuttal. It is particularly this second measure which is problematic, although it is already unclear why dialogue is defined by first measure as the co-presence of opposing positions, given that on a deliberative view the function of the public sphere consists in mobilising different positions and perspectives, i.e. in generating a spectrum of views rather than a binary opposition. The second measure is even less plausible as it is not immediately clear in how far the rebuttal of positions is an indicator for the quality of dialogue. Rather it seems that rebuttals are a measure for the level of conflictuality of the debate, which is certainly an interesting aspect, but captures a different dimension of what the authors want to assess.[28]

By "closure", the last variable, Ferree et al. generally refer to a decrease in the intensity of the debate. The idea behind it is that while liberal theories, above all what they refer to as the "representative" strand of liberal theory, expect the public exchange of arguments to diminish or even to end once the political centre has taken a decision, discursive theories take the view that conflict should be resolved by deliberation and therefore ideally lead to a consensus between the opposing parties (cf. Ferree et al. 2002: 206ff.). This measure seems to truly capture some of the core aspects of the deliberative process, although it is not entirely unproblematic. At a first glance we would probably agree that whereas liberal debates come to a close when a decision is reached by the appropriate political institution, at least as far as representative liberal theories are concerned, deliberative theory postulates that a debate terminates when an overall agreement has been reached. In the absence of a separate indicator for agreement Ferree et al. measure the range of frames and their change over time, the idea being that deliberative agreement should be reflected in a convergence of frames so that in the end all participants would agree on one frame; or the other way round: agreement would be reflected in the dominance of one frame as the debate progresses. They find that overall in both the US and Germany the number of frames diminishes, although the developments in each of the countries is different. Additionally, the convergence of frames is primarily due to the decrease in the number of pro-frames, whereas the opposing frames do in fact increase over the same period of time.

Although the results undisputedly show a clear transformation in the deliberative structure of the debates, there remain a couple of unresolved issues. The first problematic

[27] To be sure, Gutmann and Thompson also set clear limits to application of their standards of deliberativeness, including mutual respect: "When a disagreement is not deliberative (for example, about a policy to legalize discrimination against blacks and women), citizens do not have any obligations of mutual respect towards their opponents. In deliberative disagreement (for example, about legalizing abortion), citizens should try to accommodate the moral convictions of their opponents to the greatest extent possible, without compromising their own moral convictions" (Gutmann & Thompson 1996: 3). Generally speaking, however, respect as a standard in public discussion is more of a property of agonistic models of democracy and not so central in deliberative models, at least not in the Habermasian account which forms the basis of this study.

[28] Ferree et al. go on to differentiate their results further according to speaker category, i.e. periphery or centre, but the general logic of their approach remains the same (cf. Ferree et al. 2002: 242ff.).

point with this approach is that rather than measuring the deliberative quality itself Ferree et al. measure a formal outcome of it. Actors can be respectful, oriented towards dialogue, etc., but we cannot expect them to be themselves consensual – consensus is the product of a process, not what takes place at every "turn" in the debate, to use a conversation analytic term.[29] All we might reasonably expect, again as an outcome, is that the more deliberative a debate is the more it converges on one frame. Second, most theories of deliberative democracy agree – and this includes Habermas – that in the face of time constraints decisions by authoritative political institutions are necessary (see above). Because of this qualification of the ideal deliberation vis-à-vis the constraints of the real world we cannot really say that if we find a drop in the debate after a decision where no consensus was reached this equally means that the debate is poor in deliberative terms.[30] But most of all: the participants of a discourse can come to an agreement for more than one reason which in turn might be embedded in more than one frame. In short: apart from the issues raised above in relation to the framing approach, frame convergence cannot be taken as a reliable indicator for the degree of agreement in a debate.

Gerhards' (1997) study follows the same path taken by Ferree et al., though he chooses to compare Habermas' model of a deliberative public sphere with that of a generalised liberal account, taking the abortion discourse in Germany as the empirical setting, and confirms the findings of Ferree et al.'s lager study that the discursive model finds no significant support in the real world. While most of the issues addressed above also hold in this case, Gerhards' study introduces a measure for the rationality of the debate which deserves closer attention. Before we come to this, however, there is one point concerning the interpretation of the data that needs to be addressed: examining the actor structure of the debate, Gerhards concludes that it is an example of power-ridden public sphere given that it is dominated by the political-administrative centre with nearly 44.8% of the contributions to the debate, while civil society organisations take up only 15.1% of the discursive space, 7.6% are made up by the scientific community, 4.2% by other actors articulating interests, and finally 27.6% by journalists. The first problem with this view is that we do not have, nor does Habermas or any other deliberative democrat provide us with, a straightforward criterion as to the kind of actor distribution that would be necessary for a public sphere to count as autonomous. Habermas repeatedly speaks of a public sphere that is dominated by the mass media, and the task of civil society seems to consist mainly in identifying and articulating social problems in such a way that they become part of the official agenda of the strong public located at the political centre. But from this we can hardly deduce any concrete actor distribution, and it certainly does not imply that an autonomous public sphere is one where civil society is the most dominant actor. Given that Gerhards has no other debate to which he could compare his results, and because he chooses to aggregate his diachronic data rather than making cuts in the time line that would allow him to retrace the development of the actor structure, we cannot say whether the German abortion discourse is an example of an autonomous or a power-ridden public sphere. The deliberative account and (most) normative theories in general only allow us to come to plausible

[29] Such a view would entail that we have a preference from the outset for participants in a debate to agree with one another, although the reason why there is a debate is that actors disagree. It also goes against Habermas characterisation of the ideal speech situation where every participant is entitled to raise every kind of validity claim and use every kind of speech act (cf. Habermas 1984a).

[30] Habermas understands the decisions by political institutions to be merely cuts in the on-going process of deliberation.

conclusions if we take a comparative approach, and failing to adopt such a perspective means that it becomes almost impossible to interpret the results. In fact, in Gerhards' case the findings may be interpreted as evidence for an autonomous public sphere, as he admits that if the journalists are taken as representatives of the periphery then the whole picture changes. Now, this is exactly how they are defined by Habermas who allocates them a mandatary role as we have seen. Contrary to Gerhards' initial assessment the abortion discourse in Germany thus is not so much characterised structures typical of power-ridden public spheres, rather the indicators suggest that it constitutes an autonomous public sphere.

The rationality of the debate is measured by using a model of rationality levels developed by Rainer Döbert (1996), following the work of Jean Piaget (1999) and Habermas.[31] Döbert defines four levels of rationality which he characterises as follows: on level one the actor does not consider alternative perspectives but argues from a normative point of view he or she considers as authoritative, on level two the strict view is somewhat lessened as depending on the context exceptions are allowed, whereas on level three the actor perceives the existence of different, conflicting views and communicates them, resolving the dilemma by putting them into a hierarchy, the fourth level is finally characterised by the actor's internalisation of the plurality of views which are no longer ranked in a hierarchical order but integrated through compromise.[32] Applying this scale to the two prominent "idea elements" in the abortion discourse Gerhards finds 57.8% of them correspond to the lowest level, 13% to level two, 29.2% to level three, whereas we find none on level four. While Gerhards focuses on the fact that the lowest level of rationality is the one which is most pronounced in the debate, he fails to see that the distribution on the scale is rather unusual, particularly the dip on level two and the increase on level three, respectively, are noteworthy. If the scale is really hierarchical, we would expect a continuous decrease from level one to level four. The difficulty here is not Gerhards' application of the scale to the data or his interpretation of the findings, rather it lies with the scale itself. The problem is that Döbert's measure includes two different perspectives: level one and level three are characterised by what we could term – very roughly – and objectifying view, whereas on level two and four the actor takes on more of a performative attitude. And given that the performative perspective is more demanding than the objectifying one, we see a dip on level two – and unsurprisingly find no occurrences on level four. More basically, however, it is questionable whether a rationality scale that is based on developmental perspectives should be applied to the aggregate level of the data. Here again, it might have been more plausible to examine whether there are any changes in the debate over time, the hypothesis then being that as the debate progresses the rationality of the actors increases through the learning processes induced by the debate itself.

Despite these reservations, the work of Ferree et al. (2002), Gerhards, Neidhardt and Rucht (1998) as well as Gerhards (1997) remains an impressive and early attempt to operationalise the complex theoretical framework of deliberative democracy. And their work is particularly valuable as they rely mainly on Habermas as their theoretical background, though as we have seen in the discussion, it does not occupy the same central role as in the present

[31] Gerhards also examines the degree to which "idea elements", which we can roughly define as frames, occur with or without justifications, though he does not regard this a being part of discursive rationality in a narrow sense.
[32] For a more detailed description see Gerhards (1997: 21f.) and Döbert (1996).

study, leading to some of the methodical problems on which we have focused. We will therefore move to the work of Lincoln Dahlberg who explicitly endorses a Habermasian perspective in his attempt to determine the deliberative character of the internet.

2.2.2. Deliberation online: The discursive quality of the internet

Whereas the work of Ferree et al. is important as far as our general research interest is concerned and because it clearly shows the difficulties of translating the theoretical premises into a feasible empirical instrument, Lincoln Dahlberg's work is mainly inspiring as it presents a rigorous application of the Habermasian model in the context of online communication. Although Dahlberg's interest is different from the one of the present project, the general thrust of his research and the methodology he has developed point in the same direction. In different publications Dahlberg (2001a, 2001b, 2001c, 2001d, Dahlberg & Siapera 2007) has examined in how far online communication networks conform to the Habermasian ideal of deliberation and how they can be improved to fulfil the expectation of a concrete utopia or an unbounded agora more closely, with which the digital age has been confronted from the beginning. In the following we will particularly concentrate on the analytical categories Dahlberg has developed and discuss them with relation to our own study.

The major drawback of Dahlberg's work for the aims of present project can be stated before embarking on a more detailed discussion of the analytical instrument: it consists in the fact that he examines online discourse by means of what we could call a qualitative survey combined with a qualitative analysis of instances of online communication. In other words, Dahlberg's analysis is defined by focussing on those communicative practices and rules and regulations in online fora that can be immediately assessed in terms of their deliberative quality or with regard to the contribution they make in fostering deliberation. This is a perfectly sensible approach for the analysis of such a potentially anarchic communicative space as the internet, not least because it takes into account the actual content as well as those rules and practices which have an effect on the content. Yet it is doubtful whether we could simply transfer Dahlberg's method to our study, above all our research interest and hypotheses seem to call for a different approach. This qualification notwithstanding, the analytical categories Dahlberg develops show a very close reading of Habermas' work on communicative action, discourse ethics and deliberative democracy, and they will therefore also inform the analytical approach of the present project. Altogether, Dahlberg defines six categories, which constitute the deliberative procedure, and in Habermas' earlier writings the ideal speech situation (cf. Dahlberg 2001: 622f.):

(1) *Exchange and critique of reasoned moral-practical validity claims*. By this Dahlberg refers to Habermas' requirement that deliberation extend (primarily) to normative validity claims and that the participants give reasons for their positions when they engage each other in critique. We could add that other illocutions such as demands or support are not exempt from this requirement, although it is certainly the case that it applies most directly to the act of criticism.

(2) *Reflexivity*. If we engage in a debate we must also be prepared to examine and scrutinise critically our immediate and wider social and cultural contexts.

(3) *Ideal role taking*. This is a category that goes back to Mead's analysis of the generalised other and the concrete other and even further back to Kant's "enlarged mentality" found in his *Critique of Judgement* (1987), on which also Hannah Arendt (1992) places much weight in her sketching of the contours of a Kantian political philosophy, and which describes essentially the faculty to think from the other's point of view – even if the other person is unknown to us. Goodin (2000) additionally makes the point that the other does not necessarily have to be a concrete or real person, it can equally be a character of fiction.

(4) *Sincerity*. Habermas refers to it mostly as truthfulness: participants in a discourse should only say what they hold to be right or true, and they should be honest about their motifs, desires, interests, etc.[33]

(5) *Discursive inclusion and equality*. This requirement is not unique to deliberative theories and postulates that all those affected by a norm should have the opportunity to take part in the debate, to paraphrase Habermas' discourse principle (D). Additionally, the deliberative procedure is free from what Habermas following Cohen refers to as internal constraints, i.e. participants have an equal discursive standing in that everyone is entitled to make contributions, using all kinds of speech acts at their disposal, raise different topics, etc.

(6) *Autonomy from state and economic power*. In a certain way this requirement amounts to an outcome of the sum of the former four: if deliberative processes revolve around matters of the common good, if all can participate and make their voices heard, extending the debate to all matters they deem important by using all illocutions at their disposition, and if debates ideally go on indefinitely until we reach a consensus in which the participants agree on a point for the same reasons, then this debate would automatically also be characterised by being free from administrative and economic power, the two non-linguistic "steering media" Habermas identifies as constitutive of modern societies (cf. Habermas 1981a, 1981b).

Equipped with these criteria as empirically verifiable dimensions of deliberation Dahlberg (2001b) then analyses the discursive standard of mainly one online forum. In light of the present project the major shortcoming of Dahlberg's approach we have alluded to already above is that he does so above all in a largely descriptive and cursory way, which becomes problematic if we want to go beyond the mere exploration of deliberative structures and practices and compare different debates systematically. Here, the route taken by Ferree et al. seems more promising as they are aware that the analysis of public discourse needs both, a qualitative as well as a quantitative dimension, and the latter is particularly important if we want not only to give a general account of the discursive development of the public sphere, but if we want to test a set of hypotheses.

In a certain respect, the work of Steiner et al. can be seen as a way between these two poles, though they tend more towards the quantitative side. What is particularly important in their approach is that they spell out in explicit terms what is already implicitly there in

[33] The language philosophical basis for this requirement is what Habermas refers to as the "intermodal validity transfer": put simply, both claims to normative rightness and to objective truth presuppose that the speaker means what he or she says, that is, both validity claims are connected internally to the validity claim of truthfulness (cf. Habermas 1981a).

Ferree et al. but even more so in Dahlberg's attempt: the single dimensions of deliberation can be combined to form an index. We will thus turn to our last example of translating the deliberative model into an empirical measure and focus more closely on how the index is constructed.

2.2.3. Deliberation in the political system: The Discourse Quality Index

The starting point for the development of their analytical instrument is Steiner et al.'s observation that in empirical research on deliberation what "is still lacking are *quantitative* investigations with *reliability* tests" (Steiner et al. 2004: 53, emphasis in the original). They stipulate four criteria their measure has to fulfil in order to bridge the gap between normative theory and empirical practice: it should be grounded in theory, be applicable to observable phenomena as well as to different contexts, and it should be reliable. Steiner et al. are well aware of the different theoretical strands in deliberative theory and quite generally the inflationary use of the term "deliberation", which has led Chambers to complain that "the number of scholars working with a model of deliberative democracy or writing about it is enormous [...] The problem is that nearly everyone these days endorses deliberation in some form or another (it would be hard not to)" (Chambers 2003: 307f.). Faced with this problem one can either try to incorporate the different elements of the various theoretical approaches into one analytical instrument, or rely on one specific model. Steiner et al. opt for the latter strategy as the eclectic approach would only contribute to further blurring the theoretical concept and it would be hard to see how the empirical results would have any import for normative theory. They thus take Habermas' work as their theoretical background from which they develop their empirical measure. While they understand deliberation in line with Habermas' theoretical model as encompassing both institutions at the political-administrative centre as well as the broader public sphere, they limit their investigation to the institutional dimension of the process, more precisely to parliamentary debates. This has of course consequences for the empirical measure they develop as the strong public in Fraser's and Habermas' sense is structured differently and has to fulfil different functions than the informal public sphere constituted by the weak public.

They thus arrive at five different dimensions which can be grouped together to form an content analytical index, the Discourse Quality Index (DQI). The first of these dimensions, *participation*, echoes the requirements that a deliberative informal public sphere has to fulfil, but is interpreted in the context of parliamentary debates as the possibility of a speaker to participate in the debate without being interrupted. The second dimension is given by the level of *justification* which basically measures the amount of complete reasons that are given in support of a position. The *content of justifications* in turn refers to the kinds of interests advocated by speakers and is thus a qualitative dimension which distinguishes neutral statements from group interests, appeals to the common good, and appeals to the common good that are framed in terms of Rawls' difference principle (cf. Rawls 1999). By *constructive politics*, the fourth indicator, they understand what we could refer to as the degree to which as speaker shows a performative or an objectifying attitude: positional politics means that the speaker simply asserts his or her position, with an alternative proposal the speaker in turn makes a proposal which, however, is not relevant for the current debate, while the mediating proposal is a speaker's constructive effort that remains

within the context of the current debate. The fifth criterion is represented by *respect*, which is in turn divided into three sub-dimensions that deserve a more detailed discussion.

The first sub-dimension of respect refers to supporting or disparaging statements by speakers towards groups to be helped through the policies under debate. We have already indicated above that respect is not central to the Habermasian model: he mentions the term or the concept of respect neither in the formulation of the formal criteria of the ideal speech situation, nor in *The Theory of Communicative Action* or in the depiction of the deliberative procedure in *Between Facts and Norms*. Although this is not to say that respect has no role to play in deliberation, it clearly lies not at the heart of the formal procedure of conflict resolution. More important than this, there are a couple of conceptual issues with the way Steiner et al. define the respect towards groups. The point is that if we take the intersubjective dimension of deliberation seriously then respect or disrespect is not only to be seen in the content of an utterance, i.e. in the illocutionary force is carries, but in the way those addressed or their (discursive) representatives relate to it. That is to say, it is one thing if a speaker makes disparaging remarks about certain groups, it is quite another to see how these groups or their representatives react to it. Respect conceived in this way is "co-constructed" as conversation analysts would say, it is from a language philosophical point of view the perlocutionary effect rather than to be seen in the illocution alone. The perlocutionary effect, however, crucially depends on the ratification of the addressee: if for instance I want to scare someone who, however, remains rather unimpressed by my efforts, then I obviously have failed to carry out the action of scaring someone. To be sure, respect and disrespect do not necessarily coincide with such intentional categories, but the example proves the point that all those aspects of deliberation that reach into the perlocutionary dimension of speech should, if possible, be constructed as interactive categories. Particularly in comparative research as carried out by Steiner et al. this approach has the further advantage that we would be able to guard ourselves against possible artefacts resulting from cultural differences: while parliaments in country A and B may differ from each other in that the political institutions in country A are marked by a higher amount of speakers' disrespectful utterances, this does not automatically mean that deliberations in country A are generally more disrespectful: only if the addressees or their representatives ratify the utterances accordingly would we be entitled to draw such a conclusion.[34]

The other conceptual problem of respect concerns the second sub-dimension and is more a problem of terminology, though it has important consequences for the interpretation of the results. This dimension measures to what extent speakers include counterarguments: at the bottom of the scale speakers ignore counterarguments completely, on the next level they are included but degraded, then included but neither evaluated positively or negatively, and finally at the top of the scale counterarguments are not only acknowledged, they are also explicitly valued. The first problem here is that respect, at least if we conceive it in analogy to politeness, is a dimension that relates to the integrity of a person and not to the arguments uttered by that person. The second and related problem is that Steiner et al. do not keep these dimensions separate. They conceive of respect towards counterarguments on the one hand as relating to the integrity of a person in the case of the included but degraded counterargument which they illustrate by quoting a passage from a House of Commons exchange where the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, Margaret Beckett (Lab.)

[34] The sketched approach is also more in line with the empirical work in the area of politeness theory (cf. Watts 2003).

states: "The underlying thrust of the policy of the previous government was to try to turn Britain into a sweatshop, certainly of Europe, if not the world", and then addresses a specific Tory MP, saying: "I am indifferent to the rubbish the right hon. Gentleman spouts" (as cited in Steiner et al. 2004: 177). Now, "rubbish" can hardly be seen as an instance of a proper counterargument, and coding the utterance as such only makes sense if we are in fact analysing respect as politeness, or what Goffman (1982) would refer to as the "face threatening act" of a speaker. The perspective of the coding logic changes on the other hand for the highest level of respect towards counterarguments, where the points made by political opponents are not only included but explicitly valued. Again, Steiner et al. provide us with an example taken from a House of Commons debate about the transfer of administrative powers to Northern Ireland. During her speech Mo Mowlan, the Labour Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, is interrupted by a Labour MP to whom she replies: "I hear what my hon. Friend says. From my preparation for the debate, I understand that the power is potentially a reserved one, even though – he is absolutely right – the 1967 Act does not apply. Given that it is a reserved power, the House will still have an opportunity to debate the matter" (as cited in Steiner et al. 2004: 178). Here, in contrast to the previous example, the measure does indeed what it purports to do, namely identify those utterances where a speaker assesses a counterargument positively.

The third sub-dimension traces the respect towards demands made by others. It faces essentially the same conceptual problems as the previous dimension, which is in both cases given very basically by the fact that Steiner et al. count as valid utterances not only statements relating to counterarguments and demands, but also explicitly include "[a]ttacks against individuals and groups" (Steiner et al. 2004: 177), i.e. at the heart of the measure lies the combination or rather the confounding of a social dimension (integrity) and an argumentative dimension. This is ultimately also why Steiner et al. are able to integrate the theoretically different sub-dimensions into one measure of respect at all: the lack of internal differentiation means that both respect towards demands and respect towards counterarguments share with the respect towards groups the social dimension.[35]

The upshot of this is of course that the interpretations of the results are significantly flawed when it comes to assessing the level of respect attained in the debates: first of all, because they ignore the interactive dimension of the concept, Steiner et al. are forced to take every disrespectful utterance at its face value – irrespective of its ratification by the addressees. Second, and perhaps more important, their combination of social and argumentative dimensions into one and the same measure means that we cannot say that a debate is disrespectful because it scores low on the dimension of personal integrity, i.e. because it displays a disproportionally high amount "face-threatening acts". Debates might be qualified as disrespectful simply on the grounds that speakers object to demands and/or counterarguments. This, however, is hardly plausible: just because we reject a counterargument or a demand that we deem argumentatively invalid we do not thereby automatically entail that we question the personal integrity of the person who uttered it. Conversely, a debate might count as respectful if the participants agree with one another, which is even less plausible given that "a state of disagreement" (Thompson 2008: 502) is the precondition for the deliberative process.

[35] Cf. also Bächtiger (2005), Steenbergen et al. (2003).

On the whole, we can thus see that operationalizing the theoretical framework of deliberative democracy is far from a simple and straightforward endeavour. We have to make sure that our measures capture the essential elements of the deliberative process, that our analytical instrument is reliable, and that it allows us to answer our research questions. The three approaches discussed in more detail in this section are very valuable in this respect as they have different strengths and weaknesses. In the next section we will develop our own model in relation to these approaches on the one hand, while remaining sensitive to the context and the research interest of the present study.

2.3. A Discourse Quality Index for the media: The DQI_m

The preceding discussion has revealed that there is a tension between the approach taken by Dahlberg, which is very close to the theoretical foundations of the Habermasian model of deliberative democracy, but which results in a largely qualitative analysis, and the DQI developed by Steiner et al., which allows us to see the discursive quality as a quantifiable construct in the form of an content analytical index, but which might be deemed a less rigorous operationalisation of the theoretical construct. The solution does not lie in the middle between the two alternatives, rather in this section we will take the perspective of Steiner et al. as a starting point and integrate those concepts that are central to the concept of deliberative democracy and particularly important when investigating discourses mediated public sphere. This will result in a set of variables which together form the Discourse Quality Index for the media, or short the DQI_m.[36]

Before we come to the quantitative content analytical instrument proper, we first need to know what level of discourse we want to examine. Following the approach taken by Steiner et al. and in line with the theoretical background of deliberative democracy and Habermas' work on communicative action, we define the *speech act* as the basic coding unit. After all, what we want to examine are the argumentative exchanges between the participants of a debate, and here the speech act is the basic unit of communication. However, because we are dealing with political debates we restrict the analysis to normative speech acts, more precisely to speech acts which articulate a position vis-à-vis other actors in the context of the issue under debate.[37] From a theoretical point of view we can define four generic discursive relationships established through validity claims that articulate demands, criticism, support, and statements. Very basically, demands express a wish to change the status quo and thus lie at the core of the political process, criticism in turn articulates a disapproval of the current state of affairs, whereas support indicates agreement with other actors, and statements finally most often occur in formal or institutional contexts when e.g. it is declared that some form of action will be taken, etc. Important for our understanding is that these four generic dimensions are defined in broad terms: demands can refer to any aspect of the political process and range from very concrete proposals about pieces of legislation that should be passed to more abstract requests about the way the debate should

[36] There are certainly also other conceivable approaches such as those which analyse the roles of frames in deliberation (cf. Druckman & Nelson 2003; Druckman 2004; Xenos 2000). The problem here is that frames have no grounding in normative theory, at least not in deliberative theory, and taking them as our instrument of measure would not allow us to make any meaningful statements beyond their general occurrence. More specific interpretations would in turn have to be tied back to the criteria that specify the deliberative procedure.

[37] See e.g. the work of Kuhlmann (1999) who uses a very extensive definition as he is interested in the analysis of the communicative rationality of the political process as a whole.

be conducted. Similarly, criticism, support, and statements can refer to any normative aspect of the political process, though most often they will of course relate to concrete proposals. Yet, because the public sphere possesses a dual structure in that it processes debates about specific issues on the one hand, but also always has itself – i.e. the discursive structure of the debate – as a topic, it is important to define our basic categories broad enough in order to include these aspects.

The theoretical point of departure of our index is the definition of the deliberative procedure which in relation to Cohen (1989) and Habermas (1996) we can characterise in the following compact form:

(a) rationality of discourse

(b) inclusiveness of actors

(c) external autonomy of actors

(d) internal autonomy: equality of actors

(e) actors aim at reaching consensus

(f) discourses touch on all topics that can be regulated in the equal interest of all

(g) inclusiveness of perspectives and beliefs

In the following, we will develop the categories for our index from this theoretical basis and adapt them to the purposes of the present study.[38] We will thereby also see that not all specifications of the deliberative procedure are included in our analytical instrument. Furthermore, our instrument should not only satisfy the requirement of validity in presenting a suitable and justifiable translation true to the theoretical premises, with regard to the requirement of reliability it should above all also be practical. The latter standard means that we will try to keep the definitions of the single dimensions and the logics behind them as simple as possible so as to guarantee the applicability of the index.[39]

Ad (a): *rationality of discourse*. The first criterion corresponds to what Dahlberg (2001b: 623) refers to as the "[e]xchange and critique of reasoned moral-practical validity claims" and what Steiner et al. (2004) call the "level of justification for demands". *Reflexivity* is the most basic dimension of the deliberative procedure and simply means that the participants of a discourse are expected to give reasons for the positions they advocate in their contributions. Similar to Steiner et al. we will measure the number of reasons that an actor puts forth in his or her utterance. Yet because articles in newspapers often leave little room for the presentation of a fully fledged argument, our standards will necessarily be lower than those

[38] The detailed code book is in appendix 18.

[39] From a linguistic point of view the main challenge is to balance the tension between a semantic and a pragmatic analysis: whereas a purely semantic approach would lead to high levels of reliability we probably would encounter difficulties in defining on these grounds alone what a speech act let alone and argument constitutes and thereby loose the connection to the validity of our construct. An approach which overemphasises the pragmatic dimension in turn would achieve poor results in reliability tests as here the intersubjective agreement would be rather low.

of Steiner et al., i.e. we will not require the presence of complete justifications. Additionally, our scale will be restricted to measure three levels:

Reflexivity

(0) no justification

(1) one justification

(2) two or more justifications

There are, however, two other dimensions present in this first standard of deliberation, for Habermas also states that deliberations take place "through the regulated exchange of information and reasons among parties who introduce and critically test proposals" (Habermas 1996: 305). The regulated exchange here refers to a further basic dimension which gives political debates its dialogic character, namely *reciprocity*. It means that discourses are not merely an exercise in a plurality of monologues, but that we expect participants to speak to one another; the considered opinion then arises out of their discursive interaction. For our measurement we have to take into account that reciprocity is a category of discourse that can be present to different degrees. Our scale will comprise four levels:

Reciprocity

(0) no reciprocity

(1) reference to the utterance of another actor without addressing its content

(2) reference to the utterance and its content in general terms, i.e. without addressing specific points

(3) reference to the utterance in concrete terms, addressing specific points

The scale of this measure is particularly important for the descriptive-qualitative part of the analysis. In the inferential part we will simply use a dichotomous distinction (reciprocity/no reciprocity) as our main interest is to examine whether our explanatory variables have a general effect as there are no theoretical grounds for assuming a more nuanced relationship between the variables.

The third dimension is only weakly discernible in the quoted formulation, but it becomes more apparent if we turn to Dahlberg's operationalization of the deliberative procedure, who explicates the critical testing of proposals on the one hand as reflexivity. On the other hand and according to Habermas' understanding the basic intersubjective nature of deliberation it also entails that participants take on the perspectives of others: "Anyone serious about participating in a practice of argumentation cannot avoid pragmatic presuppositions that require an ideal role taking, that is, presuppositions that require one to interpret and evaluate all contributions from the perspective of every other potential participant" (Habermas 1996: 260). Based on his reading of George Herbert Mead Habermas argues that when we communicate with others we take on their perspective, or to go back even further we could say that Habermas here clarifies Kant's notion of the enlarged mentality. For our purposes, we will use a simple measure, namely the actors that are part of the justifications of speakers. To make an example: when an MP argues that the policy proposal of the government is deeply flawed because it would have an adverse effect on civil society, then

the MP is the speaker, the government is the addressee, and civil society is that actor whose point of view is included. The idea behind this is that to reason from the other's point of view entails the other as part of the argumentation, namely as part of the reason-giving process itself.[40] *Justification actors* as the third variable of our index thus refers to those actors which speakers mention in their justifications. The detailed classification of the actors is developed below in the context of the inclusiveness of the actors.

Ad (b): *inclusiveness of actors*. Inclusiveness covers what Dahlberg defines as "discursive inclusion and equality", though we will define the second part, i.e. equality, as a separate category, and it is conceptually similar to what Steiner et al. term "participation". While in the setting of parliamentary debates participation refers to the degree to which actors can make their contributions without being interrupted, we are obviously confronted with a different situation when we analyse debates conducted in the media. Here, participation as inclusiveness refers to the ability to make contributions in the first place, i.e. to pass the threshold of the media's selection mechanism and become included in the debate as an active participant. The last condition is important, for as we will in some of the debates, it is one thing to be discursively present in the media, it is at times quite another whether that presence is only passive in terms of being the object of the debate, or whether it extends to the role of actors as speakers.

In order to be able to assess the degree of inclusiveness thus defined, we need to categorise the actors. While there are many different ways to build a typology, we will take classify the actors according to those criteria Habermas develops in *Between Facts and Norms*: the most basic distinction is that between system and lifeworld, which means that on the one hand we identify civil society actors as a separate category, whereas on the other the system can be further divided into actors from the economy on the one hand, and representatives of the political-administrative system. The latter includes, for pragmatic reasons but also because they are part of the strong public, also the political parties, i.e. generally MPs.[41] Habermas further defines the media as an own actor class: their complex role as both discourse participants and discourse providers distinguishes them from the other actors. Finally, as we will see, there are also actors such as terrorists or terrorist suspects who cannot be categorised according to our scheme, and we will therefore introduce as the last category that of the "uncivil" society. We thus distinguish five categories:

Inclusiveness

(1) "Uncivil" society

(2) Civil society

(3) Media

(4) Economy

(5) Political centre

[40] In this respect, the enlarged mentality bears resemblance to Dryzek's (2008) notion of discursive representation.
[41] In his more recent publications Habermas takes a different line, distinguishing lobbyists from advocates, i.e. discursive representatives in Dryzek's sense, experts, moral entrepreneurs, and intellectuals as representatives of the elite in addition to journalists and politicians (cf. Habermas 2006: 416).

Ad (c): *external autonomy of actors*. External autonomy means that "[t]he participants are sovereign insofar as they are bound only by the presuppositions of communication and rules of argumentation" (Habermas 1996: 305). This is an indicator that, if given an extensive interpretation, presupposes knowledge about the affiliations of the actors in the debates that clearly goes beyond the information that we have at disposition. On a simpler reading, however, the actors' affiliations simply correspond to the classification which we have already developed in connection with the standard of inclusiveness. It is important to note that as a consequence of this we give the criterion a different interpretation as in analogy to inclusiveness we assess the autonomy of actors according to the same standard of evaluation, i.e. in terms of their even distribution. Because the indicators thus become identical we will not code or interpret the autonomy separately, but restrict ourselves to the concept of inclusiveness.

Ad (d): *internal autonomy: equality of actors*. Internal autonomy refers to the equality of the actors within the debate. As Habermas puts it: "Each has an equal opportunity to be heard, to introduce topics, to make contributions, to suggest and criticize proposals" (Habermas 1996: 305). As formulated, this dimension would require an input-output analysis of the contributions of the actors, i.e. an analysis of their communicative efforts which would then be matched against what we find in the media. The result of such an analysis would then be able to reveal if there are any biases in the media's reporting which favour one class of actors over the others. This approach, however, is clearly beyond the scope of the present study and would present us in many cases with insurmountable difficulties regarding the collection of the data.

A different, more general approach takes equality to mean that participants are free to choose their communicative roles, and the most basic distinction here is that between speaker and addressee. In other words, in a discourse free from internal constraints actors must be able to shift between their roles as addressees and speakers. We thus interpret equality as *role change* and will examine to what extent the different discourses fulfil this function. Defined this way, role change measures the difference between the inclusiveness of the speakers and the inclusiveness of the hearers, the idea being that a discourse can be distorted in two ways: either the inclusiveness of the addressees is greater than that of the speakers, which means that not all those addressed have a voice in the debate; only a few actors pass the threshold of the media's selection mechanism an become participants in the discourse. Alternatively, the inclusiveness of the speakers is greater than that of the addressees, which means that in the debate only a few actors are held responsible or relevant for the solution of the problem. We can see that it is particularly the first case which is problematic from a point of view of deliberative theory, and as we will see, some of the strongest systematic distortions in the debates occur precisely in this dimension. As this indicator is defined as the subtraction of the range of the speakers from the range of the addressees we can rely on our actor classification developed above in the context of our general measure for the inclusiveness of the speakers and extend it to cover the addressees.

Ad (e): *actors aim at reaching consensus*. Generally, consensus is not a criterion that applies to media debates, given that the task of the informal public sphere consists mainly in identifying and articulating social problems. We would overburden the discursive capacities

of the weak public if we required it to converge on a specific position defined by mutual agreement between the actors.[42] Rather, the task of the informal public sphere is to produce considered opinions. But this is the outcome of the process, rather than an aspect of a single speech act. In fact, to what degree a public debate has been able to generate considered public opinions can be read off all of the other indicators, or to put it more simply: considered public opinion is a synonym for discourse quality. This means that in our case we exclude this dimension from our analytical catalogue, though it would be part of it if we investigated institutional discourses such Steiner et al.'s analysis of parliamentary debates. They, however, in line with the view taken here, conceive of consensus as an outcome variable which is then tested in relation to the quality of the discourse (cf. Steiner et al. 2004: 138ff.).

Ad (f): *discourses touch on all topics that can be regulated in the equal interest of all*. The possibility to make all matters that can be regulated in the equal interest of all a topic is a further dimension that we will exclude from our instrument of analysis, the reason in this case being that the requirement that "[p]olitical deliberations extend to any matter that can be regulated in the equal interest of all" (Habermas 1996: 306) lies at the level of the topic of the debate itself and is thus not a property of a speech act. That is, in our case the topic of the debate is an important aspect of the sampling process as we will see, but it is not a part of the analytical instrument as such.

Ad (g): *inclusiveness of perspectives and beliefs*. "the interpretation of needs and wants and the change of prepolitical attitudes and preferences" (Habermas 1996: 306) is the last dimension of our index and is interpreted in our context to refer to what we could call the *range of perspectives*: a discourse free from coercion is characterised by a porousness which guarantees not only the unhindered access of actors to the debate – the media – but also means that the different views, beliefs, and preferences can be articulated without restriction. As perspectives we define the content of the justifications given by speakers and we measure these perspectives by using a category scheme that comprises twenty different values and represents a simplified version of the catalogue developed by Kuhlmann (1999).[43]

On the whole then, our analytical construct contains six dimensions: *reflexivity*, *reciprocity*, *justification actors*, *inclusiveness*, *role change*, and *range of perspectives*.[44] Whereas reflexivity, reciprocity, and perspectives capture the discursive-rational dimension of deliberation, inclusiveness, role change, and to some extent also justification actors refer to its democratic dimension. It will be an empirical question to see whether the theoretical tension is mirrored in the practice of public debate.

[42] This is, however, what Ferree et al. do when they stipulate that the deliberative model is defined by the actors' aim at achieving consensus in the informal public sphere.
[43] A detailed list is in the code book in appendix 18.
[44] As we have argued before, respect is not central to the Habermasian account, therefore it is not include in the index; this is also the reason why respect is not part of Dahlberg's characterisation of the deliberative process. Despite these theoretical reservations, we will develop a measure for respect as outlined in the discussion of Steiner et al.'s approach, though it will not be part of the index. The reason for developing the measure is that will help to shed some further light on the deliberative culture in the debates, above all when we test the role of the actors and the actor constellations.

2.3.1. Inter-coder reliability

Before we conclude this section we need to verify whether our instrument proves to be reliable in terms of inter-coder agreement. The test consisted in the coding of 50 speech acts drawn at random from the sample and assigned to ten different coders who had been trained in the logics of the coding instrument before. After initial modifications in particular with regard to the operational definitions and further simplifications of the range covered by some of the categories, the inter-coder reliability test yielded results between 0.76 and 0.93 in terms of the ratio of coder agreement as illustrated in the table below.[45] We can see that generally the actor variables score higher which has to do with the fact that they are easier to identify and the corresponding variables consist of only five subcategories. In contrast to this, the range of perspectives comprises 23 subcategories and the distinctions between them are more nuanced. An overall inter-coder reliability of 0.86 can be considered as satisfactory.

Table 2: Inter-coder reliability

Categories	Ratio of coding agreement	Cohen's κ
Reflexivity	.815	.724**
Reciprocity	.792	.719**
Perspectives	.764	.625**
Inclusiveness	.932	.844**
Role change	.832	.795**
Enlarged mentality	.893	.812**
Total	.838	.753

**$p < .001$

Having thus developed and tested the DQI_m as our analytical instrument we can now move on to the final step in setting the stage for the empirical part of the study: we need to establish an appropriate discursive context which allows us to test our hypotheses. These considerations will be the topic of the final section of this chapter.

3. Case selection and sampling

In defining the discourses we will explore we will adopt a top-down strategy and first delineate the basic context for the analysis (section 3.1.), before proceeding to the debates themselves (section 3.2.) and the media – i.e. newspapers in our case – which will form the sample (section 3.3.).

3.1. Institutional context

The most basic decision to be taken concerns the level of the analysis: our review of the literature in the field has revealed that deliberation is explored in political conversations, organisations, the internet and traditional media, political institutions as well as in international and supranational contexts. The problem with the latter is that, at least

[45] The table also includes Cohen's κ which is a more conservative measure.

initially and certainly as far as *Between Facts and Norms* is concerned, deliberative theory was formulated to elucidate the political process on the level of the nation-state. Here, we can readily argue for the normatively desirable influence of civil society through its public opinions generated in the public sphere which put issues on the official agenda of the political centre and hold it to account. On the level of international politics, this relationship becomes if not weaker, then certainly more complex, particularly also from a theoretical perspective. We will therefore stay within the boundaries of the original formulations of deliberative theory which implicitly or explicitly have the nation-state as their point of reference. That is, we are basically interested in discourses on the level of the nation state which correspond to the three public sphere models outlined by Habermas and which thus connect the political centre to the periphery to a greater or lesser degree.

Having decided to limit our study to the level of the nation-state and within the nation-state to the level of national politics, we now need to find an appropriate case for our analysis, i.e. a democratic, Western country which allows us not only to test our hypotheses but also to draw robust conclusions from our results which transcend their immediate context. Although we will not be able to generalise our results to other countries, a democracy which displays an unresponsive institutional context would strengthen our results: the logic being that if we find any positive effect or development of the public sphere in such a case, the chances are high that we would find similar patterns in democracies with more responsive institutions. The reverse is not true: if we take a country such as Switzerland which is defined among other things through the high degree of participation it affords its citizens, our results could not be taken to mean that might find similar developments in other democracies, as in most other cases the political institutions do not guarantee the same degree of direct involvement. We will therefore take the UK as an exemplar of a “tough case”, i.e. as having developed democratic institutions that are rather restricted in their responsiveness and allow for only limited participation. In the following, we will first outline the political institutions of the UK (section 3.1.1.) and then, because we investigate public political debates in the media, the media system, which yields a more ambivalent picture as we will see (section 3.1.2.).

3.1.1. The political system of the UK

Arend Lijphart (1999) distinguishes very basically between consensus and Westminster democracies, Switzerland being a representative of the former type whereas the latter is typically associated with the UK, whose seat of government gave the model its name. We will take the UK as the country whose national political discourse we will analyse precisely because it represents the kind of “tough case” we are looking for according to the logic of our case selection: if the discursive quality of public debates in the media shows any positive trend in the UK, then the chances are high that we can witness a similar development in, say, Switzerland or any other country whose political institutions afford more participation.

According to Lijphart (1999: 9ff.) the Westminster model in the United Kingdom is defined by ten characteristics, not all of which are equally important for our study:[46]

(1) Concentration of power in one-party and bare majority cabinets

(2) Cabinet dominance

(3) Two-party system

(4) Majoritarian and disproportional system of election

(5) Interest group pluralism

(6) Unitary and centralised government

(7) Concentration of power in a unicameral legislature

(8) Constitutional flexibility

(9) Absence of judicial review

(10) Central bank controlled by the state

While we will not discuss the single dimensions in too much detail, it is important to address those which are relevant from the point of view of the present study.

(1) *The concentration of power* means that the executive, i.e. the cabinet, is the most powerful institution in British politics, usually composed of members of the majority party. Coalitions such as the current alliance between the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats are very rare and considered an anomaly or at any rate viewed with suspicion. Countries such as Switzerland are by contrast marked by oversized cabinets, i.e. by cabinets that involve more parties than necessary to form a government.

(2) *Cabinet dominance* refers to the fact that whereas in theory the cabinet depends on the confidence of parliament, in reality the contrary is the case. The reason for this is, as Lijphart points out, that the cabinet is normally formed from the majority of the House of Commons, which in turn is usually represented by one party so that there is a strong connection between parliamentary majority and cabinet, to the extent that "[t]he cabinet is clearly dominant vis-à-vis Parliament" (Lijphart 1999: 12) as Lijphart notes.[47] Other such as Kingdom put is more drastically and call parliament the "living dead of the constitution" (Kingdom 2003: 347). As Judge (2005) points out, this is not a recent development, and the "legitimizing mythology" of parliamentary sovereignty was only a fact for a short period between 1846 and 1868: "By the end of the 19th century, and certainly by the end of the first decade of the twentieth, the modern British state was inimitably structured in its present institutional form: parliament was sovereign in constitutional theory but the executive was 'sovereign' in practice" (Judge 2005: 31). Indeed, the imbalance between the two bodies has grown historically, for despite the fact that the advice and counsel given to the king in the 13th century by parliament derived from the results of discussion and deliberation, "these principles of consent and representation were invoked in support of, not as a challenge to, strong executive government. The distinguishing feature of the English

[46] While we will base our characterisation of the political institutional system of the UK on authors such as Judge (2005) and Butler & Kavanagh (1999), Lijphart's classification provides a good guideline, in particular as it concentrates on those aspects which distinguish the Westminster model from consensus democracies.

[47] The executive dominance results from what is essentially a two-party system. In turn, the position of cabinets is weakened during times of minority governments as during the 1970s. Under such circumstances the executive might find it difficult to pass its proposals through parliament (cf. Lijphart 1999: 12).

(later British) state since the 13th century, and the origins of parliament itself, is the emphasis placed upon government rather than parliament" (ibid. 28). Developments in the 20th century show that a change in theory as well as in practice would have primarily to be initiated by the government, which, however, has little incentive to do so as the arrangement serves its interests (cf. Judge 2005).

(3) *Two-party system*. At a first glance, the characterisation of the UK as a two-party system seems to be at odds with reality, given that three parties have seats in parliament, i.e. the House of Commons: the Labour Party, the Conservatives, and the Liberal Democrats. Lijphart's assessment to the contrary is based on the decline of the Liberals in the 20th century, which resulted in the UK effectively remaining a two-party system, despite the ascendancy of the Labour Party as a new political force. The Liberal Party, constitutive of the Westminster system and having been one of the two major political parties together with the Conservatives since the 19th and until the first decade of the 20th century, saw a sharp decline in voter support due to the rising Labour Party. Before, during the 19th century, the Liberals had already lost voters to the Conservatives, and their electoral support decreased from 66.7% of the votes in 1832 to 45% in 1900 (cf. Rallings & Thrasher 2007: 59). The advent of the Labour Party on the political scene further drained voters from the Liberals who succeeded to persuade only 17.8% of the electorate in the general elections in 1924; Labour in turn increased its share from 1.3% in 1900 to 33.3% in the same election. The Liberals' fortunes changed to some extent when they entered an alliance with the Social Democratic Party in 1981, founded by a group of dissatisfied Labour members, merging their parties in 1988 to form the Liberal Democrats. This alliance put them back above 20% of voter share, having dwindled sometimes as low as 2.6% in 1951. Yet because of the British electoral system, the share in the votes never translated into an equally substantial amount of parliamentary seats: their best result in more recent times, 25.4% in the 1983 elections, only resulted in 23 seats.[48] By contrast, Labour's 27.6% in the same election yielded 209 seats (cf. ibid.). As a result of this, the Liberal Democrat's only real leverage in the political process is as coalition partner – which, however, represents a deviant form of government contrary to the Westminster model as we have seen.

A side effect of the two-party system is, as Lijphart points out, that the party programmes mostly centre on socio-economic issues, that is, the narrow party system leads to a reduction of dimensions of political conflict. Other dimensions such as the cultural cleavage are less important, though one could argue that issues such as sustainability, the environment, but also foreign policy issues as Lijphart notes, become more important and often defy an interpretation in strict socio-economic terms.

(4) *Majoritarian and disproportional system of election*. The system of election to which we have alluded above, is mainly responsible for the persistence of the two-party system, even in the face of a third party which commands a substantial support in numbers of overall votes. Yet, because Members of Parliament are elected in single-winner districts according to the "first past the post" rule, Labour and the Conservatives usually win the seats while the Liberal Democrats win the votes, to put it somewhat bluntly. The resulting disproportion between votes and seats has been repeatedly the topic of political debate, particularly after the Labour Party won the general elections in 2005 with the lowest share of votes in Britain's history: 35.2% resulted in 355 seats for Labour, whereas the Conservative's 32.4%

[48] The Conservative-Labour hegemony was particularly pronounced from the 1950s to the 1970s when the combined Labour and the Tory votes never fell below 87.5% (cf. Lijphart 1999: 13).

translated only into 198 seats (cf. Rallings & Thrasher 2007: 59). The obvious discrepancy gave the Liberal Democrats, who would profit most from a change in the system, as well as other political and civil society organisations ample reason to intensify their campaigns for electoral reform and for ending the reign of "manufactured majorities" (Rae 1967: 74). As a consequence of this the coalition government formed by the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats in 2010 held a popular referendum, asking the electorate whether it wanted to retain the present voting system or whether it wanted to adopt the Alternative Vote, a system which is seen as an improvement of the gross disproportionality caused by "first past the post" but which supporters of proportional voting would still find as not going far enough. Surprisingly enough for outsiders, the majority of those who took part in the first referendum in the UK for 36 years supported the established system (cf. *The Daily Telegraph* 6.5.10).[49]

(5) *The interest group pluralism* is another defining criterion of the Westminster model, clearly setting it apart from countries which follow corporatist arrangements and thus largely a adopt a strategy of accommodating the interests of the largest socio-economic associations such as the unions and employers' organisations in the political process. Interest pluralism in turn is marked by competition and open conflict between those actors who try to exert pressure on the government. In this situation the public sphere becomes particularly important as it is that part of the political process where opinions can be mobilised to generate influence on the political system. Furthermore, the unions in Britain have had a long history of taking a confrontational stance against policies which they deemed disadvantageous to their members. Their main adversary has by no means always been the Conservative governments, although Edward Heath was forced to introduce the three-day week as a result of the coal miners' strike in 1973.[50] But also Labour governments, most notably that of James Callaghan, had to deal with hostile unions. Callaghan succeeded Heath as Prime Minster in 1974 after the Conservatives had unsuccessfully run a campaign with the slogan "Who governs Britain?", trying to mobilise the electorate against the power of the unions (Lemieux 1977, Jesse 1996: 191). Yet, Callaghan was in no better situation four years later during the "Winter of Discontent" of 1978-1979, having adopted a similar strategy as his predecessor to battle the rising inflation by putting a cap on pay rises. The resulting strikes ultimately led to the Tory's return to power under Margaret Thatcher, despite Labour's slogan "Remember the last time the Tories said they had all the answers?" (Butler & Kavanagh 1980: 134). Thatcher made it one of her aims to crush the power of the unions, and she did certainly not conceal her feelings towards the labour movement when she stated: "We had to fight the enemy without in the Falklands. We always have to be aware of the enemy within, which is much more difficult to fight and more dangerous to liberty", the "enemy within" here referring to the unions and the context of war made her determination very clear (Khabaz 2006: 226). The confrontation between the Conserative Government and the unions culminated in the miners' strike in 1984-1985, which had great symbolic character as the National Union of Mineworkers

[49] With Labour's coming to power in 1997 proportional voting was, however, adopted for elections to the European Parliament, the devolved assemblies in Scotland and Wales. It had already been used in Northern Ireland since the 1970s, though it did not extend to the elections to the House of Commons (cf. Lijphart 1999: 15).

[50] Heath's government sought to combat the rising inflation among other things by introducing limits to pay rises, which meant, however, that the gap between the employees' wages and the prices they had to pay widened. The National Union of Mineworkers responded to the government's strategy by calling on its members to work according to rule, resulting in rapidly decreasing stocks of coal – one of the main sources of electric energy – and rising prices for coal, propelled even further by the oil crisis in 1973. After talks between the union and the government failed, Heath was forced to reduce the consumption of energy, introducing the "Three-Day Work Order", which meant that businesses were allowed to consume electricity only during three consecutive days a week (King 1975).

(NUM) was largely considered to be one of the most powerful unions, being regarded as having been responsible for the Conservative's loss at the elections in 1974. The strike, which resulted in the defeat and permanent loss of power of the NUM, was particularly acrimonious not only because it was an openly hostile confrontation between the union and the adamant government, the line of conflict ran straight through classes and families, revealing Britain as a deeply divided society (MacGregor & Tyler 1986).[51]

(6) *Unitary and centralised government*. The political power in the United Kingdom is concentrated in a unitary and centralised government, which means that although local governments have a certain amount of political authority, "they are the creatures of the central government and their power are not constitutionally guaranteed (as in a federal system)" (Lijphart 1999: 17), though the devolved assemblies in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland show that recent developments point in a direction away from centralism. This was mainly the result of the Labour Government's efforts for institutional reform during the first term of Tony Blair as Prime Minister (cf. Kavanagh et al. 2006: 187), which in turn shows that the cultural dimension of political conflict has become more important in recent times: the Labour Party Manifesto of 1997 addresses not only socio-economic issues such as the welfare state, trade union law, etc. but to a substantial extent also institutional matters and cultural issues which are closely tied to the political process and the political culture.[52]

(7) The principle of *concentration of power in a unicameral legislature* shows, together with the standard of the two-party system, a second deviation from the ideal which would consist in a parliament with only one house. In Britain, however, parliament is formed by the House of Commons on the one hand, which is elected by popular vote, and the House of Lords on the other, whose membership is partly hereditary but where the government in power also has the possibility of appointing life peers. Similar to the reality of the three-party system, the bicameral legislature is in effect largely a unicameral institution: the powers between the two Houses are distributed unevenly so that the House of Lords can only delay legislation but not abolish a bill proposed by the Commons. Lijphart therefore refers to the British system as "near-unicameralism" (Lijphart 1999: 18). "If the House of Lords replicates the legislative role of the Commons [...], then the most fundamental question is why have a second chamber at all?", as Judge (2005: 64) notes, adding that "critics have never tired of citing Abbe Sieyes words form the 18th century that 'if a second chamber dissents from the first, it is mischievous; if it agrees it is superfluous'" (as cited in Judge 2005: 64).

Whereas the Commons was from the beginning a political body modelled on an idea of representativeness, the House of Lords, whose members were summonsed but not elected, gradually lost its initially superior position vis-à-vis the lower chamber as representation became one of the central concepts in organising the political process (cf. Judge 2005: 64ff.; Norton 2007: 431). Indeed, New Labour's institutional reform plans of 1997 also aimed at making the Lords more democratic and representative, though later work by the Wakeham Commission showed that the reform of the Lords could not be treated in isolation from the other bodies: it was to be assessed in the context of the trilateral relationship including the government and the House of Commons. Because the Commission – as well as the Labour Government – started from the premise to keep the institutional balance between the three

[51] The confrontation between unions and the government also shows the importance of the socio-economic dimension in political conflict, which resonates in society to this day and reveals the concept of class as persistent and pervasive interpretive scheme (cf. Marshall et al. 1989).
[52] For a complete text of the manifesto see http://www.politicsresources.net/area/uk/man/lab97.htm (27.07.11).

bodies, the reformist attempts gradually petered out (cf. Judge 2005).[53] As a result of this, the hierarchy between the two chambers remains unchanged: the party (or the coalition) who controls the majority in the Commons always has the final say in the legislative process – provided that it is able to impose the required amount of party discipline. There are, however, cases where the Lords wield considerable power in the political process, and we will examine one of them: if current legislation is expiring the government is under pressure to pass a new bill through both houses, and it is precisely in these cases where the House of Lords has been able to force the government to concessions as it holds a bargaining position. Apart from these formal properties, there is widespread understanding that the revising function of the Lords is indispensable to the parliamentary process and that the second chamber possesses informal power in the form of expertise and experience, which also means that it can hold the government to account on the grounds of public reasoning. This becomes particularly important if the deliberations of the Lords find their way to the media and hence to a larger public sphere.

(8) *The constitutional flexibility* is only of minor importance in our context and refers to the fact that in contrast to most other countries, Britain has no written constitution; at least it does not have a single document that denotes the different political powers and their composition. This is not to say that such basic laws do not exist, but they are dispersed in different documents such as the Magna Carta of 1215, the Bill of Rights of 1689, the Parliamentary Acts of 1911 and 1949, which Lijphart lists, etc. The constitution can be seen as flexible because it does not have a privileged status and can be changed by Parliament just as any other law by simple majorities (cf. Lijphart 1999: 19).

(9) *Absence of judicial review*. A second consequence of Britain's "unwritten" constitution is that there is no external legal standard that could be invoked to test whether existing or new legislation are in line with constitutional principles: "Although Parliament normally accepts and feels bound by the rule of the unwritten constitution, it is not formally bound by them" as Lijphart (1999: 19) points out. Rather, Parliament itself was the judge which decided over the legality of law. The constitutional reforms under the Labour Government, particularly devolution, the House of Lords Reform, and the Human Rights Act, however, meant that a clearer separation of powers was necessary so that the judiciary would become a truly independent and impartial power (cf. Judge 2005: 236ff.). Legislation to this effect was passed in 2005 and the newly formed "Supreme Court of the United Kingdom" took up its work in 2009.[54]

(10) *A central bank controlled by the executive* is again a point of lesser interest in the context of the present study. In line with the Westminster model's principle of strong control by the majority party and hence the cabinet, and despite serving as an example for the central banks of many other countries, the Bank of England was not an independent monetary institution until 1997. It was again the reforms under the Labour Government which led to an independent status of the Bank of England, which therefore now possesses the authority to set the monetary policy (cf. Lijphart 1999: 20f.). The motive was largely that New Labour wanted to get rid of the stigma of economic incompetence the Labour Party had

[53] Legislation passed in July 2011 has reduced the number of hereditary peers to 90, 26 peers as senior bishops of the Church of England, while the remaining seats are life peers, who are appointed by the head of state, the monarch, upon advice of the Prime Minister or the Lords Appointments Commission (http://lordsappointments.independent.gov.uk/about_us.aspx, 27.07.11, http://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-information-office/hoflbpmembership.pdf, 27.07.11)

[54] Cf. http://www.statutelaw.gov.uk/documents/2005/4/ukpga/c4/part3 (17.06.11).

acquired under previous governments and their Keynesian policies: "On coming to power in 1997, one of the main elements in Labour's economic policy has been the need to reassure the City and the markets that it could run the economy" (Kavanagh et al. 2006: 233). The independent status of the Bank of England has remained untouched ever since.

In addition to these dimensions, Vatter (2009) introduces another one, on which we have touched already when discussing the defeated referendum on the change of the system of election: direct democratic participation. Lijphart has argued that direct democracy cannot be accommodated within one of his main dimension, i.e. either as being an exclusive property of consensus or Westminster democracies. As Vatter is able to show through factor analysis, introducing direct democracy into Lijphart's institutional catalogue leads to three distinct dimensions of democracy, the third of which comprises direct democracy and oversized cabinets as a factor. In the context of our present study it is of particular interest the way direct democracy is measured and how the UK performs on it. Vatter uses three criteria – the direct democratic instruments guaranteed by the constitution, the decision procedure, and the use of direct democratic means over the past ten years –, each of which constitutes a scale. Depending on their performance on these criteria the different countries receive more or less points which are then totalled. The result of this is that while countries such as Switzerland (7.5 points), Italy (4.5 points), or Denmark (3 points) lead the table, affording their citizens a considerable degree of participation in the political process, the bottom consists of countries such as the United States, Germany, and important for our studies the UK, all of which score 0 points on Vatter's combined scale (cf. Vatter 2009). This is in line with the other characteristics of the other political institution we have examined, which portray the UK as a rather unresponsive and non-inclusive political system with regard to participation – be it from citizens, the economy, or other parts of society.

In the context of the present study, we need not only to outline the context of the UK's political institutions. Since we investigate the deliberativeness of the public sphere, which is in turn dominated by the media, we also need to develop a closer understanding of the British media system. This is what we will come to next.

3.1.2. The media system of the UK

Interestingly, most works on the institutional arrangement of the UK as well as Lijphart's comparative study omit one central component of the political system – the media, and with it the public sphere. This might seem odd, given that today "[p]olitics is largely a *mediated activity*" (Kavanagh et al. 2006: 499, emphasis in the original). Yet, it is understandable insofar as the public sphere is constituted by informal institutions and therefore beyond the scope and the interest of most approaches taken by political scientist, although scholars such as Steiner et al. are well aware of the restricted view when they state that "it will also be necessary to investigate debates in the wider public sphere, which is so important for deliberative theorists" (Steiner et al. 2004: 6). Additionally, although the public sphere itself may defy any classification according to institutional criteria, given that ideally it is an anarchic discursive space (cf. Habermas 1996), the media as the most dominant actor can indeed by categorised, also with respect to institutional characteristics. The media landscape of a given country forms a system just as the political system, or the economy,

etc. and we can therefore characterise media systems according to their central components.

Of the different approaches that have been taken to classify media systems we will draw on two of the most promising ones, the work of Hallin and Mancini (2004) on the one hand as they have reinvigorated the interest in comparing media systems, and the outlines of a typology of media systems by Roger Blum (2005) who extends the work of Hallin and Mancini in important ways. We will not present the accounts in their entirety but focus on the classification of the British media system.

Hallin and Mancini develop a set of nine criteria with which they analyse the media systems of eighteen Western democracies, resulting in their classification into three groups or models. Their classification is based on the following set of factors:

(1) Newspaper industry
(2) Political parallelism
(3) Professionalization
(4) Role of the state in media system
(5) Political history; patterns of conflict and consensus
(6) Consensus or Majoritarian government
(7) Individual vs. organised pluralism
(8) Role of the state
(9) Rational legal authority

Britain is part of the "North Atlantic or liberal model" together with the United States, Canada, and Ireland and is thus characterised by (1) a medium newspaper circulation and an early development of commercial press, (2) a neutral commercial press, journalism that is oriented towards information, and external pluralism in the case of Britain, by which Hallin and Mancini mean that despite the fact-centred nature of journalism and the commercial orientation, the press still reproduces the party political divisions. (3) Unlike countries that belong to the "Mediterranean or polarised pluralist model" where a lower professionalization goes hand in hand with an instrumentalisation of the media, the liberal model displays a strong degree of professionalization and non-institutionalised self-regulation, (4) a dominance of the market, though here again the UK is a deviant case in the model as it also shows a high degree of public broadcasting, (5) an early democratisation and a moderate pluralism, (6) a government based on the idea of majoritarianism, (7) individual representation rather than organised pluralism, (8) in a political system based mainly on liberal ideals with only a weak welfare state, (9) and a strong development of rational-legal authority (cf. Hallin & Mancini 2004: 67f.).

Two things become apparent in Hallin and Mancini's approach: first, they clearly see the media system as part of the political system, evidences among other things by their integration of criteria we have encountered in Lijphart's classification of political institutions. Second, Britain sits somewhat uneasy in the North Atlantic model: not only because of the external pluralism, which is less pronounced in the other countries of model, and the fact that is has a very strong public broadcasting history with the BBC, which sets it again apart from the other countries. The UK and the other countries subsumed in the

North Atlantic model also differ fundamentally in terms of the prevailing newspaper culture: apart from circulation figures, the proportion of tabloids to broadsheets could be taken as a further criterion. Four of the top five British newspapers in terms of their circulation are tabloids (*The Sun*, *Daily Mail*, *Daily Mirror*, *Daily Star*) and only one, *The Daily Telegraph*, is a broadsheet, whereas the opposite is the case in the United States where only *USA Today*, if at all, could be taken to lean somewhat to the tabloid side of journalism; *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Sun Jose Mercury News* clearly do not fall into this category.[55]

Roger Blum (2005) has developed his typology, the "pragmatic difference approach", parallel to Hallin and Mancini, though it also reveals a close reading of their work. While he agrees with Halllin and Mancini that the comparison of media systems should not be based on ideological concepts, which was often the case in past attempts, he also sees the weaknesses of their account: for some of the countries Hallin and Mancini had only a limited set of data at disposition, the classification of some countries such as France and the UK is not always unproblematic, and they restrict their comparison to democracies of western Europe and north America (cf. Blum 2005: 7f.). One of the most readily visible improvements of Blum's approach is that he tries to develop a set of criteria that can be used to classify all media systems, not only those of democratic, Western countries. Being dissatisfied with his own initial formulation which ignored some classificatory dimensions and led to too many types, he adopts three of Hallin and Mancini's criteria – the prevailing political culture, political parallelism, and the degree of state control over the media – and thus arrives at a classification scheme with nine dimensions:

(1) Political system
(2) Political culture
(3) Freedom of the media
(4) Ownership of the media
(5) Financing of the media
(6) Political parallelism
(7) State control over the media
(8) Media culture
(9) Commercial orientation of the media

The single dimensions can take on values between "liberal", "middle", and "regulated", and produce a total of six models: four democratic, one authoritarian and a totalitarian one. The "Atlantic-Pacific liberalism model" of which the UK are part together with the United States, Canada, and Australia is characterised by liberal values for every single dimension. Accordingly, Britain is characterised by (1) a democratic political system, (2) a polarised political culture, (3) a prohibition of censorship, (4) private ownership of the media, (5) which are financed through the market, (6) a weak parallelism, (7) and an equally weak control of the state over the media, (8) an investigative media culture, (9) and commercially oriented media. This corresponds somewhat to the classification of the UK in the model of Hallin and Mancini, and with them Blum shares the problem that the UK is hard to pin down: though it shares many characteristics with the typical representatives of the Atlantic-

[55] For the detailed circulation figures for the UK see http://www.pressgazette.co.uk/section.asp?navcode=161 (13.05.11), for the US see http://abcas3.accessabc.com/ecirc/newstitlesearchus.asp (13.05.11).

Pacific model such as the USA, Britain equally shares important properties with what Blum calls the "North European service public model". The point is that whereas Blum clearly sees Hallin and Mancini's difficulty in finding a clear classification for Britain, he is not able to solve the problem himself. This, however, seems less to be due to the classificatory efforts of both approaches, than to the hybridity of the British case.[56]

We can thus see that the media system in Britain is indeed an important factor in the description of the general political system, which particularly in the context of the present study should not be ignored. What is important to see is that similar to the political system, the British media system, part of the "North Atlantic or liberal model" (Hallin & Mancini) or the "Atlantic-Pacific liberalism model", is less responsive or less inclusive than some of those media systems which are part of other models, above all what Blum terms the "North European public service model", which corresponds to some extent to Hallin and Mancini's "democratic-corporatist" model. This is not surprising insofar as we have argued that the public sphere and hence the media system is part of the political process; we should therefore expect a certain degree of accordance between media and political system. And as we have seen, Hallin and Mancini explicitly include criteria in their typology which characterise the political system.

Yet, one could also take a different view and argue that there is also a significant difference between the classification of the political and the media system in that the former is considerably less inclusive than the latter, particularly if we take into account that in the approaches of both Blum as well as Hallin and Mancini Britain fits not too well into the liberal model, displaying also typical traits of the public service and the corporatist model respectively, i.e. of the most inclusive type in both classifications. Here, ownership and financing are only partly left to the market, broadcasters such as the BBC are financed through licence fees and have a clear public service mandate. Moreover, Britain shares with the Atlantic-Pacific model the polarised political culture as well as the investigative approach of journalism, so that we could say it combines the best of both models and the parameters of the British media system should be seen as providing the contextual factors for a vibrant public sphere. Whether this is really the case and whether the British public sphere can mobilise its communicative resources against a comparatively unresponsive political system is ultimately the research question the present study seeks to answer.

Having thus selected and explored the institutional context in more detail, we can now move on to the next level, namely the definition of the discourses which we will analyse.

3.2. Political debates as object of investigation

Most studies do not simply analyse a random set of speech acts or other units of analysis, but concentrate on larger sets of data that form a unity with regard to content. Steiner et al. (2004) as well as Ferree et al. (2002) and most other studies choose to analyse political debates or parts thereof. This makes sense from the point of view of the political process in

[56] To be sure, the media system of the UK has not always conformed to this classification, rather Blum's categories as well as those of Hallin and Mancini provide a snapshot of the more recent developments; with regard to the market of the electronic media we could say that it reflects the situation in Britain since the 1960s. Since then television has become an important factor in the political process, while before television was only marginally present (cf. Kavanagh et al. 2006).

which these debates can be read as discourses about policy issues, and we will therefore follow the established approach. From a deliberative point of view political debates form the public opinion which influences the political outcome of the process. We will differ from Ferree et al., however, as we will not analyse one large debate that stretches over several decades but several smaller ones at specific points in time. In the following, we will first define what we understand in this study when we speak of a political debate (section 3.2.1.), second discuss the sampling strategy and the debates in detail (section 3.2.2.), and finally present the kind of media we will use as sources for our reconstruction of the public sphere (section 3.2.3.).[57]

3.2.1. Political debates: A definition

The debates Steiner et al. analyse are predetermined by the parliamentary records they use, which means that they do not have to make any definitional efforts. Investigating political debates in the media, Ferree et al. cannot rely on such a criterion: they adopt the perspective of the political system and analyse the debates surrounding abortion as a policy issue in the United States and Germany. This is also the strategy we will employ in the present study, the reason being that a focus on policy issues guards us against potential problems: not all political debates in the media necessarily lead to a decision in the political centre, yet those that peter out after a short while could be problematic from our theoretical point of view. The deliberative model assumes that the considered public opinion formed in the informal public sphere can have an effect on the political decisions in the centre and we will investigate how the deliberative quality of these public opinions and the debates that constitute them have changed over time. In fact, in the way we have presented the deliberative account, the political public sphere is a circular process that in the ideal case starts in civil society, gains momentum and involves different intermediary instances, including the media, and reaches the political centre, which takes up the problem, formulates a solution and feeds it back to civil society. Truncated debates would thus not be in line with our theoretical presuppositions. To be sure, debates that do not succeed in spilling over onto the formal agenda of the political centre are not *per se* incompatible with the deliberative model, but then we would examine what factors determine whether a debate receives uptake from the political centre or not. Furthermore, such a perspective would restrict us to examining exclusively debates initiated by the periphery, whereas our hypotheses partly also concern the different public sphere types.

The first criterion for a political debate thus is that it leads to a decision in the political centre. Furthermore, we will examine the end of these debates, rather than the beginning. The reason here is primarily pragmatic: our third requirement below stipulates that we need a certain amount of overlap in the reporting of political debates in the different newspapers, which means that we can only begin with the analysis of political issues if they receive regular attention in all sampled titles. As a consequence of this the debate must already be at an advanced stage. In addition to this and in order to synchronise the sampling process, we will focus on the (temporary) end of the debates, that is the end point of the analysis should not be further away from the formal decision than three months.[58] The reason for

[57] For conception of reconstruction see Habermas (1984a: 353ff.), for a critical assessment see Outhwaite (2000, 2009), Pedersen (2008, 2009).
[58] In the case of the 1985 debate about the Anglo-Irish Agreement the period will extend slightly beyond the decision stage. This is due to the fact that the negotiations between the British and the Irish government were held

this is that we can expect the temporal structure to have an effect on the debate: as we have seen, the study of Chambers (1999) about discussion groups in Canada clearly shows that during the referendum the deliberative attitude decreased the closer it came to the decision stage. It seems therefore reasonable to assume that similar dynamics might be at work in the larger public sphere, and synchronising the sampling allows us to control for this factor. We have to keep in mind, however, that as a consequence we will investigate debates that are already "saturated": most arguments will have been brought forth, and in debates initiated by the periphery, we cannot expect actors of civil society to be substantially present as the closing of a debate will necessarily be marked by a dominance of centre actors.

The second criterion is of a more pragmatic nature and concerns the duration of a debate: while most debates, in particular if they conform the first requirement, stretch over a certain amount of time, we need a formal standard which additionally defines what constitutes a debate in terms of magnitude. We will thus only consider debates that run for a minimum amount of time of 50 consecutive days. This is admittedly an arbitrary condition, but it is a pragmatic decision which allows us to consider different kinds of debates. Additionally, to narrow the duration further might become problematic for the empirical analysis, whereas a larger duration might predetermine the choice of debates to those similar to the abortion discourse, i.e. predominantly moral ones. Instead, in line with our hypothesis we will examine what we could call middle-range debates, the idea being that these are in line with our general research strategy to choose an unresponsive empirical setting for the testing of the hypotheses: larger (moral) debates are more in line with the conditions Habermas stipulates for the deliberative public sphere which he illustrates with discourses such as those about the risks of nuclear energy or genetic engineering. It would be inconsistent to select an unforthcoming political system from the deliberative perspective on the one hand, but focus on debates which on the other correspond to the deliberative exigencies.

Our third criterion to determine what constitutes a debate specifies the second one further: a political debate has not only to lead to a decision in the political centre, and it has not only to stretch over a period of at least 50 days, it also has to be present in each of the media examined, i.e. newspapers in our case, over this amount of time. And while the starting or end points do not have to coincide they should not differ from each other more than ten days – this is again a pragmatic decision. The requirement of co-presence of the debate in different newspapers bears resemblance to some extent to Noelle-Neumann's (1973) criterion of consonance, here understood, however, as the basic consonance in the media's selection mechanisms and explicitly not as the consonance of opinions. Only if different newspapers report the same issue over a longer period of time can we speak of a debate in the proper sense of the term as in this case we can assume that the issue receives uptake from large parts of society.

3.2.2. Sampling debates

Having defined what constitutes a political debate in our context, we can now turn to the actual sampling. The building of the sample is characterised by three basic decisions: we will not analyse one large debate that stretches over several decades such as Ferree et al. but several smaller ones. With this decision a second one is already anticipate to a certain

in almost total secrecy, and consequently the debate gains momentum only shortly before the formal decision in parliament is taken (see below).

extent: we will not analyse debates that take place on a moral level, but issues which are discussed on an ethical-political or pragmatic level. And finally, we will not analyse all possible combinations of debate characteristics, but restrict ourselves to two main types: the pragmatic/material/periphery type on the one hand and the ethical-political/cultural/centre one on the other.

The first decision can be seen as a response to the problems Ferree et al. are faced with because of their decision to analyse one large debate. To be sure, at a first glance the analysis of one large debate seems a natural if not necessary choice if one wants to compare the quality of public discourse in two different countries. Yet, it also has certain consequences, both on a theoretical as well as on an empirical level. First, it is clear that the abortion discourse is an extraordinary debate. This is not problematic *per se*, and we could even argue that it represents the kind of debates Habermas' has in mind when he speaks of the possibilities where deliberation can make a difference. But we can of course say only little about how the *courant normal* of the political process has developed, which mostly involves middle-range debates. The real problem is that given the extraordinariness of the debate, the results might have been different, had Ferree et al. chosen a different issue, e.g. nuclear energy. Second, from our own approach which takes into account the normative level of discourse we have to ask whether the debates are really comparable: just because the topic is the same does not automatically entail that the normative level is the same both between and within the debates. Indeed, it is probably fair to say that learning processes lead to a switching of levels or a foregrounding of other normative validity claims, e.g. the US debate might for a long time have been on a moral level and then have moved to an ethical-political level, whereas this might be the level on which the German debate started which then progressed to a pragmatic level. Again, this is not problematic in itself, but because Ferree et al. give no information on the normative levels this should be kept in mind when interpreting the results. Third, the real problem of their approach is lies with some of the conclusions particularly Gerhards (1997) draws in his article: here, he illustrates the development of the rationality of the debate by analysing one specific idea-element, namely whether actors promote or oppose the idea of a foetus as life with or without a justification. Apart from the fact that it remains unclear why this particular idea-element was chosen for the further analysis, the focus on just one such element is problematic for at least one reason. Given that we observe a debate which stretches over several decades it is not surprising that justifications of the same positions decrease as they become established. Having justified one's point of view several times the need to do so naturally diminishes: the number of cases where the idea-element "a foetus is life" is communicated with justification decreases from 47.6% in 1970-1977 to 33.1% in 1990-94. Conversely, while 39.9% of the idea-element "a foetus is life" are given in 1970-1977 without justification, this number rises to 64% in the period 1990-1994 (cf. Gerhards 1997: 24f.). Rather than being an indicator of the changing nature of rationality in the debate, one gets the impression that what is truly measured is the process until a (new) idea becomes a firmly established part of the stock of argumentative resources in the public sphere. We could also say that the decrease in the reasons given might be due to the fact that certain positions have become uncontroversial. Indeed, from the perspective of learning processes it would be counterintuitive to expect the same or an increasing level of reasons as the debate progresses. If we still would see and increase this could be taken as an indirect indicator for the conflictuality, the heterogeneity and the incomensurabiliy of views. Similarly, when analysing the changes and development of frames in the debate, Gerhards finds that only the frame "rights, duties and self-

determination of women" gains more support (cf. ibid.: 26ff.). He argues, however, that this is not so much an effect of learning processes induced through argumentation, but simply due to the fact that throughout the years more and more women take part in the discussion, and they are generally more in favour of women's right to self-determination than men or most collective actors. The problem here is that it is exactly changes of this kind which are also part of the learning processes Gerhards seeks to reconstruct: as inclusiveness is one of the central dimensions of the deliberative model we can indeed confirm a very substantial transformation of the public sphere in that the basic structure is transformed to incorporate more actors and crucially here actors who are directly affected by the outcome of the debate. Against Gerhards' interpretation we can thus see a transformation of the public sphere in its basic discursive structure in the direction of the discourse principle (D).

Our second decision can be seen as the consequence of the first one. If we want to be able to say something about the *courant normal* of politics then we necessarily will not be able to focus on debates taking place on the moral level as they correspond more to the extraordinary type. The debates of our analysis thus are conducted on the pragmatic and the ethical-political level. Certainly, they might have started on a moral level, or if deliberation leads to uncovering of new, deep seated disagreement, they might move on a moral level. But at the time of our investigation the other two levels are in the foreground and they can be called middle-range debates because they are brought to a decision within or close to the end of the period of our analysis. This does not mean that the larger topics in which the debates are embedded disappear altogether: some of them such as immigration surface repeatedly, and the status of Northern Ireland is certainly one of the most intensely fought over issues in British history. But the approach taken in the present study allows us to come closer to the "ordinary" process of politics, which also means that the issues are not part of election campaigns. Instead, in line with our design that tests deliberation under less favourable circumstances we are interested in the deliberative potential in day-to-day politics, where the conditions for high levels of discourse quality are not always fulfilled, but which in turn allows us to generalise our results to a greater degree than would be possible with a study that simply reproduced Ferree et al.'s approach.

The third decision to limit the study to the investigation to only two debate types is primarily due to practical considerations: we have three basic dimensions (cultural/material, pragmatic/ethical-political, periphery/centre) with which we can classify a debate so that we can build eight basic types. We then would have to trace each of these eight types over several decades, which is clearly beyond the scope of this study. It is reasonable therefore to restrict the analysis to those types of debates which are important from a theoretical perspective and which ideally also prominent in our chosen setting. This is the case for at least two types: from a theoretical perspective we are certainly interested in debates initiated by the periphery as these are the most promising ones from the deliberative perspective. Because we need to be able to judge how deliberative these are we also need to examine as a point of reference debates initiated by the centre. They are generally of additional interest as the centre initiated public sphere is under-theorised in Habermas' account, i.e. we do not know how these debates should perform except for the fact that they seem to result in truncated and distorted forms of deliberation. Cleavage theory has led us two identify to cleavage types that are particularly prominent: the material and the cultural one. Taking furthermore into account the political system of the UK as outlined above, we can see that the material, i.e. mostly the socio-economic dimension, is

constitutive of the realm of political debate. Yet, the cultural dimension is not absent from politics and particularly the cultural transformation of the 1960s has led to an increasing importance of this new dimension in politics. Questions of cultural or national identity are typical of this type of cleavage, and these questions are again prominent in former colonial powers such as the United Kingdom. We have already discussed the pragmatic/ethical-political dimension above and here can simply reiterate that the pragmatic side mostly occurs together with the material/periphery dimensions as these debates very often are about the redistribution of economic goods. The ethical-political dimension in turn is constitutive of cultural debates as they always touch upon the question of the identity of a society and of what the good society is. We can thus distinguish two main types of debates, keeping in mind though that there are six more which we can form. We have additionally to be aware that we can only rarely say where an issue originates: the Commonwealth immigration debate of 1965 for instance is part of a larger part on immigration whose origin can barely be located. We will therefore have to apply a weaker criterion in that we can only say which side, the periphery or the centre, is driving the issue at the moment of the analysis. The two debate types we will examine can thus be characterised as periphery/material/pragmatic on the one hand and centre/cultural/ethical-political on the other.

Having thus decided what kind of debates we will analyse, we now need to select these debates in concrete terms and establish a time frame within which we locate the developmental perspective. In other words, our next step consists in building the sample.

3.2.2.1 Time line and debates selected

Before we present the debates selected in more detail we first need to decide what period of time our analysis should cover on the whole. We have already alluded above to the fact that the cultural transformation of the 1960s marks a deep change for (not only) British society and by extension British politics. The counterculture of the 1960s mainly developed in the United States and the UK as a questioning on the established forms of authority, moral codes, stereotypes, etc. and was thus a cultural assault on a society that was constituted by its repression of women, ethnic groups, etc. (1996). It seems therefore reasonable to start our investigation in the 1960s, that is at a time when society and politics were still firmly anchored in the established norms and values. The end point of our analysis will in turn be in 2005, i.e. a point in time which is removed far enough from the 1960s so as to allow us to retrace possible transformation processes of the deliberative structure of political debates. We will moreover for pragmatic reasons restrict the analysis to six debates, two in each of the 1960s, the 1980s, and the 2000s. As we can expect a rather large amount of data given that the coding unit is the speech act, the analysis of more debates, though a desirable end in itself, is clearly beyond the scope of this study.

In the following we will present the debates in more detail, which can be grouped together according to our classification scheme as shown in the table below.

Table 3: Debates according to type

	Debate types	
	periphery/material/pragmatic	centre/cultural/ethical-political
1960s	Unilateral disarmament (1960)	Commonwealth immigration (1965)
1980s	Secondary picketing (1980)	Anglo-Irish Agreement (1985)
2000s	Fuel protest (2000)	Anti-terror legislation (2005)

Unilateral disarmament (1960): In 1960 the Cold War was at a new height and the fragile relationships between the United States and the Soviet Union soured further when a US spy-plane was shot down over the air space of the Soviet Union. The incident occurred shortly before the East-West summit in Paris where the "Big Four", i.e. the four nuclear powers France, the UK, the United States, and the Soviet Union, were to discuss their relationships and in particular the issue of nuclear weapons. Coming to the summit, however, the then leader of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev, took the occasion to end the meeting before it had started. With the arms race in full swing, Castro having seized power in Cuba the year before, the Soviet Union becoming increasingly nervous about East Germans fleeing to the West in Berlin, which resulted in the building the Berlin Wall the following year, the failing of the summit was a blow not only to the East-West relations but also to the hopes of many who had thought the meeting could become a turning point in what seemed to be a one-way road towards mutual annihilation. (Northedge 1960)

The biggest threat came from the destructiveness of nuclear weapons and civil society groups such as the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) sought to promote a new approach. Founded in 1958, the CND supported in particular the idea of unilateral nuclear disarmament. Given that there was no visible way forward in international negotiations, and that contrary to their official efforts East and West were increasing their potential of destruction, the alternative way seemed to consist in making disarmament not conditional on the other, but take action unilaterally. This view gained increasingly support and spread slowly to the more established actors. While the ruling Conservative Party tried to ignore the issue, the oppositional Labour Party had a more difficult position.[59] Having lost the general election in 1959, Labour leader Hugh Gaitskell felt that he could not lead the Party to power on a platform of unilateral disarmament as he would not gain support beyond the pacifist left.[60] Yet, the decision on the Labour's direction was not all his or that of the executive alone, as at the time the unions had considerable influence on the political agenda of the party, in particular at the annual conference, the party's highest decision-making organ (cf.

[59] The Conservatives, however, were forced to address the question of disarmament to some extent when it emerged in their white paper on defence in 1960 that Britain's independent deterrent, the Blue Streak programme, was vulnerable to first strike attacks, which then of course made the possession of a nuclear deterrent a somewhat spurious strategic advantage (cf. Epstein 1966).

[60] Labour had already gone some way towards bridging the divide between its two wings by promoting together with the Trade Union Congress (TUC) in 1959 the idea of the "non-nuclear club" which would consist of all countries except for the United States and the Soviet Union (cf. Northedge 1960).

Koelble 1987).[61] Gaitskell's problem was that not only smaller but also many of the larger unions adopted a pro-disarmament stance at their conferences and their delegates would vote accordingly at the Labour Party's annual conference. Gaitskell and the right wing of Labour, which included most of the executive, was defeated, but leader of the party famously vowed to "fight, fight and fight again for the Party we love" and the decision was reversed at the conference the following year.[62] Because Gaitskell interpreted the conference decision to give the Parliamentary Labour Party guidance rather than a concrete instruction, the official motion of the Opposition introduced in the Commons called for multilateral rather than unilateral disarmament; the within the party dissenters had learned only the day before that their motion on unilateral disarmament would not be called by the speaker. (Epstein 1962, 1966, Koelble 1987)

When classifying this debate as corresponding to the periphery/material/pragmatic type there are two aspects we have to take into consideration. The issue has a strong ethical-political dimension as it makes Britain and the way it should act its topic, but it ultimately foregrounds a means-ends relationship typical of the pragmatic level. It also revolves around a very material aspect, namely nuclear weapons. But we certainly have to keep in mind that contrary to the other material debates the disarmament debates is not a socio-economic issue and hence a rather untypical representative in our typology.

Commonwealth immigration (1965): Though the British Empire found its greatest expansion in World War I, its decline came soon afterwards and the interwar period can be seen as the first phase of the transition from Empire to Commonwealth. The process continued after the Second World War and autonomous government became the rule in the former colonies which now were now equal partners in the British Commonwealth of Nations. (Kitchen 1996) One of the effects of the former colonies' new status was that their citizens could move to Britain without any restriction, after all they were all members of the Commonwealth. As the influx of Commonwealth immigrants increased throughout the 1950s, so did the tensions between them and the population of their host country. In 1964 there were 800'000 immigrants in the United Kingdom, although this figure amounted to only 1.5% of the total British population (cf. Street 2008). While Enoch Powell was to make his infamous "Rivers of Blood" speech only in 1968, four years earlier the small town of Smethwick gained notoriety as Patrick Gordon Walker, the destined Foreign Secretary of the anticipated Labour government, was unexpectedly defeated by the Conservative Peter Griffiths who, upset by the steady influx of immigrants into his town, "favored a ban on all immigration for at least 5 years and advocated deportation for any unemployed immigrant or one who had a criminal record. He sponsored a plan for separate school classes for immigrant children who struggled with English and opposed the rehousing of anybody who had lived in Smethwick for less than 10 years. He even warned local teachers to tell their schoolchildren not to enter houses occupied by immigrants, for they would be in 'grave moral danger'" (Street 2007: 4). Griffiths also opposed the term "integration", promoting instead the idea of "peaceful

[61] Writing in 1987 Koelble states that the unions controlled 90% of the vote at the annual conference; the unions were the biggest donors to the Labour Party (cf. Koelble 1987).

[62] The unilateral disarmament issue also included a debate about the degree to which the Parliamentary Labour Party was bound by the conference decision. As the authority of the conference was based on tradition but not part of the party's constitution, the leadership "sought, in particular, to make the point that the parliamentary party could exercise a practical independence of conference policy-making. The conference, it was admitted, could instruct the external party's National Executive Committee, which in turn was to consult with the parliamentary party about the timing and methods of giving effect to conference resolutions. But the parliamentary party, it was asserted, was not bound by conference resolutions as by an election manifesto" (Epstein 1962: 170).

coexistence", and during the campaign graffiti on walls attacked the political opponent with the slogan "If you want a nigger for neighbour, vote Labour" (ibid.: 5). Griffiths' resounding victory was not well received by Labour and certainly not be its Prime Minister Harold Wilson who went as far as calling the controversial Conservative MP a "Parliamentary leper" (ibid.: 6). Nevertheless, the events showed that the integration of immigrants had become an issue. The previous Conservative government had established the Commonwealth Immigration Act in 1962, fervently opposed by Hugh Gaitskell, which restricted the immigration to those who had employment vouchers issued by the government (cf. Hayter 2007). At the same time, the social and cultural dimensions of immigration became more virulent, as *The Times* put it: "The single coloured man looking for a room in London finds first the barrier of the advertisements which say 'No coloured'. [...] It does not help him to know that there were signs up in Southall in the 1920s saying 'No Welsh here'" (*The Times* 22.1.1965). Discrimination was not a new phenomenon, but in a climate of increasing hostility, the Labour government saw itself forced to act and passed the Race Relations Act in 1965, the debate we will analyse more closely (cf. Hepple 1965, Banton 1991).

Although the on-going cultural transformation makes itself already felt here as the issue is also promoted by the civil society Campaign Against Racial Discrimination (CARD), it is nevertheless an issue where the government takes most of the initiative.[63] It is furthermore a debate where the material aspect such as the effect of immigration on the job market, etc. is in the background, whereas the cultural aspects of it are at the centre (cf. Street 2008, Hayter 2007). This is evidenced for instance by the Bristol Bus Boycott, organised as a response to the Bristol Omnibus Company's policy of not employing members of the black or Asian community. Justifying the company's stance, its general manager Ian Patey stated that "[t]he advent of coloured crews would mean a gradual falling off of white staff. It is true that London Transport employ a large coloured staff. They even have recruiting offices in Jamaica and they subsidise the fares to Britain of their new coloured employees. As a result of this, the amount of white labour dwindles steadily on the London Underground. You won't get a white man in London to admit it, but which of them will join a service where they may find themselves working under a coloured foreman? ... I understand that in London, coloured men have become arrogant and rude, after they have been employed for some months" (*The Times* 3.5.1963). It is clearly racial discrimination which is the topic here and not material aspects of immigration. On the whole thus, what the increase in immigration primarily questioned was Britain's self-understanding as a nation and as part of the Commonwealth. We can thus classify this debate as centre/cultural/ethical-political.

Secondary picketing (1980): Margaret Thatcher – as many of her contemporaries, and not only those on the right side of the political spectrum – perceived the strong position of the unions in industrial relations as the main obstacle to Britain's economic success. And even with hindsight some commentators saw the unions as a "major force of economic rigidity in the past, an obstacle to productivity growth and a source of diminished competitiveness" as Nolan summarises the widespread argumentation (Nolan 1989: 81). One of the primary

[63] Some, such as *The Times* also combined a suspicious stance towards civil society movements with the fear of communism, warning that if a movement such as CARD "gains strength through a mistaken idea that the situation here can be treated in the same way as the American, there will be trouble. The danger is that, if such a movement is democratic, it will be unable to resist communist influence, even though people in it may be alive to the threat. [...] it will be the target for a takeover by communist wolves in sheep's clothing on the one hand; and for attack by Fascist sheep in wolves' clothing on the other" (*The Times* 28.1.1965).

efforts upon Thatcher's coming to power in 1979 in the area of economic policy therefore was to curb the power of the unions. And while the most dramatic confrontation would only come in 1984/85 with the miners' strike, resulting in the final defeat of the unions, the beginning of the decade already saw government activities apt to weaken the position of the unions (cf. Wilsher & Macintyre 1985, Hanson 1991). The Employment Act of 1980 contained in particular two points which challenged the status of the unions indirectly or directly: on the one hand it promoted a scheme that provided payments incurred by unions holding secret ballots on questions such as calling or ending industrial action. While the measure seemingly aimed at more internal democracy in the unions, it was a weakly veiled "further incursion into internal union affairs" as Simpson (1981: 194) states, behind which "the real motive is a belief that more secret ballots would secure fewer strikes and generally weaken the power of militant union officials in favour of the moderate members" (Simpson 1981: 195). The more open and direct attempt to curtail the unions' power was to restrict severely the practice of secondary action, a practice by which unions took industrial action not only at the primary site of the trade dispute but also at other, uninvolved enterprises such as suppliers, contracting partners, etc. (cf. Simpson 1981). This triggered the resistance of the unions which campaigned against the government's position on the issue, their opposition culminating in a one-day general strike called by the Trade Union Congress (TUC). The effect of the protest was, however, rather restrained. This was not only because the Conservative government held a comfortable majority in the Commons of 59 seats and was unimpressed by the unions' argumentation and the open confrontation. More than this, the Day of Action itself was far from a success as it was ignored by many and thus only showed the fading political muscle of the unions (cf. Fosh et al. 1993, Winchester 1981). Before the real test four years later the unions had already to accept a first defeat – and a symbolic one in terms of how their relationship with the Conservative government was to develop.

We will analyse this debate as a representative of the periphery/material/pragmatic type, though we have to make a few cautionary remarks. Above all, we have to keep in mind that in its wider context the debate could very well be classified as centre driven – though, of course, the government's action could again be read as a response to the development of industrial relations in the 1970s, which were driven by the unions and its members. At the time of our analysis the debate in its immediate context is strongly driven by the unions, though it is equally clear that they respond to proposed legislation by the government. Furthermore, the unions are not civil society actors, so that the issue only qualifies as a periphery debate insofar as it is non-centre actors who engage the centre. To be sure, one could argue that the unions act as discursive representatives of the employees and anticipate the social problems that would be caused by the legislation. But even on this interpretation it is not a debate where civil society organisations play a substantial role. This is not problematic from a theoretical point of view and simply reflects the fact that socio-economic issues by definition always involve at least the employee or the employer side of the economy. Yet it is an aspect that we have to keep in mind when interpreting the results.

Anglo-Irish Agreement (1985): In its wider context the Agreement was part of the British attempt to end the Troubles in Northern Ireland.[64] More immediately, however, the initiative came from the Irish Taoiseach (Prime Minister) Garret FitzGerald, who, when he came back to the office in 1983, was convinced that "I must give now priority to heading off the growth of support of the IRA [Irish Republican Army] in Northern Ireland by seeking a new understanding with the British government" (FitzGerald 1991: 462). In November 1983 he met Margaret Thatcher to discuss among other things the alarming support for Sinn Féin in the past election in Northern Ireland, fearing that if the trend continued this would make constitutional politics impossible (cf. Bardon 1992: 752). Talks between the two governments were far from smooth and FitzGerald felt compromised by Thatcher's insensitivity towards the concerns of the republic when she stated at the press conference following a summit meeting about co-operation between Westminster and Dublin on security issues regarding Northern Ireland: "I have made it quite clear [...] that a unified Ireland was one solution that is out. A second solution was the confederation of two states. That is out. A third solution was joint authority. That is out. That is a derogation from sovereignty. We made that quite clear when the report was published" (as cited in Kenny 1986: 82). Yet because the political situation in Northern Ireland had reached an impasse as a result of the deeply divided society – "representatives risked electoral annihilation if they moved too far from the position their voters expected them to take" (Bardon 1992: 755) – the two governments were forced to act. While loyalists interpreted the official stance of the Conservative government so signal that the formal influence of the republic would be minimal, Thatcher and FitzGerald in almost total secrecy moved towards an agreement which granted the Republic of Ireland a consultative status in the newly established Intergovernmental Conference, whose scope extended to political matters, security and legal issues, and the promotion of cross-border co-operation (cf. Bardon 1992). This took all other parties, in particular, however, the loyalist camp by surprise: "[t]he Protestants of Northern Ireland were almost completely unprepared for the historic settlement, made without any consultation with them or their representatives" as Bardon writes (Bardon 1992: 755). Although the Anglo-Irish Agreement guaranteed the status of Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom and explicitly stated that a change could only come about with the consent of the majority, the protest by the unionists was fierce and long-lasting. Although the Agreement itself did not have the immediate positive effect both governments had hoped for, it fostered their co-operation and thereby laid the base for the Good Friday Agreement signed in 1998 which was to become a crucial component in the peace process.

Our analysis will cover the debate surrounding the Anglo-Irish Agreement, and we can see that in contrast to some of the other debates, this one very closely corresponds to our classification scheme: it is not only driven but also initiated by the centre, it is not about material, but primarily about cultural aspects, and it clearly foregrounds the question of collective identity. The debate differs from the sampling standards of the others only insofar as it extends slightly beyond the decision stage. This is due to pragmatic reasons: because of the secrecy of the talks held between Westminster and Dublin the debate proper in the media gains momentum only shortly before the formal decisions, so that we need to expand the sample beyond this stage.

[64] The Troubles is the term used to refer to the conflict between those in Northern Ireland who wanted to remain part of the United Kingdom and those who wanted a reunification with the Republic of Ireland (cf. Cairns & Darby 1998). Though commonly the late 1960s are seen as the beginning of the Troubles, the roots of the conflict go back as far as 300 years (cf. ibid.). In its more recent form it intertwines historical, religious, political, economic, and psychological aspects (cf. Whyte 1991).

Fuel protest (2000): Between May and September 2000 the net price of diesel paid by farmers increased from 14.9 pence to 23.9 pence (cf. Doherty et al. 2003: 3). The BSE crisis and the fact that some farmers such as Brynle Williams, who was to become one of the leading figures of the protest among the North Wales farmers, had not been able to operate their farms anywhere near profitability for several years, added to a mood in which the announcement of a further price increase in fuel was the spark that ignited the protest (cf. Hathaway 2001). Adopting the fuel protest strategy that was underway in France, British farmers and hauliers chose to blockade the gates of oil refineries and terminals. Although the protest was organised only locally, it quickly spread and its effects came to be felt almost immediately in the rest of the UK as the disruption of supply meant that the petrol pumps were quickly running dry: "The immediate impact of the protest was much deeper than the protesters or commentators anticipated. This was principally because they struck at a particularly vulnerable point of the economy, the oil distribution network, which had been organised along just-in-time delivery principles" (Doherty et al. 2003: 4). The blockade took the government by surprise, and citing an email to a list, Doherty et al. summarise the point succinctly: "Just how do you organise a picket, apparently with small numbers and overwhelmingly peaceful, and get the co-operation of the industry you target (like the powerful oil industry) – and the co-operation of the police, along with apparent widespread public support? Having done this, you virtually bring the nation to a standstill in a matter of days; you do not get arrested or beaten by riot police; and get to be number one news for days. You also get to dictate what goes in and out of your target industry and, while not actually physically stop-ping any trucks, you declare that your peaceful picket will prevent all but emergency service deliveries" (as cited in Doherty et al. 2003: 1).

In their work on the dynamics of protest in Britain Sanders et al. show that the fuel protest was "contagious" in the sense that it "elicited significant increase in protest potential among non-protesters" (Sanders et al. 2003: 696). It could also count on the solidarity of those affected as during the initial stages public support for the protesters stood at 78%, which was unusual, given that the protest meant that motorists were suffering from fuel shortages: "The question of how far public opinion supported the demonstrators' cause can be readily ascertained. A majority supported the fuel protesters' demand for a cut in fuel duty, as would be true of almost any form of taxation: it is always too high" (Beetham 2003: 606).[65] Yet it was equally part of the dynamic that both the protest and its public support died away quickly, certainly after the government announced in its pre-Budget report in November that it would introduce changes to cut the taxes on fuel, which were the biggest factor in the total price of unleaded petrol, adding up to over 80% of the costs motorists had to pay (cf. Rallings & Thrasher 2001: 325).

Although this debate, too, just as the union rights issue in 1980 sees primarily economic organisations involved in the controversy – again corresponding to the nature of socio-economic issues –, here we can argue more readily that farmers and hauliers also represent the interests of certainly large parts of civil society, as is evidenced by the public support. And more than in the 1980 debate, here the debate is initiated by non-centre actors, though one could again make the case that it comes as an anticipation of the centre's action. This,

[65] Sanders et al. (2003) offer a similar explanation for the relationship: "Protest in Britain feeds both on itself and on economic discontent. Successful and prominent protest activity by one group fuels the propensity of the general population protest. And when economic discontent rises, so does the public's willingness to engage in protest" (Sanders et al. 2003: 698).

however, can be accommodated within our theoretical framework. To be sure, Habermas speaks of social problems as systemic dysfunctions which are experienced in the lifeworld and thereby suggests a temporal structure in which the dysfunction first has to appear for it to be felt. This, however, does not have to be the case: the announced increase in fuel taxes just as the incursion into the internal organisations of unions do not require these actions and their corresponding Acts to be in place before those affected can say something about them. With this qualification in mind, we can thus categorise the fuel protest as a periphery/material/pragmatic debate.

Anti-terror legislation (2005): After September 11th 2001 the Labour government passed legislation to counter the threat of international terrorism, authorising the government among other things to detain terrorist suspects indefinitely. Though the Joint Committee of Human Rights (JCHR) was critical of the bill, remarking in particular that the measures "would not have received parliamentary support but for current concerns about terrorism and fear of attack" (as cited in Hiebert 2005: 677), it was only the Law Lords' ruling in December of 2004 that changed the government's approach. As the Law Lords had asserted that the measures were draconian and incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), and because the controversial clause on indefinite detention without trial was to be reviewed in March 2005, the Labour cabinet introduced the Prevention of Terrorism Bill to replace the existing law and to deal with the legal status of eight foreign detainees in Belmarsh prison. Under the new legislation the Home Secretary was given the power to make "control orders", i.e. he could put terrorist suspects under house arrest without involving the authority of a court, and derogating thereby from the right to liberty granted by the ECHR (cf. Hiebert 2005, Hickman 2005). This latter point turned out to be particularly controversial: while the government argued that it had to protect the security of the nation, which could not be delegated to a court, the JCHR concluded in its review that the argumentation was an "eccentric interpretation of the constitutional doctrine of the separation of power" (as cited in Hiebert 2005: 678). "The bill was subject to a political ping-pong match between the House of Commons and the House of Lords" as Hiebert describes the subsequent legislation process in which the Labour majority in the Commons was greatly reduced and the Lords provided a staunch opposition to the government's plans. The Lords insisted above all on the introduction of a sunset clause so that the powers of the Home Secretary would not be in place indefinitely. This was in turn rejected by the Commons, though the two houses eventually agreed to pass the bill under the provision that it would be reviewed after a year (cf. Hiebert 2005). Still, the legislation remained controversial, particularly as it touched upon established legal traditions of the British system of rights such as *habeas corpus*. In a critical assessment Paye concludes that "[t]he law attacks the formal separation of powers by giving to the secretary of state for home affairs judicial prerogatives. Further, it reduces the rights of the defense practically to nothing. It also establishes the primacy of suspicion over fact, since measures restricting liberties, potentially leading to house arrest, could be imposed on individuals not for what they have done, but according to what the home secretary thinks they could have done or could do. Thus, this law deliberately turns its back on the rule of law and establishes a new form of political regime" (Paye 2005). Similarly, Zedner states that "In the haste to furnish officials with the extensive powers deemed necessary in the face of catastrophic risk, anti-terrorism legislation commonly creates legal vacuums" (Zedner 2005: 529).

As we will see, this is a debate that the government would like to keep in the political centre, though it spreads beyond the immediate boundaries of the Commons and the Lords. As with the Anglo-Irish Agreement and the Commonwealth immigration issue, this debate, too, foregrounds questions of collective identity as the proposed legislation challenges some of the legal traditions constitutive of Britain's self-conception. It thus touches upon cultural aspects and can be classified as an example of a centre/cultural/ethical-political debate.

The selection of the debate has been the penultimate step in the building of the sample. The last step consists in selecting the appropriate media for our study, to which we will come below.

3.2.3. Newspaper sample

Ideally, a sample reflecting political debates conducted in the media would include different kinds of media, i.e. television and radio programmes, newspapers and news magazines, as well as the internet for the more recent debates. Practical considerations, however, impede the analysis of such a comprehensive data set and we will therefore choose a more restricted approach. We will thereby also choose a different sampling logic: the comprehensive sample is based on the standard frequentist view that a quantitatively large sample allows us to draw conclusions about the basic population which are more reliable than those of a small sample. The main problem with this approach is that it generates a large amount of data, which is clearly a disadvantage from the point of view of research economy.[66] Yet, choosing smaller samples according to this logic has the obvious drawback that we can no longer generalise our results.

An alternative approach consists in an alternative sampling logic, i.e. in choosing what is referred to as a theoretical sample (cf. Lamnek 1995, McKeow 1999). Here we make use of the knowledge that we have about our object of study. We have already done this with respect to the sampling of the debates which were not drawn at random but correspond to a predefined set of criteria which are of theoretical interest. And it is only in line with this approach to extend this logic to the level of the media selection. The basic idea of theoretical sampling in our context is that we draw a sample not primarily according to quantitative considerations, though they will also play a role, but to qualitative ones: given that our theoretical interest focuses on the quality of public opinion understood in a deliberative sense, we will build a sample that reflects a theoretical space of opinions. Moreover, because the national newspapers still set dominate political debates (cf. Jarren & Donges 2006, Habermas 2008b), our sample will consist of those major British national newspapers which together form such a spectrum of opinions: *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *The Independent*, and *The Sun*.

The Daily Telegraph (founded in 1855) is the only newspaper truly loyal to a political party and is closely affiliated to the Conservatives. *The Guardian* (founded in 1821) which moved from its Manchester base to London in 1964 in turn has a left of the centre readership with the highest percentage of readers voting for Labour. The Grand Old Lady of British journalism, *The Times* (founded in 1785), has a readership whose highest proportion as of

[66] A further problem is given by fact that it appears to be rather arbitrary what actually constitutes the main population, which, however, is a necessary criterion if we want to determine the right sample size.

2005 tends to the conservative side (44%).[67] This is balanced, however, by an almost equally high proportion of readers who vote for Labour or the Liberal Democrats, 27% and 24% respectively. On the whole then, *The Times* can be taken as an independent newspaper in terms of the spectrum of its readership, and not least because of its historically grown reputation as the paper of record. If we look for a British newspaper that is close to the Liberal Democrats we find *The Independent* – launched, however, only in 1986. Yet no other national British newspaper – except for *The Guardian* – displays a significant tendency towards the Liberal Democrats, or the Liberals before the merger of the Liberal Party and the Social Democratic Party, during the period under consideration. This is not surprising as the Westminster model is ideally a two-party system, and although British politics does not entirely correspond to the institutional ideal, ever since the rise to power of the Labour Party the Liberals were moved to third place – also in public discourse. Finally, *The Sun* (launched in 1964) is included in the sample as a representative of the independent tabloid papers.[68] It has steadily increased its circulation and has overtaken the declining *Daily Mirror*, which has moreover always associated itself strongly with Labour. Selling more than three million copies today, *The Sun* is not only the largest selling tabloid in the UK it is clearly Britain's largest selling newspaper and has displayed shifting political allegiances throughout its history.[69]

There are certainly other ways to build a theoretical sample that could fulfil our requirements. But the selected titles reflect what we could call the broad mainstream of public opinions and positions on the one hand, while on the other they are also national papers, i.e. their circulation figures are higher than those of e.g. most regional papers, so that we also capture the magnitude of the debates we will analyse.

Having determined the debates as well as the newspapers, the single articles were compiled using an extensive keyword list, i.e. a thesaurus based on the policy issue, to query the different newspaper databases. For those newspapers where no digital copy was available the same list was used to sample the articles by hand from the British Library. Only those articles were retained in the sample whose main focus was the policy issue or an aspect of it.

[67] Cf. the MORI (Market Opinion Research Institute) figures for first quarter of 2005 at http://www.ipsos-mori.com/polls/2005/voting-by-readership-q1.shtml (12.08.06).
[68] *The Sun* is published for the first time in 1964 as a re-launch of the *Daily Herald*. From 1960 to 1964 the *Daily Herald* is thus included in the sample as the forerunner of *The Sun*.
[69] Cf. the Audit Bureau of Circulation for circulation figures of British newspapers (http://www.abc.org.uk, 12.08.06).

Before we move on to the empirical analysis, our approach is summarised in the table below. The sampled data for the six political debates in the four (five) newspapers yields a total of 3'009 speech acts and 591 articles, respectively.

Table 4: Summary of research design

Research instrument	Content analytical index (DQI_m) measures: ▪ Reflexivity ▪ Reciprocity ▪ Range of perspectives ▪ Inclusiveness ▪ Role change ▪ Justification actors
Object of analysis	Political debates
Debate types	▪ Periphery/material/pragmatic ▪ Centre/cultural/ethical-political
Debate topics	1960: Unilateral disarmament 1965: Commonwealth immigration 1980: Secondary picketing 1985: Anglo-Irish Agreement 2000: Fuel protest 2005: Anti-terror legislation
Duration of the analysis	50 days of each debate
Starting point of the analysis	Two to three months prior to decision by the centre
Media sample	Qualitative sample of four broadsheets and one tabloid: *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *The Independent*, and *The Sun*
Articles	Main focus on debate issue

Having thus developed an empirical approach that allows us to translate the deliberative model into an analytical instrument, and having also established a context which allows us to test our hypotheses, we can now turn to the empirical analysis. The empirical chapter will be divided into two main parts: the first part will be a broad qualitative-descriptive investigation of the single categories of the DQI_m, which will allow us to develop a detailed understanding of the complexity and the development of the discursive structures of the British public sphere. These insights will then in turn be essential for the interpretation of the results of the second, inferential part, where we will test our hypotheses.

IV. Debating publics, transforming discourses: Empirical results

Having discussed the theoretical premises as well as the methodological aspects of the present study in light of the existing research, we are now in the position to embark upon the actual empirical analysis of the structural transformations of the discursive quality in the British public sphere. In order to do so this chapter will be divided into two main parts: part A. will give a broad descriptive overview of the discursive quality of the debates, which will allow us to get a better understanding of the analytical instrument and to explore the debates in more detail. Although frequency tables do not allow us to draw any inferential conclusions about the development of the deliberative quality of political debates, it is a good way to start the analysis as they give us a more general view, while they might at the same time already reveal some of tendencies which will then be the subject of further inferential analysis. At the same time, the explorative approach allows us to reconstruct the complexity of the discursive structures in more detail, and this will be important when we come to the interpretation of the results of the second part.

In the inferential part B. we will test our hypotheses and examine the effects of those factors we assume to have a an impact on the deliberative quality of the debates: social change as the most marginal of these factors, whereas cleavage structure and actor constellations display a more direct relationship to the discursive structures, the latter dimension in particular is constitutive of the utterances which together establish a debate. In order to be able to combine the results from the two parts, in this first part we will use the hypothesised effects (social change, cleavage structure, and actor constellations) as the analytical dimensions guiding the exploration of the data. It is clear, of course, that since the primary aim in this part is to explicate and interpret the findings against their political-historical context as well as the theoretical background, all our conclusions are to be taken as well measured speculations rather than being definitive statements of causality; they have at best the quality of tentative hypotheses, the robustness of some we will be able to test in the second part.

A. A brief history of time: Exploring the discursive transformations of the British public sphere 1960-2005

This first part of the empirical analysis will present the descriptive statistics for the DQI_m and examine them variable by variable, thereby exploring them first in relation to social change and cleavage structure, and then separately in the context of the actors as this entails a change in analytical perspective. The primary aim is to trace the changes the deliberative quality of public debates in media has undergone from 1960 to 2005 and discuss them within the local and historical context on the one hand and relation to the theoretical concepts which inform the analysis on the other. Where appropriate, we will expand the analytical focus to include other aspects related to the DQI_m such as the role of the different types of illocutions, in order to shape out more clearly the discursive dynamics of the debates and the changes they undergo. The internal (deliberative) and external (political-historical) contexts of the debates are important insofar as including them in situating and explaining the results allows us to come to additional conclusions as to why certain patterns emerge – or why they are broken. Each section will summarise the findings and relate them to the theoretical model. At the end, the first part of the empirical analysis will be concluded by an intermediate discussion which will bring together the results of the different variables in order to synthesise the insights gained thus far and arrive at a more integral understanding of the discursive transformation of the public sphere.

In the following, we will present the descriptive analysis for the single DQI_m variables starting with *reciprocity* (section 1) and then proceed to the results of *reflexivity* (section 2), *inclusiveness* (section 3), *equality* (section 4), *perspectives* (section 5), and *plurality* (section 6). In the final section (section 7) we will bring together the different results and discuss the development of the discursive quality of the debates as a whole.

1. Reciprocity

"Deliberative democracy asks citizens and officials to justify public policy by giving reasons that can be accepted by those who are bound by it" (Gutmann & Thompson 1996: 52), Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson sum up the core tenet of their deliberative approach, although from the perspective outlined in this study we would probably say that the demand the deliberative model makes is not so much something participants in the democratic process have to actively meet in terms of a conscious decision: as it is embedded in the normative structure of language, we cannot escape the deliberative moment once we interact with others. What is more important in the present context, however, is Gutmann and Thompson's emphasis that to deliberate public policies means to give reasons to which others can agree. From this they derive the three principles – reciprocity, publicity, and accountability – which form the core of their approach to deliberative democracy and of which the first one will at the centre of the analysis in this section.

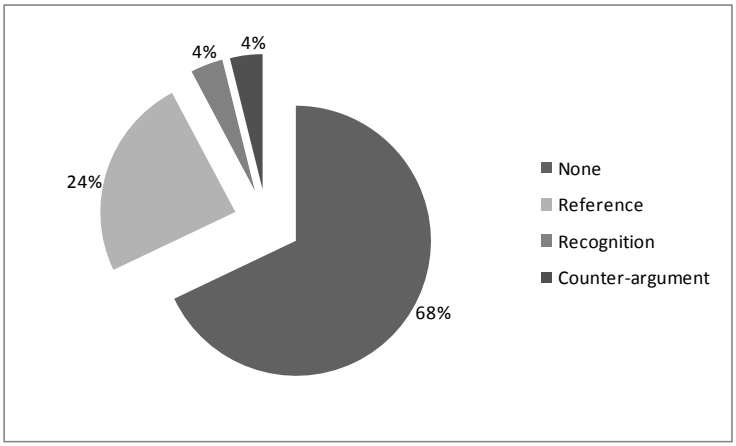
Gutmann and Thompson, to be sure, give reciprocity a different meaning from our own, above all because they tie it to a particular form of motivation (cf. Gutmann & Thompson 1996: 53), but their statement about the status of mutuality within their framework is also

true in our case: reciprocity is the leading principle, or we might say the prime deliberative dimension *inter pares*.[1] While all other dimensions such as reflexivity, the range of reasons given, etc. are equally important in order to assess the discursive quality of the political process on the whole, *reciprocity* tells us very basically whether the participants talk to one another at all or whether the arguments the make are rather to be seen as different instances of public monologues. Certainly, reciprocity is more important in closed groups than in the diffuse, anarchic structure that is the public sphere, but even here it is a central component of the debating process, though working not only as a measure of dialogicality but even more as an indicator of discursive integration and recognition of the other.

Because of the central position of reciprocity, this section will also be the most comprehensive one in terms of analysis. We will first examine the basic structure of recognition and discursive integration and in how far it has changed over time and between the debate types. Moreover, the participant perspective will allow us to reconstruct the mutual orientation of the participants in the debates in a detailed way. Before we come to the analysis of the degree of reciprocity within the debates according to time and cleavage on the one hand and in relation to the actors on the other, we will first take summary look at variable's distribution.

According to our definition *reciprocity* is measured using an ordinal scale and can take on values between 0, if a speaker does not explicitly refer to another actor, and 3, if a speaker explicitly refers to the argument of another actor and evaluates it. In between the two extremes lie the values of 1, when there is an explicit reference to another actor but no reference to the content of the utterance, and value of 2, which indicates that the speaker refers to the content without, however, assessing it in any detail. The pie chart below summarises the frequency distribution of *reciprocity* in total over all of the debates. The

Figure 3: Total reciprocity (in %)



[1] On Gutmann and Thompson's (1996: 11ff., 52ff.) reading reciprocity combines two aspects, a moral and an empirical one: morally, normative validity claims appeal to reasons that can be shared by others who are similarly motivated, while empirical claims should be reliable and not conflict with already verified knowledge. They further situate reciprocity conceptually between the concepts of prudence on the on hand and impartiality on the other. Despite the substantial difference between their definition of reciprocity and the way the concept is used in the present study, the important point is that Gutmann and Thompson offer a more substantive interpretation of what reciprocity entails, giving it thereby also a strong motivational dimension, whereas within our framework reciprocity is conceived more modestly as a formal property of the deliberative process as the degree to which actors refer to each other – independent of their motivation and the reliability (read: verifiability) of their validity claims.

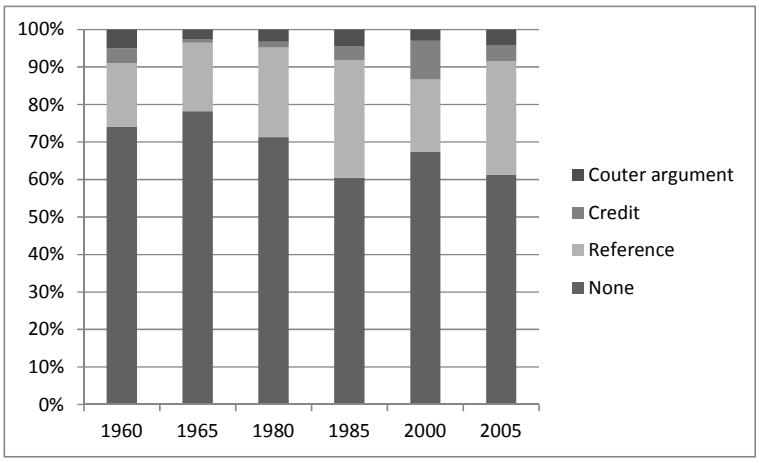
main result of this first descriptive look at the data is that the participants of the debates refer to each other in explicit terms only to a minor degree: in more than two thirds of the cases speakers do not address another actor's previous contribution. And in those cases where they do, they engage with the content of the other others' arguments again only in the absolute minority of all the cases, i.e. in only 4% of all speech acts. We have of course to bear in mind that the reciprocity measure is very conservative as only those instances are coded where a speaker makes an explicit reference to another actor. While from the recipient's perspective speakers in the debates refer to the other actors' contributions in one way or the other in most of the speech acts, from the analytic point of view it is important to record only the explicit cases in order to guarantee the accurate separation of the variable's internal categories and thus acceptable levels of inter-coder reliability – dispensing with a more subtle analysis of the actors' more implicit forms of relating to one another.[2]

The crucial question which will guide the remainder of this section is how the actor's reciprocity is structured in the single debates and whether any patterns emerge comparing them as this will allow us to make tentative inferences about the relative strength of contextual factors such as social change the cleavage type (section 1.1.). The more detailed analysis of the actors in turn will contribute to our understanding of the development of the debates from the participants' perspective (section 1.2.).

1.1. Time and cleavage structure

The frequency distribution of the values for *reciprocity* in the single debates shows remarkable differences (see figure 4 below). The most striking result is the fact that as time moves on speakers tend to refer more often to the arguments made by other participants in the debates: the value of 0, i.e. no explicit reference is made, decreases from 74.1% in 1960 to 61.3% in 2005. Yet the changes are far from uniform, which is particularly evident for the more substantial kinds of actor references coded with 2 and 3. Here, it seems, there is no clear development over time, and other factors might play a more prominent role in explaining the changes. If we stay with the general view of the overall increasing reciprocity

Figure 4: Reciprocity 1960-2005 (in %)



[2] These implicit forms would have to be examined as part of a more qualitatively oriented discourse analysis.

we can see that deliberative dimension undergoes a change that is nearly systematic, the only substantial exception being the Commonwealth immigration debate of 1965. This debate aside reciprocity in the debates seems to follow both a development in time and a distinction between material and cultural debates which becomes evident from the shifted value structure between the decades. While it is also the case that the reciprocity values for 2005 (28.7%) are slightly lower than those for 1985 (39.5%), it is particularly the 1965 immigration debate which deserves closer scrutiny as it is the only cultural debate whose values are higher than the corresponding material debate of the same decade. It is also that debates which shows the lowest overall figures for values 2 (0.8%) and 3 (2.7%) of reciprocity. Before we take a closer look at the 1965 debate, however, there are two general trends to observe in our data: first, according to the descriptive analysis social change appears to have a positive effect on the total amount of reciprocity, even if the single categories cannot be said to follow a distinct pattern. The debates thus display an increase in the argumentative orientation of the participants towards each other as time moves on, and they can thus also be said to show a higher degree of overall discursive integration. Second, apart from the 1965 debate, cultural debates display a higher overall degree of reciprocity than the material ones for each decade. While the general effect of social change is immediately plausible, this result requires further explanation as it contrasts with our theoretical expectations. Because in our sample the material debates are also those which originate or are more strongly driven by the periphery at the time of observation we could assume that they display higher levels of reciprocity as they seem to come closer to what we could call a deliberative public sphere – at least they correspond more closely to the "outside initiative" model. The crucial point which we will only be able to answer once we examine the actor structure more closely is that the "outside initiative" model tacitly presupposes a higher degree of involvement of the periphery and possibly also other parts of society. And while this might be the case for the early stages of a debate, i.e. the initiating phase when diffuse perceptions of problems by members of civil society slowly coalesce into an issue, it is questionable whether the same also holds for the (temporary) end, which is that part we are analysing. In other words: it might well be that reciprocity levels are higher in cultural debates simply because the closer we come to the parliamentary decision stage the centre becomes more dominant, and given that the cultural debates in our sample conform more to the centre-driven "inside access" or "mobilisation" models of the public sphere, it is to be expected that the political-administrative complex occupies an even more central role in these debates than in material ones. We will thus have to examine in the next section to what extent the reciprocity levels are affected by the position of the centre in the debates.

Coming back to the 1965 debate we can think of different reasons why the figures of the immigration issue are somewhat against what appears to be the general trend: first, those affected by the legislation, i.e. the immigrants, can hardly be said to be actively involved in the debate, a point we will take up again further below. Generally speaking, without the participation by those who are immediately affected by the outcome of the political process we would expect the reciprocity levels to be lower. This seems to hold, however, also for the 2005 anti-terror legislation debate where (suspected) terrorists participate only to a very marginal degree. In what aspects apart from time can they then said to be distinct from each other and can these factors help to explain the discrepancy in the values? One of the main differences can be seen in the scope of the legislation: whereas the new anti-terror bill of 2005 aims to extend the Home Secretary's power to issue control orders not only to

foreign residents but also to British citizens and thereby extends the circle of those affected by the proposal to the whole of the British population, this is evidently not the case for the immigration debate in 1965. Furthermore, in 1965 there are only weak signs of reaction by civil society organisations, CARD (Campaign Against Racial Discrimination), founded only in 1964, being the only noticeable yet marginal participant, whereas in 2005 the human rights organisation Liberty and its director Shami Chakrabarti vociferously object to the Government's policy plans. Equally, the immigration debate covers a set of different issues ranging from health checks of immigrants at the airports to anti-racism proposals – or "racialism" as it is referred to at the time – to the immigration restriction proper, whereas the 2005 is much more focused one aspect of anti-terrorism, viz. the Home Secretary's authority to impose control orders on people suspected of being involved in terrorism. Related to this there is a further significant difference between the two seemingly similar debates: in contrast to the immigration issue the 2005 anti-terrorism legislation debate extends not only to the substantial dimension of the issue, the Commons and the Lords see very heated exchanges about the way the Government tries to rush through the Bill. Michael Howard, the then leader of the Conservative Party, in particular repeatedly criticised the Government holding the view of many that "[p]laying politics is when you ram a Bill through Parliament when you don't need to" (*The Times* 24.02.05). And there is an additional difference regarding the parliamentary opposition to the policy proposals, for whereas in 2005 the dividing line on the issue runs right across the Labour Party, which despite being in power has to face vocal backbench criticism, in 1965 an all-party parliamentary group calls on the Government and the Opposition to keep immigration out of party politics (cf. cf. e.g. *The Sun* 02.03.65, *The Daily Telegraph* 10.03.65).

Having thus discussed the findings for *reciprocity* in relation to social change and cleavage structure and having additionally identified some of the most prominent characteristics of those two debates which we would at first sight have expected to display more similarities than differences, we can now turn to examine some of the aspects we already touched upon in more detail.

1.2. Actors

Apart from exploring discursive patterns according to time and issue type, a closer look at what goes on within the single debates allows us to examine the relationship the actors establish through their reciprocal orientation. This also means that we shift the analytical perspective from the macro level and the associated meaning of reciprocity as a measure of

discursive integration to the intersubjective level of interaction and thus to the second interpretation of reciprocity as an instance of recognition of the other. The table below

Table 5: Dialogic partners (total)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Partners	1.5	7	.8	.8	.8
	2.2	10	1.1	1.1	1.9
	2.3	8	.9	.9	2.8
	2.4	6	.7	.7	3.4
	2.5	69	7.6	7.6	11.0
	3.2	7	.8	.8	11.8
	3.3	4	.4	.4	12.2
	3.4	4	.4	.4	12.7
	3.5	91	10.0	10.0	22.7
	4.2	9	1.0	1.0	23.7
	4.3	1	.1	.1	23.8
	4.4	53	5.8	5.8	29.6
	4.5	31	3.4	3.4	33.0
	5.1	6	.7	.7	33.7
	5.2	37	4.1	4.1	37.7
	5.3	6	.7	.7	38.4
	5.4	35	3.9	3.9	42.2
	5.5	525	57.8	57.8	100.0
	Total	909	100.0	100.0	

1="uncivil" society, 2=civil society, 3=media, 4=economic actors, 5=political centre

summarises the findings using the actor classification we developed in chapter 2 and displays the following: the values show the single dialogic pairings according to the actor classes of the partners separated by a dot: e.g. 2.5 means that an actor of civil society (2) refers to an utterance made by an actor of the political-administrative centre (5), whereas 4.3 means that an economic actor (4) refers to a validity claim raised by a media actor (3), i.e. a journalist, and so forth. A first glance reveals that in each of the actor classes, with the exception of the economy, the actors mostly refer to utterances of the political centre. This is not surprising for two reasons: on the one hand the political centre is the most prominent speaker as we will see when we examine more closely the inclusiveness of the debates (see below). On the other hand it confirms empirically the theoretical claim that its communicative role is to remain sensitive to input coming from the other subsystems of society, which disrupts the centre's operational routines and forces it into an extraordinary mode of solving problems (cf. Habermas 1996: 357f.). This mainly holds for Habermas' conception of the "outside initiative" model of the public sphere, i.e. the material debates in our sample, and we will have to further investigate whether this relationship is also dominant in the other debates. On the whole, to be sure, the centre is its own main dialogic partner and, more important, also represents that dyadic constellation which achieves the overall highest values: in almost 60% of all the cases actors from the centre refer to another centre actor's utterance.[3]

[3] If we go back to the more detailed original data we see that most references, i.e. nearly 25%, are made by members of the political parties, be they ordinary party members, MPs, Lords, or local councillors, who address utterances made by the Government. Conversely, the Government refers to the political parties and its members in almost 16% of the cases; other dialogic combinations are numerous but take on only marginal values. I have refrained from including the corresponding tables as they count well over 200 rows and mainly show that the dialogic relationship between Government and the political parties is the only one of major importance.

These results could be interpreted as giving a somewhat negative verdict about the deliberativeness of public sphere: if we look at the dialogicality of the debate the centre is in a manifestly dominant position and is moreover most of the time concerned with its own output. These could be read as signs of a circular process which cuts the political centre off from the rest of society and closes it operationally in such a way, to use Luhmann's terminology, that it barely could be said to be in exchange with the other subsystems. This would indeed be a critical diagnosis – not only within the theoretical confines of deliberative democracy – as politics is intimately connected to the law-making process and law, as Habermas reminds us, holds that "peculiar dual position and mediating function between, on the one hand, a lifeworld reproduced through communicative action and, on the other, code-specific subsystems that form environments for one another" (Habermas 1996: 56). If, however, the political process fails to extend beyond the political centre to encompass the other parts of society so as to constitute a political public sphere, then the centre would become disconnected and law would no longer have the basis to fulfil its function: tendencies of social disintegration would be the consequence. And in fact, if we take a closer look at the dialogic partners of the political centre, we find that references to non-centre actors are merely marginal: the "uncivil" society, civil society, the media and the economic actors taken together add up to a total of only 9.4% of the centre's references – contrasted with 57.8% for the centre-centre relations.

The negative outlook of the tentative conclusions reach thus far might change, however, if we take a couple of additional points into consideration. First, although the deliberative model is a very complex theoretical framework, we do not know to what extent the input and output peripheries, to use the terms Habermas appropriates from Bernhard Peters (1993), should be present in the whole political process. Given that Habermas assigns civil society the task of discovering and articulating social problems, it does not seem very plausible to assume the deliberative model to postulate that all actors should be equally present all of the time in the process. Rather, in Habermas' conception of the deliberative public sphere the communicative impulses coming from civil society should ideally be the origin of a policy cycle. If we bear this in mind there is a second observation to make: as stated above, our data mainly comes from the (provisional) end of the legislative process, where we would thus expect the periphery to play only a minor role. At this point of the debate the deliberative process is more about finding agreement or majorities for solutions to problems rather than discovering and articulating them. As a last qualification finally, we should be aware that in the centre most dialogical constellations occur between the government and the political parties. The parties in particular through their members and MPs secure that the centre is not uncoupled from the rest of society as they function as political representatives and thereby also fulfil the function of "discursive representation" which Dryzek and Niemeyer (2008) introduce in the context of the role of unelected representatives such as U2's Bono

campaigning for the African debt relief and which is explicitly institutionalised in representative democracies.[4]

The upshot of this is on the one hand that despite of what the figures seem to show, we are probably well advised to revise the initial negative verdict. Even so, the conclusion seems to be that we are left with no real measure for the degree of deliberativeness, here in terms of reciprocity, i.e. dialogicality and recognition, in absolute terms. This leads us again to emphasise the comparative perspective which informs deliberative theory as well as the empirical application of it. Given that from a theoretical point of view we are forced to leave the stance of the objective observer to take on the perspective of a virtual participant, empirical research can produce meaningful results only through a comparative approach which in the present context means to examine the values for the dialogic pairings across the single debates as shown in table 6 below. Without discussing the figures in too much detail there are a couple of relationships to note concerning the debates themselves, the role of the periphery, of the media, and of the centre. At a first glance, and without taking the concrete figures into account, material debates seem to show a more even or at any rate greater range of dialogic partners than cultural ones, particularly from the 1980s onwards: whereas the disarmament and the immigration debate in 1960 and 1965 are almost on a par regarding the total range of dialogic pairings (10 vs. 9), the 1980s (14 vs. 6) and the 2000s (14 vs. 9) show a more substantial difference. This is cannot merely be explained by a greater range of actors participating in material debates, which we will examine the section on *inclusiveness* and *role change*, but has also to do with a greater internal differentiation of actor relationships.

The political-administrative centre's level of reciprocity on the whole but more visible in the figures of its self-reference, clearly marks the contrast between material debates where it is involved to a lower degree, and cultural ones which it dominates. Apart from this general view, what is noteworthy and even slightly alarming from the point of view of deliberative theory, is the fact that the relationship from the centre to civil society never reaches beyond marginal values, although they are consistent – except for the 2000 fuel protest (18%) which we will have to examine more closely. The references from the centre to the economic actors

[4] The deliberative view, however, also uncovers the basic problem associated with the idea of representation, or generally ersatz deliberation, as Goodin calls it: "The question is whether people who started out being representative of the wider community, in all the ways we can measure, are also representative of that wider community in the ways in which they *change* over the course of the deliberation" (cf. Goodin 2000: 88). In other words: the principle of representation, i.e. the presupposition of an accord between representatives and represented, is challenged through the process of deliberation, as it might lead to representatives adopting a different position. Although the represented could safeguard themselves against such a development with a bounded mandate, this would in turn undermine the very idea of deliberation: if we work to contain the transformative capacities of deliberation we devoid it of the emancipatory potential which lies at its core – and the thereby of the very idea on which it is premised.

in turn mirror the material/cultural divide and are balanced by the opposite references, i.e. those from the economy to the centre, the exception in this case being the 1960 disarmament debate.

The disarmament issue marks not only an exception in terms of the centre-economy relationship, even more unusual are the high values for the economic actors' degree of self-

Table 6: Dialogic partners 1960-2005 (in %)

	Year	1960	1965	1980	1985	2000	2005
Partners	1.5	-	-	-	3.5	-	.3
	2.1	-	-	-	-	-	-
	2.2	5.4	1.0	.7	.6	1.6	-
	2.3	3.3	2.9	-	-	1.6	-
	2.4	-	-	2.2	-	2.5	-
	2.5	1.1	9.7	4.5	4.1	6.6	12.8
	3.2	3.3	1.0	.7	-	.8	.3
	3.3	-	-	.7	-	2.5	-
	3.4	-	-	3.0	-	-	-
	3.5	7.6	11.7	2.2	12.4	6.6	13.9
	4.2	-	-	.7	-	6.6	-
	4.3	-	1.0	-	-	-	-
	4.4	29.3	-	14.2	-	5.7	-
	4.5	4.3	-	9.0	-	11.5	.3
	5.1	-	-	-	-	-	2.1
	5.2	2.2	2.9	2.2	.6	18.0	2.1
	5.3	-	2.9	.7	-	-	.7
	5.4	2.2	-	10.4	1.2	13.9	-
	5.5	41.3	67.0	48.5	77.6	22.1	67.4
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

1=uncivil society, 2=civil society, 3=media, 4=economic actors, 5=political centre

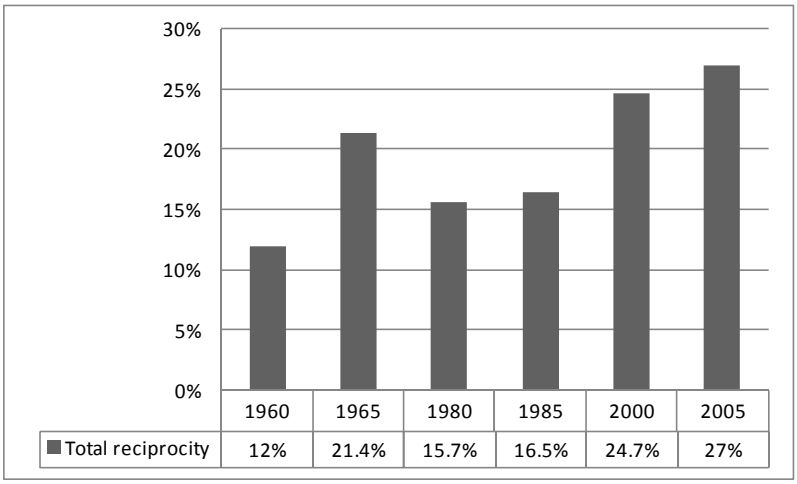
reference (29.3%), which more than doubles the figures of 1980 (14.2%) and which is more than five times those of 2000 (5.7%). Additionally, in this debate the references from the centre to the economy amount to only 2.2%, while the opposite direction is only marginally higher, totalling 4.3%. An explanation for these figures can be found in the nature of the issue, i.e. the fact that the unilateral disarmament debate is an untypical representative of material debates, combining pragmatic as well as ethical-political aspects which are mostly associated with cultural issues. Furthermore, as the figures show the unions discuss to a large degree among themselves the right stance on the issue, which has to do with the role of the unions in the formulation of Labour's official policy: as the Labour Party conference is officially the supreme body of the party and the unions account for the largest amount of delegates, ca. 80% until the reforms under New Labour, their vote more or less determines the official course. The debate on the side of the economic actors, i.e. the unions, therefore was not so much with the Labour Party or Harold Macmillan's ruling Conservative Party for that matter but among themselves, as achieving a coordinated and unequivocal stance was paramount. Already at the time the Labour executive felt uneasy about the power of the unions and its influence on the Party's policy and while later Labour governments under Wilson and Callaghan would simply ignore their defeat at the conferences, leading to a rupture in the connection between unions and party according to Quinn and culminating in the "winter of discontent", Labour leader Hugh Gaitskell 1960 still tried to mediate the positions by asking the unions to give the Labour Party guidance on the principles of its policies but asserting at the same time that the party executive demanded freedom in the formulation and application of the policy (cf. *The Times* 24.05.60).

Within this historical context it is clear why the reciprocity values of centre-economy and economy-economy relationships appear to be against the general trend. The 1980 union rights debate as well as the 2000 fuel protest are by comparison much more typical material debates and the values of these relationship are accordingly different. Still, in all three debates the relationships between the centre and the economy as well as among the economy itself is *per se* indicative of the type of debate as they are non-existent or negligible.

In contrast to this the media's as well as civil society's relationship with the centre, although the latter one with one exception, displays constantly higher values for cultural debates than for material ones. Furthermore, the media's values in cultural debates are more stable, i.e. they show less variation. On the whole, the table shows the media's role as intermediary actors or discourse facilitators who connect the various actors of the different parts of society by giving them a platform on the one hand, and by acting themselves as discourse participants on the other. We also see that in their role as discourse providers the fair balance of the different actors' representation in the media is not an absolute value but relative to the debate type: balance in a material debate means something different than balance in a cultural ones. In the first case we would for instance expect the various economic actors to be part of the public discussions, but not necessarily in the latter.

From the point of view of civil society the media as well as the economy take on what we could call a compensating role: whenever civil society's references to utterances made by the political centre are low, those of the media or/and the economic actors are higher so that taken together the total reciprocity of the non-centre actors towards the centre varies between 12% and 27% as is shown in figure 5 below. Indeed, if we add up the reciprocity values of the non-centre actors towards the centre we can see a linear development, i.e.

Figure 5: Reciprocity between non-centre and centre actors (1960-2005)



The table is exclusive of the actors of the "uncivil" society

social change leads to higher reciprocity from the non-centre actors, the exception being the high values in 1965; it clearly sparks reactions from both the media and civil society, and we will have to examine the dynamics in more detail below. Coming back to civil society's values in the table on the dialogic partners, two things can be observed: first, contrary to our theoretical expectations, the values of civil society's reciprocity towards the centre are higher in cultural than in material debates. And even if above in the discussion of the summary table we argued against premature conclusions regarding the status of the periphery in the debates, here we see that there are differences and that they appear to

contradict our theoretical assumptions. For according to theory we would expect civil society to be strongly present and display a higher amount of reciprocity in material debates, i.e. "outside initiative" public spheres, rather than in cultural debates which conform more to the centre driven political processes. This will require further discussion in the detailed examination of the single debates below. Here, we will restrict ourselves to investigate the second point to be noted, i.e. why this counterintuitive pattern is broken in the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement, where civil society displays rather low values.

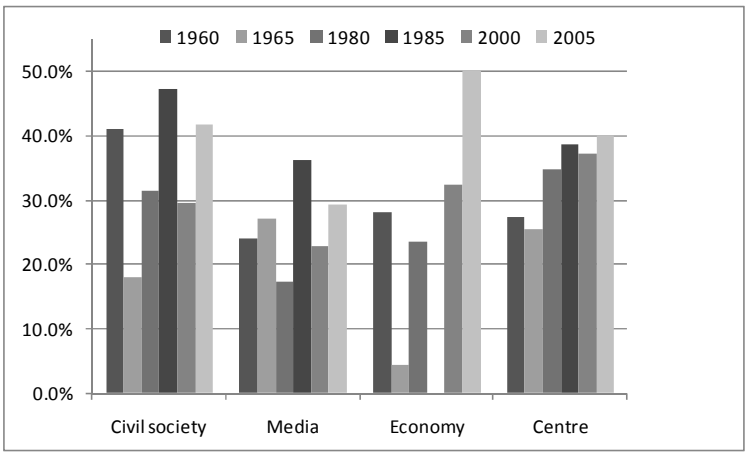
The institutionalisation of the Intergovernmental Conference between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland is a political issue that concerns mainly the centre – which can be seen from the figure of the centre-centre dialogue. Unlike Commonwealth immigration or anti-terror laws which either affect people directly or as in the latter case indirectly by the perceived danger to infringe on traditional rights of the individual vis-à-vis the state, the Intergovernmental Conference is an administrative body consulting other administrative bodies. It might well be that by examining Irish newspapers or newspapers from Northern Ireland we might have recorded higher values for the degree to which the periphery relates to statements of the political centre. Yet in the eyes of the British mainland population the issue was hardly of any major interest as it did not affect their lives in any direct or indirect way. Furthermore, given the nature of the issue Thatcher's Government did not feel compelled to procure public legitimacy for its actions, indeed most of negotiations were held in secret, and the public sphere in this case closely resembles the "inside access", i.e. the initiative comes from the centre and the issue is discussed to the exclusion of the wider public. By contrast, in the case of the two other cultural debates the centre takes on a different role as it is – even if sometimes only reluctantly – aware that it needs the support of actors outside the centre itself, while the non-centre actors at the same time feel more affected by the issues under debate and make themselves more forcefully heard. In Habermas' classification the model corresponding most closely to the two other cultural debates is the "mobilisation" model, although we can see that we might have to extend the definition of it. The "mobilisation" model comes not merely into being because the centre feels compelled to "court outside opinion" as Kavanagh (2000: 185) puts it: as we will see further below in the discussion of the single debates mobilisation also occurs because non-centre actors, i.e. mainly members of civil society, feel affected by an issue. We can thus tentatively conclude already at this stage that the concrete public sphere type is a less a stable construct than theory has it, including Habermas' more dynamic conception laid out in *Between Facts and Norms* (cf. Habermas 1996; Cobb, Ross & Ross 1976), rather it is the temporary product of the ongoing discursive negotiations of the (potential) participants.

Having analysed the main reciprocal relationships we are now also in a position to answer one question left over from the descriptive examination of the data in the section above on time and cleavage structure. There, contrary to our theoretical expectations we found that it is not the "outside initiative" public spheres (i.e. material debates) which display higher levels of reciprocity but those driven by the centre and thus conforming more to the "inside access" or the "mobilisation" type, i.e. the cultural debates in our sample, with the exception of the immigration debate in 1965. We hypothesised that the higher reciprocity levels of cultural debates might be affected by the centre's role, and as the results of the table above confirm, the centre indeed occupies a more prominent position in cultural debates. This,

however, is only the first part to the answer as we also need to examine what proportion of the actors' total amount of speech acts refers to utterances made by other actors, in other words we need to know the actors' individual levels of reciprocity. Instead of examining the levels of reciprocity between the actors, we now examine them within each actor class, more exactly we examine the proportion of reciprocal to non-reciprocal utterances.

The figure below gives the results for the single actor classes. As we can see, the centre's level of reciprocity increases through time, and as it is that actor class with highest overall proportion of utterances in the debates it comes as no surprise that the general reciprocity pattern mirrors the discursive orientation of the centre. Even though, the centre is far from being the dominant actor in all of the debates as its levels of participation are generally lower in material debates compared to cultural ones (cf. also below section 3.2.4. on the inclusiveness of the actors). Other actors such as the media or civil society are equally responsible for the overall degree of reciprocity, and here the development of latter's values are particularly interesting as they show that contrary to theory or at least contrary to our hypothesis civil society displays a higher of reciprocity in cultural debates, the immigration debate again being the exception.[5] We will analyse in more detail further below reasons how these seemingly paradox results retain their plausibility, also because t; suffice it to say for the moment that if we relate these findings back to our initial general analyses in the time/cleavage section the overall reciprocity of the debates appears to be a co-operative process.[6]

Figure 6: Actor classes' reciprocity 1960-2005 (in %)



We will now turn to examine this co-operative aspect more closely since one additional issue that arises in this context is the question of when the actors relate to one another during the debates. The anarchic structure of the public sphere Habermas postulates can in the end only exhibit a beneficial effect from the point of view of deliberative theory if the centre remains responsive to the communication offers of non-centre actors and if their contributions are not restricted to a specific point in time. We have already discussed the first of these requirements in light of the centre's seeming isolation in the political process, and the context of these considerations the second statement might appear to be somewhat contradictory to what we said about the role of the periphery. Yet the fact that the periphery

[5] We also see that the only actor which consistently displays a pattern according to cleavage structure is the media.
[6] The co-operation combines at least two dimensions: the more abstract co-operation in the overall result as the product of the mutual discursive orientation of the actors on a speech act by speech act basis.

plays a more prominent role at the beginning of a debate, particularly when the developing public sphere corresponds to the "outside initiative" model, does not mean that its contributions in the debate should to be restricted to the initial stages. The qualifications made above simply were intended to indicate that we should not expect the periphery to occupy a more central role than theory really postulates.

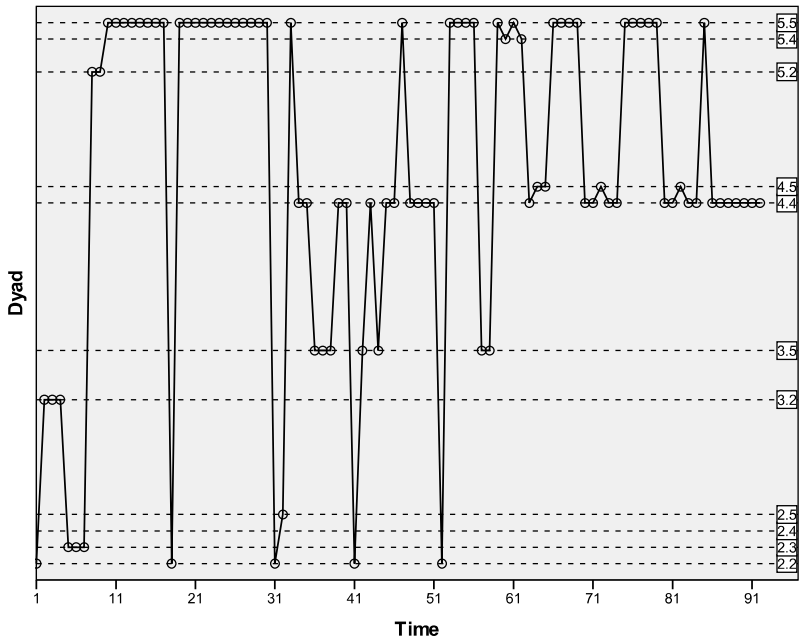
In the following we will examine more closely the material debates (section 1.2.1.) and the cultural debates separately (section 1.2.2.), though not in strict diachronic order, as the results so far seem to indicate that the cleavage structure might have a stronger effect on the actors' reciprocity and because cultural and material debates differ in one central aspect – the contested goods. As we will see, the nature of the goods has an important effect on the nature and the course of the debates.

1.2.1. Actor relationships in material debates

1.2.1.1. Unilateral disarmament (1960)

If we take a look at how the dialogical relationships developed in the 1960 debate we get the following structure. The values on the x-axis give the time within the debate whereas the y-axis shows the dyads, i.e. the dialogic pairings, whose values can be read off of the dotted lines. Figure 7 below confirms the findings of the frequency tables above, but shows

Figure 7: Reciprocity development (1960)



moreover the changes in the dialogic structure throughout the debate: the main finding is that as the debate moves on, actors from civil society relate less and less to the communicative inputs of other actors and gradually drop out of the dialogic configuration, as speakers as well as addressees of other actors. In line with what we said above about the role of the periphery in the public sphere we can see clearly how reciprocity structures change even at such a late stage in the debate. This has to do with the nature of the issue and relatedly with the role of the actors involved as well as with fact that the 1960s political debates seem to be a lot more predictable than today, or in other words: many of them

progress along predefined lines of the political process. And given that many social movements were yet to appear on the political scene, politics was still very much a process taking place within and between the established institutions. In 1960 these are the Commons, but even more so the unions and their respective annual conferences as well as the Labour Party, as much of the conflict is not only about the different positions on unilateral nuclear disarmament, but to a substantial degree also about carrying the issue into party politics and ultimately into Parliament. It therefore revolves more specifically around the question of who should have the power to dictate Labour's party programme and its political stance. We can thus see that in contrast to Habermas' ideal of a deliberative public sphere embodied by the "outside initiative" model this is a case where some of the more established actors display a substantial amount of reluctance in taking up the issue, although the periphery certainly holds some of the initiative in putting and above all keeping the issue on the agenda.[7]

Whether the periphery generally plays only a marginal role in the debate is a question we will be able to answer when we examine the inclusiveness of the actors (see section 4. below). What can be said already at this point, however, is that the public presence of civil society in the media depends – as with all other actors – on their newsworthiness. From the view of news value theory civil society's almost only noteworthy contribution to the debate is the Aldermaston March organised by the "Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament" (CND) as well as various smaller protests which, in line with the theory's expectation, are also taken up as a topic by other actors.[8] The CND played a very active role in promoting the issue since 1958, when the "Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament" was founded, using forms of public protest such as the Aldermaston march and sit-ins; it could rely on prominent supporters such as Bertrand Russell, Labour Party politicians Michael Foot and Fenner Brockway, as well as Benjamin Britten, to name but a few of the founding members and sponsors of the cause; it had a catchy slogan "Ban the Bomb"; and its logo would later become the international peace symbol. Still, although the campaigns' cause found resonance with the youth culture of the 1960s and other parts of society, Bertrand Russell resigned from his post as president of the CND in 1960, forming the "Committee of the 100",

[7] That reluctance extended well to the ranks of ministers and indeed the Prime Minister himself as an exchange in the Commons illustrates: when Labour MP Emrys Hughes asked "[i]s the Prime Minister aware of the eloquent appeal made to him no so long ago by the Leader of the Opposition for a unilateral ban on bombing tests? Unilateralism is no longer a word that a very large number of people in this country are afraid of", Harold Macmillan retorted dryly "I ought not really to be drawn into these discussions" to laughter from the government bench (*The Times* 25.05.60).

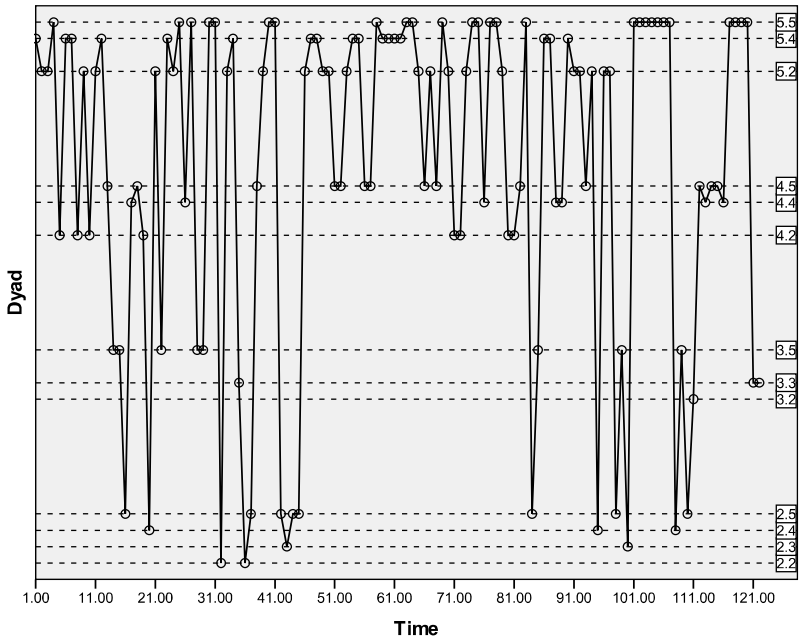
[8] News value theory finds its first tentative formulation in Walter Lippmann's work on public opinion (1997 [1922]), before it is more systematically developed by Einar Östgaard (1965), Galtung and Ruge (1965), who are most often referred to when the theory's origins are mentioned, and for the German speaking area by the work of Schulz (1976). News values theory's central statement is that independent of organisational logics of media corporations or the value orientations of journalists, news are selected primarily on the basis of certain factors, which render them noteworthy and interesting. Journalists thus anticipate the possible reactions of their audience and use these anticipations as criteria to define and select what is news and what is not, i.e. what will be published and broadcast and what will not. There is no universally agreed-upon list of news factors, but following Schulz (1976) we can for instance name spatial, political, and cultural proximity, or personal influence and the degree of prominence of the actors involved as well as conflict, criminality, damage, and success as aspects that render a piece of news more or less worthy of being reported. News value theory is one of the few strands of modern communication and media research to have mainly developed in Europe and has been able to show in empirical studies that there is broad consensus among journalists regarding the selection and interpretation of newsworthy events. More recent developments in communication research have further emphasised the constructivist aspect, which lies at the heart of news value theory, pointing out that news factors are not an inherent quality of the reported events but rather attributed to them by journalists. This has led for instance Kepplinger et al. (1992) in Germany to speak of "instrumental actualisation" (*instrumentelle Aktualisierung*) in order to underline the active part played by journalists and the agendas they pursue, while US based communication research has generally come to embrace the framing paradigm (cf. Entman 1993, 2004, 2007; Gamson 1989; Gamson & Modigliani 1989; Gamson & Meyer 1996).

which was mainly intended as a direct action branch of the CND in order to oppose Government politics more effectively, but also to regain the media's dwindling interest. Even though it would be far-fetched to say that this development is directly mirrored in the debate, we can clearly see that the CND's public interventions are hardly taken up by the other actors and that it is the unions, or in other words their role in the routine processes of politics coupled with a wide-spread fear of a possible nuclear war, which ensures that the issue stays on the public agenda.

1.2.1.2. Fuel protest (2000)

If we contrast these findings with the more recent debate about fuel prices of the year 2000 (figure 8 below), numerous differences become apparent. Not only is the periphery more present as a reciprocity actor throughout the debate, except for a period in the middle, taking up above all utterances from the centre; the centre in turn is also more responsive to the input from the periphery. In fact the centre-centre relationship in the deliberations surrounding the fuel issue is the lowest of all debates (22.1%), whereas the reference of the centre to utterances made by actors of civil society is the highest (18%), close to its level of self-reference. Economic actors and, to a minor degree, the media equally show moderate to high engagement with the utterances made by representatives of the political centre. Yet what is particularly striking is the overall responsiveness of the political centre towards civil society as well as the fact that in this debate it is a continuous relationship not only confined to the initial stages of the analysis.

Figure 8: Reciprocity development (2000)



From a deliberative perspective the reciprocity structure of the fuel debate does not merely correspond rather closely to the model of a deliberative public sphere, it even seems to exceed the expectations in some aspects. Again, a closer look at the actual debate helps to explain some of the dynamics of the interaction patterns. Compared to unilateral nuclear disarmament, the fuel debate is rather short, but receives far greater resonance in the media, which is mainly due to the way the issue develops. Oil prices had increased world

wide from 10$ to 30$, marking a ten-year high, and in 2000 British petrol taxes accounted for 81.5% of the fuel price, making it one of the most expensive in Europe and leading to protests by lorry drivers in 1999. In 2000 the Conservatives called a day of protest against the Government's handling of rising fuel prices, endorsing the lorry drivers' view and putting the issue firmly on the agenda of national politics. The real debate, however, only started in September when farmers, who were equally hit by the rising prices, blockaded an oil refinery, an example that soon found imitators, with groups such as the agrarian economic association "Farmers for Action" coordinating the picketing, thus leading to shortages at several thousand petrol stations. Factors explaining the development of the debate are the nature of the issue, i.e. the raising oil prices which affect almost everyone, the resulting discursive coalition between large parts of civil society, economic actors, at least some of the journalists of the major media outlets, as well as the Conservative Party, occupying the role of the opposition at the time. The protests raised the issue above the threshold of media attention, thereby fostered the discursive coalition and ensured that the pressure was kept on the Labour Government.

The main differences to the unilateral disarmament issue which also explain the structural development of the fuel protest debate are the broad coalition of groups and organisations from different parts of society, the spontaneous but very effective protests and blockades and their coordination through mobile phones, and last but causally prior to all this the very different quality of the debated good in question. Whereas the 1960 debate is a material dispute in a very broad sense, addressing such different issues as nuclear weapons, individual life, the survival of society as a whole and of the world in general, etc., the 2000 protest by contrast revolves around one thing, and one thing only: the fuel price. And because fuel is a concrete, accessible good that can be more easily controlled than disarmament in general or nuclear weapons in our case, the dynamics and the effects of the two debates are very different. Both debates are pragmatic in Habermas' understanding of normative levels of practical discourse, although the disarmament issue clearly also has strong ethical-political overtones of a public debating what kind of society Britain should be. Yet it is the fuel debate where true bargaining processes come to the fore, as the development "rests on resources that can be used to make threats (and promises) credible" as Jon Elster writes (Elster 1999: 392).[9] Using the concepts of Giddens' structuration theory (Giddens 1984) we could say that organisations such as "Farmers for Action" used their *authoritative resources*, i.e. their ability to mobilise their members and others as well as to coordinate their protest activities, to convert them into *allocative resources*: the blockades were aimed at exerting control over the fuel depots.[10] Still, their bargaining power crucially also rested on their ability to generate solidarity from other parts of society in the form of a public opinion that shared at least some of the reasons for the protests. From a theoretical perspective it is thus not only the case that bargaining indirectly presupposes the discourse principle as Habermas states (cf. Habermas 1996: 167), in this case at least both bargaining and rational discourse are deeply entrenched with one another. The blockades play a dual role in that they grant the activists on the one hand bargaining power, but on the other

[9] See also Habermas (1973: 153ff.) for an interpretation of bargaining from a discourse theoretical perspective and the view that practical questions, independent of whether they represent particular or public interests, can be dealt with discursively.

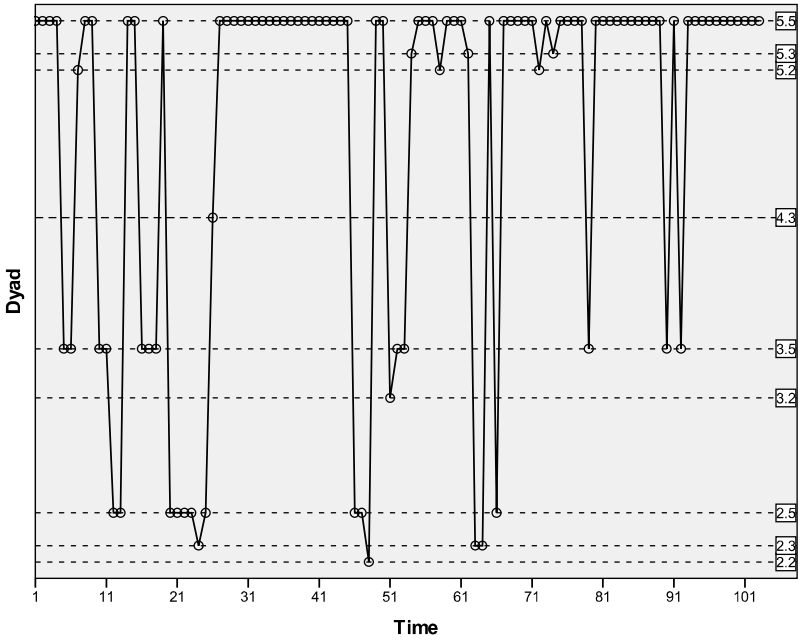
[10] In Giddens' (1984) approach to the structure/action problem action and structure are recursively intertwined so that structure is both the medium and outcome of actions. This is what Giddens refers to as the "duality of structure". Structure in turn can be divided into rules and resources, the latter of which can again be differentiated into allocative resources (control of material objects) and authoritative resources (control of persons).

hand also help them to get the media's attention and thus acted as the entry to a discourse that was constitutive of public opinion. The 1960 debate in turn could only rely on the "weakly motivating force of good reasons" (Habermas 1996: 147): the effect of demonstrations and protests at weapon production facilities never went beyond the symbolic (cf. Edelman 1964, 1971) and did not result in gaining control over a specific good, i.e. military weapons in this case.[11]

1.2.1.3. Union rights (1980)

If we contrast these findings with those of the 1980 debate on union picketing rights we get yet a different picture (see figure 9 below). It is again a material debate, but it is not couched in such existential terms as the 1960 unilateral disarmament issue, nor as distributive in its nature as the 2000 fuel debate. Rather, it is a constitutional or juridical debate, so to speak, as it revolves mainly around the Government's plans to curtail unions' rights of secondary picketing. This is also the main reason why reciprocity levels between the unions and the political centre are the second highest in all of the debates analysed, whereas only few references are recorded between civil society and the centre as dialogic partners. This pattern is broken only for a segment toward the end of the debate, and here again

Figure 9: Reciprocity development (1980)



contextual factors help to explain the shift. In its dispute with the Government the TUC (Trade Union Congress) forcefully tried to affirm its steadfastness by calling a one-day strike on May 14th 1980, the "Day of Action", which leads to an increase as well as a broadening of reciprocity structures beyond the main actors to include the media and civil society as we can see. Despite turning out to be rather unsuccessful event as it failed to garner the broad support from unionists and workers, and despite giving Margaret Thatcher a first test in the

[11] Interestingly, however, the 1960 debate saw several arrests of demonstrators for obstructing the police and some accepted jail sentences because they refused to pay the fines (cf. *The Daily Herald*, 03.05.60, *The Daily Telegraph* 26.04.60), while the approach of the police during the fuel protest was more cautious, consisting mainly in providing escorts for tankers.

Government's challenge of union power, the debate intensifies and becomes more inclusive and dialogic.

Again, as in the 2000 fuel protest the debate develops mostly on a pragmatic level characterised by the pursuit of the actors' group interests, and those who felt most disadvantaged, in this case the unions, tried to improve their bargaining position. Yet, they neither appealed to some abstract common good as in the disarmament debate, thereby shifting the debate on an ethical-political level and making society's self-conception the central issue, nor were they in the position to gain control over a concrete good as the farmers did in the fuel protest. Of course, a strike is meant to provide exactly that: by exerting control over the workforce, and particularly if conceived on a national scale, a strike is apt to affect all parts of society and can prove to be a very powerful instrument in the bargaining process. Contrary to the fuel debate, however, that control was explicitly limited from the very beginning on by the TUC itself, the reasoning being that although the strike should affect the economy, the real effect the TUC wanted to achieve was symbolic, i.e. it wanted to generate a public display of solidarity – which could also be read as a potential threat if the TUC was seriously going to challenge the Government. Yet because of the low turnout the TUC's action proved to be rather counterproductive, disclosing the organisation's lack of authority within its own ranks and consequently its waning influence on national politics – particularly that of the Conservative government.

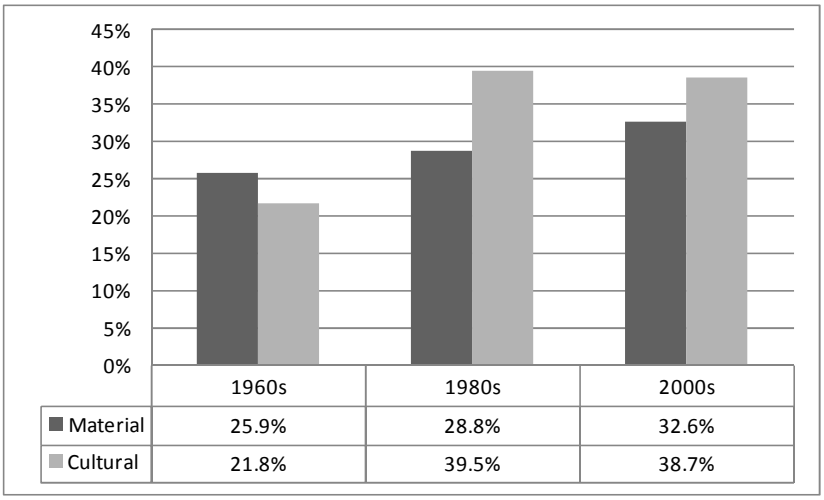
1.2.2. Actor relationships in cultural debates

One observation we made above regarding the difference between cultural and material debates is that in general the reciprocity between centre and non-centre actors is always higher in the former than in the latter, if we compare them by decade. The result might seem a little counterintuitive at first, for usually it is material debates we associate with higher participation of the periphery or their representative actors such as unions, etc. It is on the one hand encouraging from the point view of deliberative theory that not only material debates display a dialogic structure which includes the periphery and actors from other parts of society, but also cultural debates, which conform either to the "mobilization" or the "inside initiative" model of the public sphere, i.e. to models where the initiative lies more strongly with the centre. Particularly interesting is the 1985 issue as here it is all in the Government's interest to keep the issue as much off the public agenda as possible. In light of this it is surprising that the reaction by the non-centre actors in terms of reciprocity levels is higher than in the 1980 material debate on union secondary picketing rights. As we have seen, the increase reciprocity between 1980 and 1985 it is above all due to the media's commenting the actions of the political centre, i.e. mainly the Government, and holding it to account, while the reciprocity level of the periphery is similar to the 1980 debate. And as it is primarily a political-administrative debate without any visible consequences for the economy, the contributions of the actors from the economic sector are not only sparse, they are effectively non-existent.

The other the obvious discrepancies between material and cultural debates mean that we have to ask ourselves whether there are any underlying systematic differences between the two types that could help us to explain the results. One aspect common to all cultural debates is that they are marked by a non-involvement of civil society in at least the early stages of the debate, in the case of the Anglo-Irish Agreement and the anti-terror legislation

the Government probably would have preferred not to have any participation at all by actors outside the centre. Ironically, it seems that the preferred exclusion of civil society leads to its increased participation in terms of reciprocity: one reason for this might be that issues which are carried into the public sphere mainly by the periphery most often concern only smaller, or at any rate distinct social groups, even if the issue itself is articulated in terms of the common good or with reference to abstract moral principles, etc.; two cases in point are the 1980 union rights debate and the fuel debate in 2000. Contrary to this, at least two of the three analysed debates driven largely by the centre, the immigration debate 1965 and the anti-terror debate 2005, address issues which affect society as a whole and not only a part of it. Consequently, the government's actions leads to a wider resonance in society and hence to higher levels of reciprocity. And there is an additional element that might finally also contribute to the general dynamic of the cultural debates and the increased reciprocity by non-centre actors: with the exception of the Commonwealth immigration issue they are all comparatively short, they do not go on for much longer than our period of analysis, and above all in the case of the anti-terror legislation short-term. The general feeling that there is not much room for debate, nor is it desired by the government as is most visible in the case of the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985 and even more so in 2005, when the government tries to rush anti-terror legislation through parliament, might further intensify the debates. Evidence for this can be seen in fact that – again with the exception of the Commonwealth immigration issue – the total proportion of reciprocal speech acts is higher in the cultural debates compared to the material one of the same decade (see figure 10 below).

Figure 10: Reciprocal speech acts in debate types (in %)



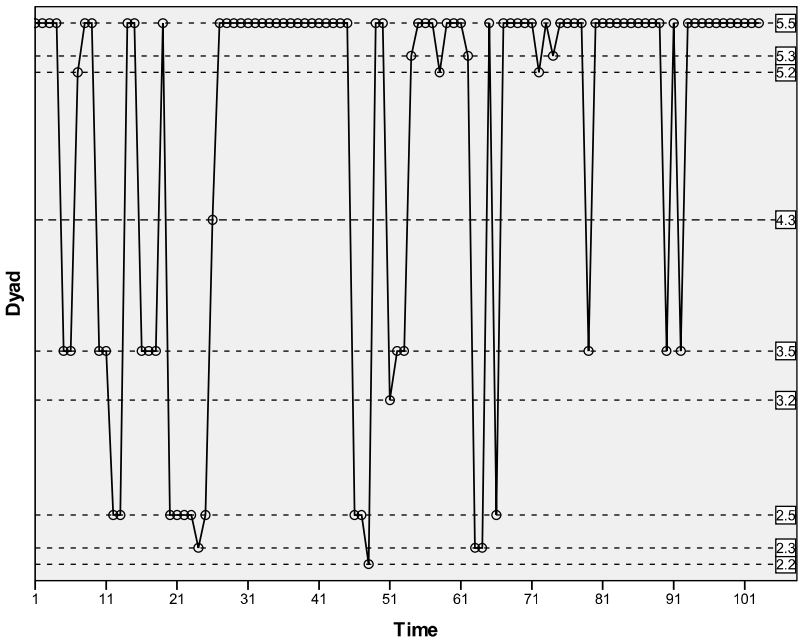
	1960s	1980s	2000s
Material	25.9%	28.8%	32.6%
Cultural	21.8%	39.5%	38.7%

1.2.2.1. Commonwealth immigration (1965)

This general assessment is mirrored in the development of reciprocity structures, and as far as the dialogic involvement of the periphery is concerned, particularly in the debates of 1965 and even more in 2005. Yet, despite the differences between cultural and material debates, the development Commonwealth immigration debate in 1965 shows at first sight remarkable similarities to the unilateral disarmament debate of 1960: both are marked by

comparable reciprocity levels of civil society, but more than this by a parallel development of their overall dialogicality (see figure 11 below). The periphery's dialogic participation is higher during the first part of the debate and decreases after that to cease completely in the

Figure 11: Reciprocity development (1965)



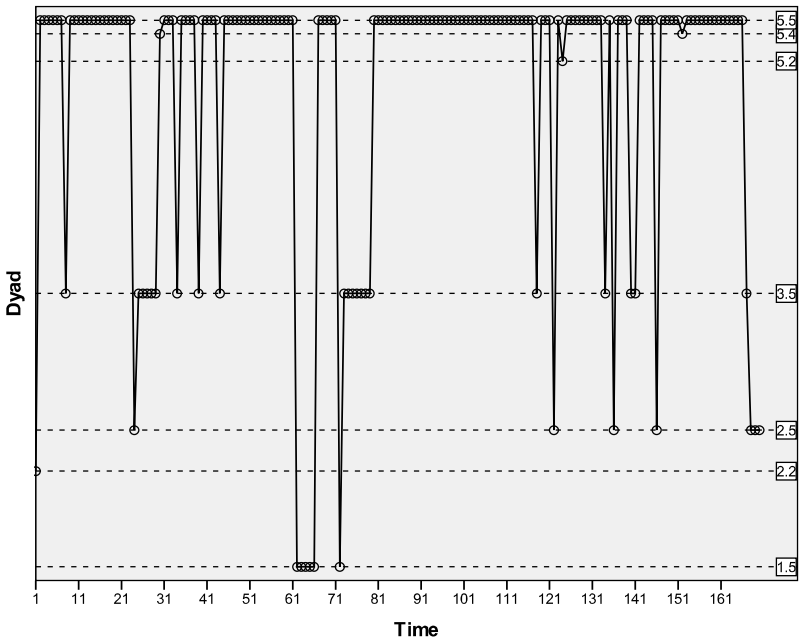
last segment. The important difference, which also lends support to our conclusions about the relationship between the cleavage type of the debates and the structure of the public sphere, i.e. the counterintuitive higher intensity of peripheral reactions in cultural debates, can be seen in the proportion of references made by civil society to utterances of the centre, which amounts to only 1.1% in the case of the disarmament debate in 1960 but adds up to almost 10% in the immigration debate. This is noteworthy insofar as we might have expected generally higher levels of participation and dialogic interaction by civil society in periphery driven debates. The results, however, point in the opposite direction: civil society reacts more strongly to issues initiated or driven by the centre – at least at the time of our observation. This might be a unique characteristic of the Commonwealth immigration debate or it could in turn have to do with the inner dynamics of cultural debates quite generally, and we will therefore investigate the other ones to see if there are any similarities.

1.2.2.2. Anglo-Irish Agreement (1985)

The result of the 1965 debate becomes even more significant when compared to the 1985 debate, for here the reciprocity between periphery and centre drops to 4.1% (for the reciprocity development see figure 12 below). It might therefore seem that people feel more affected in their individual lifeworlds by the immigration issue, even if objectively its direct effect is – if at all – only marginal than by the consultative role of the Republic of Ireland in the British administration of Northern Ireland. The issue, however, is more complex than the bare figures reveal and our data helps only to analyse some of the aspects of the debates. The important point we have to take into account is that whereas in most debates – in line with our theoretical model – the discussion of a policy proposal precedes the decision

on it, this is only partly true for the Anglo-Irish agreement: being a very delicate subject most of the talks were held in secret so that the debate begins only shortly before the decisions, i.e. the signing of the Agreement one hand and the ratifications by both the Dáil, the lower house of the Irish parliament, and the House of Commons, are taken.[12] And whereas unionists voiced scant signs of protest against the possible signing of the Agreement already beforehand, the angry reactions by the political parties of Northern Ireland, above all the unionists as well as by parts of civil society only came after the decisions were taken – and thus largely after our period of analysis.[13] By extending that period to the vote in the Commons we can include some of the reactions, but we still fail to grasp the substantial part of the debate that ensued.

Figure 12: Reciprocity development (1985)



This is not problematic *per se*, rather it is part of our comparative analytical design and helps to illustrate the structural differences between the public sphere types, but in this case it is an aspect we have to take into account as it has an influence on the debates and hence our data, and we might otherwise come to wrong conclusions. The Anglo-Irish Agreement is an almost ideal representative of the "inside access" model – though only until the Agreement is signed. This is a consideration to bear in mind, for here we see that the decisions taken are really only temporary verdicts as afterwards the debate takes a radically different turn, oscillating between a "mobilisation" model driven largely by the mobilising strategies of the unionist parties and an "outside access" model where parts of civil society

[12] As Bardon writes, shortly before the signing of the accord the unionist *News Letter* still assumed that Dublin's influence in the Province would be almost inexistent (cf. Bardon 1992: 755).

[13] Because of the secrecy in the negotiations, unionists were completely taken by surprise when Margaret Thatcher and the Garret FitzGerlad, the Taoiseach of the Republic of Ireland, presented the Agreement to the public. To unionists, the Agreement came as a shock, not only because of its suddenness, but also because of its symbolic consequences as for instance the Official Unionist Harold McCusker later expressed in his speech in the Commons: "I went to Hillsborough [where the Agreement was signed] on the Friday morning […] I stood outside Hillsborough, not waving a Union flag – I doubt whether I will ever wave one again – not singing hymns, saying prayers or protesting, but like a dog and asked the Government to put in my hand the document that sold my birthright. They told me that they would give it to me as soon as possible. Having never consulted me, never sought my opinion or asked my advice, they told the rest of the world what was in store for me" (as cited in Bardon 1992: 757).

make themselves more strongly heard, and showing thus very impressively that the "weak" public (cf. Fraser 1990; Habermas 1996) is not so weak after all.

The *ex post* debate following the signing of the Agreement is conducted on both the level of content as well as the level of formal aspects – though of course the two dimensions intersect. It is on the one hand about the contents of the Agreement which unionists but also nationalists oppose: unionists felt that the Republic of Ireland had no right to interfere in the administration of Northern Ireland, particularly as it was perceived as the refuge of Republican terrorists. During the "Ulster says No" campaign in reaction to the signing of the Agreement this view was probably uttered most fiercely by the leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, Ian Paisley, and most emphatically when he addressed a protest rally in front of Belfast City Hall on November 23rd: "I want to ask a question today. And the question is simple. Where do the terrorists operate from? From the Irish Republic! That's where they come from. Where do the terrorists return to for sanctuary? To the Irish Republic! And yet Mrs. Thatcher tells us that the Republic must have some say in our Province. We say never, never, never, never!"[14] In February 1987 James Molyneaux, leader of the UUP, and Iab Paisley, leader of the DUP, delivered a petition signed by 400'000 to the Queen at Buckingham Palace (*The Times* 13.02.87). Nationalists were more ambivalent about the Agreement, with some being in favour as it gave them an outlook of a united Ireland in the future, while others as Provisional Sinn Féin branded the Agreement a "disaster" because for the time being it cemented the status of Northern Ireland as a part of the United Kingdom, which could only be changed by a majority of the people – a bleak outlook for the republican minority (cf. Bardon 1992: 756).[15]

Apart from these topical aspects the debate which followed the signing of the Agreement was also about the formal aspect of it, i.e. the fact that those affected felt that they had been excluded from the discussions. In the end the criticism is thus directed against the way the political process – and with it the public sphere – was structured. And while all this follows our period of observation, some aspects can already be seen during the debate leading up to the Agreement, for the 1985 issue is that debate with the overall highest level of reciprocity, which testifies to the intensity with which the Agreement is discussed.

Having taken into account the specific nature of the Anglo-Irish Agreement we can now return to our comparison between this cultural debate and the 1965 Commonwealth Immigration issue. What we can thus mainly observe and what is partly mirrored in the

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[14] Author's transcription of a video clip (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8zSWlAHD29M&feature=related, 22.03.11). Ian Paisley was by no means the only unionist politician holding outspoken views about the Agreement. Enoch Powell, having left the Conservative Party in 1974 over its stance on European unification to become an MP for the Ulster Unionist Party, asked Margaret Thatcher during Prime Minister's Questions on November 14th 1985 in the Commons: "Does the right hon. Lady understand – if she does not yet understand she soon will – that the penalty for treachery is to fall into public contempt?", to which Thatcher replied: "I think that the right hon. Gentleman will understand that I find his remarks deeply offensive. Any agreement that may be reached will be within the bounds that I have indicated. No agreement that may be reached could be implemented before it came before the House for approval" (http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/106172, 14.03.11). Thatcher later came to revise her view and agreed with Powell's objection to the Agreement, though not with his personal attack on her: "I now believe that his assessment was right, though I wish that on this as on other occasions he had been less inclined to impugn the motives of those who disagreed with him" (*The Daily Telegraph* 22.11.98). The opposition to the Agreement eventually led to the demise of the Northern Ireland Assembly on 23 June 1986 (Cf. Bardon 1992: 765).

[15] The resistance in the Republic of Ireland was less vigorous, although the accord seemed to contravene articles 2 and 3 of the constitution which assert the goal of a united Ireland. Yet, although Fianna Fáil, the at the time in the opposition in the Dáil, opposed the Agreement because reinforced partition of the island, its leader Charles Haughey stated that he would not obstruct the work of the Intergovernmental Conference, being aware of the broad international support for Garret FitzGerald's diplomatic victory and the overwhelming favourable opinions at home (Bardon 1992: 759).

reciprocity structures is the difference between a public sphere structured according to the "mobilisation model" in the case of the immigration issue on the one hand, where the periphery perforce cannot be left out of debate by the Government, and the "inside access" model established in the case of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, where until the decision is taken Thatcher's cabinet shows itself far less responsive as from the government's perspective the periphery wields no direct legitimating power and consequently occupies only a minor role in the political process – a view Margaret Thatcher later would come to revise.[16]

Whereas both the media and civil society are on a par as interlocutors of the government in 1965, and whereas the media's role even slightly increases from 1965 (11.7%) to 1985 (12.4%), the dialogic orientation of the periphery towards the centre in the latter debate (4.1%) drops to less than half of the value in the former (9.7%). There seem thus to be two dynamics at play: due to the type of public sphere civil society involvement is generally low in 1985, or at least markedly lower than in the immigration debate, yet at the same time the periphery's presence seems to be distributed more evenly throughout the development of the Anglo-Irish Agreement than in the public discussion of the immigration issue.

If, however, we want to assess the status of the periphery as an interlocutor of the centre it is not sufficient to examine the reciprocity structure of civil society alone: it is only the dialogic orientation of the centre which allows us in the end to draw conclusions about the responsiveness of the political-administrative body towards actors from other parts of society. And here the results are in line with the weak dialogicality of the periphery in 1985, for the centre's orientation towards civil society takes on its absolute lowest value in all of the debates: the centre refers to utterances made by the periphery in only 0.6% of the total of all speech acts of the debate. Yet, even worse than this is the great imbalance in the reciprocity values of the centre and the media, for while the media refer to the centre in 12.4% of all speech acts, there is not a single reference by the centre to the journalistic input. All this suggests a debate where the centre's deliberations are largely uncoupled from those of the rest of society, which is additionally confirmed by the fact that 77.6% of all references are made among centre actors – the highest value over all of the debates –, clearly defining the Anglo-Irish Agreement as corresponding closely to the "inside access" model of the public sphere. Such "segregated" debates are by no means necessarily more peaceful as one could think, even if they largely fail to engage contesting actors from the different parts of society. As far as the Anglo-Irish Agreement is concerned it is certainly one of the debates which records the highest amount of face threatening acts and responses to them, i.e. acts of disrespect according to our conception.

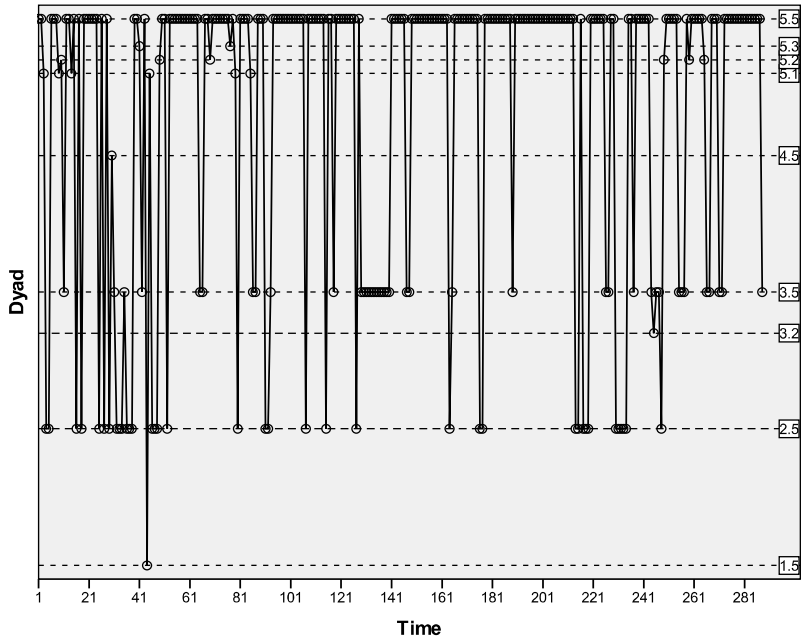
1.2.2.3. Anti-terror legislation (2005)

High levels of self-reference by the centre are one of the characteristics that set the examined cultural debates apart from the material ones. To be sure, in the material debates, too, the centre-centre reciprocity is the most dominant occurrence, but the values are all below 50%, in fact reaching only 22.1% in 2000, whereas they are all equal or higher to 67% for the cultural debates. An almost complete neglect of the media, with the only noticeable

[16] In fact, in a review of a biography of Enoch Powell for *The Daily Telegraph* Thatcher wrote: "I now believe that his assessment was right, though I wish that on this as on other occasions he had been less inclined to impugn the motives of those who disagreed with him" (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/220053.stm, 14.02.11).

exception of the immigration debate of 1965, is in turn a discursive quality that unites both cultural and material debates. The neglect is also apparent in the 2005 debate on anti-terror legislation, where it is even more significant given that the dialogic orientation of the media towards the centre reaches its highest overall level, their references to the centre accounting for nearly 14% of all speech acts in the debate. Together with the reciprocity between civil society and the centre this amounts to a total of 26.7% reciprocity from non-centre to centre actors, which is remarkable given that the economic actors' references to the centre are virtually absent in the debate.

Figure 13: Reciprocity development (2005)



Even more remarkable than this, however, is the overall distribution of dialogic pairings in the course of the debate, particularly that of the non-centre actors: almost until the end of the analysed period both civil society and the media remain very active, which at first sight seems to belie the reluctant responsiveness of the centre (see figure 13 above). Yet, as we have seen, in this debate as well as in the other cultural debates the centre actors most often address speech acts made by other centre actors, and whereas the fuel protest in 2000 sees the highest amount of reciprocity from the centre towards the non-centre actors reaching over 30% of the total amount of dialogic pairings, the figure drops only ca. 5% in 2005, an indication that the cleavage structure is the decisive factor for reciprocity and not so much social change. The overall finding for the 2005 debate is also mirrored in development of the debate: whereas references from civil society and the media towards the centre are numerous, the same cannot be said for the relationship in the opposite direction. Here again, as with all cultural debates, the centre is its own main interlocutor, and we thus see again that cultural debates appear to be more fractured than material ones. In this debate in particular to certain degree the division is paralleled by a different focus on the issue: whereas civil society, the media, and as far as the centre is concerned the Lords mainly discuss the contents of the government's proposal, taking issue above all with the implications the new anti-terror legislation would have for the long-standing tradition of habeas corpus, deeply entrenched in Britain's identity, the (rest of) the centre foregrounds a

different aspect. Most of the heated exchanges in the Commons concern primarily a formal aspect, namely the Blair Cabinet's intention of rushing the Bill through Parliament without proper debate as the statement of the leader of the Conservatives, Michael Howard, exemplifies who complained that the Bill was being "ramrodded through" (*The Times* 03.03.2005), echoing the words of the Shadow Leader of the Commons, Oliver Heald, who had already criticised one week before that the Bill "was being rammed through and debate was being ruthlessly curtailed" (*The Times* 22.02.05).

Criticism from outside parliament, but also from the Lords, in turn concentrated much more on the substance of the Bill, *The Guardian* for instance writing that "[t]he Lords showed how dangerously remote the Blair government has become from this country's traditions of natural justice, but also pointed up the inadequacy of the Conservative opposition" (*The Guardian* 09.03.05). To be sure, the two aspects intersect, as we can see in the Shadow Home Secretary's, David Davis, contribution in the Commons: "What is being proposed is treating Parliament with contempt. Here is a massive change in the traditional standards of justice and the rights every British citizen for hundreds of years being dealt with in a few days." (*The Daily Telegraph* 22.02.05). But it was particularly the threat to the historical status of *habeas corpus*, i.e. the right to be released from unlawful detention and thus against arbitrary action by the state, which resonated with the wider public as a commentary of *The Daily Telegraph* illustrates: "Tony Blair should realise that objections to his Prevention of Terrorism Bill go way beyond party political considerations, to the heart of British law. For eight centuries, *habeas corpus* and the right to a fair trial, with conviction by the judiciary as opposed to the executive, have been cornerstones of our judicial system. The Prevention of Terrorism Bill takes those cornerstones away" (*The Daily Telegraph* 24.02.05). Equally, the opinion of an author of a letter to the editor read: "Our politicians should not be suspending *habeas corpus* to prevent deaths from terrorism. They should be telling the terrorists that they and we are prepared to defend habeas corpus and our other liberties, if necessary to the death, as many brave people through our history have done. Perhaps some of our learned professors of medieval history could offer Mr Blair and Mr Clarke a few remedial classes in English constitutional history, to educate them in these matters" (*The Daily Telegraph* 10.03.2005).

As the debate in Parliament largely fails to resolve the issue, the debate outside continues, as we can see by the sustained reciprocity from civil society and the media towards the centre. We thereby also see a public sphere in motion, where the forces outside the centre challenge the prevailing "inside access" model, preferred by the Government, and push it more in the direction of a "mobilisation" model. The important point here is that in contrast to the Anglo-Irish Agreement the change occurs largely without the opposing centre actors' involvement, rather it is individual citizens, the media, but also actions such as the petition launched by the civil rights group Liberty, signed by 1'000 people from different parts of society such as the arts, but including also 350 lawyers, which carry the protest.

If we contrast these findings with those of the material debates the question arises why the responsiveness of the centre is so low, given that the reciprocity of the non-centre actors is higher in the cultural debates. The fact that in this study the cleavage structure corresponds to a difference in the structure of the public sphere is one possible answer we have already explored, but related to it is an additional point worth to be examined. In all of

the cultural issues the debates are conducted on an ethical-political level and consequently do not have a concrete material object as their topic, but rather the question "what kind of society do we want to be?" and thus revolve around the abstract notion of the good society. To be sure, in the case of the Anglo-Irish Agreement the connection to questions about the good society might be rather loose for many of the actors involved in the debate, but it is particularly the unionist parties who frame the issue very forcefully in this way. Yet contrary to material debates we can see that cultural debates which are conducted on an ethical-political level do not let the participants (attempt to) exert control over goods in the same way as e.g. in the fuel protest. Immigration, the role of the Republic of Ireland in a consultative body of Northern Ireland or the infringement on *habeas corpus* by Labour's anti-terror legislation are primarily matters of deliberation but not of bargaining processes. There might be ways in which bargaining power could be introduced in such cases as for instance through continued public protest, or for instance as in the immigration debate through the acquisition of houses by the local council of Smethwick in order "to stop the black invasion" (*The Guardian* 09.01.65), or the Opposition's tactic to play for time during the anti-terror legislation.[17] But the general point seems to be that the more we move up the ladder of normative discourse from pragmatic to ethical-political debates until we finally reach the moral level, the more participants have to rely on the motivating force of rationality, which, as Habermas readily concedes, commands only a weak appeal (cf. Habermas 1996: 147). What makes the cases at the upper end potentially problematic from a deliberative perspective, particularly if we consider the short-term effects of deliberation, is the role of administrative power which, though still bound to a legislative process, might be severed from the deliberative process in the public sphere and hence from a more encompassing opinion formation process: the Labour Government's decision to go to war in Iraq in 2003 is a case in point, and although the anti-terror legislation process in 2005 is less dramatic in its immediate consequences, it is telling in that it shows the uneasiness of the political parties – including voices within the Cabinet – to allow only little time for an issue touching the very foundations of British society.[18] This is also one of the reasons why the Labour Government continuously tried to frame the issue in a pragmatic perspective, i.e. new legislation should simply replace the old one, while the Opposition within and outside Westminster emphasised the ethical-political dimension. Yet, the Government ultimately only managed to get its proposals through Parliament because it agreed to review the anti-terror legislation after a year, and thus had to accept that it could not simply have its way, but that it depended on the cooperation of others outside its immediate sphere of influence.[19]

[17] Although the tactic used in the latter case was a double-edged sword as the Conservatives were well aware of, for the tight deadline equally allowed the Government to depict the Opposition as wavering and being soft on terrorism (cf. *The Guardian* 2.3.05).

[18] And it shows a significant parallel to the decision to go to war in Iraq in that in this case, too, most of the evidence was secret – reports about weapons of mass destruction in the former case, confidential dossiers about terrorist activity in the latter –, which undermines the very preconditions for a proper deliberative process.

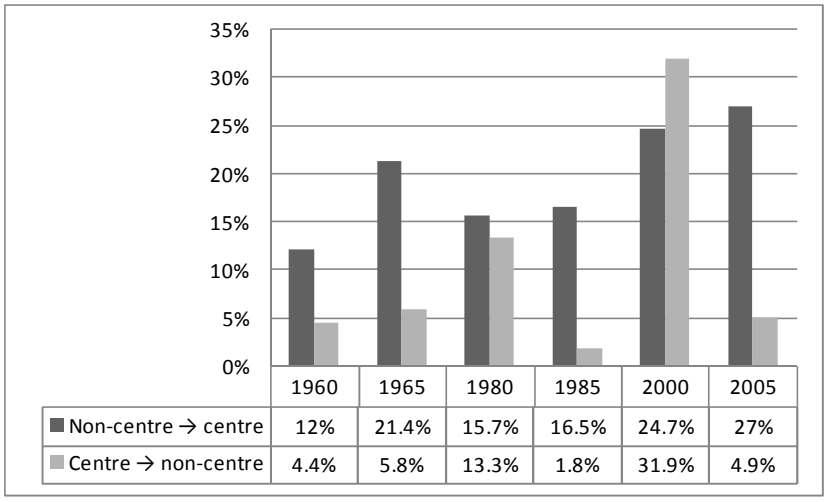
[19] The periphery might nevertheless have played an important role, even though its contributions were only marginally referred to by the centre, for many of its contributions signalled to the opposing Liberal Democrats and Conservatives that their position was in line with a substantial part of public opinion.

1.3. Conclusion: the public sphere as sphere of publics

What becomes particularly apparent in the 2005 debate but equally holds for public deliberative processes in general is that it is the participants who decide what kind of public sphere develops – and not only in relation to the examined reciprocity but to all of the elements which define deliberation – and beyond. Actors articulate and thereby frame an issue in a certain way, from a specific normative perspective, i.e. from either a pragmatic, ethical-political, or a moral angle. If they belong to the administrative core of the political centre they certainly have an advantage over other actors as they can rely on the use of administrative power. Yet even under these conditions the convincing as well as the persuasive effect of arguments depend on the ratification of others, and as we have seen neither the topic nor the issue type defines from the outside into what model the evolving public sphere develops as it is embedded in constant processes of negotiation. For instance, even if the government's attempt to frame an issue corresponding to a pragmatic level and the "inside access" model were successful, the same issue might in the long run develop into an "outside initiative" debate, where the periphery holds the government to account on moral grounds. In fact, the big issues with which society deals over years and decades such as nuclear power, or women's rights, which Habermas (1996) cites as exemplary cases for the possible deliberative public spheres, all go through different stages and at different points in time correspond more closely to one or the other model. The constant negotiation, or put differently the cooperative search of the actors what the debate is about, on which normative level it is to be conducted, etc. are all part of the anarchic properties of the public sphere of which Habermas repeatedly speaks, and which ensure that the deliberative process remains open to change. This applies even to those cases which correspond more closely to the "inside access" model and to some extent show traces of a power-ridden public sphere (*vermachtete Öffentlichkeit*). The anti-terror legislation debate is a telling case as here the centre would have liked to keep the issue within the confines of an "inside access" model, but it developed into a "mobilisation model", much against the intention of the leading actors on the issue, i.e. the Government.

It must be added that there is no obligation by the periphery to force the communicative flow to establish at least a "mobilisation model", or to take up an issue at a later stage and promote it in an "outside initiative" model. For one thing the deliberative public sphere and with it the role of civil society is always a latent force in the political process, as Habermas

Figure 14: Reciprocity between non-centre and centre actors (1960-2005)



	1960	1965	1980	1985	2000	2005
Non-centre → centre	12%	21.4%	15.7%	16.5%	24.7%	27%
Centre → non-centre	4.4%	5.8%	13.3%	1.8%	31.9%	4.9%

The table is exclusive of the actors of the "uncivil" society.

tells us, which can become active at any point in time. And the activity in turn, at least to some extent – and apart from the degree of mobilisation, organisation of grass root groups, financial and other resources which might have a distorting effect on the development of a public sphere around a certain issue – also depends on the perception of that issue as a problem (cf. Habermas 1996; Peters 1993). In the case of the Anglo-Irish Agreement for instance most of the British mainland shoes did not pinch, to paraphrase Dewey's dictum, and the conflict did not continuously spill over from the regional context in which it was embedded to the national periphery, despite its local intensity. Still, there is no denying that it is the "outside initiative" debates, corresponding more to the material issues in our analysis, which on the whole generate the greater responsiveness by the centre towards the non-centre actors, the immigration debate in 1965 again being the exception.

Yet, the material/cultural dimension is not the only one which seems to be important in the debates as some of their discursive characteristics appear to follow a diachronic pattern: whereas we have for instance seen that the centre-centre reciprocity is sensitive to the cleavage structure (cf. figure 14 above), the degree of dialogue between non-centre and centre actors depicted in the table above – with the notable exception of 1965 – rises continuously between 1960 and 2005. Partly responsible for this development are the media, which as we have seen occupy not only a role as discourse providers but also a compensating one in their role as discourse participants.

Habermas repeatedly speaks of the public sphere as a communicative space that is dominated by the mass media (cf. Habermas 1989, 1996), allocating them an ambivalent potential – emancipatory as well as distorting or repressing – and while this is in part a phenomenon we can witness when looking at the reciprocity levels of the single actor classes in our sample, the role of the mass media is not necessarily detrimental to the discursive structure of the debates as a whole. In fact, as mentioned above, the media mostly refer to utterances made by the centre in their dialogic orientation, contributing substantially to the overall degree of the non-centre/centre reciprocity structure. Additionally, they promote debates in their role as discursive platform, or brokers or providers of public discourse as it were. But they differ significantly from the other non-centre actors in a further respect: they are only rarely perceived as dialogical partners by the centre, the economy, and to some degree the periphery as most of the time they promote issues and hold other actors to account on behalf of third parties, i.e. they act as discursive representatives (cf. Dryzek & Niemeyer 2008; Habermas 1996; Häussler 2006) but are themselves not directly affected by the outcome of policy issues.

If we expand the focus and abstract from the single actor classes and the development of their reciprocity within and across the single issues we are left with the question of what this implies for the deliberative quality of the debates. One crucial general insight we can derive from our results is that reciprocity allows us to see that the seeming homogenous public sphere crystallising around a political issue is subdivided into smaller communicative spheres, some of which are connected to each other by means of (mutual) reference. Even in the integrated form of a public discourse selected, narrated and argued in and through the media, the resulting public sphere appears as a sphere of publics characterised by communicative spill-over processes between the single units, i.e. actor classes. What is important from the point of view of deliberative theory is whether the communicative flows cross from one class of actors into another one and whether the inputs are taken up by the

addressees – and above all whether the political-administrative centre remains responsive to the inputs from the various actors outside its immediate sphere of influence. For the potentially anarchic structure of the public sphere can embody the deliberative ideal only to the extent that it is able to connect the arguments, stories and general points of view of the participants, of which the political centre is always the ultimate addressee. What our results reveal is that the centre as whole remains particularly responsive in those cases which are characterised by a greater temporal urgency or an intensified dynamic as in the case of the union rights, where the "Day of Action" functions as a symbolic verdict on the Government's performance, and more prominently still in the case of the fuel protest, where the protesters issue a deadline of 60 days for the Government to act. Both are material debates and both are strongly driven by non-centre actors, the unions in 1980, and actors from the economy such as "Farmers for Action" as well as from the periphery in 2000, casting thus a positive light on the responsiveness of the centre in those debates which correspond more to the "outside initiative" model.

These theoretical considerations about the centre's position in the political process also explain why we find the centre to be the most dominant actor in our investigations: on the one hand the debates culminate – if only temporarily – in a legislative decision; hence a political centre that is only marginally present would not testify to the deliberative quality of the debates. On the other hand, criticism and demands inherently always also concern regulative aspects of political issues and are thus by their very nature directed towards the legislative process. The centre's position is thus not in itself problematic, and it becomes even less so if we take into account that in representative democracies the issues addressed by actors outside the centre are taken up by their elected representatives, i.e. by the political parties and the MPs, and they may find additional articulation through purely discursive representatives. As Habermas (1996) states following Peters (1993) the political process is characterised by two intersecting cycles: at comparatively late stage in the debates such as the ones the present study examines the issues are not only "discovered" and articulated by members of the periphery and their discursive representatives in civil society organisations, but also advocated by representatives of the centre, i.e. MPs, and in if we consider the anti-terror legislation debate, also the Lords. Apart from these two categories the media play an important role as participants, in particular in their "mandatory" function, in which they articulate issues on behalf of others, i.e. they act as discursive representatives, but also hold those in power accountable for their actions, which is particularly evident in the anti-terror legislation debate in 2005.

If we take all this together we arrive at a complex and ambivalent picture of the public sphere as seen through the lens of reciprocity structures. While the centre's responsiveness to input from the outside is generally rather low, there are cases above all in the material debates of 1980 and 2005 where the centre/non-centre reciprocity levels rise significantly. And because issues of the periphery are also articulated by their representatives in Parliament, the connection between the centre and the other actor classes is stronger than the bare figures are able show as they capture only direct relationships. The direct and indirect relationships between the actors ensure that the single discourses occurring in the different parts of society are connected, and that democratic politics thus is a process constituted by the public sphere.

Whether the points made by the participants of the debate are taken up by others directly or indirectly is something we cannot answer by looking at the structure of reciprocity alone, as it has more to do with the content of the input and because the communicative path between the actors might take several turns. Reciprocity would thus be a too restrictive criterion, and not an apt one in the first place. In contrast to this the analysis of *perspectives* as the variable which examines the content of the actors' argumentation will help us to answer this question.

2. Perspectives

While reciprocity and all other DQI_m variables allow us to reconstruct the formal structures of political debates and the changes they undergo, the *perspectives* variable additionally sheds light on the content in the form of the kinds of reasons the actors bring to the debates. On an aggregate level we can then also say something about the spectrum of reasons of the debates. This is important for although the reciprocal relationships of the actors just examined are a discursive property in their own right, the breadth or narrowness of a discourse must be approached in another way. In this view the range of perspectives can indeed be said to measure a form of inclusiveness, not in terms of the actors, but in terms of the extensiveness of the reasons given. Indeed, as the deliberative procedure allows every participant to raise every issue at every point in time, it spells out an inclusiveness of actors and arguments. This makes sense intuitively: the discourse principle allows the inclusion of all those affected by norms of action not least because all are affected in a different way, and integrating the different points of view reduces the fallibility of the decisions taken.

This section will thus examine the content of the justifications given in the debates, more precisely the focus will be on the range of reasons given. We will thereby stay within our analytical framework and focus on social change, cleavage structure, and the actors as the main predictors of discursive quality. In other words we will analyse whether the range of perspectives has increased through the decades, whether we can identify a pattern according to the cleavage structure similar to the one examined above, and whether the different actor categories can be distinguished according to the reasons they bring to the debates.

If we take a first look at the aggregated values we can see that more than half of validity claims raised by the participants of the debates are justified with reasons (55%), as table 7 below shows. Accordingly, the overall modal category is "none" (45.1%), though if we focus on the reasons given "political action" (18.3%) leads by some distance, followed by "facts" (7.7%) and close to this "negative consequences" (7.2%). All three categories are rather typical of political debates: political action is logically the most central category, and has additionally been conceptualised in a way that makes it more expansive than some of the other classifications; this might explain the distance between "political action" and the other justifications. The values for "facts" in turn, though maybe not entirely surprising, are of course most welcome from a normative point of view: they suggest that much of the debates and the actors' basis for their positions and decisions are informed by factual evidence rather than personal traits of actors, emotions, or other subjective impressions. Although this is not a direct argument against the much-perceived increase in the personalisation of

political discourse, it seems to balance some of the assumptions that accompany the seeming trend. The last of the "top three" values, "negative consequences", is equally plausible, particularly from the point of view of systems theory, or related to it Ulrich Beck's (1992) notion of "risk society": as modernisation becomes reflexive, it becomes its own topic – and problem, consequently the stability and future of society are examined from the point of view of risk (cf. Beck 1992; Giddens 1990). Equally, a system theoretic perspective in the

Table 7: Total perspectives (in %)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Perspectives	Action (economic)	98	3.3	3.3	3.3
	Action (general)	5	.2	.2	3.4
	Action (pol. process)	27	.9	.9	4.3
	Action (political)	551	18.3	18.3	22.6
	Basic values	60	2.0	2.0	24.6
	Belief, emotion	17	.6	.6	25.2
	Charisma, personality	4	.1	.1	25.3
	Condition (of situation)	30	1.0	1.0	26.3
	Cons. (negative)	217	7.2	7.2	33.5
	Cons. (positive)	60	2.0	2.0	35.5
	Consequences (general)	126	4.2	4.2	39.7
	Facts	231	7.7	7.7	47.4
	Interest (group)	52	1.7	1.7	49.1
	Interest (other)	1	.0	.0	49.2
	Interest (public)	22	.7	.7	49.9
	Juridical norm	70	2.3	2.3	52.2
	None	1357	45.1	45.1	97.3
	Opinion (third party)	33	1.1	1.1	98.4
	Pledge, promise	34	1.1	1.1	99.5
	Rule (application)	1	.0	.0	99.6
	Status, office	2	.1	.1	99.6
	Tradition (general)	7	.2	.2	99.9
	Tradition (negative)	1	.0	.0	99.9
	Tradition (positive)	3	.1	.1	100.0
	Total	3009	100.0	100.0	

line of Luhmann would suggest that as systems become more complex they increasingly need not only to monitor the outer boundaries of the system but also the inner divisions, as the on-going internal differentiations leads to an increase in complexity and results in the subsystems becoming environments for each other.

In this context the interesting question, to which we have alluded above, is of course whether we can observe any changes of these as well as the other values for *perspectives* across time and cleavage structure (section 2.1.), or the actor classes (section 2.2.). Let us now turn to examine these aspects more closely within our analytical framework.

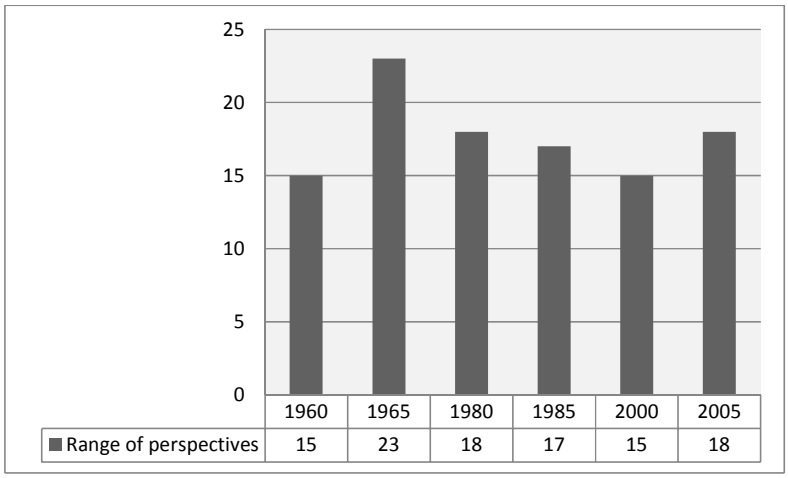
2.1. Time and cleavage structure

Over all the debates 1960-2005 the range of reasons given by actors is 25, but it is of course lower for the single debates and varies considerably between them.

Particularly noteworthy is the fact that contrary to the analyses of the reciprocity structures, where a clear pattern seemed to emerge following the material-cultural divide, the perspectives the actors bring to the debates do not correspond either to a steady

development over time, nor do they coincide with the cleavage type of the debate (see figure 15 below). Although material debates seem to display a lower range of perspectives in the 1960s and the 2000s, the same is not true for the 1980s, where both the material and the cultural debate can be said to display almost the same range of perspectives. Nor is there a clear trend in terms of a continuous development throughout the decades, rather the total of the perspectives brought to the debates oscillates between its lowest value of 15 in 1960 and

Figure 15: Range of perspectives 1960-2005



2000 and its highest of 23 in 1965. The relationship is at most curvilinear but we have no further indicators or assumptions which would allow us to substantiate a connection between *perspectives* and an underlying, i.e. confounding variable which would explain the pattern.

Taking a closer look at the content of the range of perspectives in the single debates in table 8 below, the impression of non-linearity is balanced to some extent as one thing becomes immediately apparent: the number of reasons as measured according to the *perspectives* category, seems to increase decade by decade, as the figures for "None" steadily decrease. This, however, has more to do with the reflexivity of the debates in general and will be further explored in the next section. Apart from this, some patterns emerge from the table, although not all of them point in the same direction: political action for instance becomes the dominant perspective in the justification of the actors' utterances. Previously almost on a par with the reference to facts, 13.9% political action versus 12.4% facts in 1960, it becomes the single most important argument when actors justify the points they make. Its increase might, however, not be due so much to the underlying social change but to the different nature of the debates in the single decades: unilateral disarmament in 1960 as well as Commonwealth immigration in 1965 are part of a broader policy complex, i.e. the issues are tied to larger debates, that is debates about the possibility of peace and security when the Cold War was reaching a height in 1960, and debates about the ongoing transition from Empire to Commonwealth and the search for a new national and transnational identity in 1965. By contrast the debates in the 1980s and paradigmatically even more those in 2000 and 2005 are significantly less ramified and interrelated with other issues: the fuel protest is very much just about fuel prices and taxes respectively, and even the more abstract anti terror legislation failed to broaden the issue beyond the actual parliamentary process, despite its resonance with some of the central achievements of British political and legal history such as *habeas corpus*.

If we examine the remaining figures we can make three observations. First, and quite generally, the single debates are characterised by specific justification profiles and consequently certain categories appear more prominently in some of them than in others. The comparatively high level of "economic action" (10%) in the fuel debate in 2000 is a case in point as economic concerns are the dominant factors in the debate. Second,

Table 8: Perspective profiles 1960-2005 (in %)

	year	1960	1965	1980	1985	2000	2005	Total
Perspective	None	50.2	53.9	45.4	48.3	34.6	40.4	45.1
	Action (general)	-	.2	.6	.2	-	-	.2
	Action (political)	13.9	10.6	18.3	20.3	23.6	21.4	18.3
	Action (pol. process)	-	.2	1.7	.7	1.0	1.4	.9
	Action (economic)	3.2	2.7	2.7	1.5	10.0	1.5	3.3
	Consequences	2.2	2.9	4.2	4.4	4.8	5.6	4.2
	Cons. (negative)	8.2	6.8	10.0	7.2	7.5	5.1	7.2
	Cons. (positive)	1.5	1.9	3.1	4.4	1.3	.6	2.0
	Interest (public)	.7	1.0	-	.4	.3	1.4	.7
	Interest (group)	2.5	2.1	2.5	.9	1.5	1.3	1.7
	Interest (other)	-	.2	-	-	-	-	.0
	Rule (application)	-	-	.2	-	-	-	.0
	Tradition (general)	-	.4	-	-	-	.6	.2
	Tradition (positive)	-	-	-	-	-	.4	.1
	Tradition (negative)	-	-	.2	-	-	-	.0
	Condition (of situation)	1.0	1.0	.2	.2	1.0	1.9	1.0
	Belief, emotion	1.0	.4	.6	.4	.3	.6	.6
	Basic values	1.7	1.5	.6	.4	.5	4.9	2.0
	Pledge, promise	.5	.2	-	6.6	-	.1	1.1
	Juridical norm	.2	.4	3.1	1.3	.5	5.6	2.3
	Status, office	-	.4	-	-	-	-	.1
	Charisma, personality	-	.4	.4	-	-	-	.1
	Opinion (third party)	.5	.8	1.7	1.5	.5	1.3	1.1
	Facts	12.4	11.8	4.4	1.3	12.8	5.8	7.7
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

For reasons of readability values equal to 0 have been replaced with a dash

throughout the debates appeals to interests, be they public or voiced in terms of the needs and wishes of a group or a single person, occur only sparsely. This is somewhat surprising, given that the political process is among other things very centrally about the search for the common good. It may well be, however, that the participants engage in this search by presenting competing views and arguments because the negotiation and discursive shaping of the common good is the central aim of the debate. In other words: rather than couching their contributions in terms of the common good from the outset, a more or less broadly accepted notion of the common good is one of the outcomes of the debate. On this view, the interactions on the whole might be less strategic than one would assume, although we have to acknowledge that it is only a very small aspect and surely not one which allows us to thoroughly distinguish between communicative and strategic action. Finally, the development of the single categories is uneven: just as for instance "political action" seems to exhibit a steady increase throughout the decades, so other categories, particularly the overall second largest of "facts" resists such an interpretation. Here, comparatively high levels in the 1960s are followed by rather low ones in the debates of the 1980s, before rising again, though very unevenly, in the 2000s. In this specific case, the cleavage structure seems to be stronger predictor than the developmental dynamic of social change as in all decades the material debates display higher levels of references of the actors to facts as justifications of their validity claims than the cultural ones. The same applies to the third largest category of "negative consequences", though if all three categories which record consequences are taken together, the pattern is less clear.

So far, we have focused on the development across the different issues, but not within them. Before we turn to the role of the actors we will therefore examine more closely the range of perspectives as they develop during the single debates. This will allow us to determine whether the range of justifications increases or decreases as the debates progress, which is in turn tied to the question of "closure" Ferree et al. (2002) mention as criterion to distinguish whether political processes correspond more to the liberal tradition or rather follow the deliberative model. On their reading (see chapter III above) what they refer to as "representative" liberal theories, which are on the whole less demanding and complex than their participatory counterpart – or put the other way round: more realistic –, endorse a norm of closure, i.e. "a time at which all concerned can agree that the matter has been decided and the system moves on" (Ferree et al. 2002: 210). As we have seen, closure as measured by Ferree et al. through frame convergence is neither an adequate nor a sufficient indicator to adjudicate whether a given debate corresponds more to the deliberative ideal or not. Similarly, if we find the range of justifications to decrease, this does not necessarily mean that the debate does not conform more to the deliberative ideal: it may simply be a characteristic of the political process, and one which we expect from a deliberative public sphere, to filter out those reasons and perspectives which do not gain a broad enough support, so that generally towards the end of debates we find lower levels for *perspectives* than at the beginning or in the middle of it. One could even find arguments for a view contrary to Ferree et al., i.e. if deliberation is defined among other things by an inclusiveness of perspectives, then the more perspectives we find the higher the discursive quality of the debate. It is in any case important to note that deliberative theory does not postulate that we have to come to agree on one reason only. Even Habermas' position of a consensus for the same reasons which he advocates against Rawls' concept of an overlapping consensus (cf. Habermas 1993: 92ff., 1995; Rawls 1987, 1989, 1995), does not imply that the hypothetical end point of a debate is marked by the agreement of all participants on just one reason: I can think of several reasons why for instance the welfare state should be further extended – or restricted for that matter –, which all capture different dimensions of the issue, e.g. political, social, economic, personal, etc. that would be affected by corresponding legislation.

All we can say is that from a deliberative perspective we expect the range of perspectives to increase after the initial stages and approach its highest levels as the debate expands to all actors concerned, and that although as the debate progresses fewer additional reasons may be introduced in the process, we furthermore expect that the overall range of perspectives does not drop dramatically in the last stage of the debate as it approaches an institutional decision. In the context of deliberations without closure the discursive dynamic might be different, but as from the point of view of deliberative theory institutional decisions are mere provisional cuts in the on-going discussion, there is no reason why the deliberative quality in terms of the range of perspectives should diminish. Simone Chambers' (1999) empirical work on the deliberative processes with and without closure illustrates the point very well (see chapter III above). As mentioned above Chambers examined the differences between deliberative conferences discussing the constitutional impasse with which Canada was faced in the early 1990s and the referendum campaign which followed this initial bottom-up process. Her central finding was that whereas the deliberations in the conferences were marked by great openness of the participants to listen to others and willingness to revise their claims the referendum campaign had the effect of solidifying the

positions of those involved and "fear of being a loser in the deal was being played up" (Chambers 1999: 5). In other words: strategic rather than communicative action became the dominant mode in the referendum campaign. Chambers explains the difference between the conferences and the campaign with the role decision-making played in the processes: while discussions in the conferences were primarily about gathering points of view and their deliberations were thus unburdened from having to find a verdict, the referendum by contrast was directly tied to an institutional process resulting in a vote (cf. Chambers 1999: 5f.). In general terms we can thus tentatively formulate that the more the range of perspectives decreases in a debate the more strategic action dominates, whereas if it remains stable or increases the more the deliberative side comes to the fore. This, however, only holds for the last stage of the deliberative process, as we have pointed out above that stages of the expansion of the overall argumentative repertoire at the beginning are followed by stages of contraction in the middle, where unconvincing arguments are filtered out by the participants.

Bearing these considerations in mind, we can now turn to the following figures which illustrate the development of the range of perspectives in the single debates.[20]

Figure 16: Range of perspectives (1960)

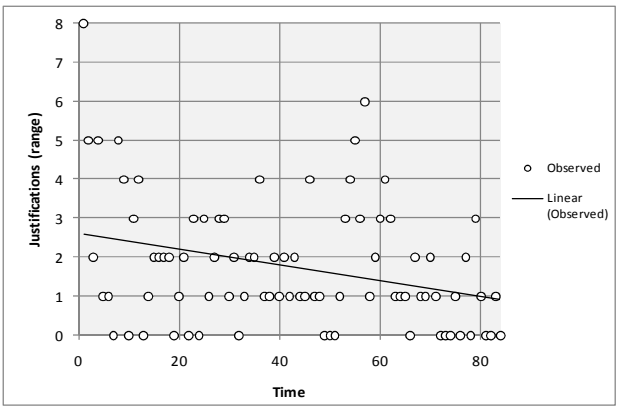


Figure 17: Range of perspectives (1965)

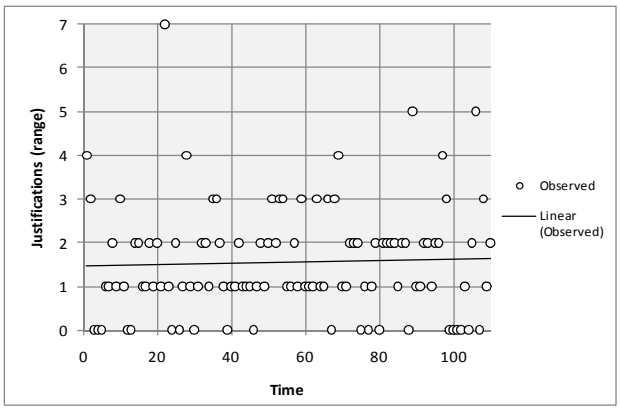


Figure 18: Range of perspectives (1980)

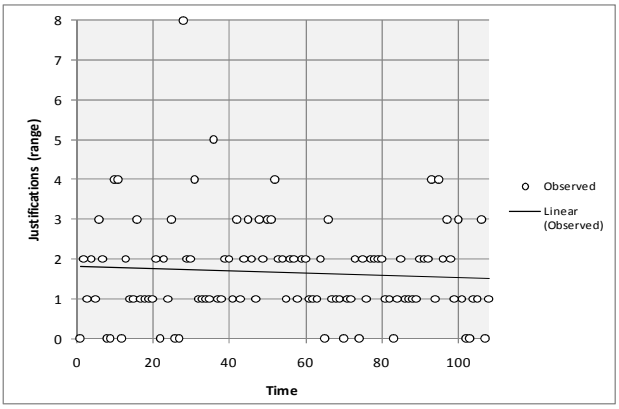


Figure 19: Range of perspectives (1985)

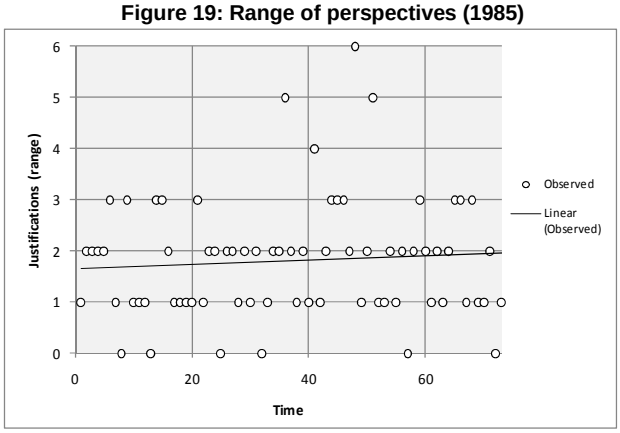
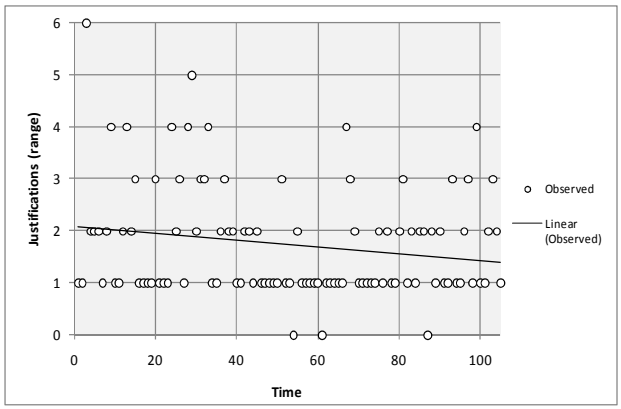
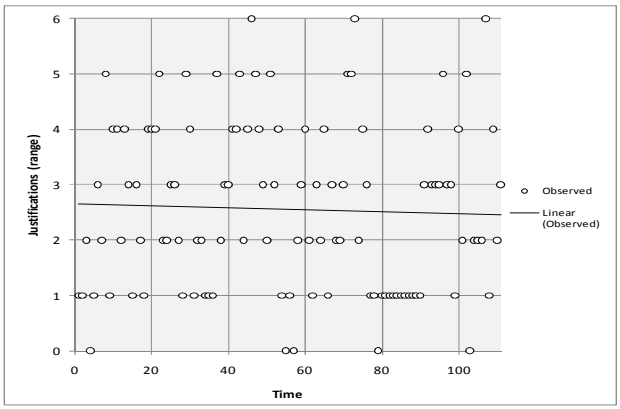


Figure 20: Range of perspectives (2000)

Figure 21: Range of perspectives (2005)

[20] The way the variable perspectives is coded we cannot say how many different justifications are uttered by one speaker in an utterance as we code only the content of the first one. Therefore, the next higher level which allows us to aggregate the data and say something about the range of perspectives in the debate is that of the article.





The most important finding seems to be that although as we have seen further above there is no clear emerging pattern in the overall range of perspectives in terms of time or cleavage type having a major effect, the detailed figures of the development of the range of perspectives within each debate gives us at least the indication of a trend, albeit with some qualifications to be made. Leaving aside for the moment the development in the 2005 debate, we can say that in all material debates the range of perspectives decreases as the issue approaches an institutional decision, while the reverse is the case for the cultural debates: the more the debate progresses the more different perspectives are introduced in the discussion. And while the anti-terror legislation debate in 2005 does not entirely correspond to this pattern, we have to take into account that this debate shows already an unusually high range of perspectives when the analysis begins, thereby leaving little room for additional increase. This is further corroborated by the general descriptive statistics for the *perspectives* variable as a whole: although the anti-terror legislation debate does not display the highest overall range, its mean is well beyond the 2.0 threshold and significantly higher than that of the other debates, while the variance is lower as that of the 1960 debate on unilateral disarmament (see table 9 below).

Table 9: Descriptive statistics of range of perspectives (1960-2005)

Year	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
1960	84	8	.0	8	1.7619	1.62525	2.641
1965	110	7	.0	7	1.5545	1.26045	1.589
1980	108	8	.0	8	1.6574	1.24677	1.554
1985	73	6	.0	6	1.8082	1.16258	1.352
2000	105	6	.0	6	1.7429	1.09218	1.193
2005	111	6	.0	6	2.5586	1.52366	2.322

Two questions have to be asked in relation to our findings: first, can the trends be explained by any contextual characteristic common to cultural and material debates respectively, and second – and more important still, what are the implications of the results for the deliberative and hence the democratic quality of the debates, i.e. can cultural debates generally be said to be more deliberative than material ones?

One interpretation we made above in relation to the reciprocity structures seems also to hold in the present context: material debates such as the one analysed here, which are driven at least at the time of analysis by the periphery or by non-centre representatives of them, e.g. the unions in 1980, or “Farmers for Action” in 2000, necessarily have a more

narrow focus, if their concerns are to become the topic of a wider debate. Or in other words: at the time of becoming a wider public issue whose discursive residues we can trace in the media the topic and the arguments have already been refined through discussions in the more peripheral parts of the public sphere. This is not necessarily the case for the cultural debates analysed which, as we have seen, are more driven by the political centre and whose beginning sometimes coincides with the start of the analysis. Unlike material debates, whose discursive refining and filtering processes occur before our analysis sets in and at least to some extent also take place outside the media, cultural debates seem to display a different dynamic. In terms of public sphere models this means that both the "mobilisation model" and the "inside access" model lead to a widening of a debate which can be observed in the media as most issues articulated by the centre are newsworthy and because the debate expands very quickly from a rather restricted number of centre actors, e.g. the government, to include other actors from the political centre and above all from the other parts of society. "Outside initiative" debates in turn only spill over into the media once they are focused enough, which might have as its corollary that their expansion stage occurred before and that at the time of analysis they are discursively "contracting", as it were. The upshot of this is that the increase of the range of perspectives we can observe in the cultural debates and conversely the decrease of the spectrum of justifications in the material debates may be due to the inherent dynamics of the different public sphere modes.

Having said this, there is of course no denying that the range of perspectives generally increases in the cultural debates – or is on a very high overall level in the case of the 2005 debate –, whereas it decreases in all of the material debates. Since we sampled cultural and material debates because we conjectured that there might be systematic differences between them, it seems reasonable to further evaluate material and cultural debates separately. If we take the decrease of the range of points of view as a – however indirect – indicator of the presence of strategic moments in the communication between the actors, then within the material debates the unilateral disarmament issue of 1960 is marked by the greatest amount of strategic action. The union picketing rights issue by contrast is discussed in less strategic terms, whereas the fuel debate falls somewhere between the two. The cultural debates in turn display a different pattern: both the Commonwealth immigration issue of 1965 and the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985 show a steady increase which is almost parallel, whereas the 2005 debate on anti-terror legislation which starts on a high level, sees a slow decrease in the justification range. On this view, the latter mentioned debates of each type, i.e. those of 1960 and 2005, are the ones which display the highest amount of strategic action. These results, however, should be regarded as temporary, for we have yet to examine the rationality of the debates, and more immediately the role of the actors in relation to the range of justifications. Additionally, as we have already mentioned, being the debate with the highest mean value, the 2005 debate seems to occupy a special status which has to be taken into account.

Still, the overall outcomes so far leave us somewhat with a puzzle, or put in other words they confirm our assumptions about the complexity and the multidimensionality of deliberative model, for they partly contradict our findings of the analysis of the reciprocity structure. More precisely, they contrast the centre/non-centre reciprocity, which apart from the 1960s, where the values for both debates are very close, takes on its highest values in material debates (see above). These, however, are exactly those debates which, without further contextual considerations, are marked throughout by decreasing ranges of

justifications. The problem can be partly mitigated if we turn to the reciprocity of the non-centre towards the centre actors as these values parallel our findings: cultural debates display a higher level of non-centre/centre reciprocity and increasing ranges of perspectives in contrast to material debates. Nevertheless, we should be wary of suggesting a causal relationship, not least because some of the differences between the reciprocity values for the cultural and the material debates are so small that they could hardly explain the direction of the development of the range of perspectives takes. Furthermore, neither the dialogic intensity of the debates as a whole nor the dialogic presence of specific actors seems to parallel the development of the justification range. Yet, before making any statements in this respect we first need to investigate the relationship of the actors in the debates to the range of perspectives.

2.2. Actors

Before we go into more detail about the content of the single actor classes' contributions to the range of justifications in each debate, we will first have a summary look at the overall range of perspectives to see whether any meaningful differences emerge. Table 10 gives an overview of the range of justifications for each class of actors per debate as well as in total.

Table 10: Range of justifications by actor class 1960-2005

Year	Actor class					Total Range
	"Uncivil" society	Civil society	Media	Economy	Centre	
1960	-	12	10	10	14	15
1965	-	15	13	7	17	21
1980	-	11	11	14	16	18
1985	4	5	10	-	15	17
2000	-	8	10	9	14	15
2005	1	15	17	2	16	18
Total	5	20	19	16	22	24

The first thing to note certainly is that the political centre employs the widest range of justifications overall and in almost all of the debates. If we take into account that the centre also comprises the political representatives and that our analyses extend to the (temporary) end of the debates the result is hardly surprising. As we remarked earlier, the actor classes are not to be thought of as hermetically closed, and that if we model the centre to include the political parties we can expect various direct and indirect spill-over process taking place between the other sectors of society and the centre. It is all the more remarkable, therefore, that in the anti-terror legislation debate in 2005 the centre comes second to the media, although the distance is the smallest possible. Yet, it is a result which is in a certain way paralleled by the outcomes for the reciprocity structures as it is precisely that debate where the media display their strongest dialogic presence, scrutinising critically above all the reasons brought forth by the Government in support of the Bill. It makes sense to assume that the heightened discursive engagement of the media also finds its expression in a wider range of justifications. Moreover, the Government is very much on the defensive in this debate, which means that it only insufficiently manages to counter the arguments from the opposition in and outside of Westminster.

As with the general transformation of the range of justifications over the single debates since 1960, so there is no clear pattern within the single actor classes which would correspond to a continuous development over time. But for the centre, the media and the

periphery the cleavage structure seems to carry some explanatory power as all of these actor classes display a greater range of justifications in cultural compared to material debates, with the exception of the 1985 debate, which might be due to the different dynamics of the two political processes, particularly if they correspond to some degree to the "outside initiative" model (material debates) and the "inside access" or "mobilisation" model (cultural debates). The reverse relationship, without exceptions, exists in turn between the economy and the material debates: in all of these debates the economic actors display a higher range of reasons than in the cultural debates. This does not necessarily have to be explained by appealing to the dissimilar discursive dynamics of different public sphere models, for as the values for 1985 suggest the range of justifications it is more readily explained by the degree of presence – or by the total absence in 1980 – of the economic actors in the debates, which we will further investigate in the section on the inclusiveness of the actors, and which obviously has an effect on the other deliberative dimensions.

Finally, it is interesting to note that that debate where the non-centre actors are most successful in the short run, i.e. the fuel protest, where at the end there is a clear change of government policy in the direction of their demands is that one which is characterised by the lowest overall range of perspectives (together with 1960) and consequently by the lowest or second lowest values for all the actors involved, particularly the economy. This is remarkable in so far as these values are very close to the 1960 debate, where in turn the non-centre actors in the end utterly failed, again in a short term view, to the change the policy of the government – or the opposition for that matter. The difference between the two debates, as we have discussed them so far and which might help to explain the different outcomes, can be seen in the high levels of mutual reciprocity between centre and non-centre actors on the one hand, and in the different kind of goods, abstract in the case of the disarmament debate as opposed to very concrete in the fuel debate, and the resulting firm bargaining position in the latter case.

If we take a look at the overall content of the actors' justifications we get the following picture as displayed in table 11 below, which can be interpreted as an argumentation profile. Unsurprisingly, the values mirror to some extent the results for the general range of justifications reported above: within each class "political action" is that reason to which actors most often refer, followed by "facts" and "negative consequences". Economic actors and the political centre are similar in their justification profile in that approximately 50% of their validity claims carry no justification. This contrasts sharply with the periphery and even more with the media as with both only about one third or less of their validity claims remain unjustified. Additionally, and because of this, the bare figures allow us to see that although economic actors justify their validity claims as all other actor classes mostly by referring to "political action", the absolute value is smaller than that of civil society, despite the periphery's overall smaller amount of total validity claims. The economic actors differ further from the rest – the "uncivil" society excluded – in that their two most articulated reasons, "political action" and "facts", which coincide with those of the other actor classes, are very close together (12.7% and 11.5% respectively), whereas the political centre, the media, and civil society make a more pronounced use of "political action" as a justification of their validity claims. This might be explained by the fact that economic policies have a more direct effect, or that the effect can be estimated in figures – accurate or not –, which is

not the case for many policy issues which concern civil society; therefore the two preferred forms of argumentation are close together.

If we follow the line of argumentation set out above that the centre directly or indirectly picks up the reasons articulated by actors from the other parts of society, then the argumentative spectrum of the centre should not only be the largest, it should also include all the different reasons voiced by the other actors, albeit to a different degree. Yet, as we can see in two instances this is not the case, namely for "positive" and "negative tradition". Yet the figures for these two categories are so small that they might fall within the limits of possible errors in coding. Additionally, the transfer or spill-over between non-centre actors and the centre does not necessarily mean that the deliberative process of the centre mirrors exactly what goes on in other parts of society. On one hand the proportions of the single justifications are again different and do not reflect the justification profile of any of the actors nor a mean value, etc. On the other the reasons given by the other actors are re-articulated by the centre and thereby also transformed. All we can thus expect is that the generic categories, i.e. above all "consequences" and "tradition (general)", are reflected in the argumentative repertoire of the centre, provided that the categories display a sufficient amount of cases.

Table 11: Content of justifications by actor class (total)

		Actor class					
		"Uncivil" society	Civil society	Media	Economy	Centre	Total
Perspectives	None	1	103	121	219	907	1351
	Action (general)	0	2	1	1	1	5
	Action (political)	1	68	99	52	327	547
	Action (pol. Process)	0	1	3	3	20	27
	Action (economic)	0	15	26	15	42	98
	Consequences	2	16	23	11	73	125
	Cons. (negative)	0	19	33	47	117	216
	Cons. (positive)	0	4	12	8	36	60
	Interest (public)	0	5	4	1	12	22
	Interest (group)	0	4	11	7	29	51
	Interest (other)	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Rule (application)	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Tradition (general)	0	3	1	0	3	7
	Tradition (positive)	0	2	1	0	0	3
	Tradition (negative)	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Condition (of situation)	1	3	7	0	19	30
	Belief, emotion	0	5	5	3	4	17
	Basic values	0	9	14	2	35	60
	Pledge, promise	2	1	6	0	25	34
	Juridical norm	0	10	12	1	47	70
	Status, office	0	0	0	0	2	2
	Charisma, personality	0	3	0	0	1	4
	Opinion (third party)	0	6	2	2	23	33
	Facts	0	31	39	35	124	229
Total		7	310	420	408	1849	2994

1=uncivil society, 2=civil society, 3=media, 4=economic actors, 5=political centre

Behind the issue of discursive transfer between the actor classes, above all between the non-centre actors and the centre, lies the same question which was central to the investigation of the reciprocity structures: to what degree are the actors from the other parts of society and the political centre connected? Put in other words and in the context of the present focus on the actors' justifications we thus have to ask whether the results of the range of perspectives lend support to the interpretation of the debates as constituting a

homogenous public sphere or whether they are rather indicative of a fragmented sphere of isolated publics. In order to answer this question we need to take a closer look at the range of perspectives in the single debates, which will additionally allow us to examine if time or cleavage structure play a defining role, and if the emerging patterns do in any way correspond to those we found in the analysis of the reciprocity structures.

The figures below present the results graphically and allow us to focus on the main findings.[21] When comparing the actors' argumentative repertoire in the debate, it becomes

Figure 22: Justification range 1960 (% within actor class)

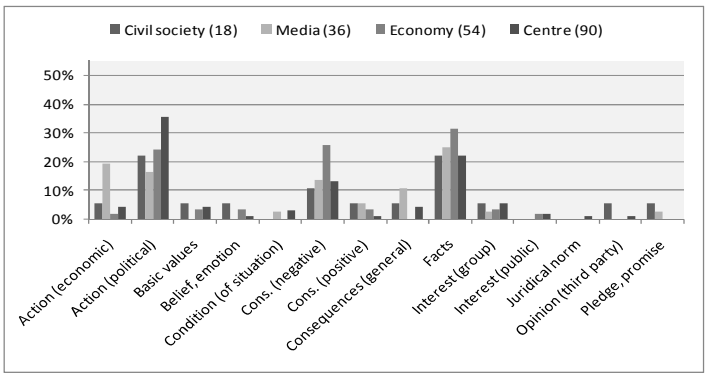


Figure 23: Justification range 1965 (% within actor class)

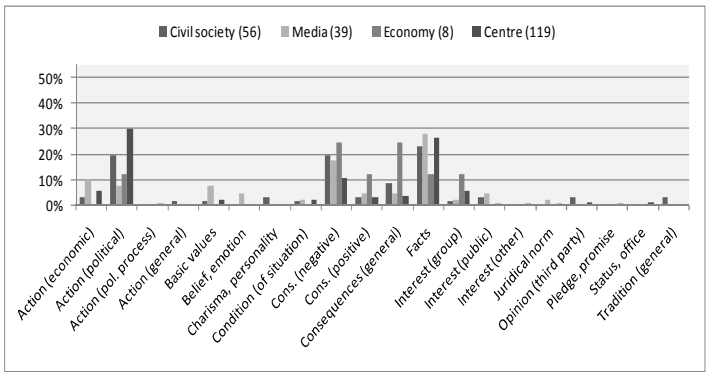


Figure 24: Justification range 1980 (% within actor class)

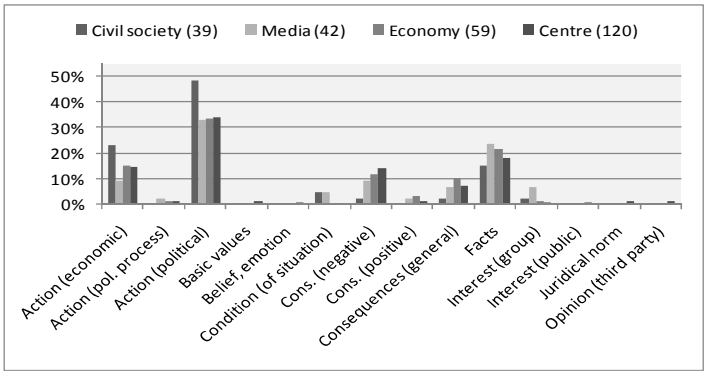


Figure 25: Justification range 1985 (% within actor class)

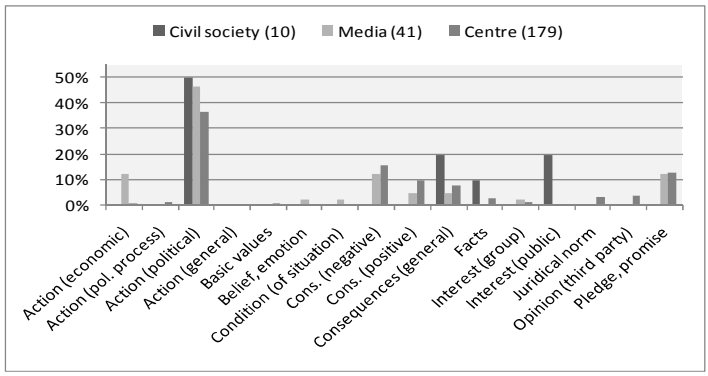


Figure 26: Justification range 2000 (% within actor class)

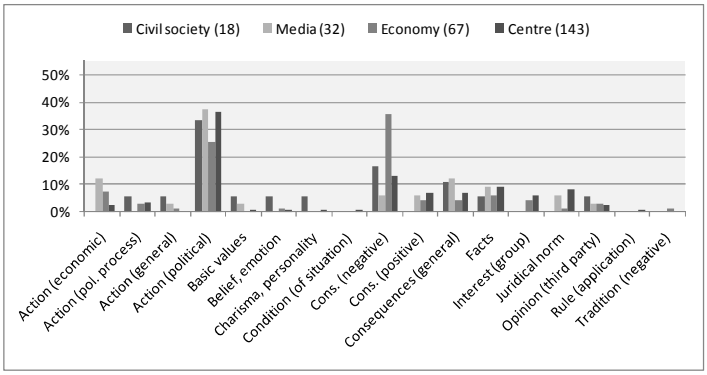
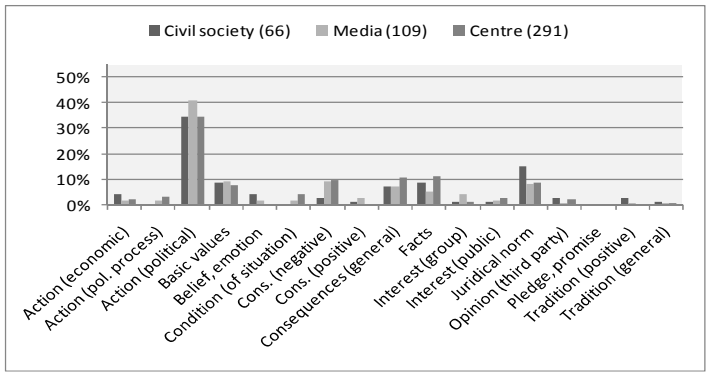


Figure 27: Justification range 2005 (% within actor class)



apparent that neither time nor debate type (material/cultural) seem to play a decisive role in the employed range of justifications; rather the debate topic appears to be the dominant

[21] Due to the low number of justifications, the "uncivil society" (five justifications in total 1960-2005) was excluded from the results. The figures give an overview of the range of perspectives and show the proportional distribution within each actor class, i.e. the bars for each actor class add up to 100%. However, as the relationship between the actor classes within the same justification can be misleading, the absolute figures can be found in appendix 1.

factor. If at all, time could be seen to have a minor effect on the distribution of the actors' range of reasons: both debates of the 1960s appear to be characterised by three justifications which dominate the discussion, ("political action", "negative consequences" and "facts"), whereas the debates in the 1980s as well as the issues discussed publicly in 2000 and 2005 show only one such dominant justification ("political action"). However, as mentioned above, time might not be the decisive factor after all, as the debates are also characterised by a further dimension not included in the analytical framework: both unilateral disarmament and Commonwealth immigration are "broad" debates in the sense that they touch different aspects of society, whereas e.g. the fuel protest in 2000 by comparison is more "narrow" in the sense that it is only about the Government's role in the rising prices of and taxes on petrol. Yet, a closer look reveals that particularly in the fuel debate two other justifications play a major role in the debate as the participants refer in the majority also to "economic action" and "facts". If there is thus a trend in the development over time it seems to be related to the increasing dominance of "political action"; we will investigate in the next chapter dealing with the inferential parts of the statistical analysis whether there is an overall widening of the range of justification or not.

More important than the inferential aspects of the development of specific justifications in the present context, however, is the question whether the non-centre actors succeed in transferring their range of reasons to the centre, or put the other way round the question is to what extent the centre is responsive to the justifications and hence the points of view uttered by non-centre actors. As mentioned above, it is unrealistic to expect the centre to reflect the whole range of reasons we find in the validity claims raised by the other societal actors, although as we have seen in all but one case the centre does display the widest range of reasons. Additionally, it would be equally too demanding to expect the centre to be responsive in the same way to each of the non-centre actors. Rather, the deliberative quality should be judged critical in those instances where a substantial amount of the reasons of non-centre actors are not picked up by the political centre. Additionally, we will have a look at those reasons which are completely ignored by the centre to see whether there is any systematic distortion in the discursive transfer.

Examining the figures and the corresponding tables in appendix 1 we can see that some of the reasons mentioned by the non-centre actors are not picked up by the centre and that these ignored reasons share certain similarities.[22] "Tradition" in its general or more specific and evaluative form is only rarely mentioned as a reason by the participants and is one of the few justifications which does not become part of the centre's argumentative repertoire. The "condition of the situation", "action (general)", "belief/emotion", "pledge/promise", as well as the "charisma/personality" of an actor are the other reasons where the centre remains unresponsive. Most of these reasons are articulated by civil society and by the media, whereas the economical actors play only a marginal role. If we keep in mind the result of the section on reciprocity that most of the time the centre is its own interlocutor, it is easy to see why in some cases the centre fails to be responsive to the non-centre actors' – and particularly civil society's way of reasoning. The failed uptake given to reasons such as "belief/emotion", "condition of the situation", and "charisma/personality" is due to their

[22] Together, the tables of all of the six debates occupy too much space, therefore they have been put into appendix 1.

subjective points of view, whereas politics, above all within the sphere of the political-administrative centre, is about justifications which we can expect to be shared intersubjectively on a broad base. Yet, this is not necessarily the case for reasons that are strongly tied to the inner world of the speaker such as beliefs, which is why they are filtered out by the centre.[23] This bears potential problems for the political process, for although systematic deficiencies produced by the political-administrative centre "are first assimilated 'privately'", as Habermas (1996: 365) writes, "that is, [they] are interpreted within the horizon of a life history intermeshed with other life histories in the contexts of shared lifeworlds", apparently not of all these aspects and vocabularies translate directly into that of the political centre. This is so because, as Habermas explains "[b]esides religion, art, and literature, only the spheres of 'private' life have an existential language at their disposal, in which such socially generated problems can be assessed in terms of one's own life history. Problems voiced in the public sphere first become visible when they are mirrored in personal life experiences. To the extent that these experiences find their concise expression in the languages of religion, art, and literature, the 'literary' public sphere in the broader sense, which is specialized for the articulation of values and world disclosure, is intertwined with the political public sphere" (Habermas 1996: 365). It is important to note that although the spheres of the existential and of the political intersect, they are not to be thought of as being identical – nor do they need to be, as the potential problem only arises when experiences of the lifeworld cannot be translated into the vocabulary of the political public sphere. As we can clearly see, for most of the time this is not the case: "belief, emotion" for instance makes up only 1% of all the justifications uttered, and the same is true for "tradition". We have to bear in mind additionally that at the time our analysis begins the political process has already advanced to a stage where the existential vocabulary, although not totally absent from the debate, has for the most part been re-articulated in the language of the political system, and what we can see are the communicative residuals of the private lifeworlds.[24]

Turning to the first question, i.e. whether there is any systematic distortion regarding the transfer of the more pronounced justifications, we can see that the reasons the actors refer to most are the same across all classes: "political action", "negative consequences", and "facts" are used most of the time when members of civil society as well as the other non-centre and centre actors justify their validity claims. In this regard there is no notable loss of translation between the non-centre and the centre actors, with one exception. In 1980 the economic actors, that is mainly the unions, justify their validity claims in over 35% of the time by referring to "negative consequences", but the political centre, i.e. mainly the Government, addresses the issue in only a little more than 13% of its utterances in the

[23] The reasoning behind the lack of the centre's responsiveness towards "traditions" as justification is similar as it confirms that in modern societies, due to their increasing systemic complexity, "the zones of overlapping lifeworlds and shared background assumptions shrink" as Habermas states (Habermas 1996: 25), and hence customs and traditions lose their integrating force – and their communicative status as a shared reason.

[24] These justifications are not to be equated with the private use of reason in Kant's sense, but we might refer to it the use of private reason in the sense that the convincing force of the reasons given, in the liminal case, only applies to the speaker as they remain ultimately inaccessible to all other possible interlocutors, i.e. the internal connection between validity claims and sustaining reasons is lost. As Habermas writes in the *Theory of Communicative Action*: "idiosyncratic expressions follow rigid patterns; their semantic context is not set free by the power of poetic speech or creative construction and thus has a merely privatistic character. The spectrum ranges from harmless whims , such as a special liking for the smell of rotten apples, to clinically noteworthy symptoms, such as a horrified reaction to open spaces. Someone w h o explains his libidinous reaction to rotten apples by referring to the 'infatuating', 'unfathomable', 'vertiginous' smell, or who explains his panicked reaction to open spaces by their 'crippling', 'leaden', 'sucking' emptiness, will scarcely meet with understanding in the everyday contexts of most cultures" (Habermas 1984a: 17).

same way. Given that the conflict is primarily between the unions and the Government we can say that the unions failed in presenting the issue convincingly from the angle of negative consequences as the Government, but also civil society (16.7%) and above all the media (6.3%) do not attach the same weight to the unions' argumentative perspective.[25] In all other cases the non-centre actors succeed in getting their perspectives across to the political centre – or the other way round, as the centre equally succeeds in getting its argumentative views to the other actors.

2.3. Conclusion

The mutual argumentative orientation of the actors we have just examined in certain sense can be interpreted to display the actors' reciprocity with regard to the contents of each others validity claims and as such it paints a different and more positive picture of the discursive relationship between the actors. Judging from the range and the contents of the perspectives the actors bring to the debate, the public sphere appears more coherent than the one we inferred from the reciprocity structures alone. There are two main reasons for this change in perspective. On the one hand most of the views uttered by civil society and other non-centre actors are reflected in the centre's argumentative repertoire, and as we have seen above there are specific reasons for those which are not: they are not uttered in a way that is accessible to the political-administrative centre. Still, these utterances are important and we will come back to some of the roles they may play. On the other hand, there is a significant amount of overlap regarding those justifications to which actors appeal most often: for all the actors "political action", "negative consequences", and "facts" are the central categories in the deliberative process.

Judging alone from the values these categories take on we would not be able to infer any differences in the reciprocal relationships between the actors, contrasting thereby our results of the section above. As we mentioned in that context the bare reciprocity structure is a conservative measure as many of the relationships between the actors are of an indirect nature and thus pass under our analytical radar. Yet, there is another reason why we find such a substantial congruence between the different actors' main justifications: "political action", "negative consequences", and "facts" appear to be the invariants of political debate in general. Apart from specific – including private – reasons, political issues are always discussed in terms of related actions; they are further always discussed in terms consequences they might produce, and interestingly enough mostly in terms of negative consequences to be avoided; and they are finally always debated in relation to facts which support one or the other position and serve as an impartial instance of adjucation. While "political action" is that category which is in itself constitutive of the political process, "negative consequences" and "facts" draw attention to the fact that apart from conferring legitimacy onto a decision, politics is always also about reducing the risk of the unknown future (see also the introductory remarks to this section).

[25] One could also say that they failed to frame the issue from that way, though framing refers primarily to the narrative structures of discourse (cf. Entman 1993, 2007), whereas the deliberative perspective emphasises the argumentative dimension. Approaches which seek to combine the two dimensions can be found in Druckman and Nelson (2003), Druckman (2004), or Xenos (2000).

Other views such as "basic values" are either presented on their own or have been translated in the vocabulary of the main categories by the centre. It might seem puzzling that "public interest" and "group interest" achieve only very low scores, given that they seem to be so central to political debate. The reason for their almost complete absence in all of the analysed debates can be explained by the actors' basic argumentative orientation: they submit their views as being representative of the public interest, they argue from the point of view of the public interest or what they perceive it to be, so that it is only rarely appealed to explicitly. The debates are thus not so much about weighing arguments couched in terms of group interest or the common good against one another; rather they appear as a cooperative search for the articulation and argumentative justification of what the point of view of the common good could be.

The argumentative openness of the centre to the other perspectives plays an important role in this process and shows that beyond the actors' reciprocal relationships arguments and points of view, the actors outside the political centre succeed for the most part in enlarging directly or indirectly, e.g. via the media, the range of perspectives of the political centre, where the decisions are ultimately taken. Inherent in the transfer, i.e. the argumentative negotiation and re-articulation of the validity claims of the actors from civil society, the media, and the economy by the actors from the centre therefore is also an element of recognition in Axel Honneth's (1992) sense of *Anerkennung*, and the analysis of the debates allow us to trace its intersubjective constitution. From a perspective of recognition the public sphere is part of a social infrastructure which allows individuals and groups to freely give their views on contested norms of action and to be recognised as autonomous actors. As we have observed before the public sphere is then both the medium and the outcome of these processes and its empirical analysis allows us to assess the degree to which this infrastructure is undistorted or "undamaged" (*unversehrt*) to use Adorno's term and so to what extent the preconditions for intersubjective recognition of the other and the other's point of view are given. As with the deliberative model it is important to see the mutual precondition of the two aspects for each other – Habermas might speak of "co-originality": recognition and deliberation on a societal scale can only take place in a public sphere, which in turn is constituted by deliberation and the existing forms of recognition. Both perspectives, the deliberative as well as the recognition based, suggest that despite external and internal constraints affecting the deliberations of the members of the political-administrative centre, the porousness and permeability of their sphere as well as that of the political public sphere in general is substantial. This general assessment notwithstanding we have also seen that single debates such as the Anglo-Irish Agreement show a severe lack of exactly these elements of social and moral infrastructure which Honneth addresses, and which are constitutive of at least the "inside access" model of the public sphere. And we have also seen what the consequences of such systematic distortions are: a vociferous and sustained campaign by those who felt their voices had been disregarded.[26]

Coming back to the concrete results of our analysis and the otherwise generally positive assessments, our findings regarding the difference between the three main justifications and

[26] Unlike Adorno's notion of integrity (*Unversertheit*) which carries overtones of victimhood of the unprotected and defenceless individual vis-à-vis a rampant instrumental rationality driving the machinery of society, Honneth's concept of the struggle for recognition recoups not only an intersubjective base on which the individual and collectives in modern societies can be theorised, it also gives them a motivational reason for engaging in public debates in the first place.

the rest clearly proves that for the most part it needs actors from different classes to achieve a spill-over effect of justifications to the centre. As a consequence of this, those validity claims which are justified in expressive terms are at a disadvantage, for they usually neither succeed in creating support across actor classes outside civil society, nor are they compatible with the vocabulary of the centre. Yet despite their seeming qualitative drawbacks and their marginal occurrence in quantitative terms they play an important role. On the one hand it would be short-sighted to identify expressivity only with those validity claims which articulate them most clearly. As Habermas (1981a, 1981b) shows among other things in the *Theory of Communicative Action*, we always raise three validity claims at the same time (to objective truth, normative rightness, and subjective truthfulness), but only one of them can be foregrounded in each utterance. Therefore, normative validity claims always have an expressive dimension in the background, which becomes more apparent in political ritual or symbolic events such as demonstrations or in spontaneous protests, etc. (cf. Edelman 1964, 1971).[27] In this way the expressive dimension contributes to creating newsworthy events, or personae, etc., and thereby helps to promote the normative concerns. The expressive dimension in these instances functions as an entry point into a practical discourse. On the other hand, and in as far as expressive validity claims are concerned – be they primarily linguistic or not – they are also connected to the realm of the aesthetic and thus have a world-disclosing capacity, unlike normative validity claims which are more connected to the solving of collective problems from an impartial point of view. Expressive validity claims have the ability to irritate the system, to use Luhmann's terminology, because as communicative *pièces de résistance* they confront it with a vocabulary or code different from its own – particularly the administrative dimension of politics. These expressive acts, however, remain connected to the centre through the internal structure of communicative action, Habermas speaks of "[t]he polar tension between world-disclosure and problem-solving [which] is held together within the functional matrix [(*Funktionsbündel*)] of ordinary language" (Habermas 1990b: 207), and through the normative requirement of the political centre to remain open to input from the other parts of society (cf. Habermas 1984a, 1981b, 1996).[28]

These theoretical considerations and the general positive empirical findings notwithstanding, we have also seen that the concrete development of the range of reasons within the debates takes, with one exception, different forms according to the cleavage structure. And while from the examination of *perspectives* alone we can draw only insufficiently robust conclusions about the degree of communicative or strategic action present in debates, we have seen that the two modes intersect in a way so as to form a continuum. We can therefore only ever speak of more or less strategic/communicative

[27] "Flash mobs" are a typical example of how the order of the validity claims can be subverted as they foreground the expressive in such a way that it becomes difficult for the onlooker to infer what the collective action, in the normative sense, is about. In the liminal case the world disclosing capacities of the expressive and aesthetic become disconnected from the problem solving capacities (cf. Habermas 1985c, particularly his excursus on the levelling of differences between literature and philosophy, p. 219ff., esp. 243), though even in these circumstances the world disclosing function of the expressive act would still be embedded in the public sphere and hence connected to everyday language which holds together the polar tension between its world disclosing and problem solving side (cf. ibid.). At a deeper, formal pragmatic level, the expressive-aesthetic validity dimension is connected to the regulative and the constative one through what Habermas has termed the "intermodal validity transfer" in *The Theory of Communicative Action* (cf. Habermas 1984a).

[28] When examining the repertoire of symbolic elements (cf. Edelman 1964, 1971) of social movements, the expressive-dramaturgical performances of their public self (cf. Goffman 1959), and the stories they tell (cf. Labov & Waletzky 1967) we might even say that the expressive is a vital communicative element in their struggle for recognition.

action as both modes are always present. Furthermore, in contrast to the *Theory of Communicative Action* where the strategic mode of interaction generally is viewed negatively from a normative point of view as it undermines the reaching of understanding (*Verständigung*) and promotes systemic forms of integration, Habermas takes a more nuanced stance in *Between Facts and Norms*. Here, the "Janus-faced" nature of law combining a normative (legitimacy) and a functionalist (facticity) side has the consequence that as political actors we can take on either a performative stance, where law "mobilizes and unifies the communicative freedom of citizens presumptively oriented to the common good" (Habermas 1996: 130), or an objectifying position, where "the system of rights unleashes the self-interested choice of individual subjects oriented by personal preferences" (ibid.: 129). These ideal modes of actor orientation seem to suggest that the two modes are mutually exclusive, but Habermas allows for more complexity, stating that in both modes "the space is provided for the extension and radicalization of existing rights" (Habermas 1996: 370), alluding thereby also to the dimension of recognition. Without developing the point into a lengthy argument about the co-existence of performative and objectifying stances, we can easily see that the two intersect not only on a theoretical level but also in the debates we have analysed. The mobilisation of the civil society in Northern Ireland by the unionist parties is a strategic act aimed, however, at reversing the existing law in order to institutionalise new legislation; a similar argument can be made of the fuel protest in 2000.

The analyses so far have revealed in more detail the deliberative structures in terms of the actors' reciprocal relationships and the argumentative repertoires they bring to the debates. But as we have seen in the analysis of the actors' range of justifications in the single debates (table 38 in appendix 1), there are considerable differences not only between the kinds of reasons uttered, but more generally between the amounts of reasons the participants employ. Similarly, rising or falling ranges of perspectives throughout the decades do not necessarily need to coincide with increasing or decreasing amounts of reasons. The next section will therefore focus on the level of rationality and trace the difference between the debates and between the different actor classes.

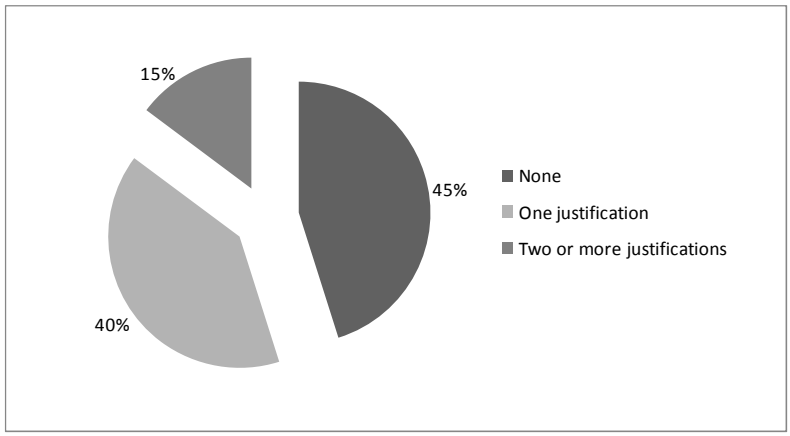
3. Reflexivity

The media have long been seen as culprits, accomplices, or certainly as one of the prime suspects in "dumbing down" the political culture and thereby the way we publicly talk about politics (cf. Barnett 1998). Coming from different theoretical traditions but reaching a similar conclusions, Walter Lippman's (1997 [1922]) *Public Opinion*, John Dewey's (1927) *The Public and its Problems* as well as later Horkheimer and Adorno's (1997 [1944]) *Dialectic of Enlightenment* voice early concerns about the vitality of the public sphere and the mass media. From the point of view of a theory which locates the emancipatory potential of society in speech such a diagnosis extends to all aspects of deliberation. We have already examined the structural transformations of the reciprocity structures between the actors as well as of the perspectives they bring to the debates, while this section will focus on the aspect of reflexivity as it is intimately connected to the "dumbing down" thesis. Quite apart from questions of reciprocity, range of perspectives, inclusiveness, and so on, the thesis says in

its most simple form that levels of reflexivity are on a decline, and it is precisely this aspect which we will examine in the following paragraphs.

Before we turn to the role of time and the cleavage structures on the one hand and the actors on the other, we will first take a summary look at the basic distribution of *reflexivity*.

Figure 28: Reflexivity total



As we can see, on the whole the actors justify their validity claims in more than half (55%) of the cases, and conversely a little more than 45% of the raised validity claims are without justification. If we expect participants of political debates to justify each and every validity claim they raise, we might come to the conclusion that even on this summary view the glass of deliberative quality is half empty rather than half full. And we could indeed appeal to Habermas as he states in his formulation of the discourse principle (D) that "all those possibly affected should be able to accept the norm *on the basis of good reasons*" (Habermas 1996: 103, emphasis added), and later makes the central point in adapting Cohen's criteria of the deliberative procedure that discourses should be free from external or internal constraints and only governed by the "unforced force of the better argument" (ibid.: 306).

Yet a more realistic view of political discussion need not contradict our theoretical basis. For to postulate the force of the better argument as the cornerstone of the political legitimation process is not equal to saying that every validity claims needs to be justified. Indeed, it is Habermas (cf. Habermas 1981a) himself who clearly states that the validity claims we raise in our interactions with others only need to be redeemed with good reasons if our interlocutors take a "no" position towards them. In these cases we enter a discourse, in which the validity of our speech act offer itself becomes the topic, whereas otherwise we remain within the framework of communicative (or strategic) action and the interaction simply moves on. As communicative action and discourse intersect not only in private realm of our everyday lives but also in political discourse, we should probably lower our expectations regarding the appropriate level of justification of a debate. Even in a confrontational discourse many validity claims are undisputed or are simply repetitions of discursive fragments which have been justified before. As far as the present study is concerned, we further have to take into account that we are dealing with journalistic texts, not with parliamentary debates, nor with discussion groups, etc. which all allow the participants to present elaborated arguments. Media texts in turn are marked, at least as far as some formats such as news reports are concerned, by what resembles sometimes a narrative collage of sound-bites; fully fledged arguments only rarely make their way into an

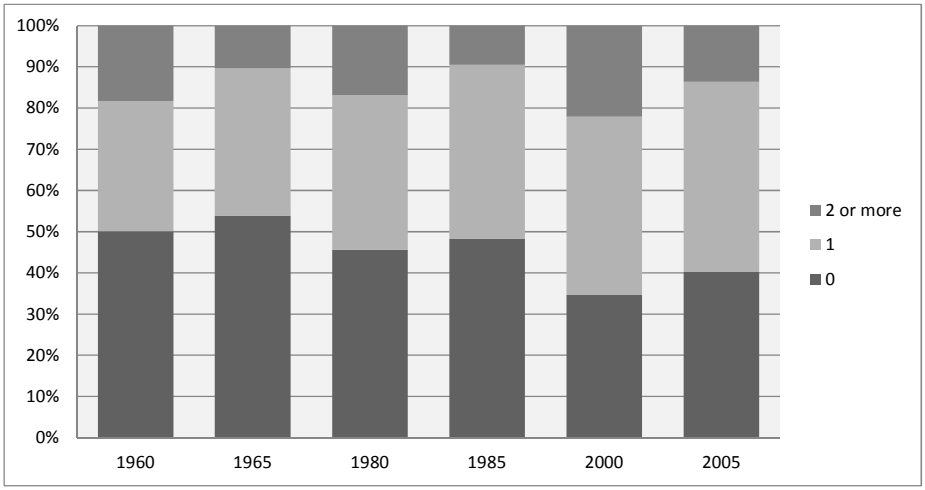
article, and positions are contrasted by their most pointed statements, not necessarily by their most profound arguments.

A consequence of the aforementioned is that in order to be able to assess the reflexivity at all, we once again need to take on a comparative perspective. We will thus first examine the different debates in relation to social change and cleavage structure (section 3.1.) and then with regard to the actors (section 3.2.).

3.1. Time and cleavage structure

Although *perspectives* and *reflexivity* do not measure the same dimension of deliberative quality, they are closely connected through the way they have been operationalised. As the range of justifications did not show any pronounced trends, at least not on the aggregate level of the single debates, it is interesting to see whether the same holds for the levels of rationality. Figure 29 presents the results, giving the percentages of the total distribution of validity claims in the debates according to the level of justification. Contrary to the

Figure 29: Reflexivity 1960-2005



analysis of the range of perspectives two clear patterns seem to emerge here. On the one hand there is a continuous increase in the levels of reflexivity between the decades, on the other hand material debates appear to be more reflexive than cultural ones throughout the sample. While the first result is surprising given that it is not mirrored in the least by the findings for the range of reasons, which develop very unevenly over time, the second contrasts the fact that the material debates are those which on the whole display lower ranges of perspectives (except for 1980/1985).

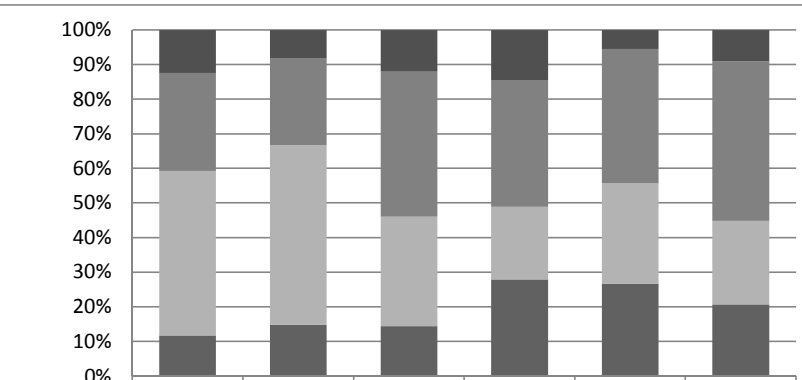
We will examine below in the context of the actors' role in more detail the relationship between material and cultural debates with reflexivity. As for now we can try to find an explanation for the development of this deliberative dimension by referring to the goods involved in the discussions, the type of public sphere constituted by the debates, and the degree to which the debates touch on the British society's self-conception. The goods dimension parallels the material/cultural divide and simply means that when examined by decade, the more concrete goods are discussed on higher levels of reflexivity, whereas the debates of the more abstract ones involve fewer reasons. We might have suspected the opposite relationship to be true as it seems equally plausible to posit that because cultural

debates revolve around more abstract goods they are embedded in a tighter network of reasons: particularly the discussion on Commonwealth immigration in 1965 shows how far-reaching and ramified political debates can be, touching on practical-pragmatic, ethical-political and moral aspects. Material goods by contrast are more palpable and self-evident so to speak, so that debates about e.g. the affordable supply of fuel are essentially less demanding in terms of the deliberative complexity, being largely confined to pragmatic and practical levels. We should not forget, however, that *reflexivity* only measures the proportion of reasons given in a debate or the number of reasons given in a speech act; it does not measure the kinds of reasons given, which we have analysed when examining the *perspectives* variable. And if we look at the results, the interpretation forwarded here is more in line with the latter variable than with the former.

Similarly, while there are good reasons to assume the debates driven more by the periphery, i.e. those corresponding to the concrete/material ones, are characterised by a higher range of justifications, there is no *a priori* reason why they should also be the ones with the highest level of reflexivity. The narrow/broad opposition in turn, which we have introduced above only tentatively, as we have no independent criteria and it does not parallel other distinctions, would point to a development over time, but one which runs exactly counter to our findings. For it is the "broad" debates of the 1960s which we would associate with higher levels of reflexivity, whereas the more narrow debates of the 1980s and particularly of the 2000s would be characterised by lower levels of reason-giving.

There is one additional possible explanation, namely the role of the illocutions, or rather the conflictuality of the debates. The reason behind this assumption is that the more the

Figure 30: Illocutions 1960-2005 (in %)



	1960	1965	1980	1985	2000	2005
Support	12.4%	8.3%	12.1%	14.4%	5.5%	9.1%
Criticism	28.4%	24.9%	41.9%	36.7%	38.8%	46.1%
Demand	47.5%	52.1%	31.7%	21.0%	29.1%	24.1%
Statement	11.7%	14.7%	14.4%	27.9%	26.6%	20.7%

validity claims are called into question the more the actors are forced to give reasons, both for their criticism as well as in support of the criticised positions. We have to keep in mind, however, that conflictuality, measured as the proportion of criticising speech acts in a debate, is not an external criterion unlike time, the cleavage structure, the type of public sphere, etc. Figure 30 above gives the distribution of the illocution types in the debates and partly confirms the assumption, at least as far as the development over the decades is concerned, for here we find a constant increase in criticism between the 1960s and the 2000s. And for the 1960s and 1980s we also find more criticism in the material than in

cultural debates, which corresponds to the difference in the levels of reflexivity. In the fuel debate in 2000 and the anti-terror legislation debate in 2005, however, the reverse relationship holds to be true as here the material debate is the one displaying lower levels of criticism in contrast to the cultural one. We can therefore not say with any certainty that material debates generally display higher levels of reflexivity because they are more conflictual.

The 2000s debates could be an instance of the overruling effect of the actors' constellation, i.e. although we expect the pattern between material and cultural debates on the one hand and the amount of criticism on the other to reflect the results the 1960s and the 1980s, fuel protest in 2000 and anti-terror legislation in 2005 might be different due to the way the actors affect the discursive structure the public sphere. We will therefore scrutinise more closely how the levels of reflexivity are distributed between the actors and whether there are any changes over time.

3.2. Actors

Before we turn to the reflexivity structures of the different actor classes in the single debates we will first examine the general distribution summarily. Table 12 below depicts the values for the single categories in a compact form: the absolute figures in the rows labelled "count" are supplemented by the proportion of each actor class within the single levels of reflexivity in the rows entitled "% within Reflexivity", and by the proportion of the levels of reflexivity within each actor class given in the rows "% within Actor class".[29] The difference between

Table 12: Reflexivity by actor classes (total)

			Actor classes					Total
			"Uncivil" society	Civil society	Media	Economy	Centre	
Reflexivity	0	Count	1	103	121	218	907	1350
		% within Reflexivity	.1%	7.6%	9.0%	16.1%	67.2%	100.0%
		% within Actor class	14.3%	33.2%	28.8%	53.4%	49.1%	45.1%
	1	Count	5	151	189	136	721	1202
		% within Reflexivity	.4%	12.6%	15.7%	11.3%	60.0%	100.0%
		% within Actor class	71.4%	48.7%	45.0%	33.3%	39.0%	40.1%
	2 or more	Count	1	56	110	54	221	442
		% within Reflexivity	.2%	12.7%	24.9%	12.2%	50.0%	100.0%
		% within Actor class	14.3%	18.1%	26.2%	13.2%	12.0%	14.8%
Total		Count	7	310	420	408	1849	2994
		% within Reflexivity	.2%	10.4%	14.0%	13.6%	61.8%	100.0%
		% within Actor class	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

the two is that "% within Reflexivity" gives the proportion each actor class has within the single levels for *reflexivity*: thus whereas e.g. civil society contributes 12.6% of the total utterances with one justification, the centre provides 60%. The figures for "% within Actor class" in turn follow the complementary perspective and allow us to examine the proportion of the reflexivity levels within each actor class: for instance of all the utterances of civil society those with one justification add up to 48.7%, while they only add up to 39% for all of the centre's speech acts.

[29] The figures for the "uncivil" society are given for the sake of completeness, but the actor class will be excluded from further analysis because of its low values: their 7 speech acts add up to only 0.2% of the total of utterances.

Examining the table in this way, there are a several results to be discussed in more detail. On a very general level we can see that the percentages within *reflexivity* confirm our findings for *reciprocity* and *perspectives*: as can be seen in the row entitled "total" at the bottom of the table, the political-administrative centre is the dominant actor in the debates, providing most of the utterances (61.8%). It is followed by the media (14%), which means that on the whole they play a very active role as discourse participants, and by the economic actors (13.6%) as well as civil society (10.4%). We can also see that because of its high proportion of utterances compared to the other actors, the centre comes always first in all of the categories, though with a clear tendency: whereas it provides the highest proportion of utterances with no justification (67.2%), the values for the other two levels decrease continuously. In other words: the higher the level of reflexivity, the fewer utterances come from the centre. Interestingly, the reverse is the case for the media: here the more utterances the higher we climb on the ladder of *reflexivity*. The result supports our interpretation of the media as discursive "integrators", which is not only confined to their role of providing a discursive platform, but as we have already seen in the section on the range of perspectives, also extends to their role as discourse participants. But it is here where their part in the debates becomes most clear: because they establish relationships between actors and actor classes, provide ranges of reasons which go beyond their own positions and thereby shed light on the reasons of others, and generally engage with the participants of the debates, they display a steady increase in their use of justifications in relation to the other actors, contributing only 9% to the "no justification" category, but 15.7% to the category of one and 24.9% to the category of two or more justifications. The patterns for the remaining actors are uneven: while civil society follows the pattern of the media to some extent, though there is hardly any significant increase between level 1 and level 2 of *reflexivity* in this case, the utterances of the economic actors fail to show any clear tendency.

When we examine *reflexivity* from the other perspective, i.e. from the angle of the distribution of the levels within the single actor classes, we get a similar picture, although with a clearer contrast. Both civil society and the media show an increase from level 0 (33.2% and 28.8% respectively) to level 1 (48.7% and 45%), while the values economic actors and the centre decrease in the same interval (from 53.4% to 33.3% and 49.1% to 39.0% respectively) and show furthermore that half of the utterances of the economic actors and the centre are without any justification. Additionally, the findings confirm the complex role of the media as they are responsible for only 14% of the total of utterances, but at the same time they contribute almost 25% of those utterances with 2 or more justifications to the debate.

Ignoring the figures for the media for a moment, we can see that on the highest level of reflexivity the percentages decrease between the actor classes when we move from civil society towards the centre, i.e. from less institutionalised to more institutionalised settings. We can think of different reasons for this: it would be plausible to assume for instance that institutional settings are characterised by declarations, announcements and general statements, which might not always need further justification. Thus for instance *The Times* writes during the fuel protest in 2000 that "The Government has backed away from immediate changes in the law, although Mr Straw said that he was keeping his options open 'in the medium term'" (*The Times* 30.09.00). On the same day Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, "said that the 'speed and scale' of the response to the disruption of fuel supplies

would be markedly different, but he conceded that he could not promise that fuel pumps would not dry up again" (ibid.). These are typical actions by Governments and other established political or economic actors, whereas they are less associated with civil society and the media, whose role consists among other things in challenging the status quo of the political system.

One way to test this assumption is to examine the relationship between *reflexivity* and the illocution types for each of the actor classes. Table 13 below shows the absolute figures for the cross tabulation. The cells highlighted in grey give the maximum values for each level of

Table 13: Crosstabulation of illocutions by reflexivity for the actor classes (total)

Actor classes			Illocution				
			Statement	Demand	Criticism	Support	Total
Civil society	Reflexivity	0	13	49	33	8	103
		1	13	47	82	9	151
		2	3	16	35	2	56
	Total		29	112	150	19	310
Media	Reflexivity	0	30	52	23	16	121
		1	22	53	96	18	189
		2	10	25	58	17	110
	Total		62	130	177	51	420
Economy	Reflexivity	0	36	120	37	25	218
		1	15	50	61	10	136
		2	6	18	24	6	54
	Total		57	188	122	41	408
Centre	Reflexivity	0	270	311	205	121	907
		1	131	187	346	57	721
		2	29	63	112	17	221
	Total		430	561	663	195	1849

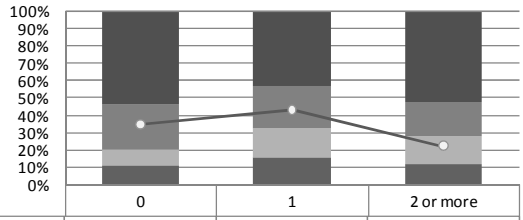
reflexivity in the actor classes and demonstrate that contrary to our suggestion, all the actor classes show exactly the same pattern: the illocutions mostly used without any justification are demands, while on the higher two levels it is criticism which occurs most often together with one, two, or more justifications in the speech acts. As criticism questions the established order, that is because it challenges, undermines, and destabilises not only the dominant validity claims but also the reasons and (tacit) assumptions which support them, the disagreement of the unionist parties in 1985 with the presentation of the Anglo-Irish Agreement as an accomplished fact, or civil society's and farmers disagreement with the rising fuel prices in 2000 always incurs a higher deliberative debt than, say, backbenchers in the Commons who assert their agreement with other members of their party. Criticism always has to be justified to become acceptable – unless the reasons are so transparent that they do not need to be made explicit. From a deliberative perspective the discursive status of criticism as the illocution with most justifications is therefore not surprising. All the more surprising by contrast is the role of demands, which we might have associated with a role similar to that of criticism: demands, too, are an expression of discontent; they, too, aim at changing the customary order of things. Why then do they appear not to be in a similar deliberative need of justifications as criticism? The answer is to be seen in the macro structures of argumentation: demands are rarely uttered on their own but most often appear in the context of criticism, that is the challenge for a change of the status quo is represented in its most simple form by two-step structure in which the established norms, etc. are first criticised before an alternative is proposed. And as the justifications appear

already in connection with the uttered criticism, demands are partly relieved from the discursive obligation to be embedded in independent justification processes.

Keeping in mind the results presented in the section above, we have seen that *reflexivity* develops both over time and across cleavages: as the decades move on, the levels of reflexivity generally increase, and within each decade material debates always display higher levels of reflexivity than cultural ones. We have also seen that there is no single satisfactory explanation, particularly as far as the development over time is concerned. Conflictuality seems to explain the results to some degree but fails to provide a plausible account for the figures of 2000 and 2005 which should be inverted according to the amount of criticism. Still, there is some development at work in the debates and the actor structures defining the reflexivity of the debates might provide some additional explanation or at least allow us to observe similar trends for some of the actor classes. We will therefore first focus on the constitution of the single levels of reflexivity by the actor classes and then change the perspective to analyse the proportion of the levels of reflexivity within each actor class.

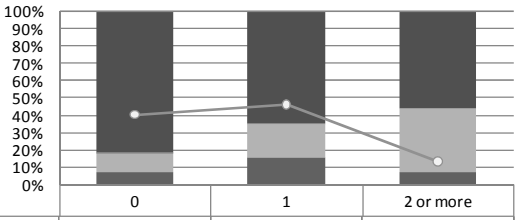
The figures below present the proportion each actor class occupies in the single levels of *reflexivity*. Additionally, the straight lines connecting the dots give the total proportion of the reflexivity levels per debate in percentages. One of the most visible changes occurs in the

Figure 31: Actors within reflexivity 1960 (in %)



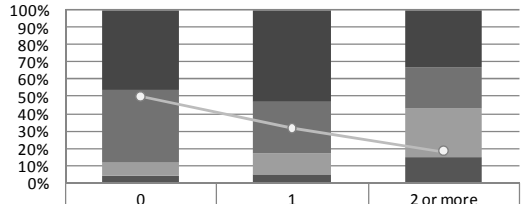
	0	1	2 or more
Centre	53.6%	43.0%	52.3%
Economy	26.1%	24.4%	19.3%
Media	8.7%	16.3%	15.9%
Civil society	11.6%	16.3%	12.5%
% of total	34.7%	43.2%	22.1%

Figure 32: Actors within reflexivity 1965 (in %)



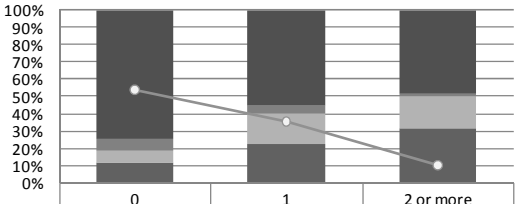
	0	1	2 or more
Centre	80.7%	64.3%	55.7%
Economy	0.3%	0.3%	
Media	11.4%	19.4%	36.8%
Civil society	7.6%	16.1%	7.5%
% of total	40.4%	46.1%	13.5%

Figure 33: Actors within reflexivity 1980 (in %)



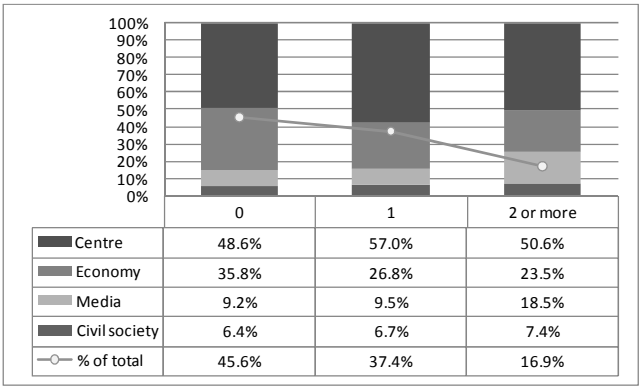
	0	1	2 or more
Centre	45.5%	52.4%	32.9%
Economy	42.5%	30.2%	23.3%
Media	7.5%	11.9%	28.8%
Civil society	4.5%	5.6%	15.1%
% of total	50.1%	31.6%	18.3%

Figure 34: Actors within reflexivity 1985 (in %)



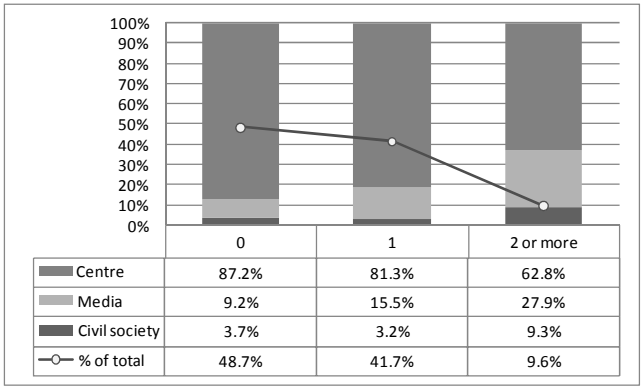
	0	1	2 or more
Centre	73.7%	55.2%	48.0%
Economy	6.9%	4.1%	2.0%
Media	6.9%	17.4%	18.0%
Civil society	12.4%	23.3%	32.0%
% of total	53.8%	35.8%	10.4%

Figure 35: Actors within reflexivity 2000 (in %)



	0	1	2 or more
Centre	48.6%	57.0%	50.6%
Economy	35.8%	26.8%	23.5%
Media	9.2%	9.5%	18.5%
Civil society	6.4%	6.7%	7.4%
% of total	45.6%	37.4%	16.9%

Figure 36: Actors within reflexivity 2005 (in %)



	0	1	2 or more
Centre	87.2%	81.3%	62.8%
Media	9.2%	15.5%	27.9%
Civil society	3.7%	3.2%	9.3%
% of total	48.7%	41.7%	9.6%

material debates, where the centre increasingly uses higher levels of reflexivity, though this is not to say that the centre alone is responsible for the overall augmentation of reflexivity. For on one hand the centre also takes an increasing share in those speech acts which are uttered without any justification (from 45.5% in 1960 to 53.6% in 2000), on the other hand the other actors equally contribute to the rising levels of reflexivity, in particular level 1 sees a shift with respect to both the non-centre actors contribution and as a category on its own as the ratio steadily develops from 31.6% of all speech acts in 1960 to over 43% in 2000. It is precisely the development in this middle category becoming the dominant one which decisively affects the overall level of reflexivity of the debates: for although level 2 of *reflexivity* increases as well, albeit unevenly, the biggest change comes in on level 1, which surpasses the amount of utterances without any justification (level 0) even without any changes on level 2.

The complexity of the developments is further complicated by the fact that we find different patterns for the cultural debates: while both civil society and above all the centre display an uneven development in their share of reflexivity throughout the decades, the growing presence of the media appears to be the only constant factor. The proportion of the media's utterances on level 2 of *reflexivity* is particularly noteworthy as it doubles over the three cultural debates between 1965 and 2005 and makes up more than a third of the total of level 2 utterances in the latter debate. Similar to the material debates, but even more pronounced, actors in cultural debates only rarely raise validity claims with two or more justifications – only 13.5% of all utterances in 2005 fall into this category. Hence as in the material debates it is the shift in the balance between the validity claims with no justification and those with one justification which is primarily responsible for the overall increase in reflexivity. And here we can see that the actors responsible for the change are both the centre and the non-centre actors, though to a different degree in each debate: whereas the centre is clearly more dominant in the 1985 debate on the Anglo-Irish Agreement than in the 1965 debate on Commonwealth immigration, it is this dominance which is responsible for the rising overall reflexivity. Yet two decades later in the anti-terror legislation debate the centre looses some of its discursive hegemony and it appears that the non-centre actors, above all the media, are the driving force behind the ongoing positive trend.

On the whole it seems that the higher reflexivity of material debates in contrast to cultural ones is due to the stronger presence of non-centre actors and their contributions. To some

extent this finding appears to complement or even contradict some of our findings for the other DQI_m variables so far: the analysis of reciprocity structures clearly showed that it is the cultural debates where the exchange between the non-centre actors and the centre is more intense, and the examination of the range of perspective proved that in almost all the cases the centre is the actor class with the widest range of justifications. Our findings for reflexivity, however, although not invalidating our previous results, point in a different direction or at least give more weight to an alternative view, for here it is the material debates and the non-centre actors who seem to play an important role in explaining the differences across time and cleavage structure.

These results notwithstanding, in order to determine the actor's influence on the overall reflexivity of the debates, we need to change perspectives and examine the reflexivity structure within each actor class over time. The figures below give the results for each actor class from 1960-2005; the straight line connecting the dots additionally displays the share

Figure 37: Reflexivity of civil society 1960-2005 (in %)

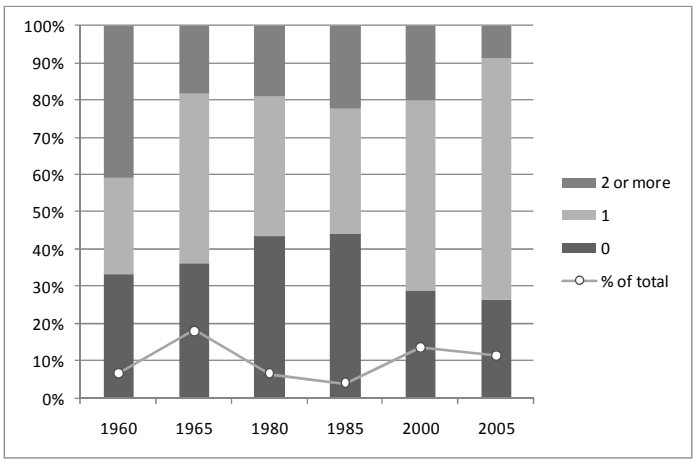


Figure 38: Reflexivity of the media 1960-2005 (in %)

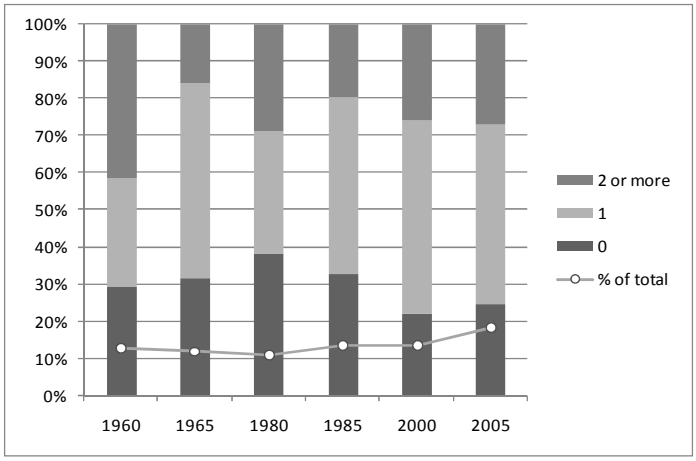


Figure 39: Reflexivity of the economy 1960-2005 (in %)

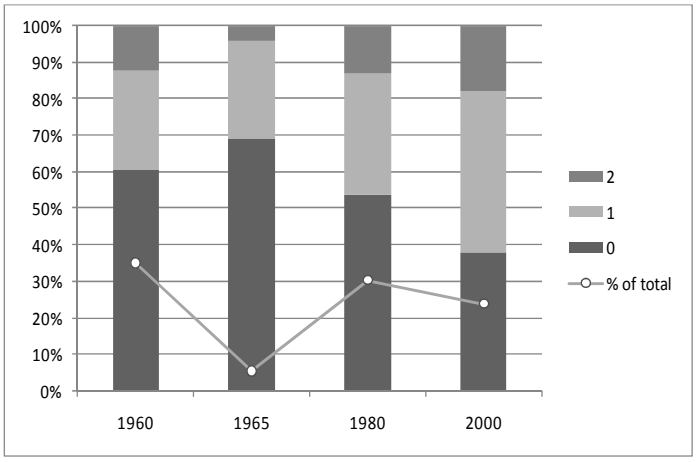
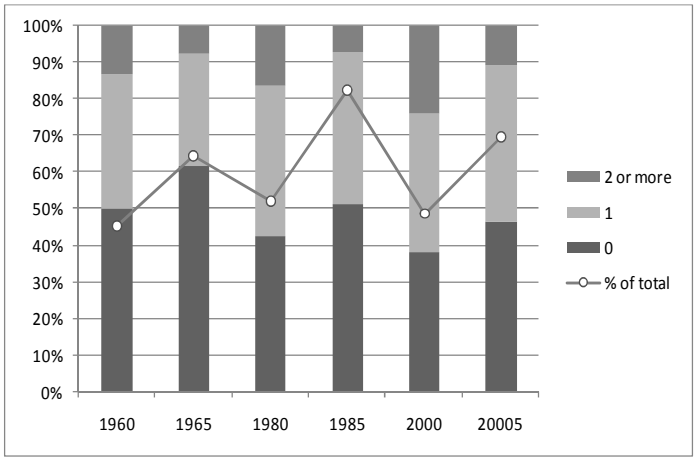


Figure 40: Reflexivity of the centre 1960-2005 (in %)



of the actor class' utterances in the total of the speech acts in each debate.[30] Two things become immediately apparent when taking a first look at the figures: though the trend is uneven in every actor class, as a general trend the reflexivity rises when we compare the

[30] The "uncivil" society has been excluded from the analysis because of its low overall values.

levels of the 1960s and the 2000s. Furthermore, the reflexivity levels of the centre resemble strikingly the overall development of *reflexivity*, showing the same increase in time and the same systematic difference between material and cultural debates. The similarity is of course less surprising once we take into account the position of the centre actors in debates, where their discursive presence varies between 45.4% (1960) and 82.4% (1985) (see also below the section on the inclusiveness of the actors).

Nevertheless, if we give these values a different reading it means that e.g. 1960 the non-centre actors contribute more than 50% of the utterances to the debate and the question then arises how their contributions are structured in terms of reflexivity. In contrast to the centre the non-centre actors' development of reflexivity shows different patterns, although they bear some resemblance to one another. Common to civil society, the media, and the economic actors is that we first see a decrease in reflexivity followed by an increase. The most complex pattern is that of the media, whose reflexivity first decreases between 1960 and 1980, then increases until 2000, and then decreases again slightly in 2005. Both civil society and the economy differ from the media in that they lack the small decrease in the last debate: after decreasing first, their reflexivity increases continuously until 2005. The media and civil society in turn differ from the economy as they reach their lowest points of reflexivity in 1980 and 1985, whereas the economic actors are somewhat "out of phase" with the trend as their reflexivity diminishes already in 1965. Finally, the economy and the centre on the whole display lower levels of reflexivity (between 37.9% and 69.2%, and between 38.1% and 61.6%, respectively) than civil society and the media (26.7% and 44.4%, 22.2% and 38.5%).

While the other differences are hard to explain without appealing to the singular properties of each debate – which in turn would undermine a general account –, the last point can be accommodated within our theoretical framework: as we have repeatedly seen, civil society constitutes not only the periphery in the theoretical account of deliberative democracy, its immediate presence in the debates, too, could be literally referred to as marginal. And as we have seen above, civil society is to some extent also marginal in terms of the minority perspectives it brings to the debate. Yet it is precisely their peripheral position in the debates which requires them to argue their case more thoroughly: unusual perspectives, opposition to the dominant consensus, perception of critical issues within the context of their lifeworlds and their effective problematisation – in short the confrontation of the political-administrative system with input that breaks its routine mode and to some extent the routine code, means that civil society incurs an heightened need for reasons, both in terms of a range of perspectives and in terms of reflexivity. The media play a similar role, but with a crucial difference: they integrate and concentrate debates in their dual role as discourse providers and participants, which means that they filter, process, and structure the discursive contributions of other participants while adding their own.

The economy in turn is more institutionalised than civil society and commands a privileged access to the centre in its role as expert and partly also in the implementation of law. We could therefore say, in line with Nancy Fraser's distinction of weak and strong public, that the economy's position is more powerful than that of civil society and that as a corollary there is less a need for the same complexity in argumentation. Or, from the perspective of civil society we could say that politics is experienced in the complexity of the lifeworld, i.e. in all of the three possible relationships we can establish to the world, while in

the economy it is primarily experienced under the aspect of their dominant code, i.e. money.[31] And proximity to power entails proximity to a common vocabulary. This can be seen by the fact that civil society protest movements usually frame the contented issue from a different perspective, use different arguments than those that a part of the centre's repertoire, but they also use a different, and often new lexical items – Blair was repeatedly referred to as "Bliar", a combination of "Blair" and "liar", on banners during the protests against the war in Iraq in 2003.

The story is again a different one for the political-administrative centre. Although it is constituted by its own code, the parliamentary complex must remain open to inputs from other parts of society so that we cannot explain its lower levels of reflexivity on the base of a restricted form of communication, etc.; the analysis of the range of perspective has shown that the opposite is the case. Yet as the analysis of the reciprocity structures has shown, the centre is its own main dialogic partner, and it is here that we might find a reason for its overall reflexivity structure. Unlike the periphery, which is characterised by detecting and articulating problems, the centre is mainly concerned with solving them by presenting different and competing solutions, which means that a substantial part of the mode of communication among the centre actors is strategic and characterised by competition. Furthermore, once the centre deals with problems either articulated by the periphery or by one of its own sub units, issues have already been filtered discursively to a significant degree: arguments deemed less cogent have dropped out of the debate and a more or less stable repertoire of reasons has been established. And finally, because the centre mainly is its own interlocutor, it really on more substantial background assumptions for its communication than the other actor classes which interact with it. As a consequence of these aspects, not all the validity claims raised by centre actors are equipped with the same amount of arguments as those of the periphery or the media.

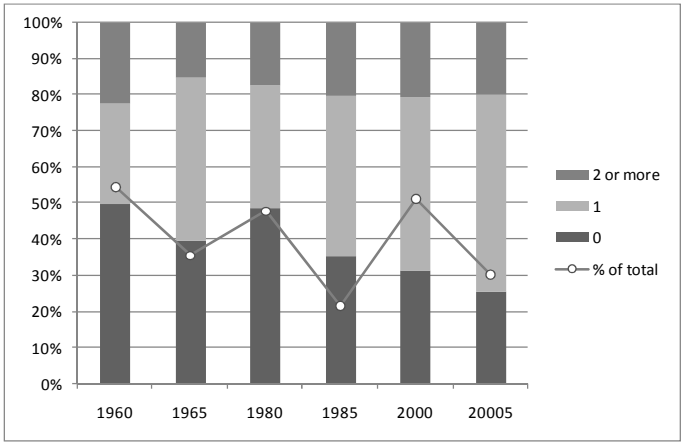
This being said, the centre does display some variation and generally shows higher levels of reflexivity in material debates, i.e. those which we have characterised as being (initially) driven by the periphery or at least non-centre actors. The responsiveness of the centre to input from outside thus also becomes manifest not only in the reciprocity structures and the range of perspectives, but also in a higher degree of reflexivity. This is not to say that the centre employs more arguments in those speech acts which have non-centre actors as their addressee; as table 39 and 40 in appendix 2 containing the cross tabulation of the centre's dialogic partners with reflexivity shows, the results are inconclusive at best. But it does mean that debates about cultural issues, which correspond more to the "inside initiative" or the "mobilisation" model of the public sphere, are processed differently regarding the level of reflexivity than material ones.

A final point related to this needs to be made. Obviously, if we take the opposite view from the non-centre actor classes and examine *reflexivity* summarily in terms of justified and unjustified speech acts, the non-centre actors taken together produce a pattern that is complementary to that of the centre (see figure 41 below). That is to say, when the centre's

[31] We should add, however, as Axel Honneth (1989) has pointed out, drawing on among others also the work of Castoriadis (1981), that economic organisations are not spaces freed or cleansed from normativity: the application and translation of instrumental rules into the practice of a social community or organisation requires additional rules of a political-practical kind, as the practical application of technical rules always remains underdetermined. The resulting possible interpretations or insecurities, however, cannot be overcome by recurring to additional technical rules, but only by bringing normative or political points of view to the practice (cf. Honneth 1989: 280f.).

reflexivity is high, that of the non-centre actors is low, and vice versa. What is less obvious, however, is the resulting pattern for the development of reflexivity for the non-centre actors as a whole: contrary to our tentative conclusion above, when we examined the distribution of reflexivity from the point of the proportion of actor classes within each level, it is not the material debates where the non-centre actors are strong or make the biggest difference – it is the cultural ones. This is in line with our findings for the reciprocity structures, which showed

Figure 41: Reflexivity of non-centre actors 1960-2005 (in %)



that cultural debates generate a greater response by the non-centre actors towards the centre than material ones. We can interpret this along the same line we have explained the centre's greater amount of reflexivity in material debates – just in the opposite direction: since all cultural debates correspond to a public sphere model driven by the centre, its output to the different non-centre actor classes needs to be re-articulated in the terms of their spheres and is then fed back into the political-administrative system. During the period of our analysis the communicative process generated by the centre is thus on the whole more complex than that of the material debates, read: "outside initiative" public spheres, and therefore leads to higher levels of reflexivity.

3.3. Conclusion

The first major conclusion certainly consists in the observation that as time moves on reflexivity generally increases, to which, however, we must add one qualification in the form of the second major conclusion: there seems to be a systematic difference between material and cultural debates. Thus, while there are no signs of the media as "dumbing down", the structural transformation of deliberation and the associated learning processes occur in a way and on a level that is not neutral towards the structural disparities between material and cultural debates: the general trend in time does not lead to an assimilation of the two types of debates, although the effect is manifest in each of them. This is in line with our findings for the non-centre/centre relationship in the analysis of the reciprocity structure, which showed the same pattern, the difference between the two variables being that in the case of *reflexivity* we are referring to general results on the macro level of the variable, i.e. on the debate as a whole, whereas the findings for the reciprocity structure are only valid for the specific dialogic relationships centre and non-centre actors but do not extend to the

aggregate level of the debate. Our results of this section thus point more clearly in the direction of the hypotheses we will analyse in the inferential part and show that there seems indeed to be a self-transformative power at work in and through the public sphere, which means that processes of reflexivity are always also processes of self-reflexivity, i.e. emancipation in the sense of releasing and realising the potentials of communicative power, which then turn on the communicative infrastructure itself. Enlightenment thus becomes self-enlightenment and the Habermasian public sphere a process constituted by its recursive nature, to use Giddens' (1984) terminology. Indeed, the perspective of Giddens' structuration theory might help us to shape out more clearly the processes at work in and above all across the debates we have analysed. From the point of view of recursivity the public sphere is both the medium and the outcome of deliberative processes, that is actors and discourses are not related to one another as subject and object, they are rather embedded in a relationship of mutual interdependence: discourses are shaped by the actors' contribution as much as the actors' contributions are shaped by the course of the debates.[32] The utterance of validity claims is a communicative act that occurs repetitively, but which crucially always also involves an element of modification and in turn results in the transformation of deliberative elements within the debates, e.g. the rising or decreasing range of perspectives, and across debates, e.g. the rising levels of reflexivity.

We have also seen, however, that the seemingly regular development of *reflexivity* quickly disappears once we turn the focus from the general results to the single actor classes. To be sure, the centre's development is parallel to that of the overall findings, which is not entirely surprising, given that of all the actor classes the centre holds the strongest position in the debates. But we have to add at the same time that its performance depends on that of the other actors so that in the end the values for each class can be seen as the result of their discursive cooperation. To be sure, the values for the economic actors, the media, and civil society do not display the same pattern, both in terms of presence and development. And while the change in the media and civil society run parallel to a certain degree, it is hard to find a common explanation. The issue is easier to solve for civil society as we could argue that in this case the level of reflexivity is related to the degree of involvement: the unions struggle against the Government's attempt to curtail secondary picketing in 1980 is primarily a debate between the centre and the economic actors, while in 1985 the Government actively excludes the other actors from the immediate debate of the institutionalisation of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. In contrast to this civil society is more immediately concerned and actively involved in the fuel debate in 2000. And while a counterargument could be made citing the unilateral disarmament debate in 1960 and the anti-terror legislation in 2005, which did not infringe in any immediate way upon the lifeworlds of the members of civil society, we have to be aware that at the same time these are this issues which went to the heart of the British identity as a whole.

[32] Habermas makes the same point when he states: "[t]hat the political public sphere must in a certain sense reproduce and stabilize itself from its own resources is shown by the odd self-referential character of the practice of communication in civil society. Those actors who are the carriers of the public sphere put forward "texts" that always reveal the same subtext, which refers to the critical function of the public sphere in general. Whatever the manifest content of their public utterances, the performative meaning of such public discourse at the same time actualizes the function of an undistorted political public sphere as such" (Habermas 1996: 369). More precisely he states that "[t]he public sphere thus reproduces itself *self-referentially*, and in doing so reveals the place to which the expectation of a sovereign self-organization of society has withdrawn" (Habermas 1996: 486, emphasis in the original).

Yet, as far as the media are concerned, there is no similar argument that could be convincingly made; in fact, there is no reason why their levels of reflexivity should develop curvilinear in the first place. We could find numerous reasons why they should remain on more or less the same level, why they should mirror the centre's trend, or why they should develop independently from all others in a simple linear way. If we scrutinise the media's discursive quality in terms of reflexivity more closely, there are two observations to be made. First, independent of their development, in the debates analysed the media display the highest level of reflexivity of all actor classes. Second and more tentatively, it seems that media's performance depends on the discursive presence of the other non-centre actors. This would partly explain the varying levels of reflexivity and accentuate the media's role as mandatary, complementing the absence of other non-centre actors, though this must remain a speculative interpretation.

Finally, what seems somewhat puzzling is the fact that while the centre is more strongly present in the cultural debates as compared to the material ones in terms of mere speech acts, it is precisely these debates where the non-centre actors display a combined higher degree of reflexivity and where their influence on the overall level of reflexivity is consequently more substantial. Although we cannot say with certainty whether the two aspects are related, we have already encountered a similar phenomenon when analysing the reciprocity structures, for there, too, it was the cultural debates which triggered a more intense response from the non-centre actors. The same mechanism seems to be at work here and supports our previous explanation: contrary to our initial assumptions, and due to the way of sampling, which takes into account only the last part of the debates, it is not the material debates which command a higher involvement of non-centre actors and civil society in particular, but rather the cultural ones. This points once again to the role of the actors, i.e. the inclusiveness of the public sphere and the basic dialogic orientations of the participants in the debates, which we will examine next.

4. Inclusiveness

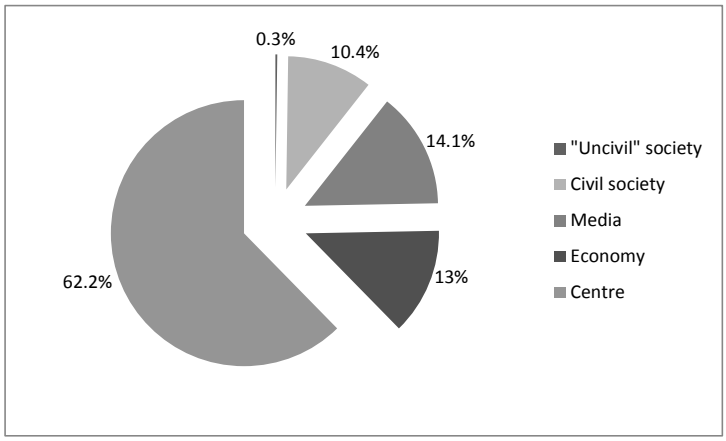
In a certain way all the other variables of the DQI_m depend on one central measure: the inclusiveness of the actors. The analysis of the amount of reciprocity between the actors already carried this idea in the sense that apart from the general levels in each debate we were interested in the spectrum of reciprocity, i.e. to whose utterances do actors refer and whose go unanswered, which led to the conclusion that the public sphere is always to be thought of as a sphere of publics. Similarly, the analysis of the range of perspectives and the levels of reflexivity always also included a perspective from the actors' point of view, or in other words the view from the angle of inclusiveness: are the perspectives of one debate more inclusive than that of the other, and is the range of one actor class more inclusive than that of another one, etc. Inclusiveness thus lies at the heart of deliberation: a debate with a maximum of reciprocity, the broadest range of perspectives and the highest levels of reflexivity would still have to be deemed un-deliberative if it included only actors from e.g. the centre. Indeed, in this case we would speak of a "representative publicity", i.e. power represented before the people, rather than of a public sphere in the modern, post-Enlightenment sense of the term (cf. Habermas 1989).

The theoretical importance of inclusiveness become manifest in the central theorem of deliberative democracy that law must pass the test of practical discourse if it is to be legitimate, enshrined in Habermas' discourse principle (D) that "[j]ust those action norms are valid to which all possibly affected persons could agree as participants in rational discourses" (Habermas 1996: 107). One of the cornerstones of (Kantian) liberalism that the people are the authors of their own laws is translated by Habermas by positioning them on both sides of the law, i.e. the side of legitimacy (*Geltung*) and the side of facticity (*Faktizität*) as those affected by norms (facticity) as well as those who enter a discourse about generating binding norms of action (legitimacy).[33] Although inclusiveness is mentioned as one among several criteria that define the deliberative procedure by Cohen (1989) as well as Habermas (1996), it is thus at the same the basic precondition of discourse, simply because without actors no discourse could take place. Knowing something about the basic actors' structure already gives us a substantial insight into the discursive quality of a specific debate.

As with the other variables of the DQI_m we will first examine *inclusiveness* in terms of the general changes that have occurred between the single debates before moving on to take a more detailed look at the actors' structure, here in particular – as in the case of *reciprocity* – by examining the basic dialogic relationships. At relevant points in the analysis the results of the reciprocal relationships will be included in the discussion as they allow us to assess more clearly the discursive structures of the debates, particularly whether the changes in the levels of inclusiveness are paralleled by the values for the actors' reciprocity.

Before we go into more detail about the changes in the single actor classes over time, a first summary look at the overall proportion of the actor classes in the debates will be useful. The pie chart in figure 42 gives the results for the total distribution of the actor classes. As

Figure 42: Inclusiveness in total (in %)



expected, the merely sporadic presence of the "uncivil" society in the media means that the total proportion, when compared to the other actor classes, is close to 0%. More remarkable than this is the fact that civil society, which plays such an important part in the deliberative

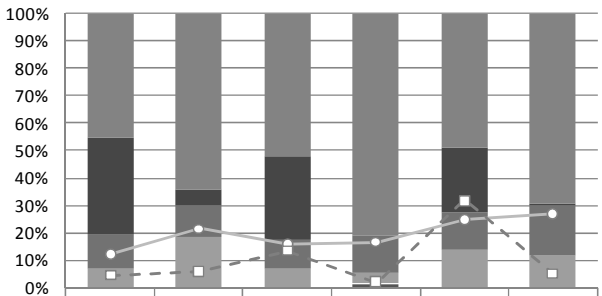
[33] The very way the discourse principle (D) is formulated reveals that the inclusiveness of the actors is distinct from the intersubjective recognition of validity claims as the participants of the practical discourse are mentioned separately. In other words, the discourse principle combines two dimensions, an actor dimension and a dimension of rationality. We will come back to this distinction in more detail in the second part, where we will see that there are indeed systematic differences between the two when analysed as the outcome variables of a regression model.

model, only accounts for 10% of all the utterances – the second lowest score. Again, as we have pointed out, this might be due to the fact that at the time our analysis begins the debates are already close to reaching a parliamentary decision, so that naturally the presence of the other actors in the public sphere will be comparatively low; observing the genesis of debates might have led to the actors from the periphery to be more strongly represented, at least in the material debates. This being said, the values for both the media and the economy are not substantially higher, and once again the results indicate that only the sum of the non-centre actors succeeds in counteracting the absolute dominance of the centre, which makes up more than 60%. Whether the basic structure of this relationship obtains generally for all of the debates is something we will now turn to investigate in more detail, first with regard to social change and cleavage structure (section 4.1.) and then in relation to the actors (section 4.2.).

4.1. Time and cleavage structure

As we can see in figure 43, which details the development of *inclusiveness* between 1960 and 2005, the centre's dominance is neither absolute, nor is it continuous. Quite on the contrary, its discursive presence oscillates between the lowest value of 45.4% and the highest of 81.3% which comes close controlling the debate on its own terms, which suggest a power-ridden public sphere and which we will therefore specifically examine in more detail below. On a more general level we can see that the centre's discursive presence parallels the material/cultural distinction, although it does not follow a clear trend in time, neither in total nor for the two debate types. The centre is primarily dominant in cultural debates

Figure 43: Inclusiveness 1960-2005 (in %)



	1960	1965	1980	1985	2000	2005
Centre	45.4%	64.4%	52.1%	81.3%	48.7%	69.6%
Economy	35.1%	5.4%	30.3%	0.0%	23.9%	0.3%
Media	12.8%	11.9%	10.9%	13.4%	13.6%	18.5%
Civil society	6.8%	18.3%	6.7%	4.0%	13.8%	11.5%
"Uncivil" society	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	0.1%
Reciprocity (n-c/c)	12.0%	21.4%	15.7%	16.5%	24.7%	27.0%
Reciprocity (c/n-c)	4.4%	5.8%	13.3%	1.8%	31.9%	4.9%

n-c/c: reciprocity of non-centre actors towards the centre.
c/n-c: reciprocity of the centre towards non-centre actors.

where its values reach a minimum of 64%, whereas its discursive presence falls below the 50% threshold twice in the material debates. The combined non-centre actors conversely display the opposite pattern: their presence is strongest in the material debates, while they contribute considerably less speech acts in cultural ones – though, as the histogram shows, the values for the single non-centre actor classes display a substantial amount of variance.

In line with our theoretical assumptions the centre is more dominant in those debates which correspond more closely to the "mobilisation" or the "inside access" model. Particularly the 1985 debate about the Anglo-Irish Agreement represents almost ideally the "inside access" public sphere type: the political-administrative centre occupies almost exclusively the discursive space, contributing over 80% of the utterances of the debate, while apart from the media the other actor classes hardly participate in the discussion: civil society reaches its lowest value with 4% while the economic actors are totally absent. The results become even more pronounce if we take into account the reciprocity between the centre and the non-centre actors, represented in the figure by the straight line connecting the dots (non-centre towards centre) and the dotted line connecting the squares (centre towards non-centre), respectively. While almost all of the non-centre speech acts address the contributions of the centre (17.4% of total speech acts and 16.5% of total reciprocity), confirming in a remarkable way that the centre-driven debates generally generate a stronger feedback by the non-centre actors than those driven by the periphery or the economy, the reciprocity from the centre towards the non-centre actors reaches its absolute lowest level (1.8% reciprocity towards non-centre actors contrasted with 81.3% of overall discursive presence). This is not to say that the centre forms a homogenous entity: almost 40% of those utterances where it addresses itself constitute criticism, which is not only substantial amount on its own but also to be counted among the higher values in centre-centre dialogic relationship. Yet we still can say that the centre "colonises" the public sphere as the way the issue is treated necessarily leads to the exclusion of members of other actor classes – and of centre actors such as the unionist parties for that matter.

By contrast, the higher engagement of the non-centre actors in the material debates and the fact that they tread issues which are carried from the periphery into the centre, and thus to some extent prevent a similar distortion of the political process, result in a lower presence of the centre, particularly in 1960 (45.4% of all speech acts). Yet because the proportion of centre and non-centre actors' presence in the debates is dependent on each other, it is hard to find any overall pattern that would suggest a development of the non-centre actors over time – this is at least the case for the aggregate level of all non-centre actors. But even on the more detailed level of the single actor classes the results are rather inconclusive: while the media contribute more or less the same amount of utterances to the different debates – with the exception of 2005 which will be discussed in more detail below – the level of participation of civil society oscillates just as that of the centre, yet without revealing any continuous trend.

The results, however, differ substantially for the economic actors, for here we can clearly discern a distinction between material debates where their participation is higher and cultural debates where it is lower. Furthermore, unlike all of the other results for centre and non-centre actors, as regards the material debates there also seems to be a development over time: the temporally more distant debates show a higher involvement of economic actors compared to the more recent ones. Both results require closer examination, the material/cultural difference because it has consequences for the way the debates are generally structured, the trend in time in turn because it might reveal something about the inner distribution of the economic actors. In material debates the economic actors are typically the most prominent participants of the non-centre actors, nearly doubling the combined scores of civil society and the media for instance in 1960 (35.1% vs. 19.6%). Indeed, their dominance is so prominent that without them the pattern of the non-centre

actors would reverse and show lower levels of participation for material than for cultural debates. In other words, the economic actors succeed in promoting their issue and setting it on the agenda of the political system, the media and the wider public by extension as well as in mobilising the other parts of society and in establishing themselves as important contributors in the debates. The last point, however, seems to have undergone significant changes: whereas the economy accounted for over 35% of all speech acts in 1960 its contributions have since been on the decline, reaching 30.3% in 1980 and only 23.9% in 2000. This is all the more remarkable since the 2000 conflict about the fuel prices and taxes war particularly explosive with organised acts of civil disobedience. One explanation might consist in civil society actors becoming more important as their contributions have doubled when comparing the 1960 and 2000 debates, which might either be due to a continuous increase in their discursive presence throughout the years and debates to be explored in the second part of our empirical analysis, or it could be related to a mobilising effect by the economic actors themselves, who sought a broader alliance to pressure the Government. Yet, independent of these conjectures about the changes in the levels of participation in the other actor classes, the economic actors' diminishing presence might simply be due to structural changes within the actor class itself; above all the declining importance of the unions could be seen as a cause as table 14 shows. We certainly have to take into account

Table 14: Presence of unions in material debates (in %)

Year	1960	1980	2000
Total	100.0	75.2	18.9

that the struggle for power between the unions and the Labour Party in 1960 or the secondary picketing debate in 1980 are much more typical union issues than the fuel protest in 2000, so that apart from a continuous decrease over time or the effect of Margaret Thatcher's struggle to crush union power, what we actually see are the contextual effects of each debate. Yet one could equally say that particularly when argued from a deliberative perspective this only shows that the unions are less and less able to make the debates their own. Or we could put it into more positive terms: the unions have successfully managed to mobilise other parts of the economic sector in recent material debates and forge (discursive) coalitions, which is particularly visible in the 2000 fuel protest. We also have to see that the three material debates are ramified to a different degree: the unilateral disarmament debate is not an economic issue *per se* and involves the unions only because of their role in policy formulation process within the Labour Party; the 1980 debate about union picketing rights is in this respect a much more typical conflict as it involves both unions on the one hand and employers' organisations on the other; the 2000 fuel protest in turn affects the unions only indirectly and is much more a concern of those who feel the effect of the rising fuel prices most immediately, i.e. individuals of civil society, self-employed people such as farmers, and hauliers. Yet the fact that groups such as "Farmers for Action", etc. gain resonance in the media also means that the public sphere has undergone some profound structural changes which will be explored more systematically in the second part. Suffice it to say for the moment that although the distribution of the actor classes in the 1960 and 2000 debates is similar to some extent, the reciprocity structures differ dramatically, in particular the dialogic orientation of the non-centre actors towards the centre has increased

steadily over the decades, whereas the values for the centre/non-centre relationship show a sudden leap.

If we take a closer look at the role civil society plays in the debates we get a very different picture from that of the economic actors: they neither display a steady development over time, nor do their levels of participation generally coincide with the material/cultural divide. And while the engagement of civil society seems to generally increase in the 2000s, these – together with the Commonwealth immigration issue in 1965 – are again those debates which touch more profoundly at the heart of their material and immaterial lifeworld. On this interpretation, however, we would in fact have an explanation common to both the economy's and civil society's participation in the debates: the more affected they are by the issue under discussion the more they contribute to the debate. The crux with this reading is that while it applies to the unions or economic actors in general who rarely participate in cultural debates as they are not affected by them, the same cannot be said of civil society. This has to do with civil society's, or rather the lifeworld's communicative structure but also with the results of its involvement in the debates. Unlike economic actors who are only affected by debates whose consequences translate into their non-linguistic code of money – or their specific subsystem code "to pay/not to pay" to use a more Luhmannian terminology – the lifeworld anchored in civil society does not have such a specified code and is hence equally open to all validity claims. There is thus no *apriori* reason why civil society should engage more intensely in material than in cultural debates, which is supported by the general development of new civil society organisations which, as the "Campaign Against Racial Discrimination" founded in 1964, belong rather to what we have referred to as the cultural dimension of political conflict. Moreover and in line with this, the results for the degree of participation of civil society in the debates show a rather uneven pattern with no clear discernible trend. In fact, from the periphery's point of view the debates in 1960 and 2005 bear some similarities despite their belonging to different cleavages: both touch upon very basic values and principles of British society and we could expect the periphery hence to participate in both debates to a similar degree, which, however, is not the case. Indeed civil society's involvement in the 2005 debate is 70% higher as that in 1960. But rather than falsifying our suggestions about the role of perceived involvement as a predictor for participation, the results could be tentatively interpreted to suggest that the different values are the result of a structural transformation of the public sphere taking place, such that it has become easier for non-institutional actors or actors organised only to a lower degree to make themselves heard – and to be recognised as participants by the other actors, above all the centre, as the reciprocity values for 2000 indicate. When we additionally compare the 1960 debate on unilateral disarmament with the 2000 fuel protest we can see that the participation of the non-centre actors has become more balanced because of the periphery's greater contribution of speech acts. Furthermore, we can also see that within the actor classes the roles are more clearly defined: the unions, which in 1960 accounted for all the economic actors and which covered all aspects of the issue, the material/pragmatic as well as the more cultural/ethical-political sides, concentrate exclusively on what now defines their domain, that is mainly questions of distribution (cf. Fraser & Honneth 2003), whereas the other aspects are articulated by other actors within and outside the economic sector. Seen from this angle the structural transformation of the public sphere also leads to a discursive division of labour.

Throughout these changes the media seem to be the only constant factor: apart from the anti-terror legislation debate in 2005 their contributions vary between 10.9% and 13.6% of the total amount of speech acts. Yet, we also have to take into account that the contributions of the other participants are at least to some degree the result of the selection processes by the media in their role as discourse providers, and because the distribution of the other actors varies between the debates, it seems plausible to assume that some of that variation is due to the changing role of the media.[34] The media are not exempt from the transformation of the public sphere, yet it is important to note that they are neither the sole driving force behind these processes. Certainly, they have propelled some of the changes that become visible also in the analysis of our data to a greater degree than other actors: technological development, new media genres, or changing cultures of (political) journalism, etc. have profoundly changed the mass communication landscape in which we are embedded today. But they have not led for instance to the founding of the "Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament", or other civil society organisations, though they have led to these movement's increasing awareness of the importance of the mediated public sphere in their struggle to articulate their concerns on a larger social scale.

Coming back to our initial point, it is undoubtedly the case that the variation in the media's input is much lower than that of any of the other actors, even if we include the 2005 debate about anti-terror legislation. Before we come to the latter debate, the first observation to be made is that the media's contributions, even if they are not impervious to the structural transformations the media themselves reflect, induce, and promote, on the whole appear to be less affected by the discursive and historical context than those of the other actors. This has to do with the genre format of newspapers: as participants the media – at least today – are almost exclusively restricted to commentary columns and leading articles which are part of the basic elements of newspapers. Together with news reports, background coverage, feature articles, interviews, etc. they form a network of journalistic styles and formats which allows the discursive processing of topics from different angles, thereby highlighting different aspects, or as we would say from the point of view of the present study: prioritising different deliberative elements. And as these formal building blocks are less susceptible to changes in time than the content they process, we consequently see less variation in the levels of participation of the media. As a result of this the media put between 81% and 89% of the discursive space at disposition to the extra-media actors in their role as discourse facilitators. The only exception in their role as participants, though still leading to a smaller variance than that of the other actor classes, is the 2005 debate: compared to the lowest value for the media in 1980 (10.9%) their level of participation has risen by nearly 70% to account for 18.5% of all utterances in 2005. The question of course is what caused the sudden leap?

There are two reasons which together might help to explain the outlier in the media's otherwise constant level of participation. One aspect of the 2005 debate we have already addressed in the context of this as well as other variables is that the anti-terror legislation discussion touches upon very basic values, constitutive of British society in their normative content as well as their historical importance. The prospect of facing arrest without trial, as some journalists feared, was of a similar order to the Government's plans of introducing

[34] Of course, one could argue that the media's selection mechanisms are the only invariant aspects of the whole transformation process, but this would be hardly convincing as at the same time our results show that their own contributions in their role as discourse participants are subject to changes between the debates.

identity cards – the deliberate denial of basic civil liberties: "Conspiring in torture, betraying our freedom. Charles Clarke is a disaster", the headline of a piece by Simon Jenkins for *The Times* criticising the Home Secretary read. It continues: "Mr Clarke is emerging as one of the weakest Home Secretaries of modern times. He has capitulated to the dark forces behind every government who do not care a cat's whisker for civil liberty. [...] Mr Clarke is about to deny British citizens their freedom on the possible say-so of an Uzbek sadist, a Syrian thug or an electrode wielding Egyptian. [...] Even assuming that Mr Clarke's conscience has gone to sleep, what has happened to his brain?" (*The Times* 16.02.05). To be sure, not all newspapers were critical of the Government as the coverage by *The Sun* shows, which was unsympathetic towards the Labour cabinet only in as far as it was held responsible for a lax immigration policy allowing potential terrorists to enter Britain, and more severely for surrendering the country to the rule of Brussels and its European Convention on Human Rights in the first place, which stood in contradiction to the anti-terror bill and was likely to prevent the political powers sought after by the Home Secretary to become institutionalised. Otherwise, Britain's largest selling tabloid engaged in its typical tone in condemning the Opposition for being soft on terrorism: "Clearly the Lib-Dems prefer slapping wrists with a velvet glove to an iron fist between the eyes. [...] It is crazy that our ability to put safety first and lock up suspects before they can set off suicide bombs is being thwarted by a European treaty on human rights. We should pull out of it right now" (*The Sun* 24.02.05), with most of the news coverage following the argumentative structure that "[human] [l]ives must come before human rights", as one reader wrote in his letter to the editor, taking his cue in turn from the former head of Scotland Yard, Sir John Stevens (*The Sun* 03.03.05).[35]

Still, the fact that the anti-terror debate touches upon basic values of British society does not seem to be a sufficient factor in explaining the increase in the media's involvement, for nuclear disarmament to some extent, but certainly Commonwealth immigration and the Anglo-Irish Agreement are equally issues with strong ethical-political sides, making the conception of Britain itself a topic in the debate. Two additional aspects which might help to explain the media's reaction is on the one hand the fact that there is no organised opposition outside the political-administrative centre except for the pressure group Liberty whose appearance in the media, however, is rather sparse, and on the other, and more important than this, the urgency of the issue: unilateral disarmament was an issue discussed in the context of the Cold War which no-one thought would end any time soon; Commonwealth immigration was certainly hotly debated at the time, Enoch Powell would give his infamous "Rivers of blood" speech only three years after the debate analysed in the present study, but again the urgency is of a different temporal scale; so that the only comparable debate is the fuel protest of 2000.[36] But the fuel debate never touched on

[35] Appearing to be soft on terrorism was indeed an epithet the Conservative Opposition wanted to avoid at all costs: "Senior Tories have indicated that the party is unlikely to kill the Government's controversial anti-terror legislation and accused ministers of preparing to portray their opposition to it as soft on terrorism" (*The Independent* 04.03.05). This view was shared at least by Stephen Robinson in a commentary for *The Daily Telegraph*: "When Conservatives complain that with a an election in the offing, Labour actually wants the anti-terror measure to lapse in March so that the Tories can be branded 'soft on terror', I am afraid I believe them. I think that what the Government is doing here is probably that simple, and that cynical" (*The Daily Telegraph* 23.02.05).

[36] In 1968 Enoch Powell, Conservative Member of Parliament for Wolverhampton Southwest, gave a speech in Birmingham criticising the Labour Government's line on Commonwealth immigration and its plan to introduce a Bill against racism. The speech did not include the exact words "rivers of blood" but a quote of Virgil's *Aeneid* which inspired the public perception: "As I look ahead", Powell said, "I am filled with foreboding; like the Roman, I seem to see 'the River Tiber foaming with much blood'" (http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/3643823/Enoch-Powells-Rivers-of-Blood-speech.html, 27.04.11). Though the speech led only to little immediate reaction upon its delivery in Birmingham, it caused a national uproar, led to Powell's dismissal from Edward Heath's Shadow Cabinet and

anything close to ethical-political considerations as it was purely about pragmatic aspects of prices and taxes, and it enjoyed moreover the participation of a very powerful non-parliamentary opposition and widespread solidarity. On the whole, it might thus have been the temporal structure of the debate, the absence of a real social counterweight in the debate, and the fact that the anti-terror issue was to a large extent about Britain's self-conception, which brought more clearly to the fore the role of the media as "the mandatary of an enlightened public whose willingness to learn and capacity for criticism they at once presuppose, demand, and reinforce" (Habermas 1996: 378). The important difference to all other debates is that here the media act as discursive representatives of an idea rather than of any concrete, identifiable social group whose voice they help to amplify.

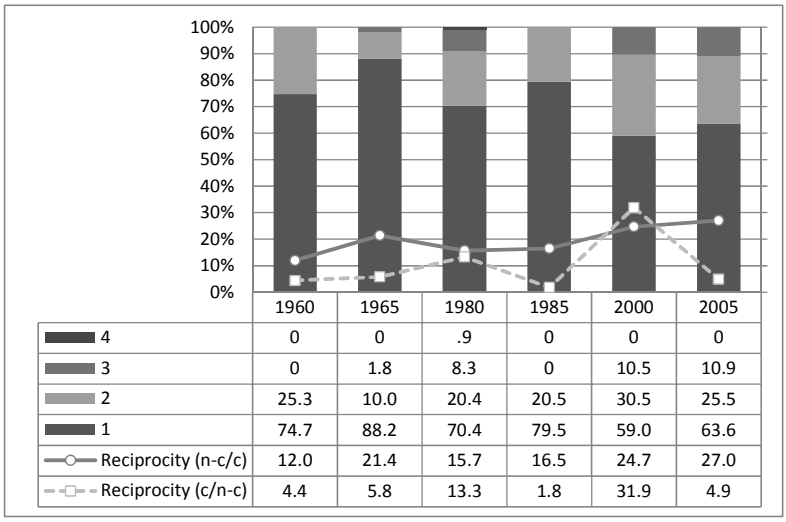
What does all this say about the inclusiveness of the debates? So far we have analysed the changes of the single actor classes in the debates and tried to explain their variations, thereby uncovering their distinct characteristics, the relationships to each other and the public sphere. We will now broaden the focus in order to get a fuller picture. On the whole we can thus see that the inclusiveness is higher in the material debates, the fuel protest in 2000 being the most inclusive one: the Government reaches a level close to 50%, the economy accounts for ca. 25% of the utterances, while the media and civil society share the remaining discursive space equally. We also see that, as mentioned above, it is above all the economy which is decisive in determining the level of inclusiveness – or so it seem at first sight. For on closer inspection one could say that it makes only little sense to expect the economy to contribute at all in cultural debates, or in other words: we cannot compare the two because they are structured differently with respect to cleavage, type of public sphere and consequently actors and actor classes. With this qualification in mind the fuel protest still leads the table, but only for the material debates, whereas for the cultural ones it is the Commonwealth-immigration issue which mobilises not only parts of civil society and the media but to a small extent also the economy. Of course, we could again argue that an issue such as immigration is in one way or the other always related to the economy whereas the same could hardly be said of issues such as anti-terror legislation. Are we then not comparing apples and oranges? To some degree the answer has to be in the affirmative and this is certainly one of the disadvantages when comparing debates on different topics, though as we have seen, tracing the same debate diachronically is not necessarily confronted with less difficulties. There are, however, two solutions or at least remedies to the problem: the first one takes as a starting point the way we measure inclusiveness, whereas the second one, to which we will come in the concluding remarks of this section, will lead us to include the analysis of the next variable of the DQI_m, *role change*, in our considerations.

So far we have measured *inclusiveness* by aggregating the single speech acts to the level of the debate as a whole; the measure thus obtained gives us the proportion of speech acts for each actor class. A different way of analysing the participation of the actors, anticipating to some extent the approach taken in the second part, is to shift the perspective from the actors to the media and ask to what degree the different participants are represented in the single articles. The figure below displays the values for *inclusiveness* measured by taking the

established him firmly as a popular yet controversial political figure, both in Parliament and within his own party (cf. Heffer 1999).

article as unit of analysis. Focussing on the amount of articles which display the views of only one actor class we can see that there is a clear trend in time and moreover

Figure 44: Inclusiveness of articles 1960-2005 (in %)



	1960	1965	1980	1985	2000	2005
4	0	0	.9	0	0	0
3	0	1.8	8.3	0	10.5	10.9
2	25.3	10.0	20.4	20.5	30.5	25.5
1	74.7	88.2	70.4	79.5	59.0	63.6
Reciprocity (n-c/c)	12.0	21.4	15.7	16.5	24.7	27.0
Reciprocity (c/n-c)	4.4	5.8	13.3	1.8	31.9	4.9

n-c/c: reciprocity of non-centre actors towards the centre.
c/n-c: reciprocity of the centre towards non-centre actors.

a systematic difference between material and cultural debates: material debates are generally more inclusive than cultural ones, additionally both types of debates display a greater range of actor classes in the articles as time moves on. These results are not surprising insofar as the article as unit of analysis is simply on a higher level than the speech act, so that we see on the level of the utterances should also become visible on the aggregate level. The advantage of focussing on the articles rather than the speech acts is that the results point out more clearly which debates are the most inclusive ones. For the material issue the analysis confirms our findings that the 2000 fuel protest is the debate where participation is distributed more evenly than in the other two: although nearly 60% of the articles mention only one actor group as speakers, over 30% give room to speakers from two different actor classes, while 10.5% of the articles include actors from three different classes. For the cultural debates in turn the approach yields the 2005 anti-terror legislation issue as the most inclusive one, its results displaying some similarity to those of the fuel debate: in over 63% of the articles only member of one actor class are represented, while in 25.5% of the cases the participants belong to two different classes, and the remaining 10.9% of articles present the views of the participants from three different societal backgrounds. In addition to our findings, the results are further supported by the fact that both debates display the highest levels of the combined reciprocity of non-centre and centre actors: the fuel protest represents the highest overall value with 56.6% while the anti-terror legislation debate accounts for a of 31.9%. This is a welcome accord from the perspective of deliberative theory, although it does not automatically allow us to infer any causal relationships.

4.2. Actor structures: dyads and reciprocity

Apart from the general analysis of inclusiveness in the debates, the data also allow us to explore the dyadic structures, which is not only interesting insofar as it extends the perspective of inclusiveness to the question of who the actors address in their contributions, but will moreover help us to assess the results of the reciprocity structures in a more balanced way. The results below therefore always include the values for the general dialogic orientation of the actors as well as the reciprocity values. The table below gives the details for the speakers and their addressees in general as well as the values for their dialogic orientation. What we are primarily interested in here is on the one hand the distribution of

Table 15: Dyadic and reciprocity structures 1960-2005 (in %)

	1960		1965		1980		1985		2000		2005	
Dyads	Dyad	Reci.	Dyad	Reci.	Dyad	Reci.	Dyad	Reci.	Dyad	Reci.	Dyad	Reci.
1.5		-		-		-	1.4	3.5		-	.1	0.3
2.1		-		-		-	.2	-		-	.1	-
2.2	2.7	5.4	4.9	1	.4	0.7	.5	0.6	1.6	1.6	.4	-
2.3	1.8	3.3	1.8	2.9	.2	-		-	.5	1.6	.1	-
2.4		-		-	3.9	2.2		-	2.2	2.5		-
2.5	2.1	1.1	10.8	9.7	2.4	4.5	3.2	4.1	9.4	6.6	11.2	12.8
3.2	3.6	3.3	1.6	1	1.3	0.7	.2	-	2.7	0.8	.5	0.3
3.3		-		-	.4	0.7		-	1.3	2.5		-
3.4	.6				6.3	3		-	1.1	-		-
3.5	8.5	7.6	9.2	11.7	3.3	2.2	13.2	12.4	9.1	6.6	18.1	13.9
4.2		-	.4	-	1.7	0.7		-	4.3	6.6		-
4.3		-	.2	1	.9	-		-		-		-
4.4	18.5	29.3	.4	-	15.9	14.2		-	5.6	5.7		-
4.5	15.2	4.3	4.0	-	11.1	9		-	14.2	11.5	.3	0.3
5.1				-		-		-		-	2.5	2.1
5.2	2.7	2.2	8.3	2.9	2.4	2.2	2.3	0.6	11.8	18	1.9	2.1
5.3		-	1.6	2.9	.7	0.7	.2	-		-	.4	0.7
5.4	5.2	2.2	.2	-	12.2	10.4	.7	1.2	12.1	13.9		-
5.5	38.9	41.3	56.5	67	36.8	48.5	78.0	77.6	23.9	22.1	64.4	67.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

1="uncivil" society, 2=civil society, 3=media, 4=economic actors, 5=political centre

the speaker-addressee relationship, whose analysis will, however, be restricted to the most important results and on the other hand the differences between the basic interlocutor structure and the reciprocity values.

When comparing the values between the two variables we can see that while there are some substantial differences, generally the reciprocity structures parallel the speaker orientations. The basic structure is therefore the same: we see the highest values for the centre-centre relationship, followed in most cases by the non-centre/centre relationship for the other actor classes, though with two notable exceptions. The orientation of the economy towards itself is higher than that towards the centre in the 1960 and 1980 debates, and both times for the same reason: the divergence from the general pattern is primarily due to the unions which find themselves not only opposed to (parts of) the political-administrative

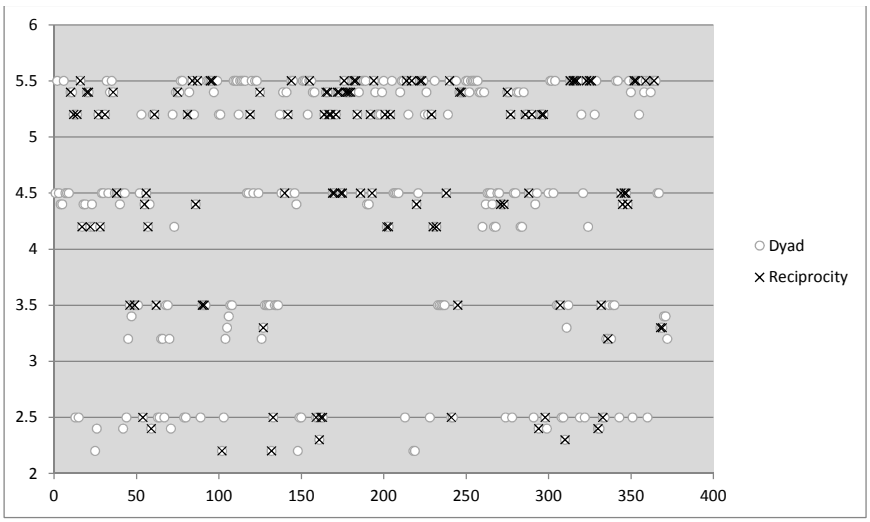
centre, but are engaged in a struggle for power and the legitimate position on the issues within themselves. The case is particularly striking for the unilateral disarmament debate in 1960 where the reciprocity value for the economy-economy relationship is ca. 50% higher than that of the general interlocutor orientation, while the opposite is the case for the economy-centre relationship (15.2% vs. 4.3%), showing the intensity of the unions' internal debate; no other dyadic constellation shows such a discrepancy. The centre-centre dyad in turn mirrors our general findings for the proportion of the centre actors in the debate: it is the single most dominant dyad whose distribution additionally follows the cleavage divide. As far as the development over time is concerned, however, we can only observe for the material debates a continuous trend in the form of a decrease of the centre-centre relations, which might be explained by the simultaneously increasing orientation of the centre towards the non-centre actors. More important than this, however, seems to be the fact that this trend is also accompanied by a steady increase of the centre's reciprocity towards the non-centre actors, meaning that whereas e.g. in 1960 the centre addressed the economic actors in 5.2% of all cases, though referring to their input to the debate only in 2.2% of all dialogic pairings, the picture gradually changes throughout in the following material debates: 12.2% general orientation and 10.4% reciprocity from the centre to the economy in 1980 and finally 12.1% general orientation compared to 13.9% dialogicality between the two actor classes in 2000. In terms of deliberative theory this means that the centre has more and more come to recognise the non-centre actors, here the economy, as participants in the political process, the culmination of this development in our analysis being the fuel debate in 2000 where not only the reciprocity levels offset the basic interlocutor structure, but where the centre-centre relationship reaches its lowest overall value.

From the perspective of the non-centre actors the struggle for recognition can be read as both an increase in their level of participation, i.e. inclusiveness, and in their orientation towards the centre in order to generate uptake, which however does not progress continuously, nor is the centre always the primary addressee. As the picketing rights debate in 1980 shows, civil society and the media address mainly the economic actors, i.e. the unions, which is also true for the economic actors themselves. This can be interpreted to mean that the basic orientation is always towards those actors who are primarily held accountable for past, present, or future actions; in most cases this is the political centre, but it need not always be.

Before concluding this section we will model the distinction between the basic dyadic structure and the reciprocity of the actors as they unfold in the debates. It will suffice to explore just one of the debates more closely as the relationship between the two categories is in all of the cases very similar: there is no discernible systematic difference between the actors' general dyadic orientation and their reciprocal relationships. This becomes evident for instance in the 2000 fuel protest where all of the reciprocity pairings are distributed more or less evenly throughout the debate (see figure 45 below). Those relationships which occur more frequently, i.e. centre-centre (22.1%), economy-centre (18%), centre-economy (13.9%), etc. are of course more visible and show slight patterns of clustering, but they are not dispersed in any different way from those of the other dialogic pairings, nor do the reciprocal relationships appear to follow another development than the basic speaker-addressee structure.

Although this is a result that we might have expected, it is far from trivial. We have seen several times in the context of *inclusiveness* and the other variables discussed so far that the proportion or development of the deliberative dimensions differs with regard to the prevailing cleavage structure, the development over time and the actors involved. In other

Figure 45: Dyad vs. reciprocity 2000 by speech acts



words, despite the recurring evidence for regularities in the structural development of the public sphere and its deliberative dimensions across and within the debates, we have always also found changes which do not seem to follow any pattern and which defy any straightforward explanation. This is particularly the case once we turn to the single actor classes and leave the level of aggregate values. Furthermore, from our theoretical perspective as well as within the context of the actual analysis which examines debates close to their legislative decision, it would have been plausible to hypothesise that notably the centre becomes more introspective as the debates progress and that consequently its reciprocity towards non-centre actors does not keep step with its dyadic structure – in short: although the centre actors address non-centre actors as the debates progress, they listen less and less to the input from outside. Yet, this is not case, neither for the material nor for the cultural debates, nor for the more recent ones or those which have been conducted several decades ago. This is a positive result from the point of view of deliberative theory and it shows that although the responsiveness of the centre varies considerably across the debates, its dialogic orientation towards the other actors within the debates themselves matches its general communicative structure.

4.3. Conclusion

When examining political debates in parliamentary settings (cf. Steiner et al. 2004) or political discussions between participants in focus groups (cf. Luskin, Fishkin, Jowell 2002, Fhikin, Luskin 2005) we are mainly interested in the quality of the argumentative exchange. When analysing the deliberative quality of the public sphere, however, our focus necessarily includes a dimension which is only secondary in these other settings, yet logically prior to argumentation and generally constitutive of discourse as such: the actors. Whereas low levels of reflexivity, reciprocity or the range of perspective are certainly to be seen critically

from a deliberative perspective, a public sphere consisting of representatives of only one actor class would be more fundamentally distorted.

As our results show, this is not the case, with the exception of the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985 where the political process during the period of our analysis is structured along the lines of an "inside access" model and therefore displays systematic distortions in contrast to the other debates. Our analysis of the two other cultural debates, the 1965 Commonwealth immigration debate and the 2005 anti-terror legislation, in turn show that non-centre actors can succeed to all intents and purposes in making their voices heard, thereby changing the public sphere in the direction of the "mobilisation model" irrespective of (part of) the centre's intentions.[37]

Still, compared to the material debates the discussion of cultural topics is on the whole less inclusive, which, however, is only partly due to an underrepresentation of civil society actors. Rather, it is the economic actors whose degree of participation defines the material debates and who help balancing the discursive presence of the centre. Furthermore, if we employ the perspective of the aggregate speech acts per article we see that there is not only a difference according to cleavage structure, but also a development over time in the sense that the more recent debates of 2000 and 2005, both cultural and material ones, are more inclusive than those of the 1980s and 1960s. At the same time, we have also seen that a higher degree of inclusiveness does not automatically entail higher levels in the other dimensions of deliberative quality, at least as far as the reciprocity of the actors is concerned.

Once we move beneath the abstract level of inclusiveness and explore the degree of participation of the single actor classes we see that that the regularity of the patterns quickly disappears at least for the discursive involvement of some of actors; the contributions of civil society in particular do not seem to follow any underlying system. At the same time, however, the varying degrees of participation of the different actors testify to the general permeability of the public sphere, already present in the 1960s – civil society's highest level of participation for instance occurs during the 1965 Commonwealth immigration debate, a level it never reaches again during our analysis. Although there are different factors for the individual actor's participation, we have generally pointed to the degree of being affected by an issue as one possible explanation. Yet from a deliberative perspective and the intersubjective dimension of politics it spells out, the immediate relevance of an issue for an actor is not so much an invariant dimension attached to the topic under discussion, but again a matter of discursive negotiation: if argued convincingly, any issue can become relevant for any actor. Communication scholars working within the framing effects paradigm (cf. Entman 1993, 2004; Iyengar 1990; Gamson 1989; Price, Tewksbury & Powers 1997; Matthes 2007) have indeed been able to show that giving an issue a specific angle affects the recipients' understanding and evaluation of their

[37] One strategy of the parliamentary opposition in its political struggle against the policy plans of the government consists in threatening to hold a referendum on the issue, be it in democracies with or without direct democratic rights. Though in the latter case the results have no juridical implications whatsoever, what lies behind the referendum idea is the attempt to change the structure of the public sphere from the "inside initiative" to the "mobilisation" model. What is important for us is the apparent deep connection between deliberation and legitimacy, and it shows that the strength of this connection changes with the type of the public sphere: it is considerably more difficult for a government to bypass the will of the people if the people think that they should rightfully have a say in the matter. This is precisely the tactic chose by the unionist parties in Northern Ireland as we have seen.

environments. Certain deliberative conditions in which actual discussions are embedded such as the prevailing communication culture (cf. Pfetsch 2001, 2004), a political opportunity structure (cf. Kitschelt 1986; Kriesi 1995; Meyer & Staggenborg 1996, Koopmans 2000) interpreted here as the possibilities of communicative spill-overs into the mass mediated public sphere and (directly or indirectly) to other actor classes, the magnitude of the coverage, etc. represent and induce participation in the deliberative process. In the terminology of communication research, deliberation is the result of the interaction between agenda setting (cf. McCombs & Shaw 1972) and agenda building effects (cf. Lang & Lang 1981): while the media set the agenda of the debating public they are in turn themselves the object of struggles to influence the topics of their coverage.[38]

Inclusiveness then is the result of these interconnecting processes. There is, however, an additional aspect we have to take into account: we cannot be certain that those actors in the public sphere are at least a more or less representative subset of those who are affected by political decisions, let alone that the public sphere is constituted in accordance with Habermas' discourse principle (D) by those who *want* to engage in the debate. In other words, the distribution of the speakers in the debates needs to be supplemented by additional information in order to assess how inclusive they really are. For as we will see, particularly debates about peripheral groups of society such as the Commonwealth immigrants in 1965 suffer very basically from the problem that they include all kinds of voices except those of the affected group. Habermas submits that "[t]he structures of the public sphere reflect unavoidable asymmetries in the availability of information, that is, unequal chances to have access to the generation, validation, shaping, and presentation of messages" (1996: 325). This is generally more likely to be the case for those groups which only insufficiently command authoritative and allocative resources (cf. Giddens 1984) such as administrative power and money, those who are only loosely organised and additionally have only a limited knowledge of the rules which underlie the media's production and selection processes such as news values, etc. In the context of the present study we will use *role change* as an information criterion which is itself part of the deliberative model but which moreover allows us to gauge the robustness of our results for *inclusiveness*. It is important to note that *role change* does not allow us to compare the mass media discourse with any form of extra media reality, which would be the ideal way to solve the problem of inclusiveness, as *role change* is itself an aspect of the media debates we analyse. But it has the advantage of broadening our view on the issue as will become clearer below.

5. Role change

The Habermasian approach to deliberative democracy is more modest than that of others, in particular in the version of Cohen, in that it limits deliberation to the political system. The reason for this is that deliberation cannot penetrate society's complexity as a whole, "for the simple reason that democratic procedure must be embedded in contexts it cannot itself regulate" (Habermas 1996: 305). Here, Habermas mainly thinks of those subsystems of society which are regulated by non-linguistic media, but he is also aware that deliberation is

[38] An alternative reading along the lines of Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann's (1974, 1993) theory of the "spiral of silence" would suggest that cumulation, i.e. the repetition of media message, and consonance, i.e. the similar evaluative stance of media coverage across media outlets, plays a major role in defining a debate and its participants.

embedded in communicative contexts it must presuppose and which it moreover *should* not be able to control. As the discourse principle (D) postulates: "only those norms of action are valid to which all possibly affected persons could assent as participants in rational discourses" (Habermas 1996: 459). The important word here is "could" for it refers not only to the possibility of consensus as the outcome of deliberation, but more basically to the possibility or the freedom to participate in the discussion in the first place. Deliberation can only then be said to be free from coercion if this extends to the freedom of potential participants to abstain from public debate. We can therefore not presuppose that those affected by norms of action will always participate in the discourses which lead to their legitimation.[39] Yet far from being a problematic aspect of deliberative theory this is a theoretical cornerstone of all democratic theories insofar as they embody an element of "government by the people" which most "actually existing democracies" have adopted.[40] It simply means that even under the ideal circumstances of e.g. G.H. Mead's communication society we could not expect everyone to partake in the deliberative process all the time (cf. Mead 1968).

A second – obvious, yet important – point concerns the practical side and is given by the simple observation that modern democracies are far from a true representation of the ideal communication society or any other form of society in which deliberative processes flow without hindrance or distortion. Habermas is well aware of this when he writes that the general, i.e. informal public sphere is "more vulnerable to the repressive and exclusionary effects of unequally distributed social power, structural violence, and systematically distorted communication" (Habermas 1996: 307f.). Yet, this is also the point where the empirical relevance of the deliberative model becomes apparent as its ideal assumptions allow us to use it as blueprint with which we can trace the divergences of reality from the ideal and which hence allows us to identify precisely those systematic distortions and deficiencies which are detrimental to democratic discourse to a substantial degree. For democratic theory this means that the deliberative procedure has to be coupled on the one hand to a theory of the public sphere which embodies the radical element spelled out in the discourse principle (D), yet which on the other is also aware of the reality in modern democracies. For empirical research in turn the consequences and the challenges are of a different kind: we can never be certain that all those affected participate in the debate, more worryingly still, we can often not be sure who the groups of the affected really are. If we additionally keep in mind that the degree of being affected by an issue is not only a property of a policy proposal but also the product of a discursive negotiation process, as we have shown above, an obvious problem arises since there is the danger that exclusion is perpetuated: because certain groups of actors are not included in the public sphere they cannot become part of it, and because they are not part of it, they are not included. In the most extreme case groups of whose existence we are unaware would be excluded from public debate. Such a possible outlook raises serious doubts about our measure of

[39] This is the theoretical lacuna Honneth seeks to fill with his recognition based approach as he detects a motivational deficit in discourse theory, precisely because it cannot explain on its own terms why certain actors and collectives participate in the political process.

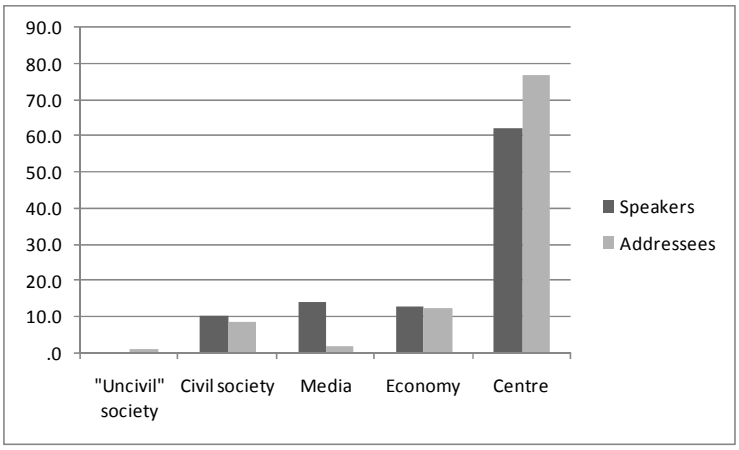
[40] There are some exceptions to the rule as e.g. the Swiss canton of Schaffhausen in which voting is compulsory, on the national level Australia, Argentina, Singapore to name but a few have turned the right to participate into a duty. Violations to perform one's duty are sanctioned very differently: while citizens of the canton Schaffhausen are fined 3 Swiss Francs, punishment in Egypt can go as far as a jail sentence, whereas in Singapore disinterested citizens are deleted from the registers until they provide a reason why they want to vote again (cf. Lijphart 1997; http://www.idea.int/vt/compulsory_voting.cfm, 27.03.11).

inclusiveness as it would be reduced to merely measuring the discursive presence of the established actors, i.e. those who can "afford" the inclusion in the public sphere. The struggle for recognition thus is translated into a struggle for attention. The question arises what we can do to get an empirical handle on the issue.

As we will see for instance in the Commonwealth immigration debate, certain groups, i.e. immigrants in this case, are indeed if not excluded then at least substantially marginalised in a debate, although they are certainly part of those affected by the norms of actions to be institutionalised. And we could even think of debates where defining the affected groups could pose a problem as in discourses on environmental policies, where at least one of the groups affected is an abstract entity and the principle of discursive representation only inadequately compensates for nature's silence. On the whole then and as alluded to above, if we want to get a fuller picture of inclusiveness we need additional data in order to be able to judge whether or not the relevant groups have a voice in the pubic sphere. While we can think of different possibilities to extend the analytical focus, the present study will rely on the concept of role change. The advantages of pursuing this track are twofold: on the one hand *role change* as variable on its own constitutes one of the deliberative standards, on the other inclusiveness forms part of it to certain extent as role change captures to what extent addressees also become speakers in the debate. It has therefore the additional conceptual benefit that we do not need look for measures outside the actual debate since according to the deliberative model there are no independent standards we could use to assess the discursive quality. Rather, in accord with deliberative theory and our empirical approach we will employ the participants' own standards to evaluate the deliberativeness of the public sphere.

In line with the structure of the presentation of the empirical results we will first explore the degree of role change across the debates and then turn to a more detailed examination of single actor classes and ask to what extent the different speakers refer to the addressees. Before doing so, however, a general look at the total distribution of speakers (inclusiveness) and hearers will allow us to get a general idea of the relationship between the two. As we

Figure 46: Role change total (in %)



can see in the figure above, there are two substantial difference between the total distribution of speakers and of the addressees: the levels for the media on the one hand and those for the centre on the other. Both can be explained with reference to the nature of the political process without having to go into any more details about the single debates.

Anticipating some of the interpretations of the results further below, there are two general, but tentative interpretations theory offers for the discrepancies between the values of the two actor classes. First, as regards the centre, the discourses of all three basic public sphere types are sooner or later directed towards the centre, as this is the institutional place where binding decisions are taken. All actors of the political process hence always address the centre: civil society and the economy as those affected by policy proposals, the media as commentators of the political events. This explains the gap of almost 15% between the centre's values as speaker and in its role as addressee. Second, in relation to the media it becomes apparent what the mandatary role entails: the media play an active part in the debates, they facilitate and integrate discourses, the comment on the different actors' statements and advocate the views of the discursive underrepresented – yet they are not perceived as political actors. Although they provide discursive platforms and actively participate in the debates, they are not treated on a par with the other actors. Yet, this is exactly what the mandatary role as well as the idea of the fourth estate implies: to stand in for other actors, for other ideas, and possibly to have an effect on the debate, but not to be a political part of it in the way the other actors are – certainly not in the way the press barons used their journalistic power for political purposes at the beginning of the 20th century.

With these preliminary considerations in mind, we can now explore in more detail the changes and developments of the two categories and their relationship to social change and cleavage structure (section 5.1.) as well as to the actors (section 5.2.).

5.1. Time and cleavage structure

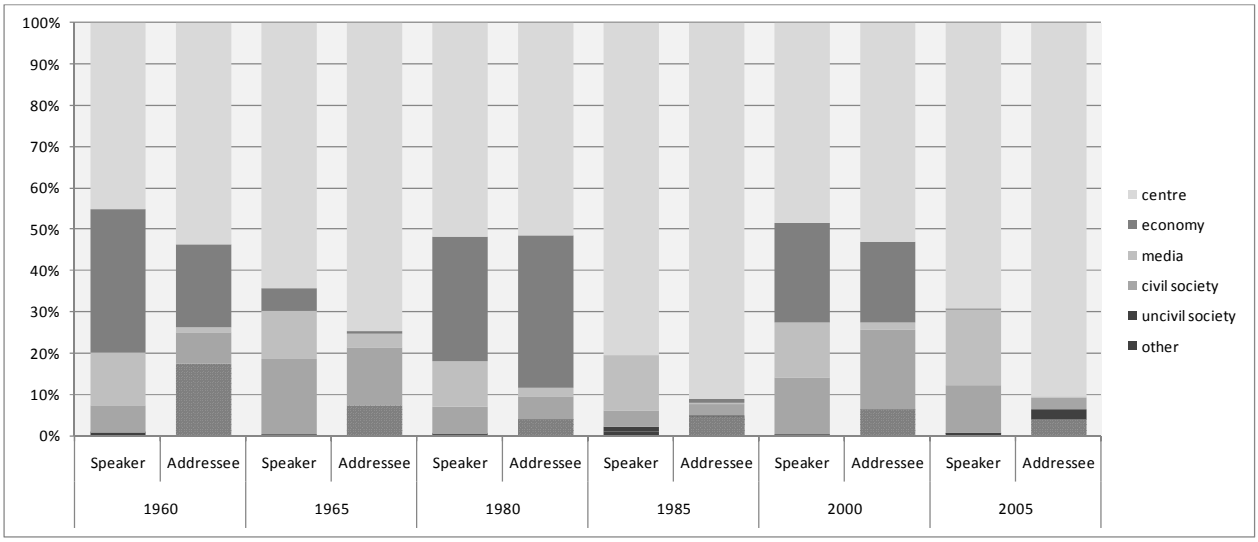
Since role change as a theoretical concept of the deliberative model states that all those affected by the institutionalisation of action norms are free to take part in the debate and take on every communicative role, our main interest is to analyse to what extent the addressees in debate also take on the role as speakers. This is of course a very minimalistic interpretation of what role change actually means, but it is at the same time the most important one as it allows us to distinguish whether actors participate as subjects in the public sphere, i.e. whether they participate in the debate, or whether they merely appear as the objects of the contributions of other actors.[41] The latter result would point to a distortion in the deliberative process and might even lead us to reassess the degree of inclusiveness.

Taking first a look at the addressees and how their internal structure has developed over time in the figure below we come to conclusions to very similar to those we reached in the analysis of the inclusiveness of the speakers, at least as far as the main general finding is concerned: the inclusiveness of addressees in material debates is higher than in cultural ones. The reason is again similar, though less one-sided than in the results of the previous section for it is not only the economy which contributes to the difference but also civil society, and in 1960 significantly also the category of "other". The "others" are included in this part of the analysis because the category not only consists of those actors which could not be identified, but also includes one type of actor which defied classification according to

[41] Given the complexity of modern societies, we cannot expect role change to occur for every individual actor, not even for those who act as contributors. Rather, what we are interested in is the degree to which whole actor classes or the groups which constituted them are able to change their communicative roles.

the scheme employed in this study, namely Britain.[42] The problem with discursive entities

Figure 47: Role change 1960-2005 (in %)



such as Britain is that speakers do not refer to it as the political-administrative centre, the only category in which "Britain" could be placed in our classification scheme, rather it occurs often in the context of general appeals that e.g. Britain should disarm in the case of the unilateral disarmament debate in 1960, or that Britain will have to integrate its Commonwealth citizens in the 1965 debate. In both cases the addressee escapes a clear classification as the way it is employed encompasses both the political system but also society in general; it is the whole of institutions, culture and lifeworld to which the actors refer. Interestingly, if we take a more detailed look at the internal structure of the "other" category we can see that while "Britain" is dominant in the 1960s it become less prominent in the subsequent debates. This could partly be read as supporting the previous tentatively inferred hypothesis that the 1960s debates are broader in the sense that they emphasise the

Table 16: Frequency of "UK" in "other" category (in %)

	Year	1960	1965	1980	1985	2000	2005
Valid	Britain	81.4	54.3	.0	14.3	11.5	10.0
	n.a.	19.6	45.7	100.0	85.7	90.5	90.0
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

ethical-political dimension more strongly and that they are more ramified, connecting to other policy areas such as economic issues in the Commonwealth immigration debate. To be sure, the 2005 anti-terror legislation debate touches on British society's basic conception of itself just as the 1960 and 1965 issues, but while the latter are couched in more abstract terms and thereby unwittingly also reveal the difficulty of identifying the responsible actors,

[42] The category of "other" is otherwise generally excluded from the analyses of the remaining DQI_m variables as it consists exclusively of non-identifiable actors which moreover account for only between 0.2% and 0.9% of the total amount of actors in the single debates. On the side of the addressees it is also excluded from the analysis of reciprocity structures as well as the more detailed examination of the actors' inclusiveness as it is necessarily always a passive object of discourse and can never perform a role change. The same could of course be said in the present context, but here the primary interest is to show that there is a systematic difference between "other" as a category of the speakers and of the addressees; it will again be excluded from the analyses in the inferential part.

in the former the participants are very clear at whose door they lay the blame, or their demands for that matter.Exploring the relationships of speakers and hearers beyond their general similarity in the debates yields substantial differences for the single actor classes.[43] Unlike the other actors the centre's discursive presence is always smaller in its role as

Table 17: Frequency of actor classes as speakers when "centre" is the addressee (in %)

	year	1960	1965	1980	1985	2000	2005
Valid	"Uncivil" society	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.5	0.0	.1
	Civil society	3.3	13.4	4.5	0.0	16.6	11.9
	Media	13.1	11.4	6.1	3.4	16.1	19.2
	Economy	23.5	5.0	20.7	13.8	25.1	.3
	Centre	60.1	70.2	68.7	81.4	42.2	68.5
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

speaker than as addressee, and the differences between the two values are larger in cultural than in material debates. The reason for the difference can again be seen in the type of public sphere constituted by these debates and we could hypothesise that this is accompanied by a higher level of reaction by the non-centre actors which in turn leads to an even more dominant position of the centre. Yet, as table 17 below shows, the opposite is the case: although the supposed relationship holds for certain cases as for civil society in 1960/65 or the media in 2000/05, on the whole it is the centre which addresses itself more often in cultural than in material debates. This no contradiction to the assertion that the type of public sphere has an effect on the speaker-addressee relationship, but it gives us a more detailed view of the discursive dynamics at work: although cultural debates are those where the reciprocity from the non-centre towards the centre actors is higher in each decade than in the material debates, it does not entail that the non-centre actors utter on the whole more speech acts which have the centre as their addressee. Rather, since the issues either originate in the centre or are strongly driven by it at the time of observation, it is above all the centre actors who engage more intensely with it – and with the responsible actors, i.e. the centre itself.

The only exception where the centre's values for its role as speaker and addressee are almost identical (51.9% vs. 51.5%) is in the 1980 picketing rights issue which is also that debate where the figures for the economy break their pattern: in contrast to the figures of the centre the economy always displays lower values in its role as addressee than as speaker – except for the 1980 debate. It is here that the economy is in the driving seat of the debate, so to speak, and is consequently also identified as the main responsible actor, not least because of its one-day general strike. It seems thus that the more decisive actors become for a debate the more they come into the discursive focus as addressees. The same effect is at work in the 2000 fuel protest in the case of civil society, whose pattern of values is similar to that of the economic actors but where the shift between speaker and addressee values occur in the latter debate: being an open confrontation between the Government and non-centre actors including acts of civil disobedience, the periphery is perceived more strongly as one of the responsible actors in this debate than in the others. This is again

[43] For the sake of completeness the values for the "uncivil" society are included, although they will not be discussed separately as they are part of only two debates and reach contradictory values: in 1985 they account for 1.3% of the speech acts as speaker and are the addressee in 0.2% of the cases, while in 2005 they appear in 0.1% of all utterances as speakers and in 2.5% as addressees. The difference can be explained by the internal structure of the category in the two debates: in 1985 the "uncivil" society consists of representatives of paramilitary groups of Northern Ireland which are more established in the political process than in 2005, where the category mainly comprises eight foreigners detained in HM Prison Belmarsh.

mirrored by higher figures for the periphery as addressee than as speaker and moreover evidenced by the fact that it mainly addressed by the other actors – it is its own addressee only in ca. 8% of the total speech acts (see also below).

The only actor class who displays a consistent pattern throughout the decades are the media: their role as addressee is marginal in all of the debates and most evidently so in 1985 and 2005 where they contribute 13.3% and 18.4% of the speech acts as speakers but are by contrast referred to only in 0.2% and 0.5% of the cases, respectively. On the whole the discrepancy between the values of the media as speakers and as addressees testifies once again to their theoretical classification as specialised actors in the public sphere: although as discourse providers they integrate the other actors and relate to them in their role as commentators, they are hardly ever figure as the object of the debate. The "fourth estate" is thus marked by a conspicuous absence as the referent of utterances, be it their own or those of the other actors. Within our framework this implies that although the media are crucial in constituting political debates and despite their participation in them, they are not perceived as political actors in the same way that the other actors are held accountable. This is not to say that the media wield "power without responsibility" (cf. Curran & Seaton 1981) as we can think of several cases where they are at the centre of the attention because of their negligence of their own standards of practice, *Sky News'* faked television report from a Royal Navy submarine during the Iraq war in 2003 or *The Sun's* coverage of the Hillsborough disaster in 1989 are just two examples (cf. *The Guardian* 17.7.2003,

11.07.2004, 18.04.2009).[44] But as the "mandatary of an enlightened public" (Habermas 1996: 378) and discursive representatives – of actors or ideas – they rarely become the object of the debate. The media can help to extend the public sphere to those who do not have a privileged access, they can represent others or other opinions discursively, and they can comment on events and actions of other actors, but although their input might receive uptake by others, they are not addressed as "authors" or "originators". The actors' orientation here is absolutely in line with the discourse principle as they recognise only those actors as participants who are affected by norms of action. This explains the particular position of the media in political debates: they are engaged in them in a more complex way than the other actors, but as long as they are not directly affected by norms of action or act against existing ones as in the journalistic scandals mentioned, they are not the most relevant addressees from the other actors' perspectives.

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[44] The expression "power without responsibility" goes back to Conservative politician Stanley Baldwin, who appropriated it from his cousin Rudyard Kipling, and refers to the power of the press barons who threatened to undermine his position within the party. It came at a time when the press barons, in particular the Lords Beaverbrook (owner of the *Daily Express*, *Sunday Express*, *Evening Standard*, *Pall Mall Gazette*, and the Glasgow *Evening Citizen*) and Rothermere (owner of the *Evening News*, *Daily Mail*, and *Daily Mirror*), used not only the press as a political instrument but went beyond the boundaries of their media enterprises to influence the course of politics. Running the Empire Crusade campaign and founding two political parties, the Empire Free Trade Crusade and the Untied Empire Party, they promoted the idea of the British Empire to become a free trade bloc, a concern opposed both by the Labour minority government under Ramsay MacDonald and the Conservative opposition under Stanley Baldwin. Beaverbrook's strategy to topple the leader of the Conservatives was threefold: he openly campaigned against Baldwin in his newspapers, had his own party contest by-elections, and additionally supported Conservative politicians who endorsed the Empire Crusade. Baldwin, who after the Conservative's defeat at the general elections in 1929 returned to the government in 1931 as Lord President of the Council in Ramsay MacDonald's national coalition ministry, then famously attacked the press barons for wanting "power, and power without responsibility – the prerogative of the harlot throughout the ages. This contest is not a contest as to who is to lead the party, but as to who is to appoint the leader of the party. It is a challenge to the accepted constitutional Parliamentary system" (*The Times* 18.03.1931). As Baldwin's own candidates regained the upper hand in the by-elections after defeats by the Empire Crusade, securing thereby his leadership, Beaverbrook's campaign lost momentum and slowly petered out. (cf. Negrine 1994: 39ff., Curran & Seaton 2003: 37ff., http://www.portcullis.parliament.uk/DServe/dserve.exe?dsqIni=Dserve.ini&dsqApp=Archive&dsqDb=Catalog&dsqCmd=show.tcl&dsqSearch=%28RefNo==%27BBK%2FB%27%29, 02.02.11).
The Hillsborough disaster was a human stampede at the FA Cup semi-final between Nottingham Forrest and Liverpool FC, which resulted in the injury of 766 people and the death of 96 people, all Liverpool fans. Covering the events under the headline "The truth", *The Sun* (19.04.89) falsely blamed the disaster on Liverpool supporters, labelled "animals", who allegedly had robbed victims, urinated on members of the emergency service, and attacked a police officer. While also the reactions of other media were critical of the fans' behaviour, none of them went so far as those in *The Sun*, which only apologised for its coverage in 2004 (cf. *Financial Times* 11.04.09, *The Guardian* 31.05.05).
In 2003 *Sky News* produced a documentary of the war in Iraq, during which the launching of a missile from a Royal Navy submarine was shown. Although the report had been cleared by the Ministry of Defence, it later emerged that the submarine was docked at the time and the launching had been staged (cf. *The Guardian* 17.07.03). One of the journalists involved, who lost their jobs in the aftermath of the scandal, committed suicide a few months later (cf. *The Guardian* 07.10.03).
At the time of writing the British Sunday tabloid *News of the World*, part of Rupert Murdoch's British newspaper publishing house News International, in turn a subsidiary of Murdoch's multinational media conglomerate News Corporation, became the main figure in a media scandal, which according to reports by *The Daily Telegraph* consisted in the paper's tapping the voicemails of celebrities, a murdered schoolgirl, and several families of members of the British armed forces who had died in Iraq (*The Daily Telegraph* 05.04.11, 07.07.11, *The Independent* 08.07.11). The Metropolitan Police Service believed that there could be up to 4'000 victims of the paper's illegal practice (cf. *The Guardian* 07.07.11). Interestingly, the former News of the World Andy Coulson resigned in 2007 over a phone hacking scandal only to become the Conservative Party's director of communications and planning a few months later (cf. *The Daily Telegraph* 05.04.11, 07.07.11, *The Independent* 07.07.11, *The Guardian* 07.07.11). As the scandal widened Rupert Murdoch decided to close Britain's best-selling Sunday newspaper, thus ending its 168-year old history (cf. *The Guardian* 07.07.11). Rupert Murdoch's son James Murdoch, Deputy Chief Operating Officer of News Corporation and Chairman of News International, said to the staff: "The *News of the World* is in the business of holding others to account. But it failed when it came to itself [...] Having consulted senior colleagues, I have decided that we must take further decisive action with respect to the paper. This Sunday will be the last issue of the News of the World. [...] In addition, I have decided that all of the News of the World's revenue this weekend will go to good causes.[...] We will run no commercial advertisements this weekend. Any advertising space in this last edition will be donated to causes and charities that wish to expose their good works to our millions of readers. [...] These are strong measures. They are made humbly and out of respect. I am convinced they are the right thing to do" (*The Guardian* 07.07.11).

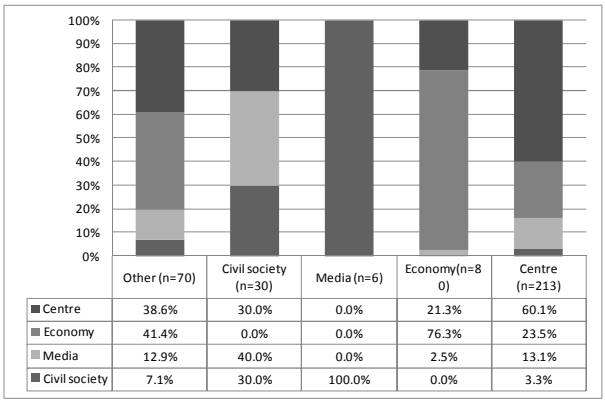
It is interesting to see that despite the different distributions of the addressees in the debates and the different explanations which lie behind them, they still follow rather closely the speakers' structure of inclusiveness to the extent that we would be able to infer more or less accurately the speaker structure when given the values for the addressees. Yet, as we have already seen to in the context of the political-administrative centre, this summary view conceals the true discursive relationship between the speakers and their addressees, which we will therefore explore in more detail below.

5.2. Actors

As our analyses of the DQI_m so far have shown, the single elements defining the deliberative quality are not all situated on one and the same dimension, a conclusion which is at least partly also valid for the relationship between *reciprocity* and *role change*. Although the values of non-centre reciprocity towards the centre in cultural debates suggest that the non-centre actors also refer more often to the centre in these debates, the empirical evidence above has shown that the contrary is true. It seems therefore useful to explore the internal stratification of the addressees in more detail. The figures below depict the internal structure of the addressees by debate, i.e. to what degree they are the object of the different speaker classes' utterances. We will concentrate on the most marked differences, starting with the category of "others". As indicated above, there is a systematic difference between the internal structure of "other" in the 1960s and the following decades in that in the unilateral disarmament as well as the Commonwealth immigration debate the category is constituted to a substantial degree by references to "Britain", though it is particularly the former debate where this is the case. In 1960 57 of the total of 70 utterances coded as "other" refer to Britain, whereas it is 17 out of a total of 35 in 1965, i.e. only half of them; the values drop further in the following debates. The difference between 1960 and 1965, i.e. the two years where "Britain" is an important referent, is to be seen in the distribution of the speakers, which is almost equal in the Commonwealth debate between civil society, media, and the centre, although the lower values do not permit to draw any causal interpretation. But they support the interpretation that the abstract, ethical-political dimension of the debate is equally perceived by the main participants, while this not the case in the 1960 debate, for here only 3.5% of the members of civil society and 15.8% of the media refer to Britain as the imagined interlocutor, while the rest is shared by the economic actors (42.1%)

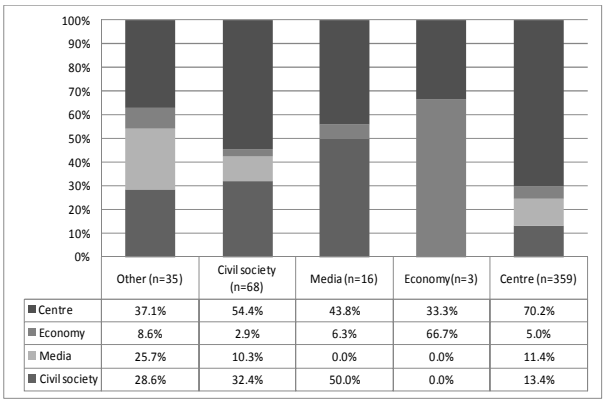
and the political centre (38.6%). Despite its strong ethical-political undertones, the disarmament debate thus shows that only those actors vying for political power, i.e. the unions and the political parties, extensively refer to Britain as the most abstract yet most inclusive of all concepts, while the media and civil society abstain from it for the most part.

Figure 48: Addressee structure 1960 (in %)



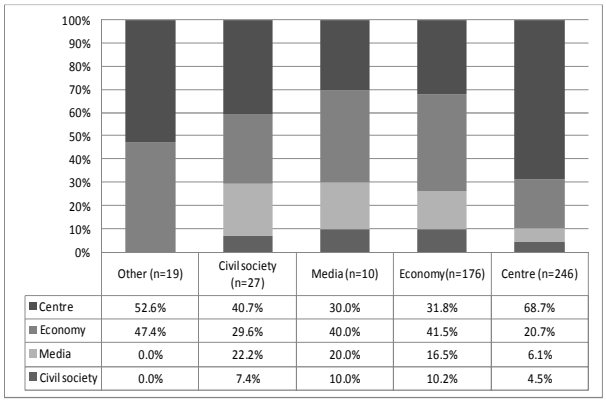
	Other (n=70)	Civil society (n=30)	Media (n=6)	Economy(n=80)	Centre (n=213)
Centre	38.6%	30.0%	0.0%	21.3%	60.1%
Economy	41.4%	0.0%	0.0%	76.3%	23.5%
Media	12.9%	40.0%	0.0%	2.5%	13.1%
Civil society	7.1%	30.0%	100.0%	0.0%	3.3%

Figure 49: Addressee structure 1965 (in %)



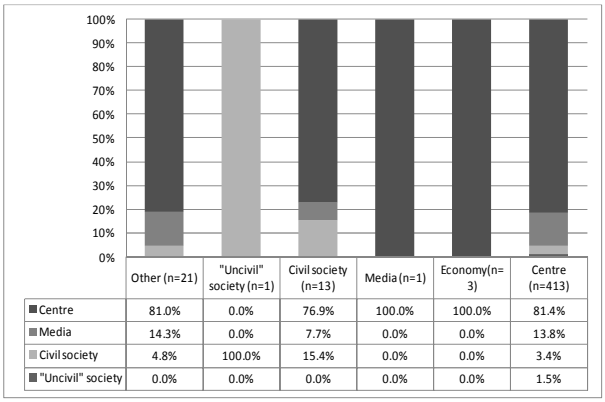
	Other (n=35)	Civil society (n=68)	Media (n=16)	Economy(n=3)	Centre (n=359)
Centre	37.1%	54.4%	43.8%	33.3%	70.2%
Economy	8.6%	2.9%	6.3%	66.7%	5.0%
Media	25.7%	10.3%	0.0%	0.0%	11.4%
Civil society	28.6%	32.4%	50.0%	0.0%	13.4%

Figure 50: Addressee structure 1980 (in %)



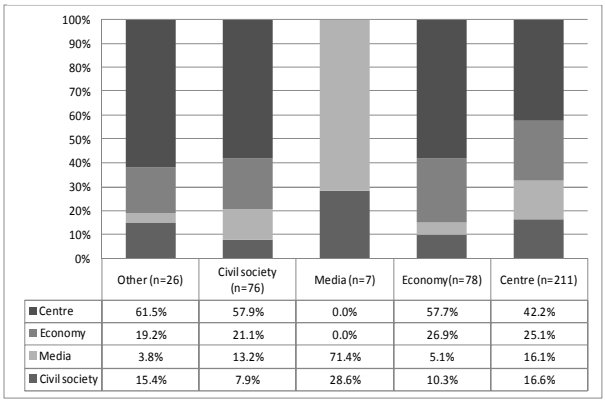
	Other (n=19)	Civil society (n=27)	Media (n=10)	Economy(n=176)	Centre (n=246)
Centre	52.6%	40.7%	30.0%	31.8%	68.7%
Economy	47.4%	29.6%	40.0%	41.5%	20.7%
Media	0.0%	22.2%	20.0%	16.5%	6.1%
Civil society	0.0%	7.4%	10.0%	10.2%	4.5%

Figure 51: Addressee structure 1985 (in %)



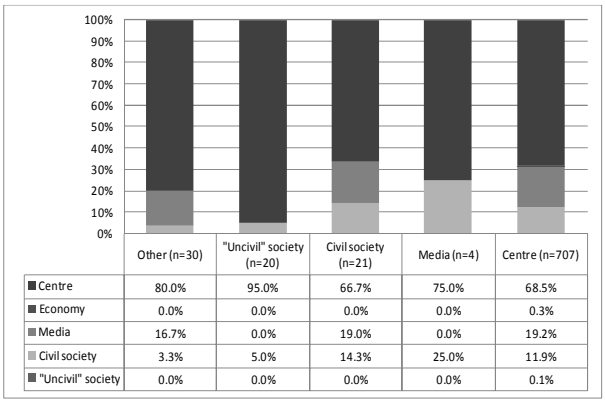
	Other (n=21)	"Uncivil" society (n=1)	Civil society (n=13)	Media (n=1)	Economy(n=3)	Centre (n=413)
Centre	81.0%	0.0%	76.9%	100.0%	100.0%	81.4%
Media	14.3%	0.0%	7.7%	0.0%	0.0%	13.8%
Civil society	4.8%	100.0%	15.4%	0.0%	0.0%	3.4%
"Uncivil" society	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%

Figure 52: Addressee structure 2000 (in %)



	Other (n=26)	Civil society (n=76)	Media (n=7)	Economy(n=78)	Centre (n=211)
Centre	61.5%	57.9%	0.0%	57.7%	42.2%
Economy	19.2%	21.1%	0.0%	26.9%	25.1%
Media	3.8%	13.2%	71.4%	5.1%	16.1%
Civil society	15.4%	7.9%	28.6%	10.3%	16.6%

Figure 53: Addressee structure 2005 (in %)



	Other (n=30)	"Uncivil" society (n=20)	Civil society (n=21)	Media (n=4)	Centre (n=707)
Centre	80.0%	95.0%	66.7%	75.0%	68.5%
Economy	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%
Media	16.7%	0.0%	19.0%	0.0%	19.2%
Civil society	3.3%	5.0%	14.3%	25.0%	11.9%
"Uncivil" society	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%

This is not surprising as the unions struggle with the Labour Party for the power to define the party's political programme, which is a contest necessarily marked by a debate about what lies in Britain's interest – or for the majority of the electorate form the party executive's and certainly Hugh Gaitskell's point of view. The Commonwealth immigration debate is in this context both more abstract and more concrete at the same time: because immigration is an issue that can be perceived in people's daily lives, while at the same time – and perhaps because of this – the debate is very much also about what Britain essentially is, what it means to be British, who is to be thought of as British, etc. This is one possible reason why we find a more or less equal distribution of references in this debate.

The Commonwealth immigration issue allows us to examine another important aspect: as the debate is to a large extent about immigrants, their integration into British society, etc. we should expect a substantial amount of the voices of civil society to belong to immigrants. At least this is what the discourse principle postulates, for if the norms of action under discussion apply mainly to immigrants then they should certainly be part of the debate. However, this is hardly the case: of all speech acts only 1% are uttered by immigrants, putting them into 23rd place on the actors' ranking in the original data, although they are referred to as addressees in 6.7% of the cases, putting them in 3rd place and thus making the addressee category in this respect more inclusive than that of the speakers. There is an additional reason for the discrepancy between the immigrant's status as speakers and addressees as the study's focus on normative validity claims further adds to the low values. In contrast to some of the other debates the immigration issue often appears in background articles, e.g. in *The Times'* series "The dark million", which provide depth and complexity to it, making immigration and immigrants more palpable by offering a view on Britain as seen through their eyes, but because of their journalistic style they leave little room for regulative speech acts.[45] Or put differently, the negotiation of normative validity claims is not the main interest of these articles, but rather the emphasis of the expressive and subjective element which is only marginally represented in regular news reports.[46]

The structure of civil society as addressees, of which the immigrants form a part, follows one general trend: in material debates the references by the centre gradually increase from 30% in 1960 to almost the double in 2000 (57.9%), which could be an indication that members of civil society slowly succeed in establishing themselves as political actors and are taken seriously as participants in the public sphere. This interpretation is further supported by the contrary development of the relationship between the media and civil society, which sees the references by the media decrease continually from 1960 (40%) to 2005 (13.2%): civil society succeeds more and more in establishing itself as an interlocutor of institutionalised actors, above all the political centre, so that the mandatary role of the media becomes less important. The picture is less conclusive for the cultural debates, however, as the centre's references to civil society increase from 1965 to 1980 but then diminish again in 2005, though not below the values of the 1960s.[47] Taking into account the absolute figures for all cultural debates, civil society is most often referred to as an addressee in the context of the Commonwealth immigration issue: 68 speech acts add up to14.1% for all references in 1965, but only for only 2.9% of references in 1985 and 2.7% in 2005.[48] The Commonwealth immigration issue is also that debate where civil society shows the highest level of self-references and confirms our intuition that together with the nuclear disarmament issue in 1960, but even to a higher degree, it is embedded in more complex ways in people's

[45] It must be added, however, that background journalism was particularly important in this context: immigration from Commonwealth countries to Britain was still a recent phenomenon, having only really started in the 1950s, and Britain was still settling into its role as a member of the Commonwealth. Through feature stories, background coverage, etc. journalists adopted a bridging function, so to speak, by providing access to a world and to views that were literally foreign to many of their readers, and by adopting a reflective stance which pointed beyond the restricted confines of daily politics.

[46] From a deliberative point of view the different journalistic styles are related to one another in a discursive division of labour: news reports present facts and consist mainly of constative speech acts, background articles additionally convey the atmosphere in which the events are embedded and have a more explanatory and interpretative character, while comments foreground the normative dimension.

[47] Given the low values for 1985 and 2005, the 1965 issue is strictly speaking the only debate which allows a more thorough examination.

[48] These figures adopt the complementary perspective of the total amount of references per addressee class, the corresponding tables are in appendix 3.

lifeworlds and represents on the whole a more ramified debate than e.g. the fuel protest; both debates articulate society's self-understanding (*Selbstverständigung*) of what Britain comprises as an abstract concept and what it means to be British.

The figures for the media as addressees are generally too low to be interpreted in any meaningful way, but as such they confirm the complexity of their role, to which we have referred above. Another important aspect mentioned above that escapes most of our analysis has to do with the discursive division of labour within journalism: many articles that provide background information have not been coded although they provide the reader with a different perspective to events, circumstances and actors which he otherwise would not receive. Yet, because these articles only rarely display normative speech acts of the kind we find in news reports, commentaries, editorials, etc., they are reduced to their discursive minimum in the course of the analysis and in fact often disappear altogether. An additional narrative analysis, though beyond the scope of this study, could complement the examination of the discursive quality, as the narrative provides the context and hence the discursive framework within which arguments are embedded, and focus more intensely on those articles that receive only moderate attention by analytical constructs such as the DQI_m.

The economic actors become substantially relevant interlocutors only in material contexts, while they are addressed so rarely in the discussions of cultural issues – the absolute figures vary between 0 and 3 – that we will restrict our discussion to the former debate type. Interestingly, in the 1960 debate the economy displays the second highest values of self-reference for all debates, surpassed only by the centre-centre relationship in 1985 where the centre – unlike the economy in 1960 – exceedingly dominates the issue. The reason for the economy's self-referencing in 1960 is not dissimilar to that of the centre in 1985 and is the result of the amount of internal debate which is higher in the disarmament issue than in the other debates because of the role of the unions. At the various conferences trade unionists they not decided not only what kind of political position to adopt, i.e. to support or oppose the unilateralist movement, which generated a considerable amount of controversy within the unions, they also played a decisive role in determining the Labour Party's official line on the issue. In 1980 by contrast the fronts were clearer as almost all the unions opposed the government's policy plans, whereas in 2000 their values drop even further as they are now only one among many other actors. Parallel to this development the references by the centre gradually increase over time from 21.3% in 1960 to 57.7% in 2000, thereby displaying also the degree to which the unions have an effect on the government's course of action and related to this the degree to which the economic – and other – actors are able to exert control over the disputed goods.

The last actor class to be discussed in this section is the political-administrative centre. Exploring its values as addressee we can see that the level of self-reference is always higher in cultural than in material debates, which is not surprising given that the cultural issues are those which are initiated or driven by centre actors. Whereas in material debates the range varies between 42.2% and 68.7%, the lowest value in the cultural debates is almost identical to the upper boundary of the material debates: the lowest value for the centre-centre relationship is 68.5%, the highest 81.4%. In material debates in turn the centre's references to the other main addressees continually increase over time as we have already seen in the context of civil society, but which is also true in the case of the economic actors;

the media in turn are only marginally perceived as distinct political actors, both on the whole and by the centre itself. The results for the cultural debates are rather inconclusive in this respect, not least because the absolute figures for the references to the other actors are rather low and therefore prevent a closer inspection apart from civil society's figures as addressee for 1965. The most important finding for the centre is thus that in material debates the centre becomes more aware of and recognises more fully other actors as co-participants in the political process. This is particularly true for civil society and the economic actors.[49]

5.3. Conclusion

Role change has emerged as an important extension and to some extent corrective for the measurement of inclusiveness. Although we can assess the degree of inclusiveness in relation to its development over time and by contrasting the different debate types, we have no possibility to judge the quality of the debates on their own. Including the addressees in the analysis mitigates this problem and seen from this angle the degree of role change is a more finely tuned approach to measuring inclusiveness.

From the theoretical point of view of the deliberative model, *role change* takes seriously and radicalises the idea that all those affected by norms of action to be implemented through the political process should have a say in the preceding discussions. Whereas inclusiveness examines the distribution of actors and their relative strength as speakers vis-à-vis each other, role change tests the permeability of the public sphere. This is not to say that the inclusiveness of the speaker should exactly match that of the addressees, but the more the two differ the more we have reason to believe that the public debate is characterised by systematic distortions which work to the suppression or the outright exclusion of some voices, in particularly those belonging to non-established and non-institutionalised actors. In this respect *role change* measures not only the porousness of the public sphere but more important allows us to say something about the degree to which it is anchored in civil society. After all, the deliberative public sphere defines that process which is established through the (discursive) tension between the two poles of civil society on the one hand and the political-administrative centre on the other. To be sure, this is less of a requirement for those two types of public spheres which take their origin in the centre or where the centre is in the driving seat at the time of observation. But we have also seen when examining the reciprocity structures that the public sphere type can be taken as a given only to a certain degree for just as different aspects of the issue under debate it is constantly negotiated between the involved actors; and although an "inside access" model cannot be turned into an "outside initiative" type of public sphere – at least not immediately –, it can be pushed in the direction of a "mobilisation" model.

In addition to the permeability of the public sphere we can thus refer to this dimension as the "malleability" of the public sphere which indicates how flexible the public sphere type constituted by a debate really is. The 1985 debate about the Anglo-Irish Agreement for

[49] As far as some of the economic actors are concerned, this is not surprising, given that they have co-constituted the modern public sphere as a discursive space, rooted in the private autonomy of the rising bourgeoisie, whose public opinion was directed against the public authority of the absolutist state (see above the chapter on theory, cf. Habermas 1990).

instance represents a typical "inside access" model of the public sphere until the signing of the treaty, when the opposing unionist parties of Northern Ireland start to mobilise civil society. The story is a little different in the case of the Commonwealth immigration issue: although the public sphere constituted by this debate is more deliberative than that of the Northern Ireland issue since it is rather an example of a "mobilisation" model than of a "inside access" model, it displays a significant distortion. For while in the 1965 debate the discursive presence of members of civil society is larger both as speakers and as addressees than in 1985, it is precisely the speaker-addressee relationship which uncovers the problematic aspect of this debate. Given that the debate is about immigration we would expect from a deliberative point of view that immigrants form a substantial part of it – and they do indeed, but only as addressees. And while the deliberative approach does not put us in the position to determine the adequate amount of participation of single actors or actor classes, the difference between the immigrants' presence as a speakers (1%) and as addressees (6.7%) points to a significant discrepancy in the debate.

Apart from these differences we have seen that generally the structure of the addressees resembles that of the speakers and that differences between the two as in the Commonwealth immigration debate does not automatically lead to a higher inclusion of the addressees in question, in this case the immigrants. The inclusion of the addressees is in most cases only marginally higher than that of the speakers for the simple reason that the former depends at least to some degree on the latter.

There is, however, one additional way in which actors are included in the debate, even in their absence. Kant's notion of the enlarged mentality, which plays such a central role in Hannah Arendt's reading of the author of the *Critique of Judgement*, is neither captured by the inclusiveness of the actors as speakers nor by the juxtaposition with the addressees. Rather, from a deliberative perspective "to think from the other's point of view" means that our focus shifts again to the justifications of the speakers' validity claims, though this time we are not concerned with their content, i.e. the range of perspectives, but with the actors with which they are connected.

6. Justification actors

This section has to begin with one qualification as our empirical translation of Kant's concept necessarily falls short of embodying the full notion of what it means to think from the other's perspective since it is confined to a rather minimalist approach by focussing on the mentioning of the other. Moreover, we also have to take into account the reality of politics in which Kant's idea is often turned on its head: rather the questioning their own positions from the perspectives concrete or abstract others could conceivably adopt, political actors tend to question the other's perspective by contrasting it with their own views, thereby de-legitimising all other stances on an issue but their own. The former Tory Cabinet Minister Lord Prior for instance illustrates the point when during the fuel protests he asked "in view of the Government's new policy of listening and contrition, 'would it not be appropriate if you made some apology to the country for the complete mess the Government has made of the petrol crisis?'" (*The Times* 29.09.00).

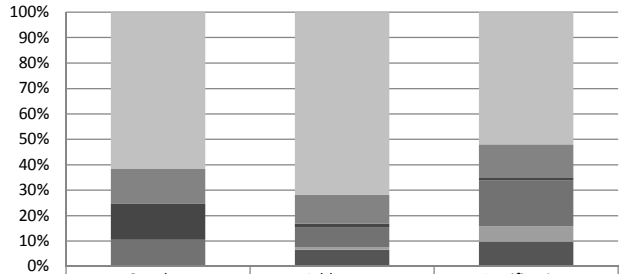
Based on the empirical evidence the sceptic could argue that rather than showing an interest in clarifying and resolving political issues, which entails a willingness to learn and thus carries the idea of Enlightenment with it, the only motivation for political actors to engage in public debates is to boast and solidify their opinionatedness. Here, it is important to distinguish the levels of analysis: while the sceptic may be right in single cases or even in most of the cases as we can say only little about the single contribution to a debate, our research interest concerns the level of the debate as a whole, not the single utterance. This is important insofar as the self-serving attitude of the single actor can still yield beneficial effects on the level of the debate as a whole for it challenges others to balance or contradict the views represented. Kant's dictum then is not so much turned on its head but simply takes a detour: while I may think from my own perspective and embody the positions of others only in a distorted way this serves precisely these concrete others as my interlocutors to be confronted with my perspective. Certainly, the outcome of such a debate need not necessarily be a prime example of deliberation, but it shows that the sceptic's point of view might be a little too restrictive. Despite their strategic orientations all actors are embedded in a deliberative framework which they cannot manipulate arbitrarily as well as in universal standards of communication behind which they cannot retreat. The deliberative hope is carried by the model's intersubjective core, which means that actors cannot take on position and argue their case in a completely arbitrary way and that those arguments and positions which do not pass the test of public scrutiny tend to drop out. Kant's solution to the problem of organising a state such that it could accommodate even a "race of devils" in *Perpetual Peace* is translated by Habermas into the solution to the problem of organising political debate such that it can accommodate purely strategic oriented actors and still lead to the legitimisation of common norms of action. From this point of view we are not so much interested in the unforced force of the better argument to which Habermas repeatedly refers as the product of the deliberative procedure, but in the unforced force of the deliberative standards themselves and the process of discursive exchanges they promote.

If we apply this line of thought in the present context of the concept of enlarged mentality another aspect, which has been central to the analysis of the role change between speakers and hearers, becomes important. While we cannot determine with any certainty whether the participants of the debates truly attempt to take on the position of the other, we can at least say something about in how far the other is part of their justifications. In this view enlarged mentality radicalises the concept of inclusiveness yet further by extending it to other aspects of the deliberative structure which moreover are not based on or related to the discursive presence of specific actors. In other words: it might well be that although immigrants are more or less excluded as speakers from the debates and only really present as addressees, they might have a strong presence in the argumentation of the actors. This has in turn consequences for how we assess the deliberative quality of a debate.

We will proceed in this last section of this part of the empirical analysis as before and first have summary look at the actors which form part of the participants' justifications and then examine in more detail the development of the enlarged mentality through the decades and between the types of debates and thereby compare the findings with the values for the speakers (*inclusiveness*) and addressees (*role change*) before analysing in more detail how the participants constitute the justification actors.

As becomes evident from the actor distribution in figure 54 below, the actors' enlarged mentality as measured in this study appears on the whole to be more inclusive than either that of the speakers or the addresses, which has consequences for the discursive presence

Figure 54: Speakers, addressees, justification actors in total (in %)



	Speaker	Addressee	Justification
Centre	61.8	71.9	52.0
Economy	13.6	11.4	12.9
Media	14.0	1.5	1.1
Civil society	10.4	7.9	18.1
"Uncivil" society	.2	.7	6.1
Other	0	6.7	9.8

of the actor classes. The values for the centre are particularly interesting as in the section above on *role change* the pattern seemed to be that those identified as accountable figures in the debate are referred to more often, leading to the rising figures for the political-administrative centre as that actor in the political process who is responsible in the last instance. Here, however, a different logic seems to be at work as the centre's values are the lowest, if we compare the three categories of speakers, addressees, and justification actors.

The media follow the same trend, though on a much lower scale, which still leads to their practical invisibility as justification actors, given that they take up only 1.1% in the actors' total distribution. Civil society by contrast is the second largest actor class with more than 18% of references, followed by the economy which shows a remarkable stability over all three categories. The "uncivil" society closes the ranking despite its values being several times higher than its figures in the addressee and speaker categories, being preceded only by "others" which accounts for nearly 10%. The latter actor class will again have to be analysed in more detail as it contains not only unidentified actors but as in the case of the analysis of *role change* concrete actors which could not be subsumed under any of the other headings. Will do so by first examining the relationship of justification actors to social change and cleavage structure (section 6.1.) and then with respect to the actors (section 6.2.)

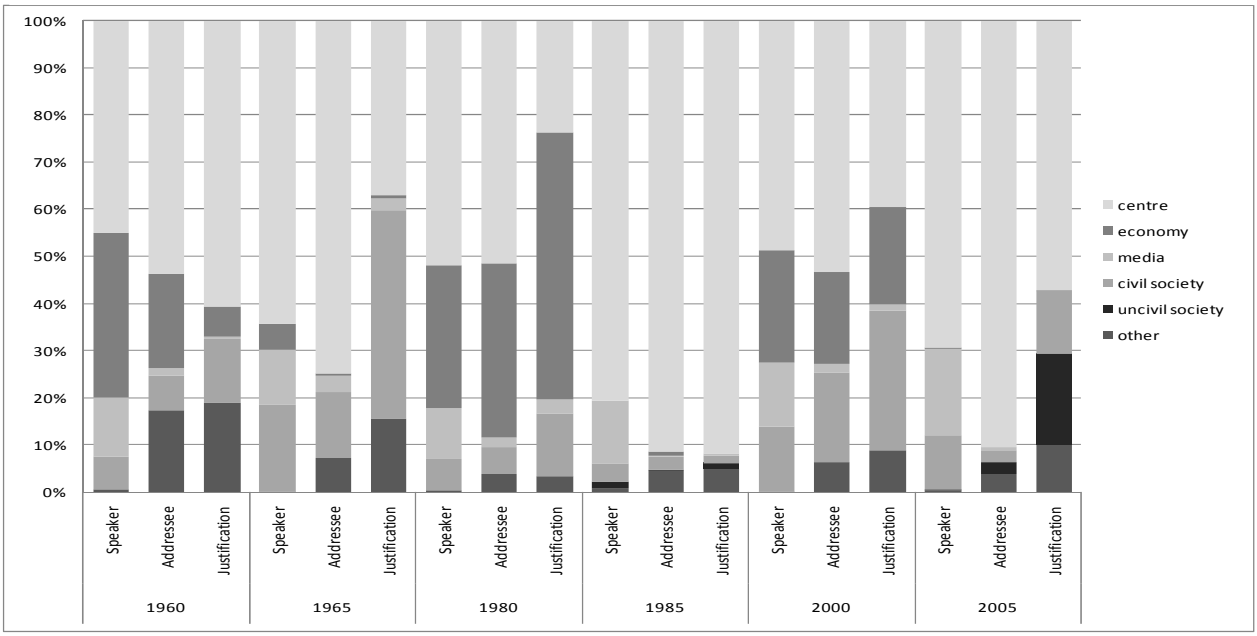
6.1. Time and cleavage structure

Moving on to the more detailed analysis of the values for the justification actors, one thing becomes immediately recognisable when examining figure 55 below: there are almost no regularities in the development of the *justification actors* category.[50] To be sure, economic actors are more prominently represented in material debates and virtually absent in cultural

[50] A detailed table of the proportional distribution can be found in table 42 in appendix 4.

ones, and the centre takes on its highest value in the cultural debate of 1985, i.e. in that debate for which we have confirmed the centre's dominance as speaker as well as addressee. But beyond this it is very hard to see any kind of pattern to appear: civil society e.g. achieves its highest value in the 1965 Commonwealth immigration debate, a cultural issue,

Figure 55: Speakers, addressees, and justification actors 1960-2005 (in %)



the second highest occurs in turn in the fuel protest, one of the most typical material debates. The centre's development is equally discontinuous.

More regularity emerges, however, when we assess the values for the justification actors in the context of the single debates, more precisely in relation to the values for the speakers and the addressees. Regardless of single exceptions, the distribution of the justification actors seems to be related to that of the other two categories; in particular there appear to be similarities between those representing the enlarged mentality and the addressees. We will concentrate on the most significant results, i.e. those for "others" in 1960, civil society in 1965, the economy in 1980, and finally the role of the "uncivil" society in 2005.

Given the similarities between the internal structure of the addressees and that of the justification actors, it is not surprising that this extends to the category of "others" in the 1960s, which accounts for 17.4% and 19.1% respectively, though only 2.8% and 3% are due to non-identifiable actors, while the remaining 14.6% and 16.1% consist entirely of references to "Britain". The qualitative difference between the two categories is that in the former case Britain is addressed as an entity capable of acting, whereas in the latter case Britain is more often also referred as a passive object, a state in the double sense of the word: whereas "Mr J. Bloom, of South Suburban Society" argued in support of unilateral disarmament at the Co-operative Party's conference by saying "bluntly that Britain should withdraw from NATO" (*Times* 18.04.60), thereby emphasising Britain's ability to act, the executive of the Transport and General Workers Union held the same stance, but put Britain more in a passive position by pointing out that "the possession of nuclear weapons made Britain particularly vulnerable to war by accident" (*The Times* 04.06.60).

In 1965 the category of "other" again mostly consists of references to Britain (9.7%), but the more interesting aspect of this debate is the dominance of civil society as justification actor, totalling 44.4% of all references, of which 33.2% mention immigrants. Even more than in the category of the addressees, immigrants here form a central actor class; in fact they are almost on a par with the centre (37%). This raises of course questions about the quality of the discourse and reinforces our view that there is an imbalance between immigrants as subjects and objects of the debate. And in this context the sceptic mentioned in the introduction to this section would indeed have a valid point as misrepresentations can only be corrected if those misrepresented have the opportunity to do so. In this debate, however, this is hardly the case. Here we can see most clearly that the deliberative model and the DQI_m as the analytical construct not only allow us to assess the discursive quality of debates by relating one to the other and examining whether the variables observed display any differences: *inclusiveness*, *role change*, and the distribution of the justification actors can also be compared to one another. The advantage of this approach is that the comparative dimension is placed within the debates and the internal evaluation complements the external contrasts by disclosing more specifically the differences and distortions between the actor distributions.

Even more dominant than civil society in 1965 is the discursive position of the economy in 1980 which can be explained by its role in the debate: while the initiative to curb union rights comes from the Thatcher Government, at the time of the analysis the unions and above all the TUC have found a way to turn the tables by announcing a one-day strike. This puts them in the driving seat of the debate but it also makes them the main responsible actor, which can be seen from the values for the addresses but more impressively from the results of the justification actor category where with a total of 56.5% they account for the highest non-centre value in all of the debates. To try and get the upper hand in a debate thus can become a double-edged sword for political actors as the attempt to dictate the terms of the debate and the outcome has the effect of being perceived as those who are ultimately accountable, even if this formally not the case. This is at least the lesson Len Murray and the TUC had to learn as the much needed public support for their position on the issue never developed into a majority and the "Day of Action" unintentionally turned into a declaration of political bankruptcy, shifting the balance of power towards the (Conservative) Government for years to come.

The "uncivil" society in 2005 is confronted with a discursive dynamic similar to the one the immigrants faced in 1965: while their level of participation as speaker is almost non-existent, amounting only to 0.1%, and they are referred to as addressees in only 2.5% of the cases, they account for nearly 20% of the references as justification actors. The difference between the two lies in the fact that in the case of the immigrants their invisibility in the debate is undoubtedly a problematic aspect, whereas in the latter case it is questionable whether the debate would profit from a greater inclusion of terrorists.[51] Still, one could argue that the discourse principle calls for the participation of all those affected by norms of

[51] We have to be aware, however, that the "uncivil" society in 2005 includes terrorists as well as terrorist suspects and the argument only holds for the former.

action – and this would include terrorists in the present case.[52] But the important point is that the discourse principle says more than this because it makes the actors participants in a *rational* discourse. The adjective here plays a crucial role as it describes not only the kind of discourse the participants enter and sustain but also restricts the participants to those actors who fulfil the prerequisites of communicative rationality, i.e. to those who possess enough communicative competence and willingness to participate in a debate and, more important in this case, do not commit a performative contradiction by their very participation. Borrowing this idea from Karl-Otto Apel (1987), who introduces this argumentative strategy as part of his attempt to shape out the claim to ultimate justifications (*Letztbegründungsanspruch*) of his discourse ethics, Habermas uses the concept of performative contradiction to reconstruct those communicative preconditions which we necessarily have to presuppose if we enter a discourse (cf. Habermas 1983a: 105). From this theoretical perspective the terrorist is outside discourse by definition and entering into it would precisely result in a performative contradiction as all the terrorist could say is e.g. "I do not believe in conflict resolution through debate". Apel (1998: 182) speaks of a "clash" between what a speaker asserts on the one hand and the performative implications of the assertion on the other.[53] This is in line with our intuition for if nothing else, deliberation is a way of processing conflicts with other means than physical violence, and from this viewpoint it would indeed by paradoxical to advocate a greater inclusion of actors who avowedly renounce this very principle in the pursuance of their political aims.[54]

After having explored the results for the justification actors on this general level, we will now turn to examine them more closely with regard to the single actor classes.

6.2. Actors

The analysis of the distribution of speakers within each category of justification actors along the lines of the analysis of the *role change* variable are not reported here as the yield only one significant result, namely that the centre refers to itself in its justifications more often in cultural than in material debates. We will therefore take on the complementing perspective

[52] Niklas Luhmann (1996) makes precisely this argument when he contrasts the engaged intellectual Habermas with the political theorist. Analysing the central importance of the discourse principle (D), Luhmann asks "how does the participation formula encompass *all those involved*?" (Luhmann 1996: 158, emphasis in the original) and makes the point that "Habermas himself does not always operate consistently here. For example, when he engages in direct moral condemnations of the criminal attacks made by youths on asylumseekers and other foreigners, he thereby tacitly replaces a demo-cratic with a demo-critical perspective. While one agrees wholeheartedly with him, it is a disaster for his theory. Strictly speaking, those who feel themselves affected by delays in the procedures for granting asylum should be invited to the the discourse" (Luhmann 1996: 159, footnote 3).

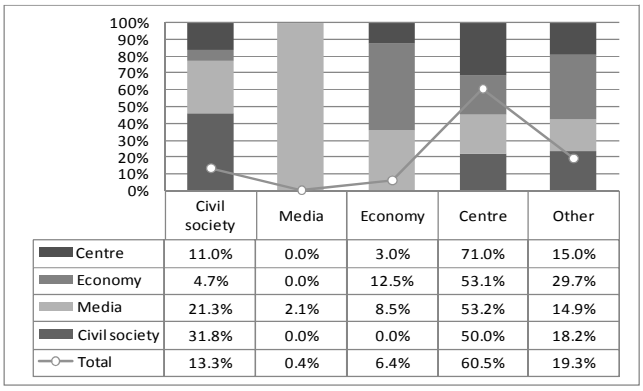
[53] Apel's example to illustrate the clash is very similar to the case under analysis: the proposition "I do not need to accept in principle the equality of all possible argumentation partners" (Apel 1998: 182, author's translation) is in conflict with the assertion-act which submits the possibility of obtaining universal consensus.

[54]Asking whether deliberative democracy can also encompass some form of terrorism in the form of physical violence Allen (2009) answers in the negative: "Given the concern that causing such harms may well backfire and undermine desired deliberative ends, it is likelier that the present analysis applies more to questions of permissible harms against property than persons" (Allen 2009: 36). He seems to miss the point, which he makes earlier, that the aim of terror is to induce terror, i.e. a form of abject fear which will guide the actions or non-actions of those terrorised. This, however, is precisely the opposite of what Habermas, Cohen and others mean when they speak of discourse being free from internal constraints. It is not the affected outcomes which are problematic for deliberative democracy as Allen points out but the violations of its preconditions. It is additionally doubtful whether activists can really be "careful not to produce such a counterproductive effect" as already Austin tells us that although illocutionary acts usually have perlocutionary effects, the relationship between the two is far from straightforward – as they depend on the interactive moment, i.e. the hearer's co-operation in creating the effect (cf. Austin 1962). Austin concludes from this that the illocutionary act is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the success of the perlocutionary act which is external to the meaning of the speech act (cf. Austin 1962; cf. Habermas 1981a: 392).

and explore to what degree the speakers refer to the single justification actor classes. In other words, we take a closer look at the distribution of the justification actors within the single speaker classes. The difference to role change can be seen in the fact that before the columns added up to 100% whereas now it is the single rows of the speaker classes which give a total of 100%. The figures below depict the results while the straight line connecting the dots represents the relative strength of each justification category in relation to the others.[55]

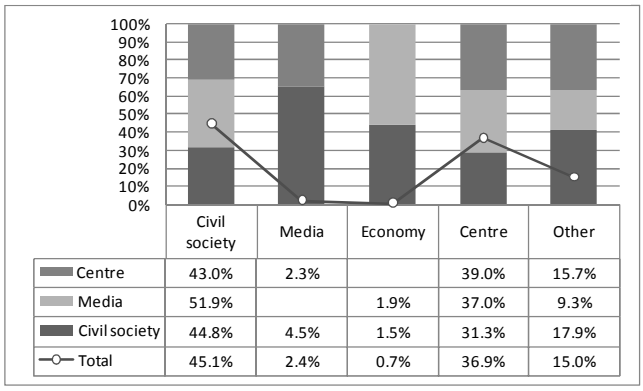
Compared to the distribution of the actor classes as addressees in the *role change* variable, the justification actors are more evenly distributed, and apart from the 1985 debate the centre figures less prominently – surprisingly so even for most of the

Figure 56: Actors referred in justifications 1960 (in %)



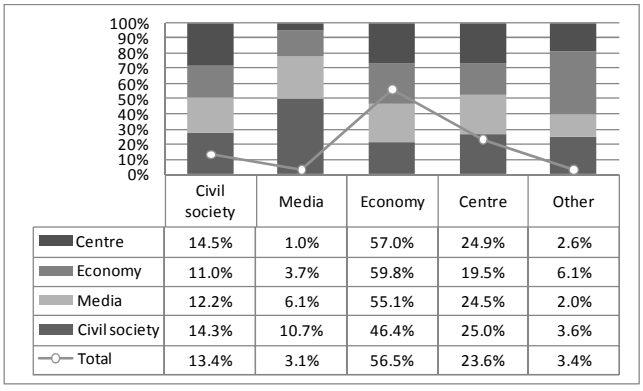
	Civil society	Media	Economy	Centre	Other
Centre	11.0%	0.0%	3.0%	71.0%	15.0%
Economy	4.7%	0.0%	12.5%	53.1%	29.7%
Media	21.3%	2.1%	8.5%	53.2%	14.9%
Civil society	31.8%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	18.2%
Total	13.3%	0.4%	6.4%	60.5%	19.3%

Figure 57: Actors referred in justifications 1965 (in %)



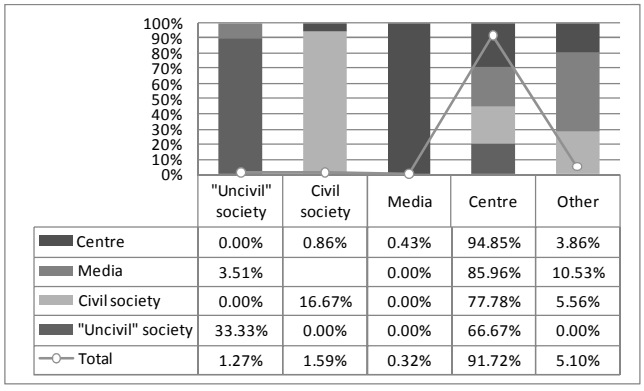
	Civil society	Media	Economy	Centre	Other
Centre	43.0%	2.3%		39.0%	15.7%
Media	51.9%		1.9%	37.0%	9.3%
Civil society	44.8%	4.5%	1.5%	31.3%	17.9%
Total	45.1%	2.4%	0.7%	36.9%	15.0%

Figure 58: Actors referred in justifications 1980 (in %)



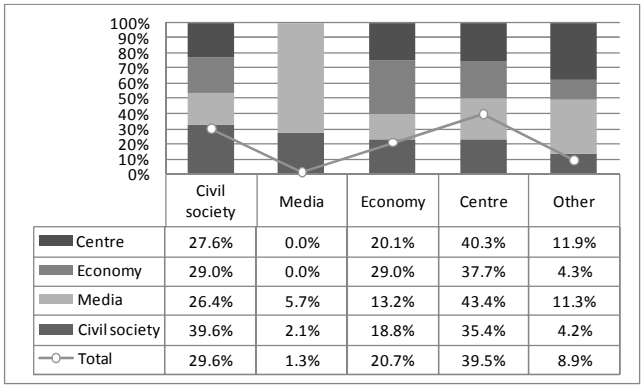
	Civil society	Media	Economy	Centre	Other
Centre	14.5%	1.0%	57.0%	24.9%	2.6%
Economy	11.0%	3.7%	59.8%	19.5%	6.1%
Media	12.2%	6.1%	55.1%	24.5%	2.0%
Civil society	14.3%	10.7%	46.4%	25.0%	3.6%
Total	13.4%	3.1%	56.5%	23.6%	3.4%

Figure 59: Actors referred in justifications 1985 (in %)



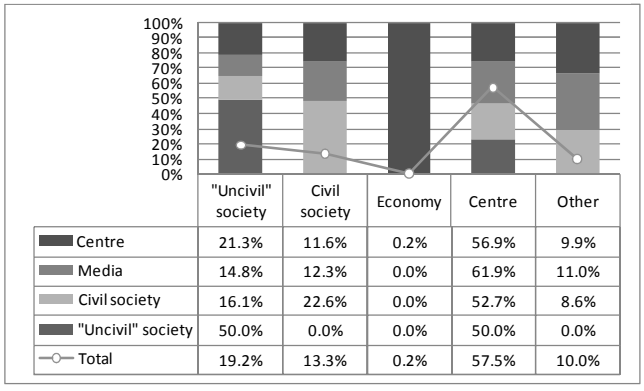
	"Uncivil" society	Civil society	Media	Centre	Other
Centre	0.00%	0.86%	0.43%	94.85%	3.86%
Media	3.51%		0.00%	85.96%	10.53%
Civil society	0.00%	16.67%	0.00%	77.78%	5.56%
"Uncivil" society	33.33%	0.00%	0.00%	66.67%	0.00%
Total	1.27%	1.59%	0.32%	91.72%	5.10%

Figure 60: Actors referred in justifications 2000 (in %)



	Civil society	Media	Economy	Centre	Other
Centre	27.6%	0.0%	20.1%	40.3%	11.9%
Economy	29.0%	0.0%	29.0%	37.7%	4.3%
Media	26.4%	5.7%	13.2%	43.4%	11.3%
Civil society	39.6%	2.1%	18.8%	35.4%	4.2%
Total	29.6%	1.3%	20.7%	39.5%	8.9%

Figure 61: Actors referred in justifications 2005 (in %)



	"Uncivil" society	Civil society	Economy	Centre	Other
Centre	21.3%	11.6%	0.2%	56.9%	9.9%
Media	14.8%	12.3%	0.0%	61.9%	11.0%
Civil society	16.1%	22.6%	0.0%	52.7%	8.6%
"Uncivil" society	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%
Total	19.2%	13.3%	0.2%	57.5%	10.0%

[55] In contrast to figure 55 which depicts the general distribution of speakers, addressees, and justification actors, these figures do not include "other" as a speaker category, therefore the percentages change slightly.

cultural debates. In fact, in the three debates of 1965, 1980, and 2000 the political-administrative centre falls below the 50% threshold, and in the first two it looses its dominant position to civil society and the economy, respectively. If we take a closer look at the internal structure of the main referenced actors we can see that in most cases the distribution is very similar: in the 2000 fuel protest the centre for instance displays an internal variation of only 5%: the economy refers to it 37.7% of its justifications, while the centre is in 43.4% part of the media's justifications. Taken together, both results indicate that there is a distinction in the debates between actors held accountable on the one hand and relevant actors on the other: while the addressee structure analysed above incorporates more strongly the dimension of accountability, the justification actors also include those deemed relevant to a substantial degree. The difference between the two variables reflects the different functions they have in the deliberative process: very basically, speakers address other actors because they want a certain area of society to change, and as the empirical results suggest the actor ultimately responsible is the political-administrative centre as all decisions have to pass through parliament. Apart from the centre there are of course also other actors who gain some prominence in the debates such as the unions in 1980, or civil society and the economic actors during the fuel protest in 2000. But on the whole the spectrum is rather restricted and the centre remains the dominant figure in most of the debates. Here, the results for the justification actors display a different picture: not only is the centre less dominant as justification actor than as addressee, the debates include certain actors to a degree that cannot be explained by their accountability alone. And surprisingly their inclusion is not due to the engagement of one actor class alone, but is the result of a similar discursive orientation across all classes.

Since apart from these observations this is the only variable which does not reveal any consistent pattern, we will conclude this section before moving on to the intermediate discussion of our results which will integrate our findings so far and lead over to the second part of the analysis.

6.3. Conclusion

The closer examination of the concept of enlarged mentality shows that the results are not only to be interpreted in the inclusiveness dimension of the deliberative model as they also incorporate another fundamental discursive aspect. As the last paragraph above shows, the actors referred to in the speakers' justifications of their validity claims do not only follow the pattern that they represent those deemed most responsible, they also include those actors which are judged to be relevant in the debate, be they present as speakers such as the centre or almost invisible such as the Commonwealth immigrants in 1965. As such the *justification actors* variable equally refers to the reflexivity dimension of discourse, under which we would subsume *reflexivity*, *perspectives*, and *reciprocity*, as it refers to the actor dimension, represented by *inclusiveness* and *role change*. The last variable of the DQI_m analysed in this first part is thus on the one hand a measure for the political accountability of actors and their relevance for the debate on the other: this is why the centre still holds a prominent position, but this is also why civil society, i.e. the immigrants, account for over 45% of all the justifications in 1965. The additional fact that the main categories of justification actors are referred to a similar degree by the different speakers suggests that they are part of a common discursive framework in which the issue under debate is

interpreted. The important difference between the speakers then is to be found in the concrete content of the arguments, i.e. the range of perspectives in which they are embedded. For it does make a difference whether immigrants are the topic of an argument about negative consequences or whether they figure prominently in the justification of a validity claim which emphasises the basic values of society.[56]

As *justification actors* allows us to assess the discursive quality of a debate through internal comparison it also embodies an utopian dimension, or at least one of democratic development. Although we have seen in the case of the "uncivil" society in 2005 that the results of the enlarged mentality concept should not automatically be read to mean that all the actors which figure prominently in the speakers' justifications need to be included more strongly in the debate, the case is certainly different for the Commonwealth immigrants or quite generally the members of civil society in some of the other debates. The discrepancy between their discursive presence as justification actors in contrast to their inclusion as speakers points to deficits in the discourse, but it also points to a possible discursive development from being merely the object of justifications to the role as addressees to active participation in a debate. Here, we see the limits of the approach taken in the present study, as we additionally would have to compare the single issues over time, e.g. follow the immigration debate from the 1960s to the present, in order to be able to assess whether any such developments have taken place.

We can also see the self-imposed limits of deliberative democracy as a theoretical model as the transition from one actor role to the other crucially depends on resources that lie outside deliberation, for instance material resources. This is what Niklas Luhmann in his discussion of Habermas' *Between Facts and Norms* refers to as the "structurally determined speechlessness" of certain actor groups caused through "system effects by which many are excluded from work and income", thereby pointing out the material preconditions of political involvement (Luhmann 1998: 169). This is not to say that we have reached the analytical limits of the deliberative model as our findings clearly show those systematic distortions in the debates which are problematic from a (deliberative) democratic perspective: rational discourse is not only a regulative idea but also a standard of critique as Gunther Teubner reminds us (cf. Teubner 1998: 184). On theoretical level we can moreover argue that participants can make the existing inequalities the topic of the debates – provided the pass at least the threshold posed by the selection mechanism of the media.

Before we move on to apply this standard of critique more rigorously by using models of inferential statistics, we will first summarise and interpret our findings in the following intermediate reflections on the relation between the deliberative model and the empirical evidence collected so far.

[56] This also shows that the argumentation structure intersects with and is sometimes difficult to separate from those elements which constitute a frame, although the framing approach generally focuses more strongly on the narrative elements of discourse (cf. Entman 1993).

7. Intermediate reflections

There are broadly speaking two strands of deliberative democracy which run through the theoretical literature: a positive, substantivist account of deliberative practice as envisioned by Gutmann and Thompson (1996, 2004), Warren (2007) and others, to which might even add Habermas' "Three normative models of democracy" in *The Inclusion of the Other* (1996), in which he goes so far as to define a model that lies between communitarianism on the one hand and liberalism on the other and thus is itself a form of political ideology or *Weltanaschauung*.[57] The closer political institutions – though certainly to be understood in a very broad sense of the term pointing in the direction of what John Dryzek calls "discursive design" (cf. Dryzek 1990) – conform or are able to promote the deliberative democratic practice, the closer they come to the ideal. And the more participants adhere to substantive principles, the more their interaction yields (normatively) beneficial effects. These effects are in turn assess by the degree to which they conform to the substantive principles.

Proceduarlism by contrast does not necessarily stand in contradiction to the substantivist account, as we have shown, but the perspective changes.[58] In *Between Facts and Norms* Habermas is not so much interested in developing a positive democratic theory that can be positioned vis-à-vis other theoretical architectures, but to reconstruct the conditions for the possibility of political legitimacy in the modern state by recovering a notion of radical democracy. Rather than positive, the approach is reconstructive, and this is the line of inquiry which the present study follows. It does not prevent us from taking into account substantive considerations, the historical context, etc., but it clearly means that our main concerns are the formal aspects of the deliberative process as they are central to generating legitimacy.

This has important consequences for the empirical analysis and the conclusions we draw from it. For rather than testing how far political debates in the media correspond to one or the other model of democracy (cf. Gerhards 1997, Ferree et al. 2002), our research focus lies on the deliberative quality of these debates, i.e. to what the degree the deliberative elements find expression and how they have developed over time and in the different debate types. The research interest thus is a different one as we follow Habermas' insight that at the heart of the political process lies an irreducible deliberative core and that this deliberative core generates and sustains political legitimacy – irrespective of whether specific nation-states, institutions, debates, etc. conform more to a liberal, communitarian, or any other form of democracy. We are thus not interested what model of democracy best represents our debates, but to what degree political decisions can be said to be legitimised by public reasoning and considered public opinion. We try to shape out in how far the actors in a political discourse (must) orient themselves towards the deliberative standards, or in other words, in how far the deliberative ideals are empirically effective, since Habermas points out they are embedded in the normative structure of speech itself and are therefore presupposed by the participants of a debate. This last point is also why proceduralist accounts of deliberative democracy such as the one proposed by Habermas in *Between Facts and Norms* lie at a deeper level, as they spell out the preconditions from which substantive principle

[57] Habermas (1994) admits that his delineation of deliberative democracy against the liberal and communitarian concepts of democracy is based on a somewhat one-sided reading of these traditions.
[58] There are indeed numerous contributions which defy a straightforward classification and one has to view the alternatives not as exclusionary but rather as the extremes of continuum.

can be derived.[59] To be sure, Habermas too has to count on the motivation of the actors and on their being willing to take on a performative attitude in questions of legitimisation. But he can do so without having to argue for a comprehensive deliberative attitude or ethos. From the perspective of empirical research the main difference to an approach which tests different models is that we can apply a more basic, and following our discussion (see above the chapter on theory) realistic notion of deliberation and one which is less forced onto the defensive in the light of the inevitable discrepancies between the deliberative ideal and the reality of politics, as it adopts not so much a positive but a reconstructive approach.

In order to illustrate the point differently we, could say that we are Kant's heirs at least in two ways that are related to each other. First, we translate the idea that we should treat others not merely as means but also as ends into the conceptual framework of the theory of communicative action and thus refer to the first mode of action as strategic and the second as communicative. Second, we translate the problem of how to organise a state that can accommodate a race of devils into a question of institutional design, though we conceive such an institution in its broadest and most basic form as deliberation and hence as that discursive structure which is generated by the argumentative exchange and negotiation of the participants. In this setting we are interested how far the devils, or more mundanely the strategically oriented actors in the political process, are accommodated by the institution – which they themselves generate. On this simplistic view, the whole punch line of deliberative democracy rests on Habermas insight that strategic action is parasitic, i.e. logically a derivative modelled on communicative action, and therefore necessarily has to embody communicative elements if it wants to be successful.[60] This is in line with our results which clearly show that the distinction between communicative and strategic action – at least in the way it is operationalized here – is one of degree rather than of category. We can interpret this as the empirical effectiveness of the deliberative core: whether we take on a performative attitude or one oriented towards success we always have to conform to some extent to the rules of that institution which is negotiated at every speaker turn, i.e. the communicative rationality inherent in speech itself.

Yet, if this is the case, where does this leave the notion of the deliberative procedure being not only a normative ideal but also a standard of critique? After all, it seems difficult to decide whether a debate fulfils the deliberative criteria to a satisfying degree or whether it is dominated by strategic action if the two modes of action form the extremes of a continuum. It is here that the concept of systematically distorted communication comes in: we are less interested in single violations of the deliberative ideal as these only rarely affect the direction of a debate, and if they do we can trace the effects. What is problematic from a the point of view of political legitimacy are systematic distortions which exclude certain reasons, certain groups of actors, certain communicative roles, etc. and thus undermine the anarchic potential of the public sphere. For if the "self-organizing legal community disappears in the subjectless forms of communication that regulate the flow of discursive opinion- and will-formation in such a way that their fallible results enjoy the presumption of being reasonable" (Habermas 1996: 301), then the task of the researcher is to analyse how this flow of communication is structured.

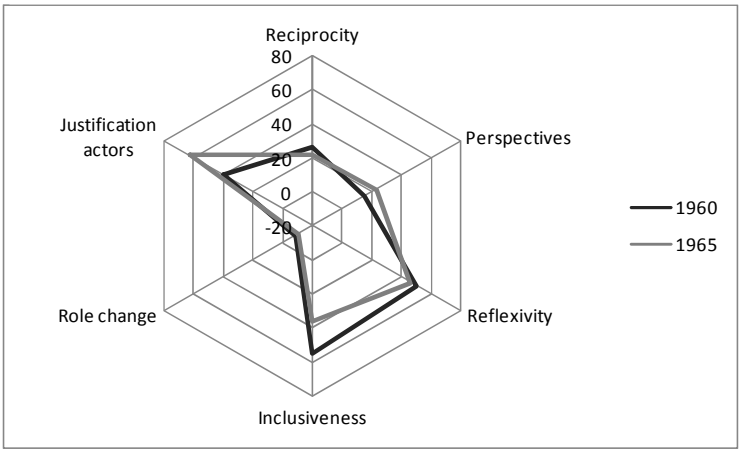
[59] Substantivist models in turn can be said to be more complex in the sense that their positive dimension allows us to design political institutions conducive of deliberation.
[60] This is at least the case for the concealed form of strategic action (cf. Habermas 1981a).

What is of a primary interest in the remainder of this first part therefore is the broader picture of the debates: having analysed the different dimensions of deliberation, what is our overall interpretation if we bring the results together? So far we have examined each variable for itself in order to allow the analyses to become more complex and to go deeper, thereby barring, however, the general view on the debate as a whole, constituted by all of the analytical categories. Although we have occasionally pointed to parallel or contrary developments in other variables, we still lack the broad picture.[61] In order arrive at a more comprehensive assessment we will necessarily have to simplify the data, which will result in a loss of complexity, but which is necessary if we want to get a crisp view.[62] We will proceed as follows and first compare the material and cultural debate of each decade (section 7.1. to section 7.3.) and then broaden the view to compare them across time (section 7.4.).

7.1. Unilateral disarmament and commonwealth immigration (1960s)

The first thing to note when we compare the two debates of the 1960s, i.e. the unilateral disarmament issue and the Commonwealth immigration debate, is that they do not differ dramatically, they rather seem to complement each other with respect to two variables in particular, *inclusiveness* and *justification actors*. An additional difference is given by the *perspectives* dimension where the cultural debate displays a wider range than the material one: it is indeed the widest range of all the debates and can be read to indicate that although the Commonwealth immigration issue is not *per se* more complex than the other

Figure 62: Overall discursive quality 1960/1965



[61] This is not to say that our more detailed findings are unimportant, they simply cannot be generalised to make them comparable with the results of the other debates. But it is certainly important to keep in mind that systematic distortions occur also on a more subtle level of discourse: although e.g. the political-administrative centre is that actor displaying the broadest range of justifications, this does not mean that it integrates all the reasons uttered in the public sphere. Small but significant differences arise particularly in relation to members of civil society who also utter private reasons, i.e. justifications that reflect their inner subjective world but can therefore not be translated into the code of the political system. Similar observations could be made for the other variables of the DQI_m.

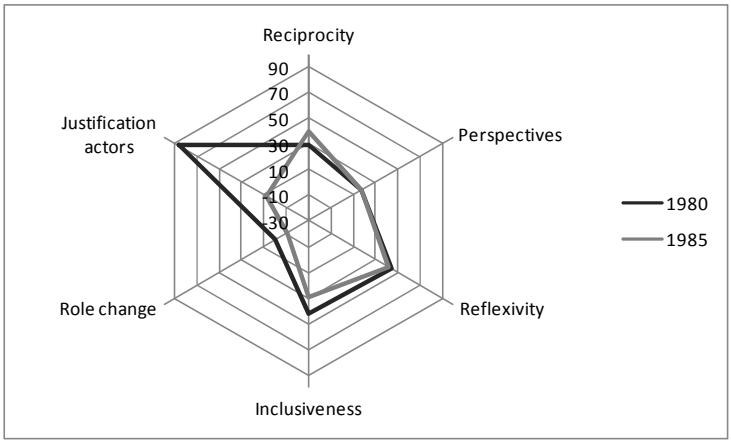
[62] The figures for the single variables have been calculated as follows. *Inclusiveness* and *justification actors* are measured by the proportion of non-centre actors, *reciprocity* is measured by the overall amount of reciprocal relationships without differentiating them any further, *perspectives* is measured by the total amount of different justifications of each debate, *reflexivity* in turn is assessed similarly to *reciprocity* by calculating the overall proportion of speech acts with one or two justifications in each debate, while *role change* is the result of the difference between the proportion of non-centre actors as speakers (i.e. *inclusiveness*) and as addressees, which yields in almost all cases negative figures and thus shows that non-centre actors are more present as addressees than as speakers. It also means that the scale is not the same for all variables, but it is sufficient for a broad overview such as this one.

debates, it extends into more policy fields than, say, the fuel protest in 2000. The difference of the degree of *inclusiveness* and the *justification actors* between the two debates is interesting because although the disarmament issue is more driven by the non-centre actors, resulting in higher levels of inclusiveness, it is precisely the periphery which yields the higher levels for the immigration debate. This means that although peripheral actors are not included to the same extent in the public reasoning process, many of the arguments are couched in their terms or have them as objects. This has consequence for our assessment of the two debates as we might have ranked the cultural debate on the whole higher as it is almost on a par with the material issue regarding *reciprocity* and *reflexivity* and performs considerably better in terms of the range of *perspectives* and the *justification actors*. Furthermore, because it is a discussion driven by the centre at the point of our analysis and corresponds more closely to the "mobilisation" model of the public sphere, we cannot expect the same degree of inclusiveness as in the disarmament debate, which is an example of the "outside initiative" model. Yet, the amount of non-centre and in particular civil society actors in the *justification actor* category confirms our finding that there should have been a greater inclusion of them – even under the assumptions of a centre-driven public sphere type.

7.2. Union rights and Anglo-Irish Agreement (1980s)

Moving on to the next two debates, the secondary picketing issue in 1980 and the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985, we can see that above all the values for the cultural debate have changed considerably: although on a level with the material debate in terms of *reflexivity* and *perspectives*, and displaying even higher values for *reciprocity*, the actor related variables are substantially lower and show that the inclusiveness is the main dividing

Figure 63: Overall discursive quality 1980/1985



line. The question which debate is the one conforming more to the deliberative standards seems therefore easy to answer: just by eyeballing the radar chart the Northern Ireland issue performs significantly poorer than the union rights debate. Yet, here as before we have to take into account the context of the debates if we want to assess them properly: as the Anglo-Irish Agreement is a centre-driven debate, should it be expected at all to display a higher discursive quality, and is it therefore valid to emphasise the lacking inclusiveness of civil society actors in this case? The answer to this question is twofold and combines an

empirical and a theoretical dimension. On an empirical level we first need to take a look beyond the aggregated values of the single variables and examine the proper course of the debate: unlike the Commonwealth immigration issue the political-administrative centre in 1985, i.e. the Thatcher Government, is less concerned with generating political legitimacy for its decision and the debate therefore closely corresponds to the "inside access" model of the public sphere, which implies that the public is informed about rather than included in the political process, most of which takes place behind closed doors. The identification of the public sphere type alone, however, can only be taken as a preliminary answer as it could be the result of exclusionary practices such as those latent ones observed in the Commonwealth immigration issue, and the question hence is whether the discursive process should have been structured any differently to allow for more participation from non-centre actors. In other words: is the "inside access" model the normatively adequate public sphere type in the case of the Anglo-Irish Agreement? While this is more difficult to decide than comparing the levels of the DQI_m variables of two similar debates, there is enough additional information to formulate a tentative answer. Two related factors play a decisive role: first, in contrast to the Commonwealth immigration debate in the Anglo-Irish Agreement the non-centre actors are not included in the category of *justification actors*, i.e. the issue under debate is not discussed in or framed from their perspective. Thus, whereas the immigrants were considered to be relevant actors in the Commonwealth immigration debate, which is evident by their presence as addressees and even more so as justification actors, civil society in the Anglo-Irish Agreement is not part of the debate in either of these dimensions. Second, and because of this, the criticism the Government receives from the opposing unionist parties, epitomised by Ian Paisley's "never, never, never, never" slogan, and the ensuing "Ulster says No" campaign is aimed exactly at a greater inclusion of those affected by the decisions, the members of civil society but also the unionist parties themselves. The criticism is thus in the end directed against the structure of the public sphere and one additional question is whether it is justified. Here, the answer is more difficult as the Agreement combines two different aspects: article 1 of the Agreement affirms the status of Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom and recognises that this corresponds to the wish of the present majority in the Province. Paragraph (c), however, declares that "if in the future a majority of the people of Northern Ireland clearly wish for and formally consent to the establishment of a united Ireland, they [the two Governments] will introduce and support in the respective Parliaments legislation to give effect to this wish" (Anglo-Irish Agreement 1985: Art. 1). This article concerns the entire population of Northern Ireland as it affects them most profoundly in the status as citizens. After this initial section in the document, however, the following 11 articles set out the guidelines for the establishment of the Intergovernmental Conference between the two Governments, where the Irish Government has a consultative role relating to those issues which "are not the responsibility of a devolved administration in Northern Ireland" (ibid.: Art. 2). And the article further confirms that "[t]here is no derogation from the sovereignty of either the Irish Government or the United Kingdom Government" (ibid.). The scope of the Conference thus appears to be rather restricted as it is based on the precondition of the sovereignty of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland by extension, and furthermore is active only in those areas which fall *expressis verbis* not within the jurisdiction of a devolved administration. Interestingly enough, Paisley's outrage and the whole "Ulster says No" campaign is directed against the second part of the Agreement, which from a point of view of democratic theory we would not judge to be problematic, given that it concerns the establishment of an

administrative unit connected to other administrative units, and whose output does not have any direct effect on civil society.

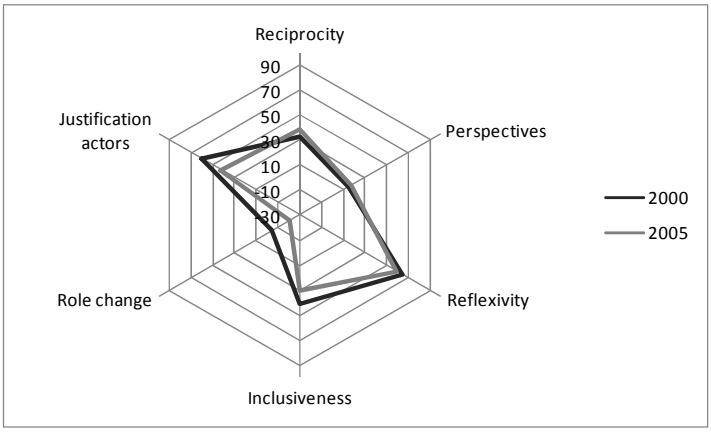
Coming back to our question whether the exclusion of civil society is problematic, the answer is: yes, but it depends which part of the Agreement we look at. Against the general uproar and the mobilisation of civil society, the creation of an administrative unit as spelled out by the terms of the Agreement is rather unproblematic – though the force of its symbolism is obvious. But this is not to say that it to be judged a critical act from a normative point of view. The issue is of a different kind, however, in the case of article 1 of the Agreement which directly affects civil society as well as the political parties, none of which have been included in the deliberative process. Although there is hardly any protest against the definition of the present or the possible future status of Northern Ireland, this is precisely the problematic aspect from the point of view of deliberative theory. And it is in this respect that the "inside access" model of debate must be seen to be inadequate.

As for the material debate, it seems to display a similar distortion between the inclusiveness of the non-centre actors and the levels for the justification actors, which we took in the immigration debate as an indication for a lack of participation of civil society actors. Here, however, the debate is exclusively about the opposition of the unions against the government's planned reform of secondary picketing rights; it is thus not a debate about a policy issue concerning civil society directly. Furthermore, the degree of role change is the highest of all debates and the only value with a positive sign, indicating that the proportion of non-centre actors as active participants is higher than that as hearers, which is in turn suggests that the inclusiveness of non-centre actors as speakers is adequate.

7.3. Fuel protest and anti-terror legislation (2000s)

Comparing finally the 2000 and the 2005 debates we can see that they differ most substantially on the actor dimension: on all three variables, i.e. *inclusiveness*, *role change*, and *justification actors*, the 2005 debate about new anti-terror legislation reaches lower levels than the 2000 dispute over fuel prices. The reason is again that the cultural debate is an example of a centre driven issue which the government would like to keep within the frame of an "inside access" model, but where the Opposition, including the outspoken criticism by some of the Lords as well as Labour backbenchers, but above all the media and parts of civil society, force into a "mobilisation" model. It is thus again an example of a debate where not only the positions on the issue are contested but also the public sphere type itself; the lowest value of all debates for *role change* confirms the impression.

Figure 64: Overall discursive quality 2000/2005



The fuel protest in turn is the most complete of all of the debates despite achieving the overall highest score only in the *reflexivity* variable. But here again, the results depend on the context and its interpretation: the levels for inclusiveness are the third highest, though they are equally the lowest of all the material debates. Yet at the same time it is that debate which shows the second highest degree of participation by civil society, the highest amount occurring in the 1965 immigration debate. The level of *role change* is only moderately negative, confirming that the participation of non-centre actors is not dramatically distorted. The *justification actors* levels are higher than those of *inclusiveness*, yet in this case it is not so much an indication of lacking participation but of discursive responsiveness by the other actors, above all the centre. On the whole then, the fuel protest is the only debate which displays a more or less balanced relationship between the rationality measures (*reflexivity*, *perspectives*, and *reciprocity*) and the actor dimensions (*inclusiveness*, *role change*, and *justification actors*).

7.4. Theory and practice of deliberative transformations

One could validly challenge our discussion so far by pointing out that apart from relying on the results of the DQI_m we have always resorted to contextual factors in order to assess the deliberative quality of the debates, often coming to conclusions which appear to contradict our measurements. Yet if this is the case, how valid is the Discourse Quality Index as an analytical construct? Additionally and related to this we have to ask whether we can bring the debates in a rank order at all, if the contextual factors not measured by the DQI_m are so important that the debates can only be assessed on their individual, internal description which thus in the end renders a comparison between them impossible. There are two answers to this: first, if we rank the debates on the single discursive dimensions and take the top three positions as the dividing line, there is no doubt about the lower extreme of a rank order of the debates as our analyses clearly show the 2000 fuel protest to be the most deliberative one, whereas the Anglo-Irish Agreement is that debate displaying the least total discursive quality. To be sure, the ranking of the other debates becomes more difficult as they differ from each other in relation to different variables: while e.g. the anti-terror legislation debate in 2005 has the second highest levels of *reflexivity*, the 1960 disarmament debate displays the overall highest amount of *inclusiveness*. But even in these cases, classifying the debates according to the single variables yields a clear result: the union rights debate achieves the highest levels on two variables and is second highest on two

others, followed by the anti-terror legislation issue which is second highest on three occasions, the disarmament debate has three variables among the top three, the Commonwealth immigration debate only two. The ranking thus is as follows: 2000 (fuel), 1980 (unions), 2005 (anti-terror), 1960 (disarmament), 1965 (immigration), 1985 (Northern Ireland), which also seems to tentatively indicate that on the whole the material debates perform better than the cultural ones. Hence, even without taking other information into account the DQI_m allows us to reconstruct the discursive quality of the debates and to classify them accordingly.

Second, it is important to see that the additional, qualitative information stands not in contradiction with the findings of the DQI_m analysis, but helps to explain and contextualise it and thus contributes to a broader understanding of the debates and their internal structure: the immigration debate e.g. performs poorer on a closer look because the actor dimensions are imbalanced, and by investigating their relationship we can uncover the reasons why this is so. Part of this additional information is also the type of public sphere which the debates define, for although this is not a direct property entering our classification of them, it is an important aspect when we reconstruct their discursive quality. The Anglo-Irish Agreement for instance is the only real example of an "inside access" model and although with this additional information it remains at the bottom of the table, the public sphere type is a necessary analytical property if we want to assess the debate on its own terms, i.e. if we want to assess the appropriateness of the public sphere type; the discussion of the 1965 immigration issue is an additional case in point.

What the discussion so far reveals is that we have to distinguish between two dimensions of systematic distortion if we want to put the notion to critical analytical use. First, in analogy to Habermas' distinction between communicative action and strategic action, so the public sphere types relate to one another. The deliberative type is represented by the "outside initiative" model, whereas both the "mobilisation" and the to the "inside access" model can be constructed as derivatives of it, i.e. as public sphere types which lack or display lower values in some of the deliberative dimensions, e.g. inclusiveness, due to systematic distortions of the basic or the full model. The above ranking of the analysed policy issues according to their deliberative quality, however, also reveals that it is not necessarily the case that "outside initiative" models always fare better than their centre driven counterparts. Indeed, the 2005 cultural debate on anti-terror legislation disrupts the expected classification pattern.

In terms of the internal evaluation of the debates, the concept of systematically distorted communication allows us to put our interpretation of the discursive quality in perspective and it thus complements the external comparison: although the Anglo-Irish Agreement for instance is the least deliberative of all the debates we have analysed, the closer examination yields more ambivalent results. By contrast, although the 1965 immigration debate performs better by comparison, the imbalance of some of the DQI_m levels, particularly the discrepancy between *inclusiveness* and *justification actors*, point to a clear systematic distortion which is confirmed by the closer inspection of the data. In this case we can thus use the results of the DQI_m and the contextual factors to critique the structure of the debate.

This is an important aspect as it leads to the clarification of some distinctions which are present in Habermas' account of deliberative democracy, but they are not properly

elaborated on a theoretical level so far. Habermas uses the distinction of the three basic different types of public spheres to shape out the properties of deliberation on a large scale, i.e. on the level of society as a whole. While Cohen and other theorists seem to draw analogies or to (tacitly) equate all too readily what deliberation means on the level of face-to-face communication with how it should be implemented in the context of mass democracies, Habermas is well aware of the pitfalls of such straightforward conclusions, behind which lurks the imagination of society as a large-scale unitary subject (cf. above). But the crucial point is that if deliberation on small scale is defined by specific formal properties, the same characteristics necessarily constitute deliberation as a society-wide practice. The immediate problem then seems to be that thinking of unrestricted communication for instance in terms of the participation of everyone affected by norms of action is not only utterly unrealistic, it cannot even serve as a normative blueprint embodying a critical ideal. This is precisely the point at which the three different types of public spheres come into play, with the most important role played by the "outside initiative" model – not only because it is able to carry the deliberative ideal, but because it defines on the large scale what deliberation, viz. communicative action, is on a small scale: the standard against which all other forms of communication are derivative or parasitic as Habermas calls them. The result of this is on the one hand that the "outside initiative" model is the only one which truly corresponds to the deliberative ideal, on the other hand it carries a (unintended) implication: the other two types of public spheres are not only less deliberative, they are also less desirable from the point of view of generating legitimacy.[63]

The problem of this theoretical verdict is that it is contradicted by our empirical findings in two ways: first, the 2005 debate corresponds to a model somewhat between an "inside access" and a "mobilisation" model but displays higher levels of discursive quality than the 1960 disarmament debate which is representative of an "outside initiative" public sphere type. Furthermore, we have seen that although the centre-driven forms of a public sphere are certainly distorted, in particular as far as aspects of inclusiveness are concerned, on closer inspection they are not always inappropriate from a normative perspective: the Anglo-Irish Agreement is to some extent a case in point for although it excludes participants from the periphery as well as from the centre, one aspect of the issue under discussion does not seem to be in need of political legitimacy on a large scale. The resulting difficulty is of course that we further have to assess whether the public sphere type defined by a debate is adequate from a normative point of view, and additionally whether it is malleable enough so that it could be transformed into a different type, above all when it is originally anchored in the centre. This is indeed one of the main differences between the Northern Ireland issue and the 1965 immigration debate, where the former debate radically changes its course after the decision is taken by the centre, whereas it is an apparent deficiency of the latter –not expressed directly by the articulation of the immigrants themselves but through the obvious imbalance of the actor related variables.[64]

If we want to assess the normative appropriateness of a discourse and the associated public sphere we thus have to inspect on the one hand the balance of the DQI_m variables

[63] As Habermas is mainly interested in reconstructing the possibilities of political legitimacy under the conditions of modern democracies he is understandably less interested in examining those public spheres further which originate in the political-administrative centre. This, however, leads to them being left somewhat under-theorised.
[64] We could classify these as measuring first (speaker), second (addressee), and third (justification actors) order inclusiveness. In the 1965 debate it is the second order and above all the levels of the third order inclusiveness which lead to an imbalance of the actor related variables.

and take on the other a more qualitative look at the original data which also includes contextual information; a central criterion for assessing the appropriateness of the discursive process then is the possible degree of malleability of the public sphere.[65] The direction in which our interpretations point is not entirely unproblematic from the theoretical point of view as our assessments seem to be somewhat in conflict with Habermas' democratic principle which states "that only those statutes may claim legitimacy that can meet with the assent (*Zustimmung*) of all citizens in a discursive process of legislation that in turn has been legally constituted" (Habermas 1996: 110). While there are important reasons for deriving a democratic principle from the more general discourse principle in order to in order to "obtain sufficiently selective criteria for the distinction between the principles of democracy and morality" (ibid.), it might be too restrictive for our purposes in that it requires the assent of all citizens. By contrast the formulation of the discourse principle seems to be more in line with our interpretations: "Just those action norms are valid to which all possibly affected persons could agree as participants in rational discourses" (Habermas 1996: 107).[66] In Northern Ireland issue in 1985 the British Government assumes that the circle of those affected does not extend much beyond the political administrative centre. Yet, this case also shows that "all possibly affected persons" can only tentatively be defined from the outset as it can change over time when e.g. the periphery convincingly argues that members of civil society are indeed affected either by the institutionalisation of the Intergovernmental Conference or by the confirmation of the present and future status of the Ulster Province. It also means by extension that the public sphere type is not invariable but is – as everything which is constituted by discourse – a matter of negotiation. The consequences are most readily discernible in the 2005 anti-terror legislation debate where part of the centre and the media actively try to push the debate from an "inside access" model which the Government prefers to a "mobilisation" model in order to expose the perceived legitimacy gap.

What is of even greater importance in the present context for the classification of the debates is that the more radical reading of deliberative theory from the perspective of the discourse principle allows us to introduce a second measure or axis as it were, which is orthogonal to the DQI_m. While the DQI_m allows us to say something about the general quality of the debates, the qualitative assessment of whether all those affected have been included in the debate allows us determine to what extent the public sphere constituted by the discourse corresponds the normative expectations and the discursive negotiations, i.e. whether it is appropriate or not. The incorporation of this second measure or evaluative criterion as it should more aptly be called, as it does not allow us to make any quantitative statements, leads to some counterintuitive judgements, in particular it allows us to better assess the centre-driven debates: the results of the Anglo-Irish Agreement have to balanced

[65] This also entails that ideally we would extend the analysis of discourses beyond their institutional decisions as these mark only intermediate points in the deliberative process, and that the resonance they generate is equally important to observe as the Anglo-Irish Agreement impressively shows. Moreover, in order to have a more consistent basis for comparison we would additionally have to analyse debates about the same issue at different times, while being aware of the problems of these strategies we have pointed out.

[66] It is questionable whether from a deliberative perspective "all possibly affected persons" can be so readily translated into "citizens", even if the discourse principle has to be further specified when applied in the context of modern democracies. The problem obviously is that the inclusiveness is greatly reduced to include only those who are entitled to vote. And while this is a necessary requirement when taking institutionalised decisions, i.e. referenda and general elections, it is hard to see why the "discursive process of legislation" should generally be restricted to citizens only, given that in a wider sense it includes the informal public sphere and hence "all those possibly affected".

in the light of the fact that the public sphere constituted by the debate is partly at least more appropriate than that of the 1965 immigration debate or that of the 2005 concerning the anti-terror legislation, given above all that in the case of Northern Ireland the public sphere is malleable enough that the debate continues in a "mobilisation" model. And finally, the combination of the discursive quality with the normative appropriateness of the public sphere type allows us to develop a better theoretical understanding of those of two types of public sphere originating at the political-administrative centre which receive only little attention in Habermas' approach to deliberative democracy, including how rigid or how flexible they are. On this count, both the anti-terror debate and the Anglo-Irish Agreement appear to be more in flux than the Commonwealth immigration issue in 1965.[67]

Having assessed the debates internally as well as in relation to each other, our interest now turns to the more systematic examination of the different patterns we have seen to emerge. Time, cleavage structure, and the actors undoubtedly play a role in the differences we see between the single debates – the question simply is: to what extent? This does not mean to abandon the concept of systematically distorted communication; quite on the contrary, we will now apply it more rigorously. Social change, just as the public sphere and cleavage type, or the presence and the constellations of specific actors or actor networks can have beneficial or detrimental effects on the discursive quality of communication. Our focus thus will be on the direction of the effects as well as on their degree: does e.g. social affect the levels of the DQI_m to a higher degree than the debate type?

[67] To some extent the three ideal public sphere types seem to correspond to the single stages the political process: the "outside initiative" model accentuates the role of the periphery and its input into the system, the "inside access" model in turn focuses on the throughput dimension, whereas the "mobilisation" model emphasises the role of output of the political system.

B. Dimensions of transformation: The effect of social change, cleavage structure, and actor constellations on discourse quality

Our descriptive analyses so far have revealed that none of the DQI_m variables displays a simple continuous development, either because the relationship seems to be somewhat curvilinear as for instance in the case of *reciprocity* which first increases substantially, then slowly decreases, and finally increases again; or because the trend in time is paralleled by a systematic difference according to debate type, resulting in a slightly offset stepping structure, most clearly to be seen in the development of *reflexivity*. And the more detailed examinations have further shown that apart from social change and cleavage structure as influencing factors, the actors also play a role. However, what our investigations have generally been unable to determine is to what degree these three basic factors – social change, cleavage structure, and actor constellations – have a statistically significant effect on the discursive quality of the debates and their development over time. This second part of the empirical analysis will therefore examine the data in this respect and proceed by testing the hypotheses we have deduced from theory. Before dealing more closely with the effects of social change (section 2.), cleavage structure (section 3.), and actor constellations (section 4.), however, we will first establish the appropriate statistical framework within which the analyses are conducted (section 1.).

1. Statistical preliminaries

We will mainly use so-called robust regression models in this second part of the empirical analysis in order to determine whether there is a significant relationship between the different explanatory variables and the different indicators of the DQI_m as outcome variables and which direction it takes. Robust regression models are based on the idea of ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions which fit a straight line through the set of our data points in such a way that the vertical distance between the line and the data points becomes as small as possible, though with an important difference as we will see.[1] Ideally, the analysis would be conducted using a more complex hierarchical linear model which accounts for the nested nature of the data: utterances are performed by speakers who in turn are participants within a debate. Hierarchical models, or multi-level models as they are often referred to, have become increasingly widespread in the social sciences throughout the past decade or so, owing their growing popularity to the simple insight that most if not all problems we encounter in the social world are inherently hierarchical in character: workers in factories, members of parties, parties within nation-states, or nation-states within supra-national entities such as the European Union, etc. are typical settings of social scientific research.

Statistically, hierarchical models can be characterised as an advanced form of regression analysis where we search for interaction effects between the levels of the analysis, e.g. does the type of factory have an effect on the productivity and the motivation of the workers, does

[1] The OLS regression takes its name from the method which is used to calculate the distance between the straight line and the data points which tries to minimise the sum of the squared residuals of the model.

the constituency have an effect on the programme of a specific party, or as in the present case does the debate type have an effect on the discursive quality – these are classical questions social scientific research tries to answer and it is easy to see why multi-level models have become so appealing.[2] They are, however, not always unproblematic. The basic difficulty for some studies such as this one is the imbalance between the levels of analysis: while in the original data set we have over 3'000 speech acts and in the data set that will be used in this part nearly 600 newspaper articles, the second level of the analysis is constituted by merely six different debates – which is clearly too small a sample to allow multi-level statistical modelling (cf. Steenbergen & Jones 2002). Educational research, where the hierarchical statistical modelling approach originated, is rarely confronted with this problem as here researchers tend to draw only small samples on the first level, e.g. students, and therefore can expand the sample on level two, e.g. schools or even districts, to a much greater degree. Quantitative social scientific research in turn is steeped in a tradition of drawing rather large samples on level one, resulting in only few cases on level two: clearly, it would hardly seem representative if we were to include only three to four utterances per debate in the sample, thus allowing for the analysis of more debates on level two.

Obviously, the data structure of the present study prevents us from using a hierarchical linear model, but we have to be aware that the decision against multi-level modelling has important consequences for our analysis as the choice of the statistical procedure is not simply a matter of elegance. Proponents of multi-level modelling correctly warn that to ignore the hierarchical structure of the data and treat them as if they were on one and the same level as in OLS regressions can have problematic consequences as we are more prone to produce "spuriously 'significant' results" as Hox points out (Hox 1995: 6). The problem is that statistical models such as OLS regressions assume that the observations are independent from each other, which is often not the case: students from the same school share similarities, as do urban areas from the same region, or utterances from the same debate. The observations are thus not independent from each other and consequently the average correlation of students of a specific school, of urban areas from a specific region, or of utterances from a specific debate will be higher than the correlations we observe across schools, regions, and debates. However, if we ignore the hierarchical structure of the data and violate the assumptions underlying standard statistical methods such as OLS regressions, we will necessarily underestimate the standard errors in our model and thus produce the kind of results against which Hox warns us.[3] Multi-level models in turn allow us to take into account the nested nature of the data by modelling explicitly the effect of schools on students' performances, regions on urban centres, or as in our case the effect of time or cleavage structure on the utterances in a debate and the discursive quality.

One way to circumvent this problem is to take into account the clustering of the standard errors in single-level regression models which results from the fact that the observations are not independent from each other. In fact, authors such as Primo, Jacobsmeier, and Milyo argue that although multi-level models represent a feasible and much used method, "calculating clustered standard errors is a more straightforward and practical approach"

[2] Multi-level models can be seen as a combination of regressions so that regressions parameters at level one are in turn explained by regressions models at level two, etc.

[3] Without going into too much mathematical detail, the importance of the standard errors is easy to see if we take into account the role they play in the calculation for the test statistic: the higher the value for the standard error is, the smaller the t-value will be and accordingly the higher the probability that the modelled relationship will not be significant.

(2007: 446).[4] Clustering occurs because individual observations reside within the same superordinate contextual units, i.e. utterances within debates, and therefore the general attributes of the debate such as the point in time or the cleavage structure does not vary for the single speech acts (cf. ibid.: 448ff.). Accounting for the clustering of the standard errors resolves this problem and has the additional advantage that the procedure relies on fewer assumptions about the data structure than hierarchical linear modelling. We will therefore follow this approach by using so-called "robust" regression models which take into account that our standard errors are clustered, i.e. heteroscedastic.[5]

A further point has to be taken into account regarding the possible effect the structure of the data might have on the regression analyses. This is due to the fact that some of the variables require us to shift the unit of analysis: above all *inclusiveness*, *role change*, and *justification actors* cannot be computed on the level of the single speech act as we would not be able to say anything meaningful about them: while it was a reasonable procedure in the descriptive part to aggregate all speech act and thus have a summary look at the overall degree of e.g. *inclusiveness*, when we want to analyse the development over time and in particular be able to make inferential statements about contextual factors, the speech act becomes unsuitable as unit of analysis. The reason is that we only have one speaker at the time, hence it is not possible to say anything significant about, say, the inclusiveness of the speakers which presupposes the presence of more than one. Between the speech act on the one hand and the debates as a whole on the other, the most meaningful analytical units are either the single day of a debate or the single article as to some extent they also include the perspective of the producing side, i.e. the journalist, and the recipient on the other. Choosing the article as unit of analysis has the advantage that we can incorporate covariate parameters in the analysis to control for the most obvious influencing factors which otherwise would escape our attention, or which would become unnecessarily complex to compute. On the level of the article we can assume that its length, its style (reporting or commenting), and its author might have an additional effect on the levels of the DQI_m: it is easy to see that e.g. the longer an article is the higher the probability that some form of reciprocity will occur, the higher the probability for more inclusiveness, etc. To exclude these considerations from the actual analysis could result in overestimating the significance of the hypothesised effects – in particular the assessment of time as the most oblique predictor could become very inaccurate.

The covariates or control variables are thus included in the model primarily to ensure that the estimated relation between the explanatory and the outcome variable is not due to the effect of other parameters. The covariates themselves are, however, not of an immediate interest for the analysis of our hypotheses. We will therefore limit the presentation and discussion to the predictor variables; the full models which include article length, style, and author can be found in the appendix.[6] Moreover, in order to allow for a compact overview, the analysis will mostly present only the essential model coefficients together in a summary table, while the complete results can again be found in the appendix.

[4] This is not to say that to account for the heteroscedasticity of the standard errors is generally preferable over multi-level models which have the undoubted benefit of being able to fully model the analytical context. See Primo, Jacobsmeier, and Milyo (2007) for a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of both methods.
[5] In the following analyses the regression models are calculated with the statistical software package R, using mainly the lmRob and the wle.lm functions to obtain robust regression models as they report values for the model fit (R-squared). In cases where the two functions produce different results, the more conservative one are reported.
[6] A closer inspection of the residuals of simple linear regressions on the DQI_m suggested a transformation of the outcome variables using the natural logarithm.

Mathematically, the two analytical models take the following form:

Full model: $y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + \beta_4 x_4 + \varepsilon$

Restricted model: $y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1$

In the following, we will first examine the effect of social change conceived in the form of time, before we turn to the analysis of the cleavage structure, and finally the effect of the presence of the actors and their constellations. In this way we gradually move from the predictor with the supposedly weakest influence – but central to the theoretical account in terms of its relation to normative learning processes – to those which we have hypothesised to have a more substantial effect. This will put us in the position to assess more clearly what the driving forces behind the discursive quality of political debates are and how they relate to one another.

2. Testing time: social change and the discourse quality of the public sphere

According to deliberative theory, democracy's emancipatory potential rests on its ability to improve the standards of deliberation in the public sphere. This is the central theoretical insight from which we have started our empirical inquiry and which has led to our first hypothesis:

H_1: Social change has a positive effect on the discursive quality of political debates so that their deliberativeness increases continuously throughout the decades.

Apart from this general hypothesis it is also plausible to assume that social change manifests itself differently in the two debate types, above all as they constitute two fundamentally different public sphere models. Accordingly, the model corresponding more to the deliberative ideal, i.e. material issues as they are driven more strongly by the periphery in our case, should exhibit a greater effect from social change as the debate type itself is already more permeable and open to transformation. Our second hypothesis in the section therefore states:

H_{1a}: The positive effect of social change is greater for "outside initiative" models that for "inside access" or "mobilisation" models, both with regard to model fit and strength of the effect (i.e. regression coefficient).

The empirical analysis follows the regression model outlined in the section above: for the analysis of the present hypothesis social change and the learning processes associated with it are translated into the explanatory (independent) variable *year*, whereas the different DQI_m indicators represent the outcome (dependent) variables. We are primarily interested in

the degree to which the discourse quality is affected by time, and we will therefore fit a regression model to the data of the debates in their temporal order from 1960 to 2005. Instead of analysing and discussing each variable separately, the results are presented in a compact form for all of the DQI_m dimensions and include the main coefficients for both the restricted model with only the explanatory variable as well as the values for *year* in the full model, i.e. the model which includes article length, style, and author.

In the following, we will first present the analysis for the effect of social change on the discourse quality of the debates on the whole (section 2.1.), and then move on to analyse the two debate types separately (section 2.2.).

2.1. The effect of social change on discourse quality

The most important parameters of the table can be found in three columns: the first is the standardised coefficient beta which gives the value of the slope (B) established between the explanatory and the outcome variables. The second is the level of significance, which might be the most important factor in this model as time is that variable which has the most indirect hypothesised effect on the deliberative quality of the debates in contrast to cleavage structure and actor constellations.[7] Finally, the values of the adjusted R-squared tell us how well our model fits the data, i.e. the proportion of variation it is able to explain.[8]

Examining the table, we can notice two things at first: as expected, time does not seem to contribute very substantially to the explanation of the changing deliberative quality of the debates across time. The levels of model fit (multiple R-squared) range between .021 and .06, i.e. social change (time) explains between 2.1% and 6% of the variation in the outcome variables. Although all of the values are rather small the larger ones can be found primarily in the rationality variables (*reflexivity*, *reciprocity*, and *range of perspectives*) as well as *inclusiveness*, whereas the actor variables *role change* and *justification actors* reach only very low scores. Yet, however small these values might be, all of them are all statistically significant, and surprisingly enough some of them are even highly significant – not only in

[7] The values for the level of significance run from zero to one and the closer the value is to zero, the more statistically significant the model is. We measure the degree to which we can be certain that the connection we establish in our model between explanatory and outcome variables truly corresponds to that relationship. In the social sciences a level of 95% certainty has become the standard, i.e. all values below the 0.05 threshold are deemed significant, all those below 0.01 (99% certainty) are deemed very significant, and all those below 0.001 are deemed highly significant (99.9% certainty).

[8] As with the level of significance so too the values for R-squared run from zero to one, where one represents a perfect fit between the explanatory and the outcome variable, whereas zero means that the model is not able to account for any variation in the data.

the restricted but also in the full model (cf. also appendix 5). As elusive as it may be, social change thus does have an effect on the deliberative quality of political debates.

Table 18: Regression of DQI_m on time

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Unstandardized Coefficients Std. Error	t	Sig.	Multiple R- squared	Std. Error of the Estimate
Reflexivity	Year	.010	.002	6.130	1.62e-09	.060	.683
	(full model)	.007	.001	5.779	1.23E-08	.473	.514
Reciprocity	Year	.011	.002	5.377	1.11e-07	.049	.793
	(full model)	.007	.002	4.448	1.04E-05	.430	.616
Perspectives	Year	.006	.001	4.956	9.48e-07	.041	.466
	(full model)	.004	.001	4.37	1.48E-05	.410	.369
Inclusiveness	Year	.003	.0006	4.706	3.24e-06	.041	.215
	(full model)	.002	.0005	4.177	3.47E-05	.092	.208
Role Change	Year	.002	.0004	3.579	.0004	.024	.167
	(full model)	.001	.0004	3.06	.002	.027	.166
Justification actors	Year	-.003	.001	-3.377	.001	.021	.363
	(full model)	-.003	.001	-3.233	.001	.035	.382

Having looked at the level of significance of the effect of time and the strength of it, what is of additional interest is of course the direction the relationship between explanatory and outcome variables takes: our hypothesis not only assumes that there is a significant effect between social change in terms of normative learning processes on the one hand and discourse quality on the other, our central prediction is that the relationship is a positive one, that is as time moves on and social change takes place, they induce normative learning processes to the effect that the discursive quality of political debates increases continuously. One aspect of the Beta coefficient is of particular importance in this context: in almost all of the cases only a positive sign indicates that the values of the DQI_m variables increase across the different debates, in other words that social change has a beneficial effect on the deliberative quality. We could also compare the steepness of the slopes of the different variables, but this makes only limited sense: as the variables measure different dimensions with different concepts and different units of analysis, a comparison that came to the conclusion that, say, the reflexivity increases more rapidly than the inclusiveness of the actors could hardly be taken as a significant contribution to the analysis (cf. King 1986). The model fit in this case might make more sense, and we will see in following analyses that depending on the explanatory variable we can observe a divide between rationality and actor variables, which we have discussed already in the first part. As for the present analysis, the direction of the slope appears to be the most important indicator. To be sure, the values of the slopes (B) are in all of the cases rather modest, ranging from .01 to .07 in the full models, but we also have to take into account the relationships we are modelling. For this it is important to see that in the B coefficient can be read the following way: for every increment in one unit of the independent wee see the corresponding change in the response variable. Although these changes are rather low, we have to be aware that we are testing the effect of time over a period of 45 years, and furthermore that the descriptive statistics for the DQI_m variables shows very moderate means as the table below shows. If we include these considerations in our interpretation of the overall effect of social change on the discourse quality, then we arrive at a different picture: an increase of .07 units of reflexivity per year is rather substantial, given that the mean value of the variable is 1.27; almost identical cases can be made for the other variables. This means that while our model explains on little in terms of the total variation of the data (R-squared), what we can explain in terms of the effect of the relationship between the explanatory and the outcome variable (B) is rather

substantial: for e.g. reflexivity each year the variable increases by .07 units, which is a considerable increase given its mean and the maximum value of 3.43.

Table 19: Descriptive statistics for the DQI_m (transformed variables)

	Reflexivitiy	Reciprocity	Perspec-tives	Inclusive-ness	Role change	Justification actors
Mean	1.2671	.8001	.9372	.8207	1.3419	.8063
Minimum	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Maximum	3.43	3.37	2.20	1.61	1.79	1.61

However, not all DQI_m variables are positively affected by social change: the slope of *justification actors* indicates that the more time moves on, the smaller the range of actors who appear in the speakers' reasoning. Thus despite the fact that social change has for the most part a positive effect on the discursive quality of the debates, it does not extend to all aspects of our index. With this qualification in mind H_1 can only partly be verified: social change has a statistically significant beneficial effect on the deliberative quality of the debates for all DQI_m variables but *justification actors*.

There is also a second variable which needs closer scrutiny, namely *role change* as it is defined as the difference between speakers and addressees and therefore the interpretation is more complex than with the other variables. A positive sign for Beta here means that the range of speakers increases more quickly than the range of addressees, which is generally a positive development from a deliberative point of view and mirrors the values we have already seen for the inclusiveness of the actors in general. If *role change* in turn had a negative sign this could be read as a tentative indication that the debates show a development away from the deliberative ideal and towards a more impermeable and power-ridden public sphere as the range of addressees would then increase more rapidly than the range of speakers.

The question now of course is how we should interpret the results. Quite generally, the positive slope for the DQI_m variables means that e.g. as time moves on the mean levels of *reflexivity* increase as do the levels of *reciprocity*, the *range of justifications*, *inclusiveness*, and role change. The negative slope of *justification actors* in turn implies the opposite: social change leads to a decrease in the range – i.e. inclusiveness – of actors in justifications. We could therefore say that social change produces an enlarged mentality that has become more constrained: the degree of inclusiveness of actors in the reasons gives by speakers was higher in the 1960s than in the 2000s. There are two things we have to address in this context: first, why does *justification actors* experience a negative development, and second, how can this be interpreted within our theoretical framework? If we go back to the first part of the empirical analysis and take a look at the descriptive statistics for *justification actors*, we can see that it is that variable which is most sensitive to the topic of the debates: whereas the values of other variables change only gradually, *justification actors* clearly displays an *ad hoc* pattern. This suggests that the issue of the debate might have a stronger effect than social change and perhaps the other two explanatory variables. Furthermore, we have already observed in the first part of the analysis that parallel to their development over time, the debates also seem to show a development from "broader" debates extending into many different policy areas and parts of society such as the unilateral disarmament issue in 1960 to more "narrow" debates such as the fuel protest. And as *justification actors* is more issue sensitive than the other variables, the development we see here might just be related

to this aspect. There are, however, no independent criteria which we could use to test our assumption and it must therefore remain a speculative conjecture.[9]

More pertinent than the explanation for the results, however, is their interpretation: taking into account the qualifications we have made, what does our regression model of the DQI_m tell us about the development of public reasoning through time? More precisely, are the values for *role change* to be interpreted as a caution regarding the structural transformation of the public sphere, which seems to follow quite generally a positive trend as far as the other variables are concerned? First of all, we can see that social change is indeed a driving force behind the development of the deliberative quality in political debates, and although it accounts only for a small amount of the variation in the discursive quality of the debates, the relationship is a significant one. Within the DQI_m there seems to be a vague indication of a difference between the actor and the rationality variables: the relationship between the rationality indicators and time is on the whole positive and stronger, compared to that of the actor variables, which is smaller and negative – with the exception of *inclusiveness*. The development of *role change* is not alarming, it simply shows the different dynamics of development of the two variables which lie at its core. Ideally, of course the difference between the range of speakers and addressees would be zero, entailing that the public sphere is permeable to the extent that those who are addressed by utterance of other actors can themselves also become speakers in the debate. A positive sign indicates that the inclusiveness of speakers is greater than that of hearers, which indicates that there is more variation on the side of the speakers than the hearers. If the slope of the regression were very steep we would have to interpret it as the development of a public sphere where the range of relevant and responsible actors shrinks to only a few, and this could indeed be problematic. A negative sign in turn would be the result of an expanding range of addressees which increases more rapidly than the range of speakers, which would even be more problematic as it would have to be interpreted to mean that access to the public sphere is more and more restricted as relevant actors fail to gain access. The difference we can observe in our regression model indicates a lag, but as it concerns the addressees and not the speakers it should not be overvalued.

If at all, it could be taken as a sign of a diminishing complexity of the debates as the range of actors deemed relevant as addressees lags behind those actors who have become relevant as active participants (i.e. speakers). This interpretation is corroborated by the overall decreasing range of *justification actors* whose development, however, deserves a more critical scrutiny. In contrast to *role change* the range of *justification actors* is not the result of the development of two variables, but a direct measure for the inclusiveness of actors as objects of reasons and thereby gauges the transformation of the enlarged mentality. As we lack an independent indicator for the complexity of debates which could be included in the full regression model, we can only make statements about data at hand, though here again it is useful to include the descriptive statistics into our considerations. If we look at the raw

[9] Running such a "speculative" regression on a new independent variable labelled *complex* which runs from 1 to 2 on an ordinal scale and measures the complexity of the debate (1 = less complex, 2 = more complex), with the 1960s debate being those connected to other policy fields whereas those of the 1980s and 2000s are more enclosed, yields a model which is statistically significant on the 0.004 level with a positive slope of .01 (both in the restricted and the full model) and an R-squared value of 0.016 (in the restricted model). While far from being a proper verification, it points to the need for additional data collection and more thorough model testing which would have to be pursued further in future research. The more general problem with this hypothesis, however, is that it would undoubtedly also affect the other DQI_m variables, and it is hard to see why e.g. the level of *reflexivity* or the *range of perspectives* should be affected negatively by it – after all, an increase in the complexity of political debates would make itself felt first and foremost in higher values of the rationality variables. If at all, our hypothesis would have to be extended to account for at least two diametrically opposed trends, which together produce the pattern we see.

data we can see that the debate with the largest range of justification actors is the Commonwealth immigration debate in 1965 (36 different actor types), but the score for the unilateral disarmament debate in 1960 (28) is lower than that of some of the other debates (1980 = 32, 1985 = 27, 2000 = 27, 2005 = 31). Even on this general view the complexity hypothesis does not seem to hold, and indeed if we exclude single debates between 1960 and 2005 or for instance both of the debates in the 1960s from the regression analysis the coefficient and with it the slope of the regression still remains negative.

In very general terms a significant decrease in justification actors means that the more time moves on the less inclusive the range of actors is to which speakers refer in their justifications. Much against its descriptor, enlarged mentality thus seems to have been contracting throughout the past four and a half decades. Yet apart from the factual development, the question of course is what this entails for the deliberative potential of democratic debate. What is particularly striking is the fact that after our discussion of *role change*, the *justification actors* variable is really the only indicator of discourse quality which decreases as a result of social change. Given that we control for length, style, and author of the article the decrease in *justification actors*, just as the increase in all other DQI_m variables, has to be taken as the result of a changing debating culture which in this case produces detrimental effects: the range of actors who are part of the justifications of speakers is less inclusive in 2005 than it was in 1960. However, unlike *reflexivity*, which measures only the number of reasons given, justification actors also has a strong qualitative dimension which we have examined in the previous part and it is important to include these findings in our overall assessment: it is one thing to observe that the range of *justification actors* decreases, it is quite another to examine what kind of actors are affected by this process.

One thing that seems to remain rather consistent throughout the debates in qualitative terms is the distribution of the justification actors as those actors who are deemed relevant are included to a greater degree in this deliberative category than as speakers. Thus, civil society in 1965, the economy – i.e. the unions – in 1980, or the "uncivil" society in 2005 represent those actors who play a significant role in the debate, and in some sense we could say that they are the objects of the debates as it is their legal status which is being negotiated. Because of this they also become the object of the speakers' argumentation processes, either as addressees, but even more so as actors in their justifications. That is to say that although we witness a quantitative decrease in this deliberative category, from a qualitative point of view the debating culture has not changed substantially; and the actor distribution in the justifications still works as a critical yardstick with which we can assess the inclusiveness of speakers. We can thus say that despite the apparent significant quantitative decrease in the justification actors' inclusiveness, its qualitative composition does not suffer from the trend. This does not do away with the variable's development which has after all been the cause of our further analysis: as the only DQI_m variable, the values of *justification actors* are negatively affected by social change. And while it is precisely this constellation which makes it difficult to find an explanation for it, the result is relevant and confirms once again that our index and the discourse quality it tries to capture is indeed a multi-dimensional construct. In the present case it shows that the enlarged mentality of the debates is decreasing. As we will see in some of the following analyses, the results of justification actors appear indeed to be more sensitive to the topic than the other variables.

2.1.1. Reciprocity and inclusiveness and forms of recognition

Having discussed the two cases which display an unusual development in the context of the other DQI_m variables, we could now conclude this section. After all, the other variables all display a positive trend which is in line with our hypothesis and therefore need no further scrutiny. There are, however, two indicators which merit additional attention: *reciprocity* and *inclusiveness*, for just as the results of *role change* and *justification actors* have been balanced by our qualitative considerations, so, too, the findings for *inclusiveness* and *reciprocity* need to be evaluated more closely with the insights gained from the qualitative analysis in the first part. Both indicators are strong measures for the inclusion of civil society in the political debates, and because the periphery plays such an important role in the deliberative model as the locus of democracy's critical and emancipatory potential, it is essential that we move beyond the general view of the quantitative development of the categories as a whole.[10] The other two variables, *range of perspectives* and *reflexivity*, are less problematic in this respect as they form the core of rationality and simply count the amount of (different) reasons given.[11] The same cannot be said of *reciprocity* as it is more than a simple measure of argumentative quality: it is that variable of the DQI_m which establishes the relationship between the actors and thus is a measure for their concrete intersubjectivity. And as we have seen in the first part of the empirical analysis, this relationship and its development is far from straightforward.

If we take into account the main findings for the descriptive analysis of *reciprocity*, particularly the relationship between the centre and the non-centre actors, it becomes clear that we cannot take the quantitative development of the variable at face value but need to further distinguish between the direction of the relationship. What seems to parallel the quantitative results is the trend of the non-centre/centre relationship, i.e. the degree to which non-centre actors refer to centre actors' utterances: although the 1965 values step somewhat out of line, the results generally form a clearly discernible trend as we see a continuous increase in reciprocity from 1960 to 2005. However, the picture changes dramatically if we examine the opposite relationship from the centre towards the periphery, for here the initial trend until 1980 (4.4%, 5.8%, 13.3%) is thwarted by the 1985 values (1.8%), the values for the fuel protest in 2000 in turn are the highest (31.9%) for this relationship, whereas the 2005 values (4.9%) are again close to those of 1960. As in the case of *justification actors*, though in a different way, the reciprocal orientation of the centre towards the non-centre actors is more affected by the context than the general social change. Unlike *justification actors*, however, our discussion above has shown that the context-sensitivity of the centre's *reciprocity* is given by the nature of the goods under debate rather than by other properties such as the complexity of the issue, etc. The general positive development of *reciprocity* as shown by our regression model thus would seem to have to be qualified to the extent that the result might reflect more the trend of the non-centre actors' orientation towards the centre than the opposite relationship. If we test the development of reciprocity between centre and non-centre actors, however, we get a somewhat ambivalent picture: the results for both relationships are significant, but the slopes of the regressions are equal to (or very close to) zero (cf. appendix 6). There is thus no substantial development

[10] We will thereby anticipate to some minor extent the analyses of the next section relating to the development of discourse quality within debate types, but it seems appropriate to restrict the discussion of the question of inclusiveness and recognition in to one section.

[11] An interesting question regarding the range of reasons is of course whether the centre becomes more permeable towards those types justifications which are exclusively uttered by members of civil society. But this would require a different kind of study as the figures in the present data are too small to allow further statistical analysis.

for either of the variables and we cannot say anything beyond the general positive transformation of *reciprocity* on the aggregate level apart from the fact, that both the orientation of the centre and the non-centre actors shows no negative significant decrease. The only model to produce significant and substantial results is the regression of the reciprocal orientation of the periphery towards the centre in cultural debates. This anticipates the topic of the next section, but as the analytical focus there will be more about the development of the discourse quality in terms of the DQI_m proper, it makes sense to report the results of this regression model here. Without discussing the results in too much detail, we can see that some of our conclusions in the first part are supported by this

Table 20: Regression of reciprocity of non-centre towards centre actors on time (cultural debates)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients				
		B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	df
Civil society	(Constant)	-	-	-		-
	Year	-	-	-		-
	(full model)	0.0044	0.0012	3.5396	.0005	290

The rlm function was used all all others failed to converge. In contrast to the wle.lm and the lmRob function it yields no R-squared. None of the robust functions converged for the simple model.

result as we have seen that the reciprocity of the non-centre actors towards the centre is always higher in cultural debates. That is, the centre's output generates a more intense response by non-centre actors in public sphere models that are driven largely by the political-administrative centre. Material, peripheral debates by contrast appear not to produce the same kind of relationship, or at least not in any way that sees a continuous growth.

The second, but more basic question concerns the development of *inclusiveness*, and more precisely whether civil society comes to adopt a more prominent position in the debates as speaker. This is important insofar as our theoretical account assumes that civil society is more sensitive to political and social problems, and that challenges as well as new impulses for the political system come mainly from the periphery, which is thus ultimately the locus of the democracy's emancipatory potential. A regression model with the ratio of civil society speakers as outcome variable and time as explanatory variables reveals that there is indeed a significant relationship, in the restricted as well as in the full model, although here as in all other cases the model fit is rather modest (see table 21, cf. appendix 7). There is, however, an additional point we have to take into account, and which could indeed prove to undermine the result. The way we have measured the change in inclusiveness of civil society includes all speech acts where civil society acts as a speaker,

Table 21: Regression of civil society on time

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple	Std. Error of	
		B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	R-squared	the Estimate	df
Civil society	(Constant)	-10.275591	2.112836	-4.863	1.54E-06			
	Year	0.005352	0.001043	5.133	4.08e-07	0.04963	0.3953	504.5
	(full model)	0.005331	0.001064	5.011	7.50E-07	0.05596	0.3964	504

which is not only the case in the regular reporting of the political process through the media but more important also when members of civil society act themselves as authors, i.e. in letters to the editor. As letters to the editor are primarily written by members of the periphery, it could well be that without these specific articles we would not be able to see any increase, or put in other words: the positive development we see in the regression model

above could simply be due to an increasing amount of letters to the editor. We therefore need to run the same model again, but this time without the letters to the editor written by members of civil society in order to find out whether a real change in the inclusiveness has

Table 22: Regression of civil society on time (without letters to the editor)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients				
		B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	df
Civil society	(Constant)	-.0023	.0007	-3.171		
	Year	0	0	3.0492	.0024	518
	(full model)	0	0	3.3273	.0009	515

The rlm function was used all all others failed to converge. In contrast to the wle.lm and the lmRob function it yields no value for R-squared.

taken place. Table 22 above provides the statistics, and we can see that although in the restricted as well as in the full model the effect of time on the presence of civil society in the debates is significant, the relationship in terms of the slope is equal to zero (cf. appendix 7). In short, the increase we have seen above mainly occurs through civil society's participation in the debates through the forms of letters to the editor. While we could say that this presents not a dramatic result in so far as the model shows no significant decrease of actors from the periphery once we exclude the letters to the editor, the opposite is of course true as well: there no significant increase in the presence of civil society actors without this institutionalised form of a discursive platform.

The picture, however, changes if we expand the analysis to the debate types – anticipating again the next section – for here we can see that there is indeed a significant and modest effect of social change on the development of the presence of civil society in material debates

Table 23: Regression of periphery presence on time (material debates, without letters to the editor)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple	Std. Error of	
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	R-squared	the Estimate	df
(Intercept)	-11.726279	2.682657	-4.371	2.31E-05			
Year	0.005636	0.001361	4.140	5.98e-05	0.1096	0.322	139.3
(full model)	0.005927	0.001348	4.396	2.09E-05	0.158	0.3266	148.9

outside their contributions through letters to the editor. As table 23 above shows, the development is small but significant, and above all the model accounts for over 10% of the variation in the data. Without going much further into the implications of the result which we will explore in more detail the next section on the difference between the two debate types, we can say that to some extent – and in a systematic way – the periphery's position becomes more central in some of the debates. In other words: in material issues civil society gains increasingly a voice in the public sphere as a participant and establishes itself as a political actor.

Our interpretations of the descriptive analyses in the first part have included a notion of recognition which is indebted to Axel Honneth's work. *The Struggle for Recognition* (Honneth 1992) by individuals as well as social groups is thus identified as the motor of social change. If we include these aspects into our analysis of civil society's changing status in the debates and take above all the intersubjective underpinning of Honneth's concept of recognition seriously, we realise that we have only examined one side of the process with regard to civil society. For what we have explored so far is to what extent the periphery succeeds in establishing itself as an actor in political debates. But the question of course also is in how

far members of civil society are taken seriously as participants in political debates, i.e. to what degree they are addressed by others. Focusing on their role as (potential) interlocutors in the debate, the table below gives the results for the regression analysis of civil society as addressee (cf. appendix 7). As we can see the relationship between time and the presence of

Table 24: Regression of civil society as addressee on time

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	
		B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			df
Civil society	(Constant)	-0.2744806	2.5427944	-0.108	0.914			
	Year	0.0002739	0.0012824	0.214	0.831	0.0001186	0.4219	384.8
	(full model)	2.26E-05	1.28E-03	0.018	0.986	0.003683	0.4193	393

civil society as addressee is not significant in either model; social change does thus not seem to have a profound effect on the establishment of civil society as a participant in the public sphere that is recognised by the other.[12] Rather, as we have seen in the descriptive analyses, the recognition of civil society as a political force in the public sphere is only temporary and depends strongly on the topic of the debate as well as other factors such as coalition partners: the unionist parties in the Anglo-Irish Agreement debate or the farmers during the fuel protest mobilise the periphery and focalise the protest. In addition to this, civil society is always latently or very manifestly present as the gallery, in front of which political debate takes place. In analogy to the status of the media we could therefore also speak of dual role of civil society, though in a different way, namely as participants and as part of a legitimating and potentially universal audience, whose opinions are courted by members of the centre as Kavanagh puts it (cf. Kavanagh 2000: 185f.).

2.2. The development of discourse quality within material and cultural debates

From a deliberative perspective, of course, civil society's role cannot be restricted to that of a passive object, a courted opinion, as it can exhibit its legitimating function only to the extent that it is also an active participant in the political process. Apart from the individual effects of the debate topics we have repeatedly mentioned, this might in turn be influenced more systematically by the debate type. That is to say, the levels of the recognition based variables discussed in last paragraphs just as the overall discourse quality of the debates might also be connected to their cleavage structure. We will analyse the effect of this factor more thoroughly in the next part, but here we are interested in the temporal development within each of the debate types, which we will examine in the remainder of this section.

Behind this is also a more general point about the rather uninspiring findings for *inclusiveness*, *reciprocity* and their related variables, which might be affected by a methodological issue. The potentially problematic issue is that the sample combines two larger debates every twenty years, of which one is mainly material and periphery driven whereas the other one is cultural and initiated or dominated by the centre at the time of analysis. This approach is justified insofar as our main research interest is to find out how two of the main types of public spheres have changed over time, what the differences between these two types are more precisely, and what part is played the actors. However, precisely because of this sampling strategy we can say only very little about the degree to

[12] Separate regressions on the material and the cultural debates yield significant results, but as above a slope whose value is equal to zero.

which the political process since the 1960s has taken one or the other form. Our sample suggests not only that material/periphery and cultural/centre debates are the two main types of public spheres, but that they also occur with the same frequency. Yet, this is not necessarily – or almost certainly not – the case, although we have no additional data which would allow us to determine whether material debates have increased on the whole through the past decades at the expense of cultural debates, or the other way round. It is this aspect which might in turn have an effect on the development of specific discursive dimensions

Table 25: Effect of time on debate types

	Cultural debates			Material debates		
DQI_m	B	Sig.	Mltpl. R squared	B	Sig.	Mltpl. R squared
Reciprocity	.016	7.82E-09	.112	.002	.503	.002
Full model	.009	1.17E-05	.526	.005	.034	.305
Reflexivity	.014	4.10E-09	.114	.005	.051	.013
Full model	.007	.000125	.534	.009	3.81E-06	.453
Perspectives	.009	8.99E-08	.095	.001	.433	.002
Full model	.004	.003	.466	.005	.001	.383
Inclusiveness	.003	.0001	.057	.003	.003	.034
Full model	.002	.004	.104	.003	.0008	.141
Role change	.003	2.44E-06	.077	-	-	-
Full model	.002	1.88E-05	.079	-	-	-
Justification actors	-.005	2.96E-06	.078	-	-	-
Full model	-.005	.0002	.072	-	-	-
Periphery presence	-	-	-	.006	5.98e-05	.110
Full model	-	-	-	.006	2.09E-05	.158

The wle.lm function was used as it yielded more conservative results.

such as the recognition of civil society. The potential problem can be mitigated, however, if we examine the debate types separately, as this allows us to determine the degree to which social change has an effect on cultural debates on the one hand and material ones on the other. In other words, we now move one level below the general development of discursive quality through social change and assess the influence of time for the two debate types separately.

As we can see from table 25 above which reports the statistically significant results in a compact form, there appears to be a distinction between the effect of social change in material and in cultural debates (cf. appendix 8). Whereas all of the DQI_m variables show a significant development in cultural debates and on a substantial degree as far as the rationality dimension is concerned (*reciprocity*, *reflexivity*, and *perspectives*), material debates appear to be less affected by social change, both in terms of the number of variables and with regard to the strength of the effect. At the same time, however, it is precisely in this debate type where the presence of civil society actors shows a significant increase over time. It is important to see that the results do not imply that one debate type is more deliberative than the other, this will be the topic of the next section. Here we are measuring the extent to which social change has an effect on material and cultural debates. In our statistical model, this presupposes a regularity of development and the results strongly indicate that it is the cultural debates which develop more systematically, or put the other way round they are more conducive to a systematic increase of deliberative quality. Material debates by contrast display a development on fewer variables and to a lower degree, though significantly and in contrast to cultural debates it also extends to the presence of civil society outside from their contributions through letters to the editor. To be sure, the presence of civil society has already displayed a significant relationship with social change in the general model in the first part of the section. But there, the value for the slope suggested that the presence of civil society sees no manifest development, whereas the

development within the material debates alone does indeed display a substantial increase. This partial result notwithstanding and before we discuss the findings in more detail, we can already draw one of the main conclusions of this section as the table above clearly shows that we have to reject our second hypothesis: contrary to our assumptions it is not the material debates which are more responsive to social change but the cultural ones.

The question of course is why we see such a systematic difference between the two debates, which has also the effect that e.g. social change is able to explain almost 10% or more of development of the rationality variables within cultural debates – a remarkable result compared to the material debates where the values of the model fit ranges merely between 0.2% and 3.4% for this dimension and the slopes are less steep. The answer to this necessarily points beyond the scope of this section, but it might already give us an idea of how the separate explanatory dimensions could be related to the deliberative quality. The main discrepancy between cultural and material debates is arguably the presence of the centre, which is between 64.4% and over 80% in cultural debates, but ranges between 45.4% and 52.1% in material debates as the descriptive analyses of the first part have shown. And although the centre is the most dominant actor in both debates, we can reasonably assume that the even greater dominance in cultural debates might play a decisive role in the development of these debates. This might occur irrespective of whether the centre's dominance further increases through the decades as social change is simply related to the fact that it becomes most visible in quantitative terms through those actors which occupy most of the discursive space.[13] That being said, the conclusion to be drawn from this is of course more controversial than the regression model or the quantitative presence of certain actor groups suggest at first. For in its consequence the results and our explanation entail that centre driven public spheres, i.e. those which correspond more to the "inside access" or the "mobilisation" model, are inherently superior to those which are initiated by the periphery and bear more resemblance to the "outside initiative" model of the public sphere. The clear distinction on normative grounds between power-ridden and an autonomous public spheres is thus not only contrasted but outright contradicted by the empirical results. Of course, our theoretical account does not explicitly claim that those public spheres which conform more to the deliberative ideal display automatically a higher discursive quality and are more responsive to social change. But what good would they be, the polemic sceptic could ask, if deliberative public spheres turned out to be less deliberative than their alternatives, i.e. those which are rejected because they are considered to be deficient forms of public reasoning, and if they were seen to be less able to develop in the direction of the deliberative ideal?

The immediate answer might be seen in the process the "outside initiative" models describe, represented in our case by the material debates, which originates in the periphery and connects the communicative impulses from civil society to the political-administrative centre. On this reading, the main and decisive difference between the two basic public sphere models is to be found in the participatory dimension of the political process, which is embodied to a higher degree in the "outside initiative" model, and which is captured by the actor variables of the DQI_m. The results of the regression models here thus touch at the very heart of the material debates and the public sphere model they constitute which by its very definition is more permeable than those originating in the centre. We should therefore

[13] Seen from a statistical point of view we could say that the greater presence of an actor class might be taken as an indicator of greater discursive regularity, and regularity is in turn what our regression models reconstruct.

certainly be able to see that material debates are more open to social change than cultural ones in this dimension. Contrary to our assumptions and in contrast to some of our suggestions in the descriptive part, however, this is not the case as it is not the material debates which show more significant relationships with the actor variables but the cultural ones. Furthermore, both show a very similar development on the only variable where material debates display a significant relationship in this dimension of the DQI_m, namely *inclusiveness*.[14] In addition to this, the development of *role change* shows only a significant development in cultural debates, and the positive regression coefficient confirms that it does so to a degree which underscores that the inclusiveness of the speakers increases more rapidly than those of the addressees – again a highly counterintuitive result. The only variable where cultural debates show a significant negative development is given by the effect of social change on *justification actors*, and we can thus also see that it is this relationship which is mainly responsible for the overall negative performance of the variable in the analysis of the total of the debates further above. Although it is still difficult to find a satisfying explanation for this development, an inspection of the descriptive data might help us to move beyond mere speculative guesses as in the section above. As the frequency table in the appendix shows the reason for the development we see is on the one hand given by the strong presence of civil society in the 1965 debate along with the centre, which results in a moderate range of actors as part of speakers' justifications (cf. appendix 9). On the other hand, and more important, the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement issue displays the opposite pattern as the centre alone accounts for 96.7% of justification actors, and it is this restricted range of justification actors that is mainly responsible for the overall negative transformation we see; the considerable degree of inclusiveness of the 2005 anti-terror legislation debate can only soften but not reverse the trend.

Our discussion so far shows that cultural debates are decidedly more responsive to social change than material ones. There are, however, some additional points we have to take into consideration that will not be able to balance the picture entirely, but might add an additional perspective. Against the possibly excessively bleak consequences for material debates we have seen in the section above that they are the ones where the periphery succeeds in establishing a voice outside from letters to the editor, i.e. in is in this debate type that civil society is increasingly recognised as an actor in the public sphere. This puts the seemingly greater responsiveness of cultural debate on the actor dimension of the DQI_m somewhat into perspective. An additional and more central point becomes visible once we expand the focus away from the single variables and try to assess the implications for the public sphere models, in particular that embodied by the cultural debates. While it is without question that the rationality dimension in cultural debates is above all related to the role of the centre, the same can obviously not be said of the actor variables. Quite on the contrary, here it is particularly the increasing presence of non-centre actors which is responsible for the values of *inclusiveness* and *role change*. This means, however, that on the whole cultural debates are less stable than they appear to be, so to speak, as they experience at least on the actor dimension a push away from centre dominated and power-ridden public spheres towards more inclusive and hence autonomous forms. In other words: cultural debates are at least on a par with material ones in their responsiveness to social change on the actor dimension because here they correspond more to public spheres usually initiated by the periphery. In this sense social change might have a more restricted

[14] A regression model which included an interaction term to test whether the difference of the slopes in the two debate types, returned no significant results (cf. appendix 8).

effect on material debates, but its influence on cultural debates is not only stronger in terms of the values for the single variables, it is also more profound in that it contributes to partly transforming the public sphere type. From a participatory perspective in general, and in particular one that includes civil society both debates thus show a positive development, though the transformation process is certainly more complex in cultural debates as it also comprises possible countervailing tendencies towards a greater dominance of the centre, above all on the rationality dimension.

As we can see, the discussion of one of the explanatory dimensions (social change) immediately also involves the other two (cleavage structure and actor constellations), and we will examine in the following sections in how they affect the discursive quality. Before we continue with the empirical analysis, however, we will first bring together the different results and assess our findings from a theoretical perspective in the concluding paragraphs of this section.

2.3. Conclusion

On the whole, our analyses have produced positive results: most of the values of the DQI_m dimensions have increased over time, and all have shown transformations that are statistically significant. The only exception is posed by the range of *justification actors* which has been on the decline since the 1960s. The results of the descriptive analysis from the first part balance the negative findings for this variable to some extent, as despite the diminishing range it is still the actors deemed relevant and responsible who are mostly represented in the justifications, irrespective of whether they are established/institutional or not. And as the further analysis has revealed, it is mainly the cultural debates which are responsible for the development.[15] With this exception in mind our findings thus broadly confirm the first hypothesis: social change has indeed a beneficial effect on the discursive quality of political debates. And the effect is not merely confined to the aggregate level of the variables as the closer examination of *reciprocity* and *inclusiveness* as well as the separate analysis of the debate types has been able show, though this has equally led to the falsification of the second hypothesis. The positive relationship between social change and deliberative quality holds even on the level of single actor classes, though in the case of civil society the results produce a more ambivalent picture as the periphery succeeds in establishing itself as a political actor only in material debates. The trend, however, does not extend to the role of civil society as an addressee; and particularly from the point of view of the centre the periphery fails to become a substantial interlocutor.

Given that quite apart from the confirmation or falsification of our hypotheses the results depict for the most part a positive trend in the development of deliberative properties of political debates, the question arises how robust our results are. After all, they stand in stark contrast to a substantial part of the empirical evidence we have reviewed further above, though most of this research is only indirectly related to the deliberative paradigm. On a theoretical and methodological level our notion of structural transformation is more abstract than what Habermas or for instance Bernhard Peters (2001) often have in mind

[15] The additional hypothesis that *justification actors* is generally more sensitive to the debate topics than the other DQI_m indicators finds no evidence through statistical analysis: an analysis of variance (ANOVA) yielded no significant results (see appendix 10).

when they speak of learning processes, particularly in relation to the role of civil society: "Social movements, citizen initiatives and forums, political and other associations, in short, the groupings of civil society, are indeed sensitive to problems, but the signals they send out and the impulses they give are generally too weak to initiate learning processes or redirect decision making in the political system in the short run", Habermas states in *Between Facts and Norms* (Habermas 1996: 373). Related to this view, Peters (2001: 667) speaks of a shift in the public opinion as the result of public discourses: some positions and arguments become implausible or are disqualified, some lose their dominant position or disappear from the debate altogether. The point with both authors is that they often seem to have in mind single issue debates which extend over a longer period of time as e.g. the abortion discourse examined by Ferree et al. (2002), whereas the present study has adopted a more abstract notion of transformation processes. True, this notion can be found in Habermas' conception of social evolution (1979a), but it focuses necessarily more on the formal properties of public discourse than on the content of specific arguments, positions, etc. and thereby also accepts that the effect of such transformation processes might remain ephemeral to political debates and not produce any statistically significant traces.

If against this demanding test arrangement, however, we still find significant results, then they can be taken to be rather robust and we can safely say that irrespective of the debated topics, the recursivity of the political public sphere defines a process which leads to the transformation of its own normative structure, and which in most cases takes a positive direction. The analysis has also shown that these transformation processes take a distinct form in the two public sphere types: social change generally has a more pervasive effect in cultural debates where it affects all discourse quality indicators and some to a substantial degree, whereas material debates are affected in a more restricted way. To reiterate our statement from above, this does not mean that cultural debates are to be valued more highly from a deliberative perspective than material ones, or that social change has no effect on material debates. It simply means that in so far as social change produces continuous transformation processes, cultural debates appear to pick them up more systematically. However, we have seen at the same time that social change produces a complex pattern in cultural debates as they appear to undergo a twofold transformation: while the increase of rationality is mainly carried by the presence of the centre in the debates, the positive development they experience in the actor dimension is in turn caused by the non-centre actors. The result is an unstable public sphere with a drive towards less inclusiveness one dimension and greater inclusiveness on the other. This confirms our analysis of the single debates in the descriptive part, where paradigmatically the Anglo-Irish Agreement issue displayed exactly such a constellation, and it appears that the greater control of the centre on one dimension is counteracted by non-centre actors on the other, pushing the public sphere towards a "mobilisation" model or even further, within as well as across debates.

Coming back to the initial point made about the difference between the positive results the analysis so far has revealed and the negative findings of much of empirical research, how should we interpret our findings in the context of an apparent on-going tabloidization, personalisation, Americanisation, etc. of the public sphere? Three points have to be made in this context: first, the present study is not an investigation into the tabloidization, personalisation, or into other related trends political communication research has

explored.[16] The focus is clearly a different one – as are the theoretical premises, and we cannot simply take the findings from one area and transfer them to other areas without accounting for the different contexts. This basic qualification notwithstanding, what we can say is that against the findings of those studies which find and increase in tabloid formats and contents in the quality press our results show that the analysis of the core dimensions of a radical conception of democracy paints on the whole a more positive picture and confirms the assumption of the self-transformative capacities of public reasoning. Second, the existing empirical evidence presents by no means a uniform chorus which bemoans the fall of the public sphere, and the way we have summarised the diachronic empirical research might rightly be said to have emphasised more strongly the fatalistic side of it, so to speak. However, despite this objection, we thirdly have to take into account that the main concern has been to make a broader argument about the connection between empirical research on the one hand and the influence of the explicitly or only latently present theoretical framework in which the empirical work is embedded on the other. As we have seen, much of empirical research still takes its cue from Nietzsche or Weber, and because of this shortcoming some of the studies are unable to fulfil what Habermas calls for: namely to reconstruct social learning processes as the cooperative search for solutions. This is not to say that studies finding more tabloidization or personalisation have produced merely artefacts. But they often lack theoretical rigorousness, i.e. they succumb to what Steiner (2008) refers as "concept stretching", and they moreover do not display the conceptual openness that would allow them to find the theoretical opposite of what they were looking for.[17] In the context of the present study the seeming signs of a deteriorating political process depicted by the existing literature are disconfirmed by our results and show either to have no substantial effect or possibly even a positive one on the core of the political process, i.e. deliberation.[18] To be sure, the present study, too, can only present a restricted perspective in this respect and future research should certainly try to integrate some of the different strands, above all deliberation and personalisation.

Before we conclude this section and against our generally positive findings, a word of caution is in order. For despite the fact that most of the DQI_m variables display a positive development, there is good reason not to be overly optimistic. Rather, on a closer look the analyses of our hypotheses support a more modest view of deliberative development as particularly civil society as the locus of the emancipatory potential is only partly affected by social change. Certainly, the periphery's presence increases on the whole, it also increases if we analyse the two debate types separately, and in the material debates it further shows a positive development, even if we disregard the contributions by members of civil society

[16] Tabloidization, Americanisation, personalisation, etc. refers to a heterogeneous area of empirical research which examines among other things the change in the balance between "hard" and "soft" news, the development of emotional-affective aspects in the reporting about politicians, the spill-over of tabloid formats, styles, and content into broadsheets, or quite generally the changing structure of the media market, though not all findings point in the direction of an increase in what are essentially deemed deteriorating aspects of public political communication (cf. Blumler-Kavanagh 1999; Croteau & Hoynes 2001; Esser 1999; Kepplinger 1998; Marcinkowski, Greger, Hünning 2001; McNair 2003; Norris 2000; Picard 2008; Sparks 2000; see also the review article on personalisation research by Adam & Maier 2010). In their comparative study of the journalistic and media development in, Austria, France, Germany, Switzerland, and the UK since the 1960s Lucht & Udris (2010) find for British media system that mid-market newspapers display an increasing interest in reporting scandals and they also confirm the spill-over of tabloid formats, style, and content into broadsheets, though they reconstruct some of the trends through the analysis of only one newspaper (cf. ibid.; Udris & Luch 2011).

[17] If we were e.g. to study the degree of personalisation in the press across the decades we would very basically also need an analytical notion of what the opposite or the absence of personalisation is and what it entails theoretically. This is rarely, if at all the case in the existing literature of the field.

[18] In analogy to the study of Price, Cappella and Nir (2002) which shows that disagreement can have beneficial effects on reasoning processes, we could assume that e.g. personalisation affects the deliberative quality of political debates in different ways which need not all be negative from a normative point of view.

through letters to the editor. But as we have argued above, a deliberative approach has to take not only into account the contributions by a specific actor class, but also their discursive recognition by others. It is, however, precisely in this dimension that we see only a very moderate and indirect development. It is indirect insofar as the raising presence of civil society in the debates is already a form of recognition about their status in the public sphere given to them at least by the media's selection process. Yet, the political-administrative centre shows no such change, neither in total nor in the different debate types, which ultimately means that civil society's participation sees a continuous development only as a speaker, but not as an addressee. Again, this is not to say that there is no change in the relationship between the centre and the periphery, certainly the fuel protest in 2000 shows a sudden increase in the centre's orientation towards the non-centre actors. But these changes apparently do not develop in a linear fashion, and this is something we have to consider when interpreting the results. On the whole, they tie in with the crucial yet modest role civil society plays in the deliberative account of the political process: it is crucial as it generates legitimacy and is the locus of emancipatory impulses for the system as a whole, but at the same time its effectiveness is modest as civil society is not to be thought of as a macro-subject aspiring to take over the self-organisation of society – this would be highly counterproductive and indeed outright impossible, apart from running against deliberative theory. In line with a modest view we can say that the presence of civil society certainly increases, but that its influence, i.e. the centre's response, remains selective. We have, however, also seen that there are differences between cultural and material debates in this regard as well as with respect to some of the other discursive variables. The next section will therefore explore these distinctions more thoroughly and test the effect of cleavage structure on the deliberative quality of the debates.

3. Dividing debates: Cleavage structure and the discursive quality of conflict resolution

As Kriesi (1998) has convincingly argued, for a cleavage to become a structuring property of politics there needs to be more than a mere conflict of interests between opposing groups. Most notably, the prerequisites for the emergence of a cleavage are stable identities of the groups involved, or at least a self-consciousness of these groups as constituting a collective, and the articulation of their beliefs, wishes, interests, etc. In the debates under analysis these criteria are fulfilled as the spill-over into the public sphere occurs at a time when the conflicts have developed a certain dynamic, involving two or more groups who articulate their view of the contested issue – or so it seems at first sight. There is one notable exception to the rule, namely the 1965 immigration debate: for here those primarily affected by the norms of action, i.e. the immigrants, neither articulate their views, wishes, needs, etc. themselves nor are they adequately represented by others who could be seen as their discursive representatives. To be sure, the anti-racism campaign CARD is founded in 1964 and an all-party group in the Commons takes initiative to keep immigration out of politics, but racism is only one topic, and one which furthermore is apt to perpetuate the situation of immigrants as objects of the political process. Moreover, it is questionable to what extent we can speak of a stable identity of the group of immigrants, though Kriesi's use of the term remains rather vague, since their self-consciousness is certainly on a lower level than that of, say, the organised labour.

Does this mean that we should exclude the 1965 debate from further analysis in this section? A deliberative perspective would find that the results of the descriptive analysis of the debate should rather be read to qualify the preconditions of cleavages: the structural silence of the excluded, who only incoherently form a homogenous group, are not so much a problem for empirical analysis as for their theoretical account. The central result of the immigration issue is that there exist cleavages which contrary to our established understanding run deep, enter the public sphere, but do not necessarily presuppose collective identities and articulations of interest in the way we usually encounter. An imbalance in resources in Giddens' sense is certainly always involved in the conflict between groups, and very often the conflict will be about access or the distribution of specific resources, but as the 1965 debate shows, conflict divides can become cleavages without all the conditions being fulfilled for all the participating actors, and particularly not for one of the main actors, i.e. those affected by new legislation. This does not invalidate Kriesi's argument, it simply shows that when the criteria for the formation of a cleavage are violated, instead of abandoning any further exploration this is where a discursive analysis begins.

We have also seen in the preceding empirical part that the two cleavages correspond to two different public sphere types: material debates are generally initiated or strongly carried by the periphery or non-centre actors such as the unions, whereas cultural debates originate and are driven by the political-administrative centre. Our hypothesis about the effect of cleavages is therefore equally a hypothesis about the effect of public sphere types, and it is indeed this aspect which defines the direction of our hypothesis, as based on the central importance of civil society in the deliberative model we assume:

H_2: Cleavage structure and public sphere type have a significant effect on the discursive quality of political debates to the extent that on the whole material/periphery debates achieve a higher discursive quality than cultural ones.

While this hypothesis compares the two debate types on the aggregate level *in toto*, it is equally plausible to assume that should be able to find at least some of these differences when comparing the debates by decade. This approach has the advantage that it allows us to incorporate again a developmental perspective, though this time we do not trace the transformations within each debate type, but across the debates, in other words we reconstruct the changes in their differences.

H_{2a}: Cleavage structure and public sphere type have a significant effect on the discursive quality of political debates to the extent that material/periphery debates achieve a higher discursive quality than cultural/centre ones in each decade.

The two hypotheses suggest a different statistical approach than we have taken in the previous section as they focus on the differences between the debate types. Because of this (stepwise) synchronic nature of the comparison, we will analyse the hypotheses by means of a t-test. In the following we will first present the statistical model in more detail (section

3.1.) and then move on to the analysis of the first hypothesis about the aggregate comparison (section 3.2.), before coming to the more detailed, stepwise comparison of the debates per decade (section 3.3.).

3.1. Analysing cleavage structure: the statistical model

The analysis of variance is strictly speaking not a specific statistical procedure but a family of related statistical approaches. It its simplest form as it is employed here, an ANOVA measures the difference of the means of two groups and performs an F-test to examine whether the differences are statistically significant. More exactly the F-test calculates the level of significance for the ratio of the variance between the two groups (material and cultural in our case), divided by the variance within the groups. The ANOVA thus compares the variance of means between the two groups to the variance of means within the groups and determines whether it is significant, i.e. whether the differences we observed already in the first part of the empirical analysis are more than occurrences by chance (cf. Steiner et al. 2004, Bächtiger 2005, Steenbergen et al. 2003).

The general mathematical formula of an ANOVA is as follows:

$$Y_{ij} = \mu + \tau_i + \varepsilon_{ij}$$

Yij is the j-th observation on the i-th treatment, with j running from 1 to n, and the treatment levels i from 1 to k. The common effect is given by μ, the treatment and its effect are in turn given by τ and has 1 to k levels, the random error is given by ε_{ij} for j observations and i levels of treatment.

A disadvantage of ANOVAs is that they place higher requirements on the data structure than other statistical procedures, which is one reason why regression analysis has come to replace them in many cases. One aspect of importance in the present context is that ANOVAs are based on the assumption that the variances in the samples are equal, i.e. homogenous, which might not be fulfilled for all variables. The approach adopted here involves a change – or rather a specification – of the statistical model: because an independent sample t-test yields the same results as an ANOVA when we compare only two (sub-)samples, as in our present case, we will opt for this strategy: t-tests can be seen as a special case of the analysis of variance, and Welch's t-test in particular has the additional advantage of being robust with regard to heteroscedasticity of the variables.

3.2. Aggregate comparison of material and cultural debates

After these abstract considerations we will now turn to examine our data and use the independent sample t-test to determine whether we can find systematic differences between the two debate types. As we can see in the table below, the two debate types differ significantly from each other on all but one dimension: there is not systematic and hence

Table 26: Independent samples t-test (Welch)

		t-test for Equality of Means					
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Cohen's *d*
Reciprocity	Equal variances not assumed	-3.752	582.822	.000	-.24790	.06607	-.326
Reflexivity	Equal variances not assumed	-1.942	584.289	.053	-.11267	.05803	-.113
Perspectives	Equal variances not assumed	-2.313	586.998	.021	-.09161	.03961	-0.191
Inclusiveness	Equal variances not assumed	2.432	581.630	.015	.04470	.01838	.200
Role change	Equal variances not assumed	-2.965	551.796	.003	-.05099	.01720	-.244
Justification actors	Equal variances not assumed	-1.717	581.928	.087	-.05785	.03369	-

statistically significant difference between the values for *justification actors*, between material and cultural debates. Furthermore, the level of reflexivity is just above the .05 threshold of statistical significance, and while this dividing line is more a matter of convention and convenience, we must be aware that in this case the comparison of the means of the two groups is certainly less significant than, say, for *reciprocity*.[19] An additional Kolmogorov-Smirnov-test as a nonparametric alternative to the t-test yields a significant result for *reflexivity* and we will therefore include the variable in the further analysis, albeit with due caution.

One additional aspect we are of course interested in is the effect size of the t-test, which however is not based on the same measure we have used for model fit of the regression analyses in the first section, i.e. R-squared. A consequence of this is that we cannot compare the effect sizes of social change and debate type at their face value. Yet, as we will see, despite the distinct measures the results differ enough from one another so that a cautious interpretation should be rather unproblematic. The table above lists the most common effect measure for t-tests, Cohen's *d*, though it has to be interpreted carefully as it is based on the assumption that the variances are homogenous, which is not the case for the present analysis.[20] Cohen's *d* runs from 0.0 to 2.0 and Cohen (1988) cautiously states that effect sizes lower or equal 0.19 should be treated as small, those between 0.2 and 0.49 as medium and those above as large.[21] Most of the effects in our analysis are more or less on the threshold between small and medium, or as reciprocity comfortably within the

[19] Cowles and Davis (1982) provide a very thorough historical reconstruction on the origin of .05 level of statistical significance.

[20] The appendix therefore includes the two other most commonly used measures, Hedge's *g* and the point-biserial correlation *r*. While we cannot say that the yield identical results, they all point in the same direction (cf. appendix 11).
As regards the commonly used statistical tests to assess the homoscedasticity of variables, see Glass and Hopkins (1996) for a critical evaluation of both Levene's test of homogeneity of variances based on the deviation from the group means as well as Brown and Forsythe's alternative based on the median.

[21] Cohen rightly emphasises that the basis for the classification of statistical power tests into small, medium, and large is "an operation fraught with many dangers: The concepts are arbitrary, such qualitative concepts as 'large' are sometimes understood as absolute" (Cohen 1977: 12).

medium interval, and their values show that on the aggregate level it seems clear that the debate type has a higher explanatory power than social change. The only exception is the rather small effect reached by *reflexivity*, which again confirms our cautious interpretation of the variable and is in line with the t-test's result showing only a just about non-significant effect. An alternative interpretation of the effect sizes proposed by Cohen is to take them as a measure of non-overlap between the data of the two groups: in our case the amount of non-overlap varies between ca. 8% and more than 23% according to Cohen's scale (cf. Cohen 1977: 21ff.). In other words, the values of ca. 8% to over 20% of our data is exclusively explained by group membership, i.e. by their being either part of a material or a cultural debate. Again, this is clearly more than the regression model for social change is able to explain, though we should be aware that the two measures cannot be compared directly.

Having explored the levels of significance and the model fits for the effect of the cleavage structure on the DQI_m variables, we can now move on to our main point of interest, namely the descriptive statistics of the two debate types. The t-test has only revealed so far that the differences in the means for the single variables are significant with one exception, but we still need to know which means are higher in order to be able to answer our hypothesis. The table below gives the results for the descriptive statistics of the material and the cultural debates together, and the greyed cells in the column "mean" highlight the higher value for each variable, including *justification actors*, despite its insignificant result in the t-test. What we can see immediately when inspecting the "mean" column is that our hypothesis is contradicted by the findings which clearly falsify our assumption: in all variables but one the means are higher for the cultural debates than the material ones. The exception is *inclusiveness*, to which we will come back in more detail below, not only because this finding is interesting in its own right as it is the only variable which confirms the hypothesis, but also because it has a bearing on *role change*.

Table 27: Descriptive Statistics of material and cultural debates (total)

DQ_{lm} variables	Debate type	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Reciprocity	Material	297	.00	18.00	1.7643	2.79811
	Cultural	294	.00	28.00	2.6531	3.65333
Reflexivity	Material	297	.00	30.00	3.2222	3.28764
	Cultural	294	.00	20.00	3.8469	3.53631
Perspectives	Material	297	.00	8.00	1.7172	1.31293
	Cultural	294	.00	7.00	1.9966	1.41300
Inclusiveness	Material	297	0	4	1.39	.634
	Cultural	294	0	3	1.28	.550
Role change	Material	297	-3.00	2.00	-.1751	.79035
	Cultural	294	-2.00	2.00	-.0136	.68116
Justification actors	Material	297	.00	4.00	1.3704	.91766
	Cultural	294	.00	4.00	1.4660	.85294

What we can primarily see is that cultural issues generally fare better on the rationality dimensions: *reciprocity*, *reflexivity* as well as *perspectives* all show higher mean values in these debates than in the material ones. The results broadly mirror our findings from the first section and are at least partly in line with the descriptive part.[22] This concerns also

[22] Though it has to be added that from the point of view of the speech acts examined in the descriptive part the values of *reflexivity* should be higher in material debates. The apparent contradiction to the present results is resolved if we take a closer look at the descriptive statistics of the untransformed variable for the two debate types

inclusiveness, which is the only DQI_m indicator of the previous section to show a significant development over time in material debates and whose range here appears to be higher on average in these than in cultural issues. Unlike the values of other variables, which might be more driven by the public sphere type, *inclusiveness* is very strongly related to the cleavage in question as our previous analyses also showed that material debates involve mainly one actor who is virtually totally absent in cultural debates: the economy. As we have seen in the descriptive part, the higher inclusiveness of material debates is mainly the result of the presence of the economy, and the effect is also visible when we compare the means of the debate types. The greater inclusiveness of material debates, however, apparently does not affect the values of *role change*, which might seem counterintuitive at first. Yet, it is important to remember that *role change* measures balance between speakers and addressees, and since material debates are even more inclusive with regard to the latter dimension they produce on the whole a result which is lower than that of cultural ones.[23]

If we want to explain the differences between the two debate types, then the kind of public spheres they constitute might present the most promising approach: material issues represent debates which are initiated or strongly driven by the periphery or related interest organisations such as the unions, whereas cultural debates originate or are dominated by the centre. It helps again to take into account the descriptive analyses of the first part which have shown that the centre is the main driving force behind the rationality variables, and as it is more dominant in cultural issues, it is these debate types which show in total higher levels compared to material issues. But this is not the only driving force behind the results, for in some rationality dimensions such as reflexivity the non-centre actors, too, show higher levels in material than in cultural debates. In fact, particularly in this dimension the non-centre actors seem to compensate for the performance of the centre, which is on the whole lower in cultural than in material debates. This might in turn be caused by the different dynamics of cultural and material debates as well as the point in time at which we observe them: as at least two of the material debates develop over a longer period of time, whereas two of the cultural debates are by comparison rather brief and originate rather abruptly. We have argued before that this difference, together with the greater urgency to come to a decision we see in e.g. the Anglo-Irish Agreement as well as paradigmatically in the anti-terror legislation debate, are mainly responsible for the development of the issues and with it for their discursive quality. We could also say that they are more focused, in terms of the issue as well as in terms of the actors, which is a characteristic that is rather associated with "inside access" or "mobilisation" type public spheres, while "outside initiative" types are by definition more open – which is also why material debates are able to generate higher levels of inclusiveness compared to cultural ones.

Having discussed the findings on the aggregate level in more detail, we will now examine to what extent these differences are confirmed if we compare the two debate types stepwise by decade.

(cf. appendix 12), which shows that material debates are generally marked by a higher number of articles with no justification, and that the amount of justifications per article decreases rather quickly after the mode value of 2 is reached, whereas the values of cultural debates diminish more slowly. This is also confirmed by the skew of the distribution and visible in the histograms of the variable in the two debate types.
The frequency table in the appendix furthermore shows that the trend is the same for all actor classes with the exception of the economy, who displays higher values for the material debates.

[23] See the descriptive part.

3.3. Stepwise comparison of material and cultural debates

Our results so far have shown that the cleavage structure has a significant effect in all but one cases, that the deliberative quality is higher in cultural debates safe for *inclusiveness*, that together with this there seems to be the indication of a rationality/actor divide which mirrors the distinction between the debate types, and that on the aggregate level the effect of cleavage structure is greater than that of time, although of course such comparisons are questionable. But it is important to be able to assess at least tentatively whether the point in time or the debate type have similar effects on the discourse quality, though the direction of the effects might indeed be the more important measure, as they allow us to explain why e.g. a debate conducted more recently might still achieve lower scores on the DQI_m than one that took place several decades ago.

The next paragraphs will combine both views, the synchronic and the diachronic, by analysing in more detail how the differences between the debate types have evolved. The tables below give the figures for those variables which have yielded significant results in the t-test, and as we can see, the lack of any data for the comparison of the 1960s debates means that nuclear disarmament and the Commonwealth immigration issues are discursively too close to produce any results of statistical significance. Before we discuss the findings in more detail, the main observation is clear after only a superficial glance at the tables: the statistically significant differences between the debates develop over time, though as we will see the transformation process is not necessarily a gradual one. After a decade in

Table 28: Independent Samples Test: 1980s

		t-test for Equality of Means					Means		
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Cultural debates	Material debates	Cohen's *d*
Reciprocity	Equal variances not assumed	-3.368	138.34	.001	-.42657	.12666	1.0457	.6191	-.518
Inclusiveness	Equal variances not assumed	2.154	179.00	.033	.06553	.03042	.7765	.8420	.314
Role Change	Equal variances not assumed	-2.855	175.21	.005	-.08082	.02831	1.3906	1.3097	-.411

Table 29: Independent Samples Test: 2000s

		t-test for Equality of Means					Means		
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Cultural debates	Material debates	Cohen's *d*
Reflexivity	Equal variances not assumed	-3.148	203.593	.002	-.27285	.08666	1.5938	1.3209	-.427
Reciprocity	Equal variances not assumed	-4.303	212.799	.000	-.46392	.10782	1.2086	.7447	-.585
Perspectives	Equal variances not assumed	-3.994	206.364	.000	-.22809	.05711	1.1684	.9403	-.542
Role Change	Equal variances not assumed	-3.662	185.155	.000	-.11849	.03235	1.4086	1.2901	-.501

the 1960s which shows no distinction between the material and the cultural debate examined, the 1980s display three and the two debates of 2000 and 2005 differ from each other on four dimensions of the DQI_m. While we will discuss the comparisons of the last four debates in more detail in the next paragraph, the fact that the cultural and material debate of the 1960 and 1965 display no significant difference at all requires some explanation. For if we simply take the comparison of nuclear disarmament and Commonwealth immigration

at face value we run the risk of overgeneralising the results. We would more specifically be ignoring the fact that above all the Commonwealth immigration issue is not a typical cultural/centre driven debate, at least not in the way both the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement issue and the 2005 anti-terror legislation debate are. Here, it helps to refer to the results of the descriptive analysis which has revealed that civil society in particular, but also the economy, show comparatively high levels of discursive presence for the cultural debates, in fact in the case of the periphery the immigration issue shows the highest overall levels of participation. Although we cannot say with any certainty what effect this specific constellation has on the discourse quality of the debate and on the comparison with the nuclear disarmament issue by extension, an interpretation based on the mere juxtaposition of the two debates is likely to underestimate the differences between material and cultural debates in the 1960s.

The other decades display a picture that is more in line with our general findings on the aggregate level, though they also reveal that the development of the differences between the debates is not uniform. Perhaps the most interesting result in this respect is that inclusiveness as that variable which clearly separates material from cultural debates disappears as a distinctive criterion in the 2000s. On an interpretive note, the main reason is to be seen in the disability of the government during the anti-terror legislation debate to keep the issue as closely controlled by the centre as Thatcher was able to do during the Anglo-Irish Agreement debate, even if only initially. But in 2005, the dissent voiced by the main opposition parties as well as criticism from outside Westminster by civil society organisations as well as individual members from the periphery mean that the public sphere resembles much more a “mobilisation” model, rather than the “inside access” model which is constituted by the government’s handling of the Anglo-Irish Agreement issue.

Given the disappearance of *inclusiveness* as one of the central distinguishing characteristics between material and cultural debates, it is all the more remarkable that on the whole their distinctiveness increases even further between the 1980s and the 2000s. While *reciprocity* and *role change* remain stable elements of the comparison, in the two most recent debates *reflexivity* and *perspectives* also become significant indicators of the discursive difference between the debate types. What is more, if we take into account the mean values of the debates, the last step in the development of the material/cultural distinction shows that all variables display higher values for the cultural debates. This makes the disappearance of *inclusiveness* even more significant as it was the only discourse quality indicator to show higher levels for material debates.

Having thus explored the development of the difference between material and cultural debates more closely, we can see that the empirical data clearly falsifies our hypothesis, as the only confirmation of a higher discourse quality for material debates comes from the *inclusiveness* variable which, however, disappears as distinctive factor after the 1980s. While the differences between the debates through the decades generally confirm the trend we see on the aggregate level and can thus be related to the same explanatory factors, what is more interesting in the present context is the development of the difference as such. For here an important transformation appears to occur: while material debates generally display lower values on the DQI_m than cultural ones, the public sphere type associated with cultural issues is moving in the direction of what is more commonly associated with debates which originate in the periphery. The weakening of *inclusiveness* as a defining criterion of the cleavage type is a case in point as it shows that in this respect the difference has become so

small that material debates can no longer be distinguished from cultural ones – or in other words: cultural debates become more inclusive.[24] Cultural debates thus come to encompass the two discourse dimensions of rationality and actors which we have so far associated with the two debate types. As we have concluded in the section above on the development within the two debate types, the driving force behind this development seems to be a changing public sphere, which, although it does and cannot transform into an "outside initiative" model, takes up some of its elements and thereby moves in the direction of a more deliberative public sphere. This process does not weaken the distinction between the two debate types, quite on the contrary: the significant variables for the 2000 and 2005 debates show that the levels of Cohen's *d* range between -.427 and -.585, which is clearly higher than the values the comparison on the aggregate level yields and on average higher than the distinctions in the 1980s.[25]

3.4. Conclusion

We can summarise our main findings in one sentence: contrary to our assumptions cultural debates perform much better than material ones, not only on the aggregate level but most of the time also individually by decade.[26] Centre driven public spheres thus seem to conform more to the deliberative model, thereby clearly contradicting our theoretical account which locates the deliberative potential in issues that originate at the periphery. Yet, apart from the fact that our results again confirm that "inside access" and "mobilisation" models remain under-theorised in the deliberative account of the political process, some qualifications have to be made. First, as we have repeatedly said, we must be aware that we are our analyses concentrate on the end of political debates which at least in the case of some of the material issues have been going on for quite some time, and it could be the case that towards the end material debates simply perform poorer in terms of discursive quality. Second, another characteristic of material debates and "outside initiative" public spheres by extension lies in the fact that they are more flexible, malleable, but also less focused and therefore rarely display the same actor structure. Cultural debates by contrast are dominated by the centre which leads to more discursive regularities than in material debates, and which also has an effect on the rationality dimension.

That being said, there is an important distinction we have to make: the changes we see taking place in the development of the two debate types and more important the differences that arise between them are not so much due to the cleavage structure, which remains intact, but to the transformation of the public sphere – in particular with regard to the centre driven type. The development we see in some of the discursive dimensions in the cultural debates shows a public sphere in flux, describing a movement that essentially points away from the dominance and control of the centre. The one debate which epitomises the trend most clearly is perhaps the Anglo-Irish Agreement, where part of the opposition in the centre but also members from civil society contest not only the decision taken, but the

[24] This is indeed the case if we compare the levels of inclusiveness for the different debates (cf. appendix 13). The emergence of *role change* as a significant distinction between material and cultural debates is partly related to this development as the variable integrates the inclusiveness of the speakers and of the addressees, though here it is also the addressees which see a more restrained increase through time. Given that in the descriptive part we have seen that the addressees are those actors deemed relevant and responsible in the debates, their more modest development in cultural debates supports the interpretation above that this debate type and the public sphere which is constituted by it is more focused than material/periphery driven issues.
[25] In terms of non-overlap the effect size of the stepwise comparison varies between 21% and ca. 37%.
[26] True, the 1960s show no difference between cultural and material debates, but this can hardly be taken as evidence in support of the hypothesis.

very procedure which leads up to it, i.e. the kind of public sphere itself. We have thus a situation where on the one hand those debates that conform more closely to the theoretical ideal of a deliberative public sphere are less deliberative than those which seem to represent rather non-deliberative modes of conflict resolution and whose legitimacy therefore appears to be rather low. Surprisingly, however, it is exactly these debates which display a significantly higher discourse quality on the aggregate level as well as in their development.

This has further consequences, for more than in material debates, or at least more visibly than in material debates, the political conflict in cultural debates thus is always conducted on two levels: on the level of the topic on the one hand and on the level of the appropriateness of the public sphere type on the other.[27] Yet, because the transformation process is driven by the development of the public sphere rather than by the cleavage structure itself, the increase in, say, *inclusiveness* is not something that is an inherent property of the cleavages, rather it is something that is permanently negotiated and gradually achieved in and through the public sphere, in this case by the periphery. This also means that political debates in general seem to undergo a transformation towards greater recognition, above all of non-centre actors. And the question of course is how their presence relates to the discursive quality of the debates. The next section will therefore examine more closely the effect of the actor classes and actor constellations on the different indicators of the DQI_m.

4. Friends and foes: Actor classes, coalitions and discourse quality

As we have seen, political debates evolve through time and are recursively affected by the public sphere which they constitute. More basically than this, however, we would probably say that it is not the debates themselves which constitute the public discursive space, but rather the actors, and hence it is important to examine the role they play. Above all, civil society plays a crucial role for deliberative democracy, as it the social originator of an autonomous public sphere and that place within society where democracy's deliberative potential, free from being subjected to systemic codes, resides, which is in turn fed into the public sphere to legitimise political decisions and rationalise political power.

These considerations have led us to assume that the presence of civil society is positively related to the discursive quality of political debates. And thus we assume:

H_{3a}: Irrespective of time and cleavage structure, civil society has a beneficial effect on the discourse quality of the debates.

Staying within our theoretical framework, we would also assume that if civil society has a positive effect on political debates because autonomous public spheres take its origin from it, then the influence of other actors must be perceived as rather critical, particularly that of the centre and of the economic actors, although the role of the latter one might best be

[27] This empirical result echoes Habermas' statement that the public sphere "continually thematizes itself as it operates for the existential presuppositions of a nonorganizable practice can be secured only by this practice itself" (Habermas 1996: 486).

characterised as ambivalent. Yet, the centre in particular can be seen as being responsible for the emergence of power-ridden public spheres which generate political decisions truncated in their democratic, i.e. deliberative, legitimacy; and to some extent the same can be applied to economic actors through their being representatives of a subsystem governed by a non-linguistic code. Here, we thus assume:

H_{3b}: Irrespective of time and cleavage structure, economic actors and the political-administrative system have a detrimental effect on the discourse quality of the debates.

Finally, due to their complex role the media should have a positive effect on the discursive quality of the debates. For although the public sphere is dominated by the mass media and as economic organisations they partly belong to the economy, their dual role as discourse providers and participants in which they integrate and comment on political events and actions of the main protagonists should lead to higher levels of deliberative quality. In *Structural Transformation* Habermas allocates to them an ambivalent role and with it an emancipatory as well as a repressive potential. In *Between Facts and Norms* he speaks of media power as a new source of influence in the political process, which refers mainly to the selection processes by the media, but equally relies on their role as mandatries of an enlightened public sphere. We therefore assume:

H_{3c}: Irrespective of time and cleavage structure, the media have a beneficial effect on the discourse quality of the debates.

Additionally, examining actor classes on their own might be a first step in assessing the relationship between actors and discourses, but as discourses are (ideally) carried by the exchange of points of view, arguments, and positions, it seems reasonable to extend our perspective of actors towards a more intersubjective conception of their role in political debates. This means that we assume actor constellations to have an effect on the debates, and we mainly understand these constellations to be explicit or implicit discourse coalitions. Such coalitions can take the form of mutual support, or of demands or criticism one or more parties articulate vis-à-vis a third party. The concept of discursive coalitions has the advantage that it does not have to rely on formal accords and agreements made between actors, but is more in line with our conception of the public sphere: coalitions emerge out of different actors' common discursive engagement with a political issue and are thus more flexible as they cut across actor classes, though they are also more fleeting as they are merely discursive cooperation.

We will examine three such coalition types: support/agreement, demands, and criticism. Agreement/support can be seen as some sort of small intermediary forms of consensus and we thus would expect these forms have a more positive effect on the debates than demands or criticism, which in turn display stages of open and unsettled political conflict.

H_{3d}: Irrespective of time and cleavage structure, the beneficial effect on the discourse quality of speech acts couched in terms of agreement is higher than those which assert demands or voice criticism.

In the following, we will first examine the contribution of the single actor classes (section 4.1.) before moving on to the more complex constellations (section 4.2.). We will thereby only concentrate only on those results which are statistically significant. Furthermore, the coalition models will only focus on the most prominent constellations based on the dialogic relationships of the actors.[28] Prominent in this case means that the coalition should ideally refer to a common addressee in at least 5% of the utterances in a debate.[29]

4.1. The effect of single actor classes on the DQI_m

In this section we will examine the effect of the discursive presence of the actor classes across the debates. Table 30 below gives in a compact form the core values of the regression models for the single actor classes, listing the slope, the level of significance, and the model fit for the single equations.[30] The first thing to note is the absence of the economic actors: none of the regression models yielded a significant relationship. This is something we might have expected to some degree economic actors only participate in material debates almost exclusively, or put the other way round: material debates are defined by the presence of economic actors. Given further that regression models try to fit a straight line between the single DQI_m variables on the one hand and the discursive presence of the actor classes on the other, it is of little wonder that the economic actors cannot make any significant contribution as they take part in only half of the debates. The second general impression we get is something of a discursive division of labour between the centre, the media, and civil society. On the whole it seems that the political-administrative centre makes its most substantial contributions in relation to the rationality variables of the DQI_m, whereas civil

[28] The corresponding frequency tables can be found in appendix 14.
[29] This is to be taken as a rule of thumb rather than a strict guideline as it is not always the fulfilled for all the coalitions.
[30] The detailed regression models can be found in appendix 15.

society's influence is more substantial with the actor variables.[31] The media in turn once again confirm their integrating function, here on a different level, in that they bridge the rationality and the actor dimensions of the debates.

Table 30: Actor class effect on deliberative quality

	Civil society			Media			Centre		
DQI_m	B	Sig.	Mltpl. R squared	B	Sig.	Mltpl. R squared	B	Sig.	Mltpl. R squared
Reciprocity	-	-	-	-	-	-	.434	<2E-16	.239
Full model	-	-	-	-	-	-	.106	.008	.424
Reflexivity	.057	.322	.002	.336	2.08E-12	.084	.306	<2E-16	.160
Full model	.104	.019	.453	.24	9.66E-11	.487	.307	<2E-16	.45
Perspectives	.066	.099	.005	.228	3.86E-11	.079	.195	<2E-16	.140
Full model	.106	.003	.407	.166	7.1E-10	.436	.191	<2E-16	.142
Inclusiveness	.088	4.78E-5	.034	.071	.0002	.03	-	-	-
Full model	.20	<2E-16	.218	.073	1.28E-05	.108	-	-	-
Role change	.039	.011	.013	.043	.0046	.017	-	-	-
Full model	.051	.006	.021	.047	.003	.03	-	-	-

The wle.lm function was used as it yielded more conservative results.

The centre's presence affects their discursive quality of the debates most strongly as can be seen from the model fit which shows that the degree of participation of the centre in the debates explains between 14% and ca. 24% of the variation in the data. This finding confirms the results of the descriptive analysis where we have found that the centre is the most dominant actor in the debates, particularly in cultural ones, and the trend carries over into the overall assessment of the centre's performance. That is, because the political-administrative centre is the most dominant actor by some distance, it accounts for instance for more than 80% of the speech acts in the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985, it is only to be expected that it is able to explain more of the variation in the data than the other actor classes. In addition to this, the regression coefficients show that the influence on *reciprocity*, *reflexivity*, and *perspectives* is substantial as the values for B vary between .106 and .307 in the full model, and between .195 and .434 in the restricted model, respectively. Reciprocity in particular confirms the centre's position at the very heart of the debates as it is the only actor who shows any significant relationship on this variable. Most of the utterances of the other actor classes are directed towards the centre, including the opposition within the centre itself, and they hold the centre to account by taking up its discursive output, as we will also see further below we discussing the effects of the discourse coalitions. This seems to go hand in hand with equally positive and high values for reflexivity and perspectives: on the one hand different points of view are carried into the centre or generated by the centre itself, on the other the centre's position at the heart of the political process means that it is constantly under pressure to legitimate its actions, to generate understanding for them, and to do so vis-à-vis other centre actors as well as other subsystems of society, which on the whole creates an necessity for a higher amount of justifications. Finally, however, we can also see the reverse side of the centre's dominance which is given by its lack of influence on

[31] The centre's values for *reflexivity* and *perspectives* in the full model yielded a negative sign for the slope, and the changing of signs between the restricted and the full model could be caused by multicollinearity between some of the independent variables in the full model, i.e. a high amount of correlation. Although the collinearity diagnostics revealed no critical results, a factor analysis of the explanatory variables showed a high correlation between the discursive presence of the centre actors and the length of the article. A possible solution to this would be to use a ridge regression model, which stabilises the coefficient, though they can then no longer be said to be unbiased. While this can be accommodated in a Bayesian framework which interprets the bias as additional assumptions, it would be more problematic in our case, not least because we would change the main model of analysis. In our case the simplest solution is to respecify the model, i.e. to examine the independent variables for high correlations and exclude the cause of it, i.e. *article length* (cf. Fox 2008). In both full models, those with and without *article length*, the centre's presence is statistically significant, but the results reported in the table are those of the model which excludes the problematic independent variable.

the actor variables, which shows again that inclusiveness as a form of recognition is not so much something that it granted but something that members from other actor classes negotiate and for which they struggle.[32]

The media display statistically significant relationships with the deliberative quality of the debates in four cases, but it does not extend to *justification actors* and *reciprocity*. Particularly the latter variable deserves a closer examination as we could plausibly assume that the integrating and commenting functions the media display in their role as discourse providers and participants should be accompanied by a corresponding degree of dialogic orientation. One reason for the apparent discrepancy in the media's performance is given by the fact that their contributions to the debates are often of a different kind than those of the other actors: commentaries, leading articles, etc. develop an argument over a whole article, whereas other actors' position are concentrated in their single statements. A consequence of this is that when it comes to coding the articles and the actors' contributions, the media's reciprocal orientation is affected by their distinct form of communication, i.e. their dialogic orientation is either lost in the complexity of their arguments or it does not go beyond very general references which are not coded. Apart from this, they occupy a truly intermediary position in the debates as can be seen in their discursive performance: they combine both rationality and actor dimensions, and have throughout a beneficial effect on the discourse quality. The media's model fit is lower than that of the centre and ranges between 1.7% and 8.4%, but their relationship to the data is equally strong, which is evidenced by the slopes. Contrary to the centre, however, the media contribute substantially to the discursive integration of the debates as they also show positive values for *inclusiveness* and *role change*. We could also say that whereas the centre is the institutional locus of the integration of different points of view, provided by the principle of representation, the media are the discursive instance of integration, which they actively promote as mandataries, i.e. what Dryzek and Niemeyer call "discursive representatives", but to which they significantly also contribute through incorporating different actors from different classes, whereby they increase the levels of participation.

Civil society in turn can be said to display mainly an orientation towards the actor variables. True, the relationships between the presence of the periphery and *reflexivity* as well as *perspectives* are also significant, but the R-squared values are on such a low level that the models do not even explain 1% in the data's variation; they are thus on the whole negligible. This leaves us with *inclusiveness* and *role change* as the two variables where the presence of civil society leads to small but significant increases; the slopes and the model fit are almost identical to those of the media. The generally low model fit is primarily explained by the periphery's marginal presence in the debates compared to that of the centre; it is therefore all the more relevant for our interpretation that the participation of actors from civil society in the debates yields significant and positive results. Civil society's presence thus mainly contributes to expanding the spectrum of actors in the public sphere and thus quite generally the communicative repertoire of the debates. It also contributes to increasing levels of reflexivity and ranges of perspectives, though the modest values indicate that the influence is rather selective than continuous, which is confirmed e.g. by the analyses in the

[32] We also see in this context that *justification actors* is a variable that lies conceptually between the actor and the rationality variables: it is measured according to the actor variables but it captures a reasoning dimension, namely the extent to which other actors are included in the arguments. This is why sometimes it follows the trend of the rationality variables as is the case for the centre's performance in the cultural debates where it in line with *perspectives*. Here, in turn it is more closely connected to the actor variables.

descriptive part of the centre's dialogic orientation towards the non-centre actors in general. The results for the presence of civil society thus tie in nicely with our theoretical account, which defines the periphery as the locus of democracy's emancipatory potential, but is equally aware that its impulses have a rather modest and certainly indirect effect on the system as a whole, which, however, are significant.

We can now evaluate our first set of hypotheses about the effect of the presence of specific actor classes. While the economic actors' relationship to the data is generally non-significant, the discursive presence of all the other actor classes has a positive effect on the discourse quality of the debates. The centre's presence has the highest effect, though it is restricted to the rationality dimension of the DQI_m, while both civil society and the media affect the discursive quality of the debates in moderate to only modest degrees, but in turn cover both dimensions of the index, above all the media. On the whole, the hypotheses H_{3a-c} can be verified, though we need to take a couple of additional points into consideration.

As stated above, there seems to be a division of labour between civil society, the media, and the centre. From this point of view it is not the centre's primary task to organise the inclusiveness of the public sphere – apart from formal-legal elements which allow and work towards the public sphere's greater permeability. Our results show that deliberative politics is not only "internally connected with contexts of a rationalized lifeworld that meets it halfway" (Habermas 1996: 301), the centre of the political process is empirically connected to a civil society that meets its *discursive* requirements halfway. In our context this means that the centre should mainly be assessed on the grounds of its performance on the rationality dimensions of the DQI_m, and here we can see that the contribution of its presence is both substantial and positive. We must be aware, however, that the centre's performance is potentially problematic for the political process and the public sphere it constitutes as the more dominant the centre becomes, the less inclusive the public sphere is – although there is no significant negative relationship between the centre's presence and the actor variables of the DQI_m. We could define such cases as instances of closure, and they occur mainly in two scenarios: first, in "inside access" public sphere models the centre generally holds a dominant position as we have seen when examining the Anglo-Irish Agreement issue. Second, within political debates the centre becomes naturally more dominant towards the end when decisions are taken, which is that part we are investigating. The difference between the two instances is that the closure is of a discursive nature in the first case, caused by the public sphere type, whereas it is institutional in the second one and relates to the (temporary) conclusion of the political process; though, of course, both instances can and do indeed intersect as our analyses have shown. Generally, instances of closure are thus marked by systematic distortions in the discursive process. And while this is intentionally so in the case of the institutional conclusion of political debates, it is potentially more problematic if it extends to the organisation of the public sphere as a whole. For here the higher rationality of the centre belies the fact that the political process very centrally fails to fulfil its central task, namely the political will formation through the discursive exchange with other parts of society. The centre in these instances risks of becoming uncoupled from a society to whose interests and needs it should remain responsive. The Anglo-Irish Agreement issue, in particular the backlash that the Conservative government experienced from the unionist parties and large parts of civil

society in Northern Ireland, and perhaps even more than this Margret Thatcher's astonishment in view of the intensity of the reactions are telling examples in this respect.

The assessment of the media is much more straightforward as they affect the deliberative quality of the debates positively and to a substantial degree. Their results support our interpretation of the first part that they act both as discourse providers and as participants, and the complexity resulting from their dual role is evidenced by the fact that their discursive presence shows a significant relationship with the DQI_m on all but one variable. Contrary to the centre, their presence is neither indicative of nor conducive to discursive closures – quite on the contrary, almost all of the significant actor indicators point in the direction of an expanding the public sphere.

Civil society's discursive presence is by contrast almost complementary to that of the centre and reinforces the picture of a division of labour as its most substantial contributions (in terms of R-squared) occur on the actor variables, particularly *inclusiveness* and *role change*, i.e. precisely in that dimension where the centre achieves only non-significant relationships. This is in line with civil society's role in deliberative theory: although on a very modest level the presence of periphery works towards increasing the range of perspectives, actors from the periphery thus succeed in articulating the wishes, needs, demands, support and criticism and in this way increase the inclusiveness of the public sphere. It is equally important to see that civil society is always the explicit or latent interlocutor of the centre, although and the condition of the public sphere also depends on the degree to which the periphery's contributions succeed at spilling over into the political process. Moreover, as Habermas (1996: 302) writes, "deliberative politics is internally connected with contexts of a rationalized lifeworld that meets it halfway", which is also reflected in the distinctive deliberative profiles of the centre as the political system on the one hand and civil society as the locus of social and communicative integration and democratic emancipation on the other. The periphery's modest and at best selective influence on the debates and the political process confirms empirically deliberative theory's assertion that civil society cannot exert direct control over the political system: "[c]ivil society can directly transform only itself, and it can have at most an indirect effect on the self-transformation of the political system; generally, it has an influence only on the personnel and programming of this system. But in no way does it occupy the position of a macrosubject supposed to bring society as a whole under control and simultaneously act for it" (Habermas 1996: 372).

Deliberative theory, however, also draws our attention to the fact that it is not so much single actors or actor classes where legitimacy or sovereignty resides, rather it is to be found in the deliberative process itself. To take the deliberative model seriously thus also means to move further in the direction of communicative reason as the effect of actors mutual orientations, i.e. we will take into account the intersubjective dimension of the debates more closely. From this view, the guiding question is which of the intersubjective relationships established and negotiated by the actors in the debates has the greatest effect on the deliberative quality: mutual support, demands, or criticism. Each of these relationships established cuts across the actor classes and we will examine them one after the other in the remainder of this section.

4.2. The effect of discourse coalitions

Perhaps the main difference between a coalition in the common sense of the term and what we have defined as discourse coalitions is that these actor constellations do not require any formal accords or arrangements between the partners. For our purposes a discourse coalition exists whenever actor A and actor B establish the same discursive relationship towards actor C, e.g. when A supports the argument of C and B is also found to back C's position. As there are numerous possible coalitions which are generated by this definition, we will concentrate on those which from the point of the illocution are the most important ones, and additionally restrict these to the analysis of those which are most pronounced in the debates. More precisely, we will thus examine more closely the effect on the DQI_m by the discursive relationships established through support, demands, and criticism within those coalitions which appear more regularly in the debates: support, demands towards, and criticism of the centre, demands towards and criticism of the economy, and criticism of civil society. We will take the illocutions as the guiding criterion for the presentation of the results, starting with the support coalition (section 4.2.1.), and then moving on to the demand coalitions (section 4.2.2.) and the criticism coalitions (section 4.2.3.).[33]

4.2.1. Support coalition of the centre

In line with the other tables presented in this section, this too gives the most important results in a compact form. One thing becomes immediately apparent: the support coalition of the centre shows a significant relationship with the discursive quality of the debates only in one instance: *reciprocity*. And the result in itself already points to another, more central conclusion, if we anticipate the findings for the other coalitions for a moment: namely that contrary to our hypothesis the support constellation does not show the highest levels of discourse quality. As we will also see further below, all the coalitions that have the centre as

Table 31: Support coalition of the centre

	Centre support		
DQI_m	B	Sig.	Mltpl. R squared
Reciprocity	.712	<2E-16	.142
Full model	.183	.008	.420

their addressee yield significant values for *reciprocity*. This is not entirely surprising as the centre is not only the addressee, but to a substantial part also the speaker, and as we have seen further above, the centre's relationship to the debates is set apart from that of the other actor classes by its values for *reciprocity*. In the present case we can see that this relationship is equally significant, the direction is substantially positive even in the full model, and accounts on the whole for more than 14% of variation in the data.

If our explanation for the centre coalitions' results is based on the fact that the centre itself marks a strong presence as speaker, then the obvious question – again in relation to the results of the section above – must be why we do not find any significant relationship between the support coalition and reflexivity or perspectives, which showed significant levels in the regression of the centre on the DQI_m. Here, the answer is not to found in the internal actors' structure of the speakers in the discourse coalition, but by the argumentative context of the illocution. As we will again be able to confirm with our results for the other

[33] The detailed regression models can be found in appendix 16.

two illocutions and the corresponding coalitions, instances of support and agreement carry a smaller burden of or debt for justification than demands or criticism. This is so because speakers mostly refer to an utterance of another actor who in turn has already given a justification for his or her validity claim. The need for the coalition speaker to give a reason for his or her support only arises if the support as such is unexpected, e.g. if a Labour MP supports the demand of a Tory MP, if the speaker thinks it is important to reiterate the reasons already given by another speaker, or if there are additional reasons to be mentioned in support of some other actors' stance. But very often actor A and actor B come from the same "camp", they share a political context and identity, and the support in these cases simply signals solidarity and resonance of the reasons that were already mentioned. During the unilateral disarmament debate in 1960 for instance, a delegate at the conference of the USDAW (Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers) took up the point made by another delegate "and went farther, saying that the people of Britain would not support any government which pursued a policy which would leave Britain defenceless. Any party with such a policy that would leave the country defenceless, naked, or impotent was bound for disaster" (*The Times* 05.05.60). Here, the speaker supports a position uttered by another speaker, but gives additional reasons which he thinks are important as they highlight additional and different reasons for the same position. In contrast, in the same the debate we learn that the Earl of Swinton "welcomed the courageous repudiation which Mr. Gaitskell had given to such a proposal" of unilateral disarmament (*The Times* 04.05.60), where no further justification is given for the expressed opinion. From a formalistic point of view of the deliberative process we could also say that typically, agreement comes at the end of debates, when reasons for and against a course of action have been given and weighed against each other and the dispute is resolved or settled by a decision. Therefore, it is only natural that we find less reasons in those instances where actors agree with each other – and by consequence we obviously also find no significant enlargement of the range of reasons.

As regards the actor dimensions of the DQI_m, the frequency tables of the discourse coalitions in the appendix show on the one hand that the centre's orientation towards itself is more dominant than in the other coalitions, but that more important the actors from other classes show only little support of or agreement with the centre, with the exception of the media to some extent. Yet, this is on the whole too little to lead to a substantial and hence statistically significant increase in *inclusiveness* or any of the other actor variables. We can additionally also think of a functional explanation for this: as support signals mostly solidarity of actors sharing a common political identity, it is mostly to be found among members of the political centre rather than between members belonging to different actor classes. The media are the exception here, though their support is less a symbol of solidarity than to be seen as an instance of deliberative orientation: in the complex discursive structures that political debates are, it is important to keep the overview, which the media accomplish not only through the presentation of facts but also in the role as participant through developing a stance of their own. As regards the centre, however, we can see that support has only a limited deliberative value, given that its role is not to ponder or probe different aspects of contradicting positions, but consists mostly in fulfilling what Erving Goffman has called "face-work", which in this context amounts to supporting the other's public display of the self (cf. Goffman 1967, Brown & Levinson 1987, Watts 2003).

4.2.2. Demand coalitions towards the centre and towards the economy

The demand coalitions which have the economy or the centre as their addressees differ very basically from the centre's support coalition in that each of them shows significant relationships with two of the six DQI_m variables, *reciprocity* and *role change* for the centre as

Table 32: Demand coalitions of the centre and the economy

	Centre			Economy		
DQI_m	B	Sig.	Mltpl. R squared	B	Sig.	Mltpl. R squared
Reciprocity	.340	8.39E-10	.065	-	-	-
Full model	.330	2.33E-09	.423	-	-	-
Inclusiveness	-	-	-	.105	.007	.015
Full model	-	-	-	.078	.028	.064
Role change[a]	-.021	.090	.006	-	-	-
Full model	-0.037	.011	.023	-0.121	.0003	.038

The wle.lm function was used as it yielded more conservative results.
[a] The restricted model did not converge on any of the robust regression functions used for the economy's discourse coalition.

well as *inclusiveness* and *role change* for the economy (see table 32 above).[34] Before we examine in more detail *reciprocity* and *inclusiveness*, there is a more general remark to be made about the values for *role change*. The negative values for the regression coefficients do not necessarily give raise to a critical interpretation. It is important to remember that *role change* is calculated by subtracting the range of addressees from the range of speakers; a negative slope thus indicates that the range of addressees grows more rapidly than the range of speakers. As our unit of analysis is the article, the interpretation is that in articles where demands are made towards either the centre or the economy, they are not the only objects of the debate. Quite on the contrary, apparently actors from other classes are addressed as well given that their inclusiveness is higher than that of the speakers, and while we cannot say anything in more detail about the concrete discursive relationships between them, the fact in itself suggests that a real role change takes place. And it suggests furthermore that demands are never discussed only with regard to one actor, but always in a broader discursive context.

As far as the centre is concerned, the frequency tables in the appendix show that it marks the lowest presence as speaker in this coalition compared to its position in support and – as we will see below – criticism coalitions. The weaker position, however, has no negative effect on *reciprocity*, although we have found in the descriptive part that the centre is its own preferred interlocutor and we might therefore have expected either a non-significant relationship of the demand coalition and *reciprocity* or possibly even a negative one. But as we move away from the examination of single actor classes towards the discursive relationships they establish together, we also become more aware of their deliberative import, which in this case compensates for the centre's lower presence. It is important to note, however, that the discursive relationship established between the demand coalition and *reciprocity* is of a different nature than that we have discussed above in the context of

[34] *Reciprocity* showed a change in the sign for the regression coefficient in the full model which was therefore respecified without the article length as covariate.

the support coalition. Again, the key to shape out the differences and arrive at a better understanding is to analyse the argumentative context more closely. We have to remember

Table 33: Relationship between reciprocity and illocutions

		Illocution			
		Support	Demand	Criticism	Total
	No reciprocity	56.5%	81.6%	57.6%	68.0%
	Reciprocity	44.5%	18.4%	42.4%	32.0%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

that all our variables in the inferential part are measured on the level of the article, but it is on the level of the speech acts where the distinctive argumentative roles of support and demands become apparent as the table above shows. For here we can see that *reciprocity* is part of the support speech act itself in 44.5% of the cases, but only 18.4% of the speech acts couched in terms of demands. Support and agreement are often uttered in reaction to another actor's utterance, but not demands. If in the latter case we nevertheless see an increase in *reciprocity* to occur on the level of the article it is therefore to be interpreted as reactions to the demands themselves. And because in these articles the centre is not only the addressee but also the speaker, this can be taken as indirect, albeit weak, evidence of the centre's responsiveness. Our line of argument can be improved if we run a regression of the demand coalition on the centre's presence to see if an increase in the demands towards the centre results in a stronger presence of the centre as speaker. As we can see in the table below, the corresponding regression model yields a positive regression coefficient which is highly significant in the full model, and a model fit for the restricted regression of .1745.

Table 34: Regression of centre coalition on centre presence

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
Centre coalition	.627	.057	11.02	< 2E-16	.175	.837	574.7
(full model)	.589	.056	10.508	< 2E-16	.204	.822	582.4

.

Given that we have additionally established in the section above on the effect of the presence of single actor classes that the centre's position leads to an increase in reciprocity, we have thus good reason to believe that part of the increase in reciprocity caused by the demand coalition can indeed be ascribed to the centre's responsiveness.

Our findings, however, also point to a more basic relationship between deliberative quality and the different coalition types to which we have already referred in our proceduralist interpretation of the role of agreement in the debates and which has further gained plausibility through the current analyses. It might be the case that political conflict and its resolution move through three distinct phases: first, there is criticism of the status quo, then demands to change the current situation are made, and finally – and ideally – the parties involved reach an agreement. If this line of reasoning is only marginally applicable in the context of our debates, then we would expect most of *reflexivity* and *reciprocity*, as well as the highest amount of *perspectives* to occur during the first stage: in contrast to support and agreement, and even more than in the context of demands, criticism would indeed incur a higher burden of justification. This would in turn explain the non-significant results of the support and demand coalitions on some of the rationality variables of the DQI_m. Our

argument therefore hinges on the discursive performance of the criticism coalition, at least as far as the centre is concerned, to which we will come below.

As regards the economy as addressee of the demand coalition we can see that the debate is structured differently, for here the increase in the coalition leads to more *inclusiveness*. This is mainly the result of the different status of economic and centre actors in the political process: from a procedural point of view economic actors are intermediaries in the political process, whereas the centre always also is the final deciding institution. As a consequence of this, members of the economy are often addressed by other economic actors, e.g. unions are addressed by other unions as well as by trade or employers' associations, but they are certainly always also addressed by the centre as the ultimate regulative institution. The centre in turn is its own main interlocutor as we have seen and therefore an increase in its presence as addressee of a coalition does not lead to a higher amount of inclusiveness. In contrast to this coalitions directed towards the economy by their very nature are predisposed to involve more actors than centre coalitions, i.e. at least the other economic actors and the centre. Furthermore, the general difference between centre coalitions, including the support coalition examined above, and the economy coalitions is to be seen in the fact that centre coalitions involve at least one rationality dimension of the DQI_m, while the economy coalition shows significant relationships only with the actor variables, which mirrors the findings from the section above about the effect of the presence of the single actor classes as far as the centre is concerned. We will now examine whether the trend further holds when we turn to those discourse coalitions which are based on the criticism of a common addressee.

4.2.3. Criticism coalition towards centre, economy, and civil society

The first thing to note here is that the criticism coalitions are the only actor constellations to involve civil society as an addressee. As far as the centre is concerned we can see that the

Table 35: Criticism coalitions of the centre, economy, and civil society

	Centre			Economy			Civil society		
DQI_m	B	Sig.	Mltpl. R squared	B	Sig.	Mltpl. R squared	B	Sig.	Mltpl. R squared
Reciprocity	.635	<2E-16	.280						
Full model	.252	6.71E-07	.433						
Reflexivity	.585	<2E-16	.323				.272	.013	.011
Full model	.263	4.44E-10	.478				.309	.0002	.460
Perspectives	.372	<2E-16	.283	.203	.001	.019	.261	.002	.019
Full model	.165	5.56E-08	.424	.123	.016	.404	.267	1.22E-05	.364
Inclusiveness[a]	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Full model	-	-	-	.123	.0001	.100	.178	3.71E-06	.203
Role change	.032	.004	.017						
Full model	.043	.003	.026						

The wle.lm function was used as it yielded more conservative results.
[a] The model did not converge for the simple robust regression of the economy and the civil society coalitions on the functions used.

criticism coalition is even more relevant for the debate's discourse quality compared to the demand coalition just examined as it establishes statistically significant relationships with regard to four of the six DQI_m variables. The economy coalition in turn shows significant results for *inclusiveness* as well as for *perspectives* but not for *role change*. The most substantial differences to the evaluation of the effect of the single actor classes' presence in the section above is on the one hand the absence of the media as the addressee of a

discourse coalition. On the other, the results of this section show that the division of labour we have analysed above disappears once we move from the effect of the single actor classes as speakers to discourse coalitions. Certainly, the centre coalition is still marked by a greater emphasis on the rationality variables, but the economy coalition in turn is balanced between the two, and the coalition surrounding civil society as an addressee is inclined towards the rationality rather than the actor side.

If we examine the results more closely according to the single coalitions, we can see that in the case of the centre the model explains between 28% and 32.2% of variation in the rationality variables of the debates, which is a substantial amount and considerably higher than the values of the other coalitions. The findings are again primarily explained by the centre's dominance in the debates, both as speaker and as addressee – which also explains why the model fit for *role change* in rather moderate as the centre's dominance here impedes active change between speakers and hearers. Yet, the positive sign for the slope indicates that the criticism of the centre contributes to an increase in the range of speakers, even if the coalition shows no significant relationship with *inclusiveness* itself. In contrast to this the significant and substantial values for *reciprocity*, *reflexivity*, and the range of *perspectives* is something we have already anticipated and thus confirms the suggestion that rationality variables are most strongly affected by criticism.

In the economy coalition, too, the economy itself is the most dominant actor just as the centre in the centre coalitions, but not to the same degree (cf. appendix). And it is precisely because of the comparatively more even distribution of speakers that this coalition shows a positive and significant relationship with *inclusiveness*. Yet, contrary to the demands coalition of the economy analysed above, the criticism coalition also has a positive effect on *perspectives*, which in general means that the disagreement uttered towards the economy leads to a broadening of the range of actors as well as the range of reasons. Again, this finding further supports our argument that of all the illocution based coalitions examined, criticism has the greatest effect on the rationality dimension of the DQI_m.

The common criticism of civil society results in the same discursive profile as that of the economy, with the important difference that is also displays a significant relationship with *reflexivity*. And although on the whole the model fit is as expected lower than that of the centre coalition, the slopes of the variables indicate a substantial contribution of civil society's coalition to discourse quality.

We can now assess the last hypothesis of this section which states that the effect of support coalitions on the discourse quality of the debates is higher than that of demand and criticism coalitions. As has become already clear when examining the support coalition, the hypothesis has to be rejected unreservedly. More than this, it appears that the opposite relationship is true, and we can additionally rank the different coalitions types according to their contributions to the discourse quality: the criticism coalitions perform better with regard to the number of coalitions it generates (centre, economy, and civil society), the number of DQI_m variables it affects as well as the size and the direction of the effects. The demand coalitions by contrast extend only to two classes, the centre and the economy, and

involve fewer variables. The support coalition, finally, shows only significant results for the centre coalition's relationship with *reciprocity*.

We have also discussed some of the reasons that might be responsible for this result: first of all, size matters so to speak, namely with regard to two different dimensions: the total proportion of the different illocutions on the one hand and the presence of the various coalitions on the other. Those actors which command a higher presence in the debates as well as those illocutions which occur more frequently contribute more strongly to the relationship between the coalition and the discourse quality indicators. Yet, while the relationship is rather straightforward with regard to the discourse coalitions as the centre is by far the most dominant actor both as speaker and as hearer, the issue is more complex for the illocutions as here two of them are almost on a par as we can see in the table below.

Table 36: Frequency of illocution types (total)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Illocution	Statement	584	19.4	19.4	19.4
	Demand	996	33.1	33.1	52.5
	Criticism	1121	37.3	37.3	89.8
	Support	308	10.2	10.2	100.0
	Total	3009	100.0	100.0	

Criticism and demands are separated only by little more than 4%, whereas the centre (62.2%) and the economy (13%) as the second most dominant actor are separated by nearly 50% in their role as speakers, the difference in their role as addressees is even more substantial (cf. section on inclusiveness in the first part). On a frequentist perspective alone this would leave us somewhat with a puzzle as it is easy to explain the relative effect of the different discourse coalitions due to their different magnitude, but it is harder to explain on these grounds the differences which are generated by the illocutions. It is precisely here that our proceduralist explanation comes into play as we have also observed that the different illocutions incur a different burden of justification, which again allows us to rank them in an order from smallest (support) to medium (demand) and highest (criticism) obligations. Both factors together the dominance of certain actors and actor constellations as well as the inherent deliberative implications of specific discursive elements, i.e. the nature and strength of criticism's relationship with the rationality dimension of the debates captured by the DQI_m, are able to explain the differences we see in our results. And we will discuss in the concluding paragraphs of this section what kind of consequences this has for the public sphere and deliberative theory in general.

5. Conclusion

If we continue on one of the last points of the preceding discussion, the important finding is not so much that the centre has the strongest effect on the results either on its own as speaker or as the addressee of different constellations, but that it does so mainly because of the discursive role of criticism. If we develop this thought further it leads us to one of the most important findings of this study, namely that criticism in general has a beneficial effect on the deliberative quality of political debates. Or put the other way round: political conflict is not disruptive for deliberation, it is rather processed through it and results in fact in generating the highest effects on discourse quality. This may seem trivial from a theoretical

perspective at first as we could simply argue that deliberation as a way of conflict resolution presupposes conflict for the deliberative procedure to be able to work at all, but it is by no means a result that was to be expected as criticism, contestation and disagreement could very well be voiced in way that resist the discursive implications we have outlined above and would undermine the cooperative search for political solutions.

The theoretical claim that deliberation is a means of conflict resolution, or at least a way to process disagreement, is thus most clearly supported by our empirical findings. More than this, the contestation of the status quo is the common element which connects a discourse theory of the political process to a motivational account of political conflict and social change: the struggle for recognition is first of all a challenge of established norms, institutions, ways of thinking and arguing, and so forth and therefore articulated primarily in terms of criticism, which is in turn accommodated within a deliberative framework which processes contentious and antagonistic validity claims. It is, however, not only institutional arrangements which define and sustain this framework, it is above all the actors themselves: if we apply the proposed alternative to measure the respect of speakers towards the addressee of the chapter on the methodology of deliberation, i.e. to code face threatening acts as well as the responses to them we find that throughout all of the debates only 141 (4.7% of all speech acts) face threatening acts are committed and only in nine cases (0.3% of all the speech acts) does the addressee or another actor take issue with the offence. This has to do on the one hand quite generally with the fact that actors always try to "go on" in the interaction with other actors as Giddens (1984) shows by drawing on the insights of ethnomethodology, above all the work of Harold Garfinkel (1967).[35] But our results additionally show more specifically that deliberation as a discursive mode of conflict resolution has the effect that detrimental factors such as disrespect/impoliteness occur only marginally, and if they do they furthermore hardly receive any uptake. Deliberation is thus not only robust to unfavourable conditions as it presupposes conflict and thereby a certain amount adverseness and animosity in the form of disrespect and impoliteness, it also minimises the influence of those non-deliberative occurrences, though we cannot generalise our results to other contexts and we certainly need to know more about the favourable external and internal conditions of deliberation.

This is an important point which has far-reaching implications, for it is not only the case that deliberation accommodates criticism, the deliberative quality of the debates itself is driven by contention and controversy. This relationship has an empirical basis: if we follow this line of thought and abstract from concrete actor classes and coalitions and examine solely the effect of criticism on the DQI_m we get the results of the table below. Before discussing them in more detail the central finding certainly is that criticism is the single most important factor in explaining the deliberative quality. More than this, the relationship is a positive one throughout all of the DQI_m variables, or to put it in other words: the more criticism the better the discourse quality. This is in line with the results of empirical studies such as that of Price, Cappella, and Nir (2002) who show that disagreement contributes to expanding people's range of reasons and their ability to reflect their own perspective from the other's point of view. And it is also in line with Bächtiger's (2010) notion of "contestatory deliberation": "I propose that under the right psychological and contextual conditions, agonistic inquiry [contestatory deliberation] is a key deliberative technique which helps to

[35] Garfinkel in turn was strongly influenced by Wittgenstein's (2000) notion of understanding as "knowing how to go on" in a given situation.

unleash essential parts of deliberation's normative potential [...] while simultaneously counteracting unwanted aspects of deliberation" (Bächtiger 2010: 3). By "unwanted aspects" he means above all the settling of a dispute through what according to a deliberative perspective would be a false consensus or acquiescence. Here, the confrontational aspect of discourse protects the participants to settle their disputes with reasons to which they cannot subscribe. Indeed, if we conceive of political debates as a struggle for recognition, then it is mainly a struggle for the recognition of one's point of view. Bächtiger also makes the point that contestatory deliberation "may work best in cooperative setting which simultaneously has in-built routines for agonistic practices" (ibid. 2010: 5). In this respect we can go one step further as our results show that even in a non-institutional setting such as the mediated public sphere contestation yields positive effects, and that the bonds of cooperation and solidarity are promoted through the deliberative practice itself (cf. also Rehg 1997).

Table 37: Regression of the DQI_m on criticism

DQI_m	Centre		
	B	Sig.	Mltpl. R squared
Reciprocity	.659	< 2e-16	.302
Full model	.265	2.68E-07	.436
Reflexivity	.673	<2e-16	.417
Full model	.387	<2e-16	.515
Perspectives	.443	< 2e-16	.393
Full model	.283	<2e-16	.469
Inclusiveness	.085	1.21e-09	.068
Full model	.051	.005	.072
Role change	.030	.006	.015
Full model	.042	.004	.025

The wle.lm function was used as it yielded more conservative results.

If we take a more detailed look at the results of the regression model we can see again that deliberation clearly comprises two dimensions, an actor dimension, with low to moderate values for slopes, level of statistical significance, and model fit, and a rationality dimension which displays higher values on the core dimensions of the regression models.[36] The disparity between the two dimensions arises because of the centre's dominance which is only little conducive to the actor dimension as its different variables are conceived to involve participants from different parts of society and hence actor classes. Yet, what requires more of an explanation is the fact that even in this regression model the relationship between what is to be assumed as the most powerful explanatory variable (criticism) and the inclusiveness of *justification actors* remains non-significant. This is mainly because on the one hand, as we have already remarked in the descriptive part, the variable displays only a very low form of linear development, i.e. it is very sensitive to the topic under discussion. But on the other hand it is also due to the fact that an increase in criticism affects predominantly the rationality dimension of discourse quality, it thus intensifies the debate between the participating actors, but expands in turn it only moderately to other actors, and has apparently even less an effect on *justification actors* as it is that variable which captures aspects of both dimensions. Because of its hybrid nature it is thus more delicate indicator and less responsive to the main sources of influence on the discourse quality.

If we bring back in an actor related perspective in our discussion we can say that very basically criticism is of course voiced by actors, and because they need not necessarily

[36] More detailed figures for the models are given in appendix 17.

belong to one specific class, we might refer to them quite generally as "challengers", a term introduced by Kriesi (2004). In contrast to Kriesi (2004), however, we do not take the degree of institutionalisation as the defining criterion – Kriesi only refers to non-institutional actors as challengers – but the intersubjective relationship established through the illocutionary force of the speech acts; this is a more flexible view and allows for greater analytic complexity. This is not to deny the role of single actor classes, above all that of the centre, which has a substantial effect on the debates if only because of its sheer presence. But to conceive of challengers in the way proposed allows us to make the transition from single actor classes and institutions to discursive interaction as the basic unit of political debates and hence the public sphere. It is also a distinction which has guided the hypotheses in this section, where the first part has been concerned with the influence of specific actor classes while the second one has foregrounded the interactive component.

The first part of the section as well as the second one clearly shows the dominance of the centre in the debates, although the analyses result in two very different depictions: whereas the performance of the centre in the first half as speaker is restricted to the rationality dimensions of the DQI_m with no visible influence on the actor variables, its role as the addressee of discourse coalitions results in a much more comprehensive effect on the discourse quality, though it is still non-significant with regard to the most central of the actor variables, namely *inclusiveness*. This discursive imbalance of the centre as actor as well as the object of coalitions is compensated for by the media in the first part, the economy in the second, and by civil society, which plays an important role in both parts. It is above all civil society as a speaker but particularly in its role as addressee of a discourse coalition which not only counteracts the imbalance but bridges the rationality-actor divide, similar to the media in the first part.

If we interpret our results from the perspective of the public sphere they lend support to the modest view of civil society's role in the theoretical account, while they confirm at the same time the importance of the periphery for the political process. To be sure, the centre's role is not directly detrimental to the discourse quality as it presences achieves high effects on the rationality dimension of the DQI_m. However, this comes at the price of a systematic distortion of the public sphere as communicative infrastructure and with it the political process as it results in the exclusion of non-centre actors and thus reveals a discursive dynamic which is geared towards an "inside access" model. This inherent drive is visible even in the centre oriented coalitions, none of which contributes in any significant way to an increase in the range of inclusiveness of the actors. Here, the other coalitions display a different picture, although the respective model fit shows that they contribute only in very modest terms to the discourse quality. Nevertheless, from the perspective of the public sphere and it discourse quality indicators we see that the political-administrative centre has indeed to rely on a civil society "that meets it halfway". Yet, in order to have an effect on the debates, civil society's participation alone is not enough: what is equally important is that the periphery's struggle for recognition is successful to the extent that civil society itself becomes the addressee of discourse coalitions. Only in this way is a public sphere generated that emphasises not only the rationality dimensions, that mimics not only discourse, but that includes different actors and their perspectives. The results of this section thus confirm the view developed already in the descriptive part that it is the "outside initiative" and "mobilisation" models which are able to generate greater discourse quality in contrast to the "inside access" model. The findings also caution us, however, against placing too high hopes

on the role of the periphery and they warn us against a too dominant role occupied by the centre. Rather, the solution lies in a permeable public sphere that guarantees not only access to different actors but encourages also the uptake of their contributions by others to the extent that they become the addressees of diversified discourse coalitions. These need not run along the lines of agreement and support – quite on the contrary: that coalition which achieves the highest results on almost all of the DQI_m variables is that of the challengers of the status quo quite generally. The most central element to a vibrant public sphere is thus revealed to be criticism, as it is the motivating force behind the struggle for recognition of actors and positions as well as that illocutionary force which improves the quality of the discourse most clearly.

V. Discussion and conclusion

In this concluding chapter we will fist summarise and discuss the main findings of the second part of the empirical analysis. So far, we have analysed our hypotheses separately and we now need to connect the different results and insights and embed them in the larger theoretical context (section 1). This will also lead to a couple of critical remarks about the restrictions the approach of the present study faces (section 2). And building on this we will finally sketch an agenda for the further development of deliberative theory as well as for empirical research (section 3).

1. Discussion of the inferential part

Before we conclude this study we first have to bring together the insights from the second, inferential part of the analysis. In contrast to the findings of many studies which see a decline in public-spiritedness of actors and the discursive quality of political debates our analyses show that not all is lost for democratic development and its radical element, the public sphere. Quite on the contrary, to the extent that it becomes visible in the deliberativeness of the debates examined, the emancipatory potential of the public sphere appears to be steadily expanding. Yet, just as the empirical literature on deliberation quite generally, so our results, too, reveal a complex and in important ways ambivalent picture of the discursive transformation of the public sphere. First, on a positive note for normative theory, most of our indicators of deliberative quality increase through time – though they do so more clearly for that debate type which is deemed less deliberative, i.e. cultural, centre driven debates. In addition to this, civil society as the "emancipatory actor" of the public sphere, so to speak, succeeds in establishing itself in material debates in terms of an increasing inclusiveness, but not in cultural ones. There is no significant development, however, in either debate with regard to the recognition of civil society as an interlocutor in the debates by the other actors. As the descriptive analysis has already revealed, this seems to be caused by the specific topic of the debate and probably also by the nature of the goods debated. Second and in contrast to our theoretical expectations, cultural debates on the whole perform better than material debates in terms of discursive quality. Though *inclusiveness* is the exception as it is more pronounced in material debates, things change when we take on a developmental perspective: here, *inclusiveness* disappears as a distinguishing dimension in the 2000s, which now comprises *reflexivity*, *reciprocity*, *perspectives*, and *role change* – all pointing in the direction of cultural debates as those with the higher mean values. The last variable also indicates that the more recent cultural debate bridges the rationality/actor divide which saw material debates being achieving greater values in the latter dimension in contrast to cultural ones which were more prone to the former one. Third, the last section of this chapter has shown that in terms of actor classes there is a discursive division of labour of some sort, the centre being mainly responsible for the rationality variables, while civil society shows a stronger association with the actor indicators, with the media covering both aspects. Moreover, when turning to the actor coalitions the results clearly show that the "state of disagreement" Thompson (2008) spells out as the precondition for deliberation has indeed the greatest influence on the deliberative quality of the debate: criticism coalitions are able to explain a larger amount of variation in the data than both demand and support coalitions. Abstracting further from concrete

discourse coalitions we have seen that criticism incurs a higher discursive debt than demands, which leads to the substantial difference we see in the models, i.e. in criticism's higher performance, despite the fact that their occurrence in the debates is very close.

While the last findings are a welcome confirmation of deliberation as a model of conflict resolution, the other two (cleavage and social change) produce a more complex picture and challenge the assumptions of deliberative theory in several ways. In terms of the development over time we have seen that the inclusiveness increases and in particular that civil society becomes a more regular actor in material debates, although it is not recognised as such by the others. The challenge posed by these findings is not only relevant for deliberative theory, but also and perhaps even more for developmental accounts of the public sphere in the vein of *Structural Transformation*. The problematic aspect is that social change has only a very moderate effect on the role of civil society, and as we have seen in the last section, correspondingly, civil society has in turn only a very moderate effect on the discursive quality of political debates. Both, however, *Structural Transformation* as well as to some extent also Axel Honneth's theory of recognition see the bourgeoisie and civil society respectively as the motor and primary addressee of social change and hence of the development of the public sphere. Yet, according to our findings the increase in actors from civil society is rather marginal, and if we further take into account the effect of civil society as a distinct actor class on the discursive quality of the debates, it is equally small.

This is not to say that the contribution of civil society is insignificant, rather the structural transformation of the deliberative quality is a complex process in which civil society plays a direct and indirect role. We can identify at least two dynamics at work: as we have already remarked in the chapter on the theoretical foundations of deliberative democracy and as has repeatedly become clear when examining the empirical results, there is a tension both in theory and in practice between the deliberative dimension, associated in our model with the rationality variables, and the democratic dimension, expressed above all by *inclusiveness* but also by *role change*. From the empirical perspective civil society has primarily – though not only – an effect on the democratic dimension, i.e. the greater inclusiveness of the debates means that the public sphere is expanded to include more actors. This is also the case for the media who occupy a dual role in that they contribute directly to the greater inclusiveness through their utterances, but also indirectly through the inclusion of other actors. The centre's role in turn is confined to the rationality dimension, which is plausible, given that it includes actors from the other parts of society and in particular civil society through the principle of representation – at least as far as the Commons are concerned.

Related to this is a second aspect which is perhaps more worrying for democratic theory: in line with the empirical findings by Steiner et al. (2004) as well as the point made by Thompson (2008) we can see that the tension between the deliberative and the democratic dimension means that we cannot maximise the deliberative quality as a whole, rather there is a trade-off between these two aspects. If we were to give recommendations for the ideal public sphere we would have to decide which of these aspects should be more pronounced. In practice, we find them represented by the "outside initiative" model of the public sphere, which promotes above all the democratic dimension, and the "mobilisation" as well as the "inside access" models, which favour the deliberative dimension. We have also seen, however, that the centre driven debates fare on the whole better in terms of discursive quality, and that in the stepwise comparison *inclusiveness* disappears as a criterion of

distinction between the two most recent debates. On the face of it this challenges our normative premises, for according to our theoretical basis the deliberative public sphere is that one which originates at the periphery of civil society and moves towards the centre, whereas those models which originate at the centre incorporate power structures and therefore constitute distorted forms of public reasoning. Our results, however, stand in stark contrast to these assumptions as they show that the periphery driven debates type are less deliberative than the centre driven ones. Does this mean that we have to rewrite public sphere theory? The answer is clearly no, for our results simply show that whereas periphery debates perform poorer than we might have assumed, centre debates perform better despite their seeming weaknesses.

The point is that centre debates have not only become more deliberative but also more democratic as is for instance evidenced by the Anglo-Irish Agreement issue of 1985, where the temporary end of the debate is the starting point for an intense follow-up discussion. Here we can also see that undemocratic debates can have positive effects – provided that the public sphere is porous enough to allow for different flows of communication. And the 2005 anti-terror legislation debate involves civil society actors even more directly as a response to the government plans. Indeed, it seems to be the case that the "inside access" model of the public sphere exists only if we examine it in isolation and further research would have to show the real occurrence of the model and in how far it has changed over time. We can also see that contrary to Habermas' notion of the "mobilisation" model, represented in our study by the 1965 Commonwealth immigration debate and the 2005 anti-terror legislation issue, the involvement of civil society is not only encouraged by centre actors – for strategic or communicative reasons –, civil society actors themselves actively intervene in the debate. In other words, the flows of communication are much more complex, running simultaneously in diverse directions. This is the result of what we have termed the porousness or malleability of the public sphere and we have seen that it is not only an important element of periphery driven debates, but perhaps even more so for centre driven public sphere types.

As consequence of this interpretation we might quite generally favour debates which correspond to the "mobilisation" model, given that they score not only high on the deliberative dimension but equally involve civil society. Or, to put it the other way round and more pointedly: if centre debates of the "mobilisation" type perform so well on both the deliberative and the democratic dimension, where is the empirical advantage of periphery driven debates? And following from this: where is the normative advantage? Here, it is important to see that deliberative theory does not say that the "outside initiative" model of the public sphere is expected to more reasonable in terms of the rationality variables than the other two, rather it emphasises the inclusion of all those affected according to the discourse principle (D). That is, what makes periphery debates more deliberative (in a broad sense) than centre debates is that they are more democratic, not that they are necessarily more rational. The primary task of civil society is not to guard the levels of reflexivity, but to bring in their points of view and to utter above all their concerns, interests, and preferences. As Dewey put it: "The individuals of the submerged mass may not be very wise. But there is one thing they are wiser about than anybody else can be, and that is where the shoe pinches, the troubles they suffer from" (Dewey 2008 219). This is exactly what Habermas

means when he develops the notion of a deliberative public sphere, which has its roots in civil society because the lifeworld is more sensitive towards social problems:

> The political public sphere can fulfill its function of perceiving and thematizing encompassing social problems only insofar as it develops out of the communication taking place among those who are potentially affected. It is carried by a public recruited from the entire citizenry. But in the diverse voices of this public, one hears the echo of private experiences that are caused throughout society by the externalities (and internal disturbances) of various functional systems – and even by the very state apparatus on whose regulatory activities the complex and poorly coordinated sub-systems depend. Systemic deficiencies are experienced in the context of individual life histories; such burdens accumulate in the lifeworld. The latter has the appropriate antennae, for in its horizon are intermeshed the private life histories of the "clients" of functional systems that might be failing in their delivery of services.
>
> (Habermas 1996: 365)

As a consequence of this civil society and its members are “unburdened” in moral and cognitive terms: unlike Rousseau and his followers Habermas is aware that the individual is neither the supreme locus of morality nor of wisdom. It is therefore not the sum of individual opinions, but public opinion as a discursive process which is able to uncover the moral point of view and which leads to considered judgments. The public sphere is deliberative insofar as it provides the opportunity for members of civil society to voice their concerns and is able to process them in a reasonable way – independently of processes initiated by the centre. Inclusiveness is thus the central component and from this perspective it is to be valued positively that material/periphery debates also display an increase over time in the rationality variables. In the final analysis this means that although the deliberativeness of the centre driven debates is a sign of a vibrant public sphere and a surprising one insofar as the values exceed our theoretical expectations, it would be wrong to conclude that centre debates are therefore better in deliberative terms than periphery debates. To be sure, on many dimensions of the DQI_m they achieve higher scores, but they cannot do away with the fact that they originate at the centre – and this is their basic shortcoming. Debates originating at the periphery in turn are not only important because the allow civil society voicing their concerns, they also keep the centre on its toes, as it were, for they confront the political-administrative complex with new communicative impulses: democratic development can only occur if civil society is able to make full use its potential of irritating the political-administrative system, to use the systems theoretical terminology.

Apart form these theoretical considerations, there are two important points to be added regarding the findings and the research design. First, as we have remarked above, the results of the centre driven debates seem to suggest that they often spark reactions by civil society to an extent that if we disentangled the debates further it might be more appropriate to speak to two communicative flows which intersect: the main public sphere established by the centre is challenged by a counter public sphere which has its roots in civil society. This is also the reason why in centre driven debates more visibly than in their periphery counterparts the public sphere itself is always also the topic of the discussion, independent of the actual issue; the Anglo-Irish Agreement is again the most prominent case in our sample. In addition to this, and as we have pointed out repeatedly, we have to take into

account that for reasons of sampling we have restricted the examination to the end of the debates, and while some of them such as the anti-terror legislation issue do not stretch back much further than our period of analysis we must be aware that we can generally say only little about their beginning. This, however, would be important particularly in the case of the material/periphery debates as it would be plausible to assume that for instance civil society actors display a larger range of perspectives which is later reduced as the different positions and points of view are filtered through public reasoning. Similarly, the centre might only become the actor with the broadest spectrum of justifications as the debates develop further.

On the whole, then, our results are more positive than we assumed – particularly as far as the centre debates are concerned, but they pose no threat to the theoretical account. As we have pointed out already in the intermediary reflections at the end of the first part, our results, however, emphasize the need to theorise more profoundly those public sphere types which originate at the centre. At present they merely constitute a deviant and deficient form of communication from of the ideal and this is clearly not very satisfying when we compare the theoretical account with the empirical results. Here, empirical research can help to promote further theoretical work, particularly in sketching out the contours of a theory of the public sphere that gives equal weight to the different public sphere models. In this context the central point of our study seems to be that not all communicative flows initiated by the centre are equally suspicious from a deliberative point of view: as long as either the debate remains open in the sense that the end as in the case of the Anglo-Irish Agreement is only temporary and in fact the beginning of a new debate which takes its start in the periphery, or as long as there are counter moving flows of communication in the public sphere as in the Commonwealth immigration issue and the anti-terror legislation debate, i.e. as long as there are indicators which confirm a certain porousness and malleability of the public sphere, these debates are not problematic from the perspective of deliberative theory. We will come back to this further below when we discuss the outlines of a theory of systematically distorted communication as part of a theory of the public sphere.

2. Putting the results into perspective

The discussion thus far has confirmed the general positive conclusions we can draw from the results of our study. Although they are not directly comparable to the findings of Ferree et al.'s (2002) investigation of the abortion discourse in the United States and Germany, we can say that the present analysis balances the inferences they make from their analysis. This is all the more remarkable as in contrast to Ferree et al. we have not investigated learning processes that occur in concrete terms in the augmentation of knowledge about one and the same subject in debates that stretch over a larger period of time. Rather, we have focused on the transformative potential of the deliberative structures themselves, which undergo a slower process of change and whose direction has been less clear.

At the same time, we should not forget the findings of our descriptive analysis of the first part, for they have been able to reveal a complex picture which points beyond a simple, linear development. Above all the unstable development of the reciprocity from centre towards non-centre actors is an important and critical result while for instance the stable range of perspectives of the centre can be read as a positive sign – also because the centre

incorporates almost all of the justifications of the other actor classes. But reciprocity, as we have already pointed out in the first part, occupies a somewhat different position in the theoretical framework for it is that dimension which ultimately tells us whether the debates we analyse are simply aggregated statements or whether a dialogic element runs through them. In the face of Habermas' (2006) fear that the internet contributes to the fragmentation of the public sphere we can point out that because the public sphere always is fragmented, the crucial point is whether there is a critical value for the degree of fragmentation, i.e. within the analytical approach of our study, whether an increase in the fragmentation has an effect on the other deliberative dimensions. This, however, is a question we cannot readily answer as it requires a different and expanded research design that certainly also needs to include the outcomes of the deliberative process at some stage.

A couple of further cautionary remarks regarding our results are necessary. First, although our analyses are based on a sample that comprises more than 3'000 speech acts, they ultimately come from only six debates, and although the debates cover different topics and policy areas, our sample is rather small from this aggregate perspective. This is also one of the reasons why we have chosen to analyse the transformation of the underlying communicative structure rather than manifest forms of knowledge. The advantage of the approach consists in guarding the analysis against some of the difficulties Ferree et al. (2002) as well as Gerhards (1997) are confronted with when assessing the development of the deliberative quality of their debates. The downside obviously is that we cannot say anything about the development of those debates which touch on larger or recurring topics such as the Commonwealth immigration issue. Similarly, we cannot ultimately be sure whether our results would change if we had chosen to analyse other debates from the ones in our sample. Nevertheless, the second part of the analysis has revealed stable patterns of development, and there seems thus to be an indication for a significant relationship between the deliberative quality measured by the DQI_m and our explanatory variables.

3. Theoretical issues and research agenda

Before we conclude this study we need to address a couple of open questions regarding theory as well as empirical research on which we have touched in this final discussion. The first one concerns the expansion of a theory of the public sphere so that we can operate with a more complex background also for those public sphere types which deviate from the normative ideal. Without being able to present such a theoretical account in these closing paragraphs we can point to some of the aspects which it should include. The most fruitful approach would probably consist in making a theory of distorted communication as outlined by Bohman (2000) part of the theory of the public sphere. This is already implicitly the case as the centre driven public sphere models represent deficient forms of public communication, but a more thorough approach to which we have hinted above could help us in creating an analytical framework with greater complexity which is also able to move beyond the distinction between the "outside initiative" model as being inherently more valuable than the "mobilisation" or the "inside access" model, to put it in simplified terms.

As Bohman points out in his article, the value of a theory of distorted communication will ultimately (also) be measured by the contribution it can make to practical recommendations regarding distorted forms of communication. In other words, we cannot content ourselves

with uncovering what goes wrong in political debates but remain silent when it comes to the question what ought to be changed. This is a much more challenging task, not only because some of the recommendations will touch on the motivations and attitudes of actors and hence on aspects we cannot directly – or perhaps even indirectly – influence. The more basic problem is that the deliberative approach is largely a reconstructive form of analysis, and this makes it almost impossible to make any meaningful prospective suggestions. In addition to these theoretical problems, our empirical results have shown that deficient forms of deliberation as exemplified by the Anglo-Irish Agreement can yield positive effects, which complicates matters even further. And finally, if the public sphere is to maintain its anarchic structure as the reservoir of its deliberative potential this means that any concrete recommendations in terms of institutional design, etc. can only refer to institutions that feed into public debates. And even here, the task is far from easy as e.g. the coupling of deliberative institutions envisaged by Goodin (2005) can easily lead to opposite effects as the communicative flow between the institutions needs to be controlled, i.e. administered to a certain extent, which in turn undermines the communicative freedom necessary to set free the emancipatory potential. From the point of view of the present study two aspects seem to be particularly important: one concerns the reciprocity of the debates, which we have already discussed above, the other concerns the inclusiveness of the debates. Both are essential if we want to guarantee the porousness of the public sphere, though the institutions which support these aspects range from the parliamentary-administrative complex and initiatives to make it more responsive to civil society inputs to informal types of political praxis including forms of protest such as civil disobedience.

Drawing together the different theoretical and empirical aspects we have considered so far we can specify the following areas where further research is necessary and can in a first step again take our model of the political process to identify them. At the ideal origin of the political process several studies have investigated the place of deliberation in civil society settings, though most of them have relied on small group experiments and discussions. The recent study by Marques and Maia (2010) tries to get at what people actually do in their daily conversations about politics, employing discussion groups as their preferred method. This is certainly a good approach but we need to get closer to people's "doing talking politics" as conversation analysts might say, i.e. we need to move from controlled settings such as discussions and experiments to ethnographic studies, qualitative in-depth interviews, etc. which allow us a privileged access to the experience of politics in the daily lives of people. In this way future research can explore more closely the link between the private and the public and shape out the relationship between the distinct rationalities of the different validity spheres Wellmer (1986) has called for on a theoretical level. Studies in the latter area are particularly important as the emancipatory potential of the public sphere rests on the communicative freedom rooted in the lifeworld, which in turn rests on the permeability between the validity spheres of propositional truth, normative rightness, and sincerity or authenticity. As regards civil society organisations as well as political parties, we need to move beyond the analysis of single organisations and examine the interactions between them on the one hand and the political-administrative system on the other. This also means that quite generally the next step of research would consist in moving from examining the deliberative structures within organisations and institutions to the communicative relationship between them. The media are that area to which our present

study has attempted to make a contribution, but clearly here we need to combine analyses of the leading national media with the emerging and expanding online communication. As we have already pointed out in the chapter on methods, the research interest here would primarily focus on the potential of the online communication of civil society actors to initiate spill-over processes from online to offline media. In this area we can build on the rich tradition of agenda setting, agenda building and framing research, and undergird these empirical theories with a strong normative basis. As for the political centre, finally, the move beyond the analysis of single institution would lead to develop a theoretical and empirical account of deliberation between institutions, both on the national and international level, and between them and the wider public sphere.

On a different level, communication in all these settings and arenas is characterised by an input or production side, the throughput or the content constituted by it and the output, i.e. the relationship to other deliberative arenas. This is admittedly an oversimplified view of communication within and between political organisations, institutions, and quite generally participants of the political process, but it helps us to underline an important point. The bulk of research – just as the present study – has for some time focused on the content of deliberation and only recently have more studies, mostly experiments, been conducted which explore the output of deliberation. So far, this is mostly understood as the effect discourse has on the participants in deliberative processes as is for instance the case in the concept of deliberative polls. Little attention is given, however, to the effect deliberation in one arena has on the deliberative quality in other arenas. Yet, the public sphere as a communicative network connecting different fora, arenas, organisations, etc. just as the political-administrative system with its different institutions are mainly characterised by constant communicative spill-over processes, and it is certainly these aspects on which future research ought to concentrate. On the side of the input, the study of Marques and Maia (2010) is one of the few which examines the generation of deliberative processes or their communicative preconditions in real-world settings, albeit from the indirect perspective of discussion groups. Here, experiments might be able to point the way for our research interest, but we need more ethnographic analyses to uncover the complexities of everyday political talk, though we also need similar studies in institutional settings. Above all, however, the next step and the next challenge for research will have to examine the spill-over processes which we can trace more or less readily on the level between institutions and arenas, etc. within them, i.e. we will have to connect the macro view of deliberative processes to the discursive dynamics that occur on the micro-level of the concrete interaction. The present study has attempted to move in this direction in the descriptive part, when examining for instance the development of reciprocity or the range of justifications within the single debates. Here, we need to find ways to develop a critical measure for the paths that deliberation takes – and does not take –, i.e. a measure that examines these processes not only on an aggregate level such as the DQI_m, but which more clearly allows us to reconstruct the discursive relationships as they unfold. After all, if deliberation is quite generally understood as the giving and taking of reasons, then we should expand the focus from examining the reasons to the give-and-take as equally central to the process.

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VII. Appendix

Appendix 1: Actor justifications (absolute figures)

Table 38: Justifications by actor class 1960-2005

Year			Actor classes					
			"Uncivil" society	Civil society	Media	Economy	Centre	Total
1960	Perspectives	Action (economic)		1	6	0	2	9
		Action (political)		3	5	11	31	50
		Basic values		1	0	1	4	6
		Belief, emotion		1	0	2	1	4
		Condition (of situation)		0	0	0	2	2
		Cons. (negative)		1	5	13	9	28
		Cons. (positive)		1	2	1	1	5
		Consequences (general)		0	3	0	3	6
		Facts		3	8	14	18	43
		Interest (group)		1	1	1	5	8
		Interest (public)		0	0	1	2	3
		Juridical norm		0	0	0	1	1
		None		8	12	67	74	161
		Opinion (third party)		1	0	0	1	2
		Pledge, promise		1	0	0	0	1
	Total			22	42	111	154	329
1965	Perspectives	Action (economic)		1	3	0	7	11
		Action (general)		1	0	0	0	1
		Action (pol. process)		0	0	0	1	1
		Action (political)		10	3	1	36	50
		Basic values		1	2	0	3	6
		Belief, emotion		0	1	0	0	1
		Charisma, personality		2	0	0	0	2
		Condition (of situation)		1	1	0	3	5
		Cons. (negative)		10	7	2	11	30
		Cons. (positive)		2	2	0	4	8
		Consequences (general)		4	1	2	5	12
		Facts		10	9	1	32	52
		Interest (group)		1	1	1	7	10
		Interest (other)		0	0	0	1	1
		Interest (public)		2	2	0	1	5
		Juridical norm		0	1	0	1	2
		None		30	15	16	182	243
		Opinion (third party)		2	0	0	2	4
		Pledge, promise		0	0	0	1	1
		Tradition (general)		1	0	0	0	1
	Total			78	48	23	297	446
1980	Perspectives	Action (economic)		0	4	5	4	13
		Action (general)		1	1	1	0	3
		Action (pol. process)		1	0	2	4	7
		Action (political)		6	12	17	51	86
		Basic values		1	1	0	1	3
		Belief, emotion		1	0	0	1	2
		Charisma, personality		1	0	0	1	2
		Condition (of situation)		0	0	0	1	1
		Cons. (negative)		3	2	23	19	47
		Cons. (positive)		0	2	3	10	15
		Consequences (general)		2	4	3	9	18
		Facts		1	3	4	12	20
		Interest (group)		0	0	3	9	12
		Juridical norm		0	2	1	11	14
		None		14	20	71	101	206
		Opinion (third party)		1	1	2	4	8
		Rule (application)		0	0	0	1	1
		Tradition (negative)		0	0	1	0	1
	Total			32	52	136	239	459

1985	Perspectives	Action (economic)	0	0	5		2	7
		Action (general)	0	0	0		1	1
		Action (pol. process)	0	0	0		3	3
		Action (political)	1	4	18		62	85
		Basic values	0	0	0		2	2
		Belief, emotion	0	0	1		1	2
		Condition (of situation)	0	0	1		0	1
		Cons. (negative)	0	0	5		28	33
		Cons. (positive)	0	0	2		16	18
		Consequences (general)	2	2	2		12	18
		Facts	0	1	0		5	6
		Interest (group)	0	0	1		3	4
		Interest (public)	0	2	0		0	2
		Juridical norm	0	0	0		6	6
		None	1	8	19		182	210
		Opinion (third party)	0	0	0		7	7
		Pledge, promise	2	0	4		20	26
	Total		6	17	58		350	431
2000	Perspectives	Action (economic)		9	4	9	18	40
		Action (pol. process)		0	1	1	2	4
		Action (political)		18	14	20	39	91
		Basic values		0	0	0	2	2
		Belief, emotion		0	0	0	1	1
		Condition (of situation)		2	2	0	0	4
		Cons. (negative)		1	4	7	15	27
		Cons. (positive)		0	1	2	2	5
		Consequences (general)		1	3	6	8	18
		Facts		5	10	13	20	48
		Interest (group)		1	2	1	1	5
		Interest (public)		0	0	0	1	1
		Juridical norm		0	0	0	2	2
		None		14	12	31	65	122
		Opinion (third party)		0	0	0	2	2
	Total			51	53	90	178	372
2005	Perspectives	Action (economic)	0	3	2	0	5	10
		Action (pol. process)	0	0	2	0	9	11
		Action (political)	0	23	43	1	96	163
		Basic values	0	6	10	0	20	36
		Belief, emotion	0	2	2	0	0	4
		Condition (of situation)	1	0	2	0	11	14
		Cons. (negative)	0	2	10	0	26	38
		Cons. (positive)	0	1	3	0	1	5
		Consequences (general)	0	5	8	0	31	44
		Facts	0	6	5	0	29	40
		Interest (group)	0	1	5	0	4	10
		Interest (public)	0	1	2	0	8	11
		Juridical norm	0	10	8	0	25	43
		None	0	24	36	1	244	305
		Opinion (third party)	0	2	0	0	7	9
		Pledge, promise	0	0	0	0	1	1
		Tradition (general)	0	1	1	0	3	5
		Tradition (positive)	0	2	1	0	0	3
	Total		1	89	140	2	520	752

Appendix 2: Dialogic relationship between the centre and its addressees for material and cultural debates(reflexivity)

Table 39: Crosstabulation of centre addressees and centre reflexivity (material debates)

		Addressees				Total
		Civil society	Media	Economy	Centre	
Reflexivity	0	40.6%	66.7%	40.7%	42.5%	42.0%
	1	40.6%	33.3%	40.7%	38.9%	39.4%
	2 or more	18.8%	-	18.6%	18.7%	18.6%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 40: Crosstabulation of centre addressees and centre reflexivity (cultural debates)

		Addressees					Total
		“Uncivil” society	Civil society	Media	Economy	Centre	
Reflexivity	0	52.6%	55.7%	72.7%	50.0%	51.7%	52.1%
	1	36.8%	36.1%	9.1%	25.0%	39.3%	38.7%
	2 or more	10.5%	8.2%	18.2%	25.0%	9.0%	9.2%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Appendix 3: Speaker-addressee distribution (1960-2005)

Table 41: Addressee structure 1960-2005 (% within speakers)

year			Addressees						
			Other	"Uncivil" society	Civil society	Media	Economy	Centre	Total
1960	Speakers	Civil society	18.5%		33.3%	22.2%		25.9%	100.0%
		Media	17.6%		23.5%		3.9%	54.9%	100.0%
		Economy	20.7%				43.6%	35.7%	100.0%
		Centre	14.9%		5.0%		9.4%	70.7%	100.0%
	Total		17.5%		7.5%	1.5%	20.1%	53.4%	100.0%
1965	Speakers	Civil society	11.4%		25.0%	9.1%		54.5%	100.0%
		Media	15.8%		12.3%			71.9%	100.0%
		Economy	11.5%		7.7%	3.8%	7.7%	69.2%	100.0%
		Centre	4.2%		11.9%	2.3%	.3%	81.3%	100.0%
	Total		7.3%		14.1%	3.3%	.6%	74.6%	100.0%
1980	Speakers	Civil society			6.3%	3.1%	56.3%	34.4%	100.0%
		Media			11.5%	3.8%	55.8%	28.8%	100.0%
		Economy	6.2%		5.5%	2.8%	50.3%	35.2%	100.0%
		Centre	4.0%		4.4%	1.2%	22.5%	67.9%	100.0%
	Total		4.0%		5.6%	2.1%	36.8%	51.5%	100.0%
1985	Speakers	"Uncivil" society						100.0%	100.0%
		Civil society	5.6%	5.6%	11.1%			77.8%	100.0%
		Media	4.9%		1.6%			93.4%	100.0%
		Centre	4.6%		2.7%	.3%	.8%	91.6%	100.0%
	Total		4.6%	.2%	2.9%	.2%	.7%	91.4%	100.0%
2000	Speakers	Civil society	7.3%		10.9%	3.6%	14.5%	63.6%	100.0%
		Media	1.9%		18.5%	9.3%	7.4%	63.0%	100.0%
		Economy	5.3%		16.8%		22.1%	55.8%	100.0%
		Centre	8.2%		22.7%		23.2%	45.9%	100.0%
	Total		6.5%		19.1%	1.8%	19.6%	53.0%	100.0%
2005	Speakers	"Uncivil" society						100.0%	100.0%
		Civil society	1.1%	1.1%	3.3%	1.1%		93.3%	100.0%
		Media	3.4%		2.8%			93.8%	100.0%
		Economy						100.0%	100.0%
		Centre	4.4%	3.5%	2.6%	.6%		89.0%	100.0%
	Total		3.8%	2.6%	2.7%	.5%		90.4%	100.0%

Appendix 4: Actor distribution according to discursive role (1960-2005)

Table 42: Speakers, addressees and justification actors 1960-2005 (in %)

	1960			1965			1980			1985			2000			2005		
	Speak.	Addr.	Just.	Speak.	Addr.	Just.	Speak.	Addr.	Just.	Speak.	Addr.	Just.	Speak.	Addr.	Just.	Speak.	Addr.	Just.
Other	.7	17.4	19.1	.2	7.3	15.5	.4	4.0	3.4	.9	4.6	5.0	.3	6.5	8.9	.5	3.8	10.1
"Uncivil" society	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	.2	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	.1	2.5	19.4
Civil society	6.7	7.5	13.6	18.3	14.1	44.4	6.7	5.6	13.3	3.9	2.8	1.6	13.8	19.0	29.6	11.4	2.7	13.2
Media	12.7	1.5	0.4	11.8	3.3	2.4	10.8	2.1	3.1	13.3	.2	0.3	13.5	1.8	1.3	18.4	.5	0.0
Economy	34.8	19.9	6.4	5.4	.6	0.7	30.2	36.9	56.5	0.0	.9	0.0	23.8	19.5	20.7	.3	0.0	0.2
Centre	45.0	53.7	60.6	64.3	74.7	37.0	51.9	51.5	23.7	80.6	90.8	91.8	48.6	53.1	39.5	69.3	90.2	57.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Speak.= Speaker, Addr.= Addressee, Just. = Justification actor

Appendix 5: Effect of social change on the DQI_m

Table 43: Regression of reciprocity on year

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
Intercept	-13.33932	3.08081	-4.33	1.76E-05			
Year	0.006904	0.001552	4.448	1.04E-05	0.4298	0.6155	573.4
(restricted)	0.010666	0.001984	5.377	1.11e-07	0.0488	0.7926	563.2
Author	-0.135975	0.078275	-1.737	0.0829			
Length	0.115239	0.005983	19.261	< 2e-16			
Style	-0.01878	0.038978	-0.482	0.6301			

Table 44: Regression of reflexivity on year

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
Intercept	-14.010797	2.56182	-5.469	6.74E-08			
Year	0.007459	0.001291	5.779	1.23E-08	0.4726	0.5136	577.6
(restricted)	0.010319	0.001683	6.130	1.62e-09	0.06039	0.6825	584.6
Author	-0.079111	0.065236	-1.213	0.226			
Length	0.104519	0.004952	21.106	< 2e-16			
Style	0.038092	0.032382	1.176	0.24			

Table 45: Regression of perspectives on year

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
Intercept	-7.539018	1.861857	-4.049	5.86E-05			
Year	0.004099	0.000938	4.37	1.48E-05	0.4098	0.3694	563.8
(restricted)	0.005736	0.001157	4.956	9.48e-07	0.04097	0.4656	575
Author	0.019732	0.047561	0.415	0.678			
Length	0.067624	0.003656	18.497	<2E-16			
Style	-0.004366	0.023501	-0.186	0.853			

Table 46: Regression of inclusiveness on year

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
Intercept	-3.8150623	1.0882991	-3.506	0.000495			
Year	0.0022908	0.0005485	4.177	3.47E-05	0.09154	0.2083	517.4
(restricted)	0.0026231	0.0005574	4.706	3.24e-06	0.04102	0.2145	517.8
Author	0.0100797	0.0277967	0.363	0.717035			
Length	0.0139452	0.0025027	5.572	4.06E-08			
Style	0.0196427	0.0138524	1.418	0.156792			

Table 47: Regression of role change on year

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
Intercept	-1.2771491	0.8741372	-1.461	0.14462			
Year	0.0013467	0.0004401	3.06	0.00233	0.0272	0.1664	513.6
(restricted)	0.0015475	0.0004323	3.579	0.000377	0.0242	0.167	516.6
Author	-0.0114103	0.0226405	-0.504	0.61449			
Length	0.0002844	0.0016811	0.169	0.86575			
Style	-0.0163015	0.0112075	-1.455	0.14642			

Table 48: Regression of justification actors on year

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
Intercept	7.2589977	1.9521059	3.719	0.000221			
Year	-0.0031791	0.0009834	-3.233	0.0013	0.03476	0.3824	547
(restricted)	-0.0031437	0.0009308	-3.377	0.000785	0.02107	0.3628	529.9
Author	-0.0467194	0.0499715	-0.935	0.350241			
Length	-0.0036507	0.0038007	-0.961	0.337204			
Style	-0.0772324	0.0247242	-3.124	0.00188			

Appendix 6: Reciprocity of centre and non-centre actors towards each other

Table 49: Regression of reciprocity from centre towards non-centre actors on time

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients			
	B	Std. Error	t	df
(Intercept)	-0.0001	0	-3.8605	
Non-centre	0	0	3.9137	586
(restricted)	0	0	3.9902	589
Author	0	0	-1.6083	
Length	0	0	4.3248	
Style	0	0	1.0697	

The rlm function was used all all others failed to converge.

Table 50: Regression of reciprocity from non-centre towards centre actors on time

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients			
	B	Std. Error	t	df
(Intercept)	-0.0027	0.0006	-4.18	
Non-centre	0	0	4.2414	586
(restricted)	0	0	4.6870	589
Author	0	0	0.2921	
Length	0	0	3.3562	
Style	0	0	-1.1608	

The rlm function was used all all others failed to converge.

Table 51: Regression of reciprocity from non-centre towards centre actors on time (cultural debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients			
	B	Std. Error	t	df
(Intercept)	-8.5072	2.4371	-3.4908	
Non-centre	0.0044	0.0012	3.5396	290
(restricted)	-	-	-	-
Length	0.0077	0.0042	1.8216	
Style	-0.0207	0.0411	-0.5035	

The rlm function was used all all others failed to converge.
The functions did not converge for the simple model.

Appendix 7: Development of civil society

Table 52: Regression of civil society on time

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	-10.275591	2.112836	-4.863	1.54E-06			
Year	0.005331	0.001064	5.011	7.50E-07	0.05596	0.3964	504
(restricted)	0.005352	0.001043	5.133	4.08e-07	0.04963	0.3953	504.5
Author	-0.038868	0.053959	-0.72	0.4717			
Length	-0.009934	0.004073	-2.439	0.0151			
Style	-0.001755	0.026906	-0.065	0.948			

Table 53: Regression of periphery on time without letters to the editor

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients			
	B	Std. Error	t	df
(Intercept)	-0.0022	0.0006	-3.3937	
Non-centre	0	0	3.3273	515
(restricted)	0	0	3.0492	518
Author	.0001	0	1.8708	
Length	0	0	-0.5291	
Style	0	0	0.8096	

The rlm function was used all all others failed to converge

Table 54: Regression of civil society as addressee on time

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	3.41E-02	2.57E+00	0.013	0.989			
Year	2.26E-05	1.28E-03	0.018	0.986	0.003683	0.4193	393
(restricted)	0.0002739	0.0012824	0.214	0.831	0.0001186	0.4219	384.8
Author	-8.65E-03	3.19E-02	-0.271	0.786			
Length	4.36E-03	4.89E-03	0.891	0.373			
Style	8.23E-02	1.15E-01	0.713	0.476			

The lmRob function did not converge and the wle.lm function was used.

Appendix 8: development of discourse quality within material and cultural debates

Table 55: Regression of reciprocity on time (material debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	-9.716896	4.761265	-2.041	0.0422			
Year	0.005112	0.002399	2.13	0.034	0.3046	0.6426	282.8
(restricted)	0.002004	0.002990	0.670	0.503	0.001753	0.7658	255.9
Author	-0.212181	0.111891	-1.896	0.0589			
Length	0.120764	0.011154	10.827	<2e-16			
Style	-0.049367	0.087224	-0.566	0.5719			

Table 56: Regression of reflexivity on time (material debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	-16.75486	3.69432	-4.535	8.47E-06			
Year	0.008775	0.001862	4.713	3.81E-06	0.4527	0.5013	286.1
(restricted)	0.004748	0.002418	1.963	0.0506	0.01327	0.6538	286.7
Author	-0.220759	0.087315	-2.528	0.012			
Length	0.128501	0.008585	14.967	< 2e-16			
Style	0.180149	0.0675	2.669	0.00805			

Table 57: Regression of perspectives on time (material debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	-8.492714	2.723965	-3.118	0.00201			
Year	0.004534	0.001373	3.303	0.00108	0.383	0.3675	282.5
(restricted)	0.001377	0.001755	0.784	0.433	0.002	0.4556	264.4
Author	-0.072573	0.064897	-1.118	0.2644			
Length	0.083586	0.00637	13.121	< 2e-16			
Style	0.089211	0.049631	1.797	0.07333			

Table 58: Regression of inclusiveness on time (material debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	-4.714351	1.6439642	-2.868	0.004456			
Year	0.0028116	0.0008286	3.393	0.000793	0.1408	0.2171	274.2
(restricted)	0.0026967	0.0008871	3.040	0.00261	0.0343	0.2315	260.2
Author	0.022031	0.0384035	0.574	0.56666			
Length	0.0192957	0.0039519	4.883	1.78E-06			
Style	-0.0904964	0.0298409	-3.033	0.002656			

Table 59: Regression of periphery presence on time (material debates, without letters to the editor)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	-11.726279	2.682657	-4.371	2.31E-05			
Year	0.005927	0.001348	4.396	2.09E-05	0.158	0.3266	148.9
(restricted)	0.005636	0.001361	4.140	5.98e-05	0.1096	0.322	139.3
Length	-0.007716	0.007601	-1.015	0.3117			
Style	0.145196	0.059277	2.449	0.0155			

Table 60: Regression of reciprocity on time (cultural debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
Intercept	-17.922127	4.081201	-4.391	1.59E-05			
Year	0.009181	0.002057	4.463	1.17E-05	0.5257	0.5821	285.292
(restricted)	0.016285	0.002735	5.954	7.82e-09	0.1123	0.7957	280.107
Author	-0.056583	0.10874	-0.52	0.603			
Length	0.109931	0.007074	15.541	< 2e-16			
Style	0.081899	0.068786	1.191	0.235			

Table 61: Regression of reflexivity on time (cultural debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
Intercept	-12.966917	3.518439	-3.685	0.000273			
Year	0.006898	0.001774	3.89	0.000125	0.5336	0.5018	285.662
(restricted)	0.014103	0.002325	6.067	4.10e-09	0.1136	0.6855	287.162
Author	0.081099	0.093622	0.866	0.387088			
Length	0.097391	0.006095	15.98	< 2e-16			
Style	-0.136237	0.059366	-2.295	0.022465			

Table 62: Regression of perspectives on time (cultural debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
Intercept	-7.137606	2.527955	-2.823	0.00509			
Year	0.003882	0.001274	3.046	0.00254	0.4655	0.3578	280.763
(restricted)	0.008643	0.001575	5.487	8.99e-08	0.0949	0.4644	287.194
Author	0.120819	0.067215	1.797	0.07333			
Length	0.060872	0.00441	13.803	< 2e-16			
Style	-0.123733	0.04282	-2.89	0.00416			

Table 63: Regression of inclusiveness on time (cultural debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
Intercept	-3.2893625	1.3602657	-2.418	0.016303			
Year	0.0020169	0.0006855	2.942	0.003562	0.1041	0.1837	253.924
(restricted)	0.0025217	0.0006457	3.906	0.000121	0.05727	0.1773	251.098
Author	0.0200125	0.036303	0.551	0.581938			
Length	0.0099195	0.0025756	3.851	0.000149			
Style	0.0078768	0.0230605	0.342	0.732957			

Table 64: Regression of periphery presence on time (material and cultural debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	-4.387178	1.5471284	-2.836	0.0057			
Year	0.0026255	0.0007805	3.364	0.0008	0.1299	0.2052	530.1
(restricted)	0.0023721	0.0008018	2.958	0.00323	0.05741	0.2092	526
Length	1.6116308	2.1447701	0.751	0.453			
Style	0.0166245	0.0268257	0.62	0.536			
Interaction	0.0162981	0.0024208	6.733	4.34E-11			
(restricted)	0.0006164	0.0010896	0.566	0.57185			

Table 65: Regression of role change on time (cultural debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
Intercept	-3.5157716	1.12676	-3.12	0.002			
Year	0.0024726	0.0005678	4.355	1.88E-05	0.07918	0.1574	274.973
(restricted)	0.002618	0.000544	4.813	2.44e-06	0.07705	0.157	277.530
Author	-0.0204243	0.0304782	-0.67	0.503			
Length	0.0011232	0.0019353	0.58	0.562			
Style	-0.0059404	0.0188755	-0.315	0.753			

Table 66: Regression of justification actors on time (cultural debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
Intercept	10.267392	2.427039	4.23	3.19E-05			
Year	-0.004688	0.001223	-3.833	0.000157	0.07147	0.3388	273.237
(restricted)	-0.005330	0.001116	-4.774	2.96e-06	0.07777	0.3203	270.280
Author	-0.050943	0.064838	-0.786	0.432726			
Length	-0.00617	0.004192	-1.472	0.142263			
Style	-0.02277	0.040773	-0.558	0.576979			

Appendix 9: Justification actors (cultural debates)

Strictly speaking, a Welch t-test would be the more accurate procedure as the values for *justification actors* are heteroscedastic, i.e. the variances of the single debates are not homogenous. Yet, t-tests can only be computed for the comparison of two samples so that in the present case we would have had to compute 13 t-tests. This would not only lead to losing the overview of the results, substituting t-tests for ANOVAs for more than two samples also increases the likeliness of a type II error, i.e. we become prone to accepting the results although in fact there is no significant difference between the debates. ANOVAs in turn allow us to compare several samples at the same time; furthermore, they are rather robust to deviations from the postulated ideal requirements of the data structure (cf. Kleinbaum, Kupper, Muller 1988: 345).

Table 67: Frequency of justification class actors (cultural debates)

year		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1965	Civil society	132	52.6	52.6	52.6
	Media	7	2.8	2.8	55.4
	Economy	2	.8	.8	56.2
	Centre	110	43.8	43.8	100.0
	Total	251	100.0	100.0	
1985	“Uncivil” society	4	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Civil society	5	1.7	1.7	3.0
	Media	1	.3	.3	3.3
	Centre	293	96.7	96.7	100.0
	Total	303	100.0	100.0	
2005	“Uncivil” society	129	21.5	21.5	21.5
	Civil society	88	14.7	14.7	36.2
	Economy	1	.2	.2	36.4
	Centre	381	63.6	63.6	100.0
	Total	599	100.0	100.0	

Appendix 10: ANOVA of justification actors

Table 68: ANOVA of justification actors (all debates)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.604	5	.321	1.919	.089
Within Groups	97.794	585	.167		
Total	99.399	590			

Appendix 11: Effect size of the t-test

Hedge's *g* is based on the same logic as Cohen's *d*, and although it uses a slightly different approach to the pooled standard deviations, the results can be interpreted along the lines of Cohen's *d*. The point-biserial correlation is a special case of Pearson's product-moment correlation and takes into account that one of the variables is dichotomous, i.e. the distinction between material and cultural debates in our case. The conventional interpretation of the point-biserial correlation is that values between .0 and .09 are considered small, between .10 and .24 medium and above as strong.

Table 69: Effect of debate type on discourse quality (all debates)

DQI_m variable	Effect size		
	Cohen's *d*	Hedge's *g* (unbiased)	Point-biserial correlation *r*
Reciprocity Confidence interval	-.326 [-.387; -.265]	-.325 [-.386; -.263]	-.161 [-.222; .099]
Reflexivity Confidence interval	-.113 [-.193; .032]	-.112 [-.193; .032]	-.056 [-.137; .024]
Perspectives Confidence interval	-0.191 [-.229; -.152]	-0.190 [-.229; -.151]	-0.095 [-.134; .056]
Inclusiveness Confidence interval	.200 [.182; .218]	.200 [.182; .218]	.100 [.082 to .118]
Role change Confidence interval	-0.244 [-.261; -.227]	-0.243 [-.260; -.226]	-0.121 [-.138; -.104]

Table 70: Cohen's *d* and percentage of non-overlap

Effect size	Percent of non-overlap
2.0	81.1%
1.9	79.4%
1.8	77.4%
1.7	75.4%
1.6	73.1%
1.5	70.7%
1.4	68.1%
1.3	65.3%
1.2	62.2%
1.1	58.9%
1.0	55.4%
0.9	51.6%
0.8	47.4%
0.7	43.0%
0.6	38.2%
0.5	33.0%
0.4	27.4%
0.3	21.3%
0.2	14.7%
0.1	7.7%
0.0	0%

Cf. Cohen (1988: 21ff.)

Appendix 12: Descriptive statistics for reflexivity

The following table and the figures give the values for reflexivity as untransformed variable based on its occurrence in speech acts.

Table 71: Descriptives for reflexivity in material/cultural debates

Material	N	Valid	297
		Missing	0
	Mean		3.2222
	Median		2.0000
	Mode		2.00
	Variance		10.809
	Skewness		3.004
	Std. Error of Skewness		.141
	Percentiles	25	1.0000
		50	2.0000
		75	4.0000
Cultural	N	Valid	294
		Missing	0
	Mean		3.8469
	Median		3.0000
	Mode		1.00
	Variance		12.506
	Skewness		1.396
	Std. Error of Skewness		.142
	Percentiles	25	1.0000
		50	3.0000
		75	5.0000

Table 72: Frequency statistics for reflexivity in material debates

			Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Material	Valid	.0	37	12.5	12.5	12.5
		1	48	16.2	16.2	28.6
		2	79	26.6	26.6	55.2
		3	34	11.4	11.4	66.7
		4	34	11.4	11.4	78.1
		5	16	5.4	5.4	83.5
		6	17	5.7	5.7	89.2
		7	7	2.4	2.4	91.6
		8	8	2.7	2.7	94.3
		9	5	1.7	1.7	96.0
		10	1	.3	.3	96.3
		11	2	.7	.7	97.0
		12	1	.3	.3	97.3
		13	3	1.0	1.0	98.3
		14	2	.7	.7	99.0
		16	2	.7	.7	99.7
		30	1	.3	.3	100.0
		Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Table 73: Frequency statistics for reflexivity in cultural debates

			Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Cultural	Valid	.0	32	10.9	10.9	10.9
		1	57	19.4	19.4	30.3
		2	45	15.3	15.3	45.6
		3	39	13.3	13.3	58.8
		4	27	9.2	9.2	68.0
		5	23	7.8	7.8	75.9
		6	12	4.1	4.1	79.9
		7	11	3.7	3.7	83.7
		8	17	5.8	5.8	89.5
		9	10	3.4	3.4	92.9
		10	1	.3	.3	93.2
		11	6	2.0	2.0	95.2
		12	4	1.4	1.4	96.6
		13	5	1.7	1.7	98.3
		14	2	.7	.7	99.0
		16	2	.7	.7	99.7
		20	1	.3	.3	100.0
		Total	294	100.0	100.0	

Figure 74: Distribution of reflexivity in material debates

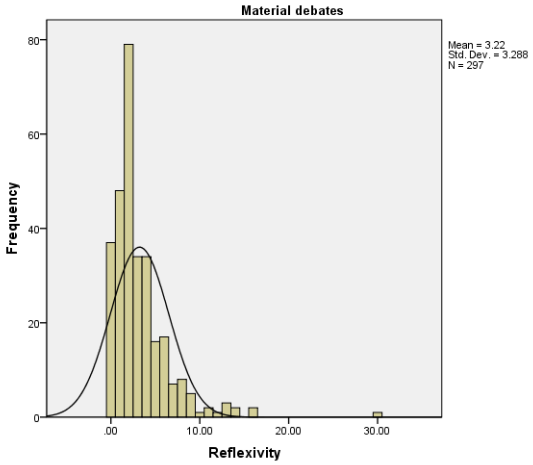

Figure 75: Distribution of reflexivity in cultural debates

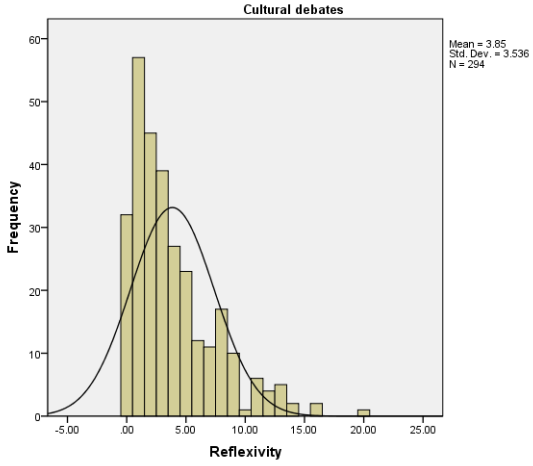

Table 76: Descriptive statistics for reflexivity

		N	Mean
Material	Civil society	297	.3098
	Media	297	.3603
	Economy	297	.4377
	Centre	297	1.1549
	Valid N (listwise)	297	
Cultural	Civil society	294	.3912
	Media	294	.6531
	Economy	294	.2041
	Centre	294	2.0374
	Valid N (listwise)	294	

Appendix 13: Development of inclusiveness

Table 77: Development of speakers

Year	N	Mean
1960	84	.7863
1965	110	.7463
1980	108	.8420
1985	73	.7765
2000	105	.8893
2005	111	.8641

Table 78: Development of addressees

Year	N	Mean
1960	84	.7981
1965	110	.8358
1980	108	.9193
1985	73	.7503
2000	105	.9762
2005	111	.8063

Appendix 14: Discourse coalitions

14.1. Support coalitions

Table 79: Support dyads (frequencies)

year			Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1960	Valid	2.2	3	6.0	6.0	6.0
		2.3	1	2.0	2.0	8.0
		3.2	3	6.0	6.0	14.0
		3.5	2	4.0	4.0	18.0
		4.0	3	6.0	6.0	24.0
		4.4	11	22.0	22.0	46.0
		4.5	4	8.0	8.0	54.0
		5.0	3	6.0	6.0	60.0
		5.2	1	2.0	2.0	62.0
		5.4	1	2.0	2.0	64.0
		5.5	18	36.0	36.0	100.0
		Total	50	100.0	100.0	
1965	Valid	.5	1	2.5	2.5	2.5
		2.2	1	2.5	2.5	5.0
		2.3	1	2.5	2.5	7.5
		3.5	2	5.0	5.0	12.5
		5.2	2	5.0	5.0	17.5
		5.3	2	5.0	5.0	22.5
		5.5	31	77.5	77.5	100.0
		Total	40	100.0	100.0	
1980	Valid	2.4	2	3.4	3.4	3.4
		2.5	2	3.4	3.4	6.9
		3.4	2	3.4	3.4	10.3
		3.5	2	3.4	3.4	13.8
		4.0	1	1.7	1.7	15.5
		4.3	1	1.7	1.7	17.2
		4.4	5	8.6	8.6	25.9
		4.5	9	15.5	15.5	41.4
		5.0	1	1.7	1.7	43.1
		5.2	1	1.7	1.7	44.8
		5.3	1	1.7	1.7	46.6
		5.4	7	12.1	12.1	58.6
		5.5	24	41.4	41.4	100.0
		Total	58	100.0	100.0	
1985	Valid	2.5	2	3.0	3.0	3.0
		3.5	10	15.2	15.2	18.2
		5.4	1	1.5	1.5	19.7
		5.5	53	80.3	80.3	100.0
		Total	66	100.0	100.0	

2000	Valid	2.4	2	9.1	9.1	9.1
		2.5	1	4.5	4.5	13.6
		3.2	1	4.5	4.5	18.2
		3.5	3	13.6	13.6	31.8
		4.4	2	9.1	9.1	40.9
		4.5	5	22.7	22.7	63.6
		5.2	4	18.2	18.2	81.8
		5.4	1	4.5	4.5	86.4
		5.5	3	13.6	13.6	100.0
		Total	22	100.0	100.0	
2005	Valid	.5	1	1.4	1.4	1.4
		2.3	1	1.4	1.4	2.8
		2.5	3	4.2	4.2	6.9
		3.0	1	1.4	1.4	8.3
		3.5	25	34.7	34.7	43.1
		5.0	1	1.4	1.4	44.4
		5.5	40	55.6	55.6	100.0
		Total	72	100.0	100.0	

14.2. Disagreement coalitions

Table 80: Criticism dyads (frequencies)

year			Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1960	Valid	2.0	1	.9	.9	.9
		2.2	6	5.4	5.4	6.3
		2.3	3	2.7	2.7	8.9
		2.5	2	1.8	1.8	10.7
		3.0	1	.9	.9	11.6
		3.2	6	5.4	5.4	17.0
		3.4	1	.9	.9	17.9
		3.5	5	4.5	4.5	22.3
		4.0	1	.9	.9	23.2
		4.4	21	18.8	18.8	42.0
		4.5	9	8.0	8.0	50.0
		5.0	1	.9	.9	50.9
		5.2	3	2.7	2.7	53.6
		5.4	11	9.8	9.8	63.4
		5.5	41	36.6	36.6	100.0
		Total	112	100.0	100.0	
1965	Valid	2.0	3	2.5	2.5	2.5
		2.2	8	6.7	6.7	9.2
		2.3	3	2.5	2.5	11.7
		2.5	19	15.8	15.8	27.5
		3.0	2	1.7	1.7	29.2
		3.2	2	1.7	1.7	30.8
		3.5	10	8.3	8.3	39.2
		4.0	1	.8	.8	40.0
		4.2	1	.8	.8	40.8
		4.3	1	.8	.8	41.7
		4.5	1	.8	.8	42.5
		5.2	6	5.0	5.0	47.5
		5.3	3	2.5	2.5	50.0
		5.5	60	50.0	50.0	100.0
		Total	120	100.0	100.0	

1980	Valid	2.2	1	.5	.5	.5
		2.4	12	6.0	6.0	6.5
		2.5	5	2.5	2.5	9.0
		3.2	1	.5	.5	9.5
		3.3	1	.5	.5	10.0
		3.4	12	6.0	6.0	15.9
		3.5	9	4.5	4.5	20.4
		4.0	4	2.0	2.0	22.4
		4.2	4	2.0	2.0	24.4
		4.3	1	.5	.5	24.9
		4.4	24	11.9	11.9	36.8
		4.5	24	11.9	11.9	48.8
		5.0	7	3.5	3.5	52.2
		5.2	4	2.0	2.0	54.2
		5.3	1	.5	.5	54.7
		5.4	18	9.0	9.0	63.7
		5.5	73	36.3	36.3	100.0
		Total	201	100.0	100.0	
1985	Valid	1.5	2	1.2	1.2	1.2
		2.5	5	3.0	3.0	4.2
		3.5	21	12.6	12.6	16.8
		5.0	2	1.2	1.2	18.0
		5.2	2	1.2	1.2	19.2
		5.3	1	.6	.6	19.8
		5.5	134	80.2	80.2	100.0
		Total	167	100.0	100.0	
2000	Valid	2.0	1	.6	.6	.6
		2.2	3	1.9	1.9	2.6
		2.3	2	1.3	1.3	3.9
		2.4	4	2.6	2.6	6.5
		2.5	15	9.7	9.7	16.2
		3.0	1	.6	.6	16.9
		3.2	6	3.9	3.9	20.8
		3.3	5	3.2	3.2	24.0
		3.4	4	2.6	2.6	26.6
		3.5	15	9.7	9.7	36.4
		4.2	6	3.9	3.9	40.3
		4.4	10	6.5	6.5	46.8
		4.5	13	8.4	8.4	55.2
		5.0	2	1.3	1.3	56.5
		5.2	16	10.4	10.4	66.9
		5.4	13	8.4	8.4	75.3
		5.5	38	24.7	24.7	100.0
		Total	154	100.0	100.0	
2005	Valid	2.5	57	15.8	15.8	15.8
		3.0	4	1.1	1.1	16.9
		3.2	2	.6	.6	17.5
		3.5	69	19.2	19.2	36.7
		4.5	1	.3	.3	36.9
		5.0	7	1.9	1.9	38.9
		5.1	1	.3	.3	39.2
		5.2	6	1.7	1.7	40.8
		5.3	1	.3	.3	41.1
		5.5	212	58.9	58.9	100.0
		Total	360	100.0	100.0	

14.3. Demand coalitions

Table 81: Demand dyads (frequencies)

year			Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1960	Valid	2.0	2	1.1	1.1	1.1
		2.3	1	.5	.5	1.6
		2.5	4	2.1	2.1	3.7
		3.0	8	4.2	4.2	7.9
		3.2	1	.5	.5	8.4
		3.5	15	7.9	7.9	16.3
		4.0	23	12.1	12.1	28.4
		4.4	21	11.1	11.1	39.5
		4.5	35	18.4	18.4	57.9
		5.0	21	11.1	11.1	68.9
		5.2	3	1.6	1.6	70.5
		5.4	4	2.1	2.1	72.6
		5.5	52	27.4	27.4	100.0
		Total	190	100.0	100.0	
1965	Valid	2.0	5	2.0	2.0	2.0
		2.2	8	3.2	3.2	5.2
		2.3	4	1.6	1.6	6.8
		2.5	28	11.2	11.2	17.9
		3.0	5	2.0	2.0	19.9
		3.2	2	.8	.8	20.7
		3.5	26	10.4	10.4	31.1
		4.0	1	.4	.4	31.5
		4.2	1	.4	.4	31.9
		4.4	2	.8	.8	32.7
		4.5	16	6.4	6.4	39.0
		5.0	11	4.4	4.4	43.4
		5.2	15	6.0	6.0	49.4
		5.3	2	.8	.8	50.2
		5.4	1	.4	.4	50.6
		5.5	124	49.4	49.4	100.0
		Total	251	100.0	100.0	
1980	Valid	2.2	1	.7	.7	.7
		2.3	1	.7	.7	1.3
		2.4	1	.7	.7	2.0
		2.5	1	.7	.7	2.6
		3.2	1	.7	.7	3.3
		3.3	1	.7	.7	4.0
		3.4	8	5.3	5.3	9.3
		3.5	1	.7	.7	9.9
		4.0	3	2.0	2.0	11.9
		4.2	4	2.6	2.6	14.6
		4.3	2	1.3	1.3	15.9
		4.4	35	23.2	23.2	39.1
		4.5	11	7.3	7.3	46.4
		5.0	1	.7	.7	47.0
		5.2	6	4.0	4.0	51.0
		5.3	1	.7	.7	51.7
		5.4	20	13.2	13.2	64.9
		5.5	53	35.1	35.1	100.0
		Total	151	100.0	100.0	
1985	Valid	1.5	2	2.1	2.1	2.1
		2.0	1	1.1	1.1	3.2
		2.2	2	2.1	2.1	5.3
		2.5	7	7.4	7.4	12.6
		3.0	3	3.2	3.2	15.8
		3.5	14	14.7	14.7	30.5
		5.0	3	3.2	3.2	33.7
		5.2	1	1.1	1.1	34.7
		5.4	1	1.1	1.1	35.8
		5.5	61	64.2	64.2	100.0
		Total	95	100.0	100.0	

2000	Valid	2.2	3	2.6	2.6	2.6
		2.5	17	14.7	14.7	17.2
		3.2	2	1.7	1.7	19.0
		3.5	15	12.9	12.9	31.9
		4.2	2	1.7	1.7	33.6
		4.4	2	1.7	1.7	35.3
		4.5	29	25.0	25.0	60.3
		5.2	4	3.4	3.4	63.8
		5.4	8	6.9	6.9	70.7
		5.5	34	29.3	29.3	100.0
		Total	116	100.0	100.0	
2005	Valid	2.0	1	.5	.5	.5
		2.1	1	.5	.5	1.1
		2.2	2	1.1	1.1	2.1
		2.5	22	11.6	11.6	13.7
		3.2	2	1.1	1.1	14.7
		3.5	26	13.7	13.7	28.4
		4.5	1	.5	.5	28.9
		5.0	11	5.8	5.8	34.7
		5.1	1	.5	.5	35.3
		5.2	1	.5	.5	35.8
		5.5	122	64.2	64.2	100.0
		Total	190	100.0	100.0	

Appendix 15: Effect of actor classes on the DQI_m

The appendix reports only the tables for the statistically significant relationships.

All the coefficients given in the tables below are those of the full models except the rows labelled "restricted" which give the coefficients for the regression models with only the explanatory variable and no covariates.

15.1. Reciprocity

Table 82: Regression of reciprocity on centre actors (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.14375	0.059435	2.419	0.01589	0.4241	0.6187	567.0
Centre)	0.106494	0.03979	2.676	0.00766			
(restricted)	0.38729	0.04328	8.948	<2e-16	.289	.712	570.0
Author	0.162551	0.076111	2.136	0.03313			
Length	0.108257	0.008155	13.275	< 2e-16			
Style	-0.014976	0.03982	-0.376	0.70698			

15.2. Reflexivity

Table 83: Regression of reflexivity on media actors (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.64877	0.045976	14.111	< 2e-16			
Media	0.240168	0.036414	6.595	9.66E-11	0.4872	0.5048	572.6
(restricted)	0.33641	0.04680	7.188	2.08e-12	.084	.661	565.7
Author	0.151863	0.061055	2.487	0.0132			
Length	0.105612	0.005036	20.971	< 2e-16			
Style	0.005425	0.031721	0.171	0.8643			

Table 84: Regression of reflexivity on centre actors (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	1.053084	0.089494	11.767	<2e-16			
Centre	0.3071	0.029844	10.29	<2e-16	.45	.521	571.9
(restricted)	0.30566	0.02904	10.53	<2e-16	.160	.646	582.3
Author	-0.094199	0.081744	-1.152	0.25			
Style	0.005924	0.040976	0.145	0.885			

Table 85: Regression of reflexivity on periphery (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.745754	0.075176	9.92	<2e-16			
Periphery	0.104065	0.044309	2.349	0.0192	0.4531	0.5203	571
(restricted)	0.05738	0.05791	0.991	0.322	0.001728	0.6837	567.2
Author	-0.073427	0.066317	-1.107	0.2687			
Length	0.108162	0.005029	21.506	<2e-16			
Style	0.026843	0.032844	0.817	0.4141			

15.3. Perspectives

Table 86: Regression of perspectives on civil society (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.57677	0.034282	16.824	< 2e-16			
Civil society	0.106159	0.035991	2.95	0.00332	0.4073	0.3688	558.1
(restricted)	0.06580	0.03980	1.653	0.0989	.005	.461	536.9
Author	0.001507	0.050288	0.03	0.9761			
Length	0.07029	0.003782	18.587	< 2e-16			
Style	-0.010021	0.02353	-0.426	0.67036			

Table 87: Regression of perspectives on media actors (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.56676	0.033132	17.106	< 2e-16			
Media	0.16596	0.026455	6.273	7.10E-10	0.4364	0.3587	557.2
(restricted)	0.22783	0.03375	6.75	3.86e-11	.079	.451	558.1
Author	0.102215	0.043923	2.327	0.0203			
Length	0.067221	0.003659	18.374	< 2e-16			
Style	-0.023002	0.022835	-1.007	0.3142			

Table 88: Regression of perspectives on centre actors (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.781597	0.062119	12.582	<2e-16			
Centre	0.191465	0.0208	9.205	<2e-16	.142	.445	570.3
(restricted)	0.19526	0.02026	9.638	<2e-16	.140	.445	571.7
Author	0.006068	0.056758	0.107	0.915			
Style	-0.027969	0.028468	-0.982	0.326			

15.4. Inclusiveness

Table 89: Regression of inclusiveness on civil society (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.725058	0.019242	37.681	< 2e-16			
Civil society	0.199804	0.021151	9.447	< 2e-16	0.2183	0.1986	512.3
(restricted)	0.08793	0.02143	4.104	4.79e-05	.034	.224	473.6
Author	-0.218858	0.030571	-7.159	2.83E-12			
Length	0.011029	0.002122	5.198	2.91E-07			
Style	0.029461	0.013295	2.216	0.0271			

Table 90: Regression of inclusiveness on media actors (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.745367	0.019756	37.728	< 2e-16			
Media	0.072992	0.016565	4.406	1.28E-05	0.1081	0.2017	516
(restricted)	0.07122	0.01871	3.807	0.00016	.031	.222	459.9
Author	-0.062459	0.0249	-2.508	0.0124			
Length	0.01055	0.00225	4.688	3.53E-06			
Style	0.008595	0.013351	0.644	0.52			

15.5. Role change

Table 91: Regression of role change on civil society (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	1.3766852	0.0167055	82.409	< 2e-16			
Civil society	0.051047	0.0183621	2.78	0.00565	0.02188	0.1684	483.0
(restricted)	0.038851	0.015195	2.557	0.0109	.022	.168	482.9
Author	-0.050337	0.0246003	-2.046	0.04128			
Length	-0.0002355	0.0018075	-0.13	0.89641			
Style	-0.0145762	0.0116405	-1.252	0.2111			

Table 92: Regression of role change on media actors (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	1.3794522	0.0167356	82.426	< 2e-16			
Media	0.0465892	0.0155921	2.988	0.00295	0.02591	0.1705	486.0
(restricted)	0.043276	0.015210	2.845	0.00463	.017	.172	475.7
Author	-0.0111361	0.0219	-0.508	0.61133			
Length	-0.0008666	0.0018326	-0.473	0.63652			
Style	-0.0219916	0.0115965	-1.896	0.0585			

Appendix 16: Effect of discourse coalitions on the DQI_m

The appendix reports only the tables for the statistically significant relationships.

All the coefficients given in the tables below are those of the full models except the rows labelled "restricted" which give the coefficients for the regression models with only the explanatory variable and no covariates.

16.1. Support of the centre

Table 93: Regression of reciprocity on centre support (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.200894	0.056524	3.554	0.000411			
Centre support	0.182917	0.0692	2.643	0.008437	0.4198	0.6214	566.6
(restricted)	0.71201	0.07571	9.404	<2E-16	.142	.752	536.1
Author	0.126173	0.075191	1.678	0.093893			
Length	0.112552	0.006993	16.095	< 2E-16			
Style	-0.028089	0.039522	-0.711	0.477553			

16.2. Demands towards the centre

Table 94: Regression of reciprocity on centre demands (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.86887	0.10619	8.183	1.78E-15			
Centre demand	0.32988	0.05433	6.071	2.33E-09	0.08256	0.7808	565
(restricted)	0.33979	0.05441	6.245	8.39e-10	0.0652	0.7885	559.2
Author	-0.16478	0.10008	-1.646	0.1002			
Style	-0.12334	0.04935	-2.499	0.0127			

Table 95: Regression of role change on centre demands (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	1.400634	0.016328	85.784	<2E-16			
Centre demand	-0.036913	0.014403	-2.563	0.0107	.0234	.1689	509
(restricted)	-0.02122	0.01247	-1.701	0.0895	.006	.171	476.5
Author	-0.020552	0.021293	-0.965	0.3349			
Length	0.002761	0.00206	1.341	0.1806			
Style	-0.02587	0.011257	-2.298	0.022			

16.3. Demands towards economic actors

Table 96: Regression of inclusiveness on economy demands (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.729988	0.032724	22.307	< 2e-16			
Economy demand	0.077729	0.035335	2.2	0.0283	0.06425	0.2121	491.5
(restricted)	0.10527	0.03907	2.695	0.00731	.015	.2221	447.6
Author	0.015136	0.028823	0.525	0.5997			
Length	0.012862	0.00261	4.928	1.14E-06			
Style	0.004318	0.014834	0.291	0.7711			

Table 97: Regression of role change on economy demands (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	1.388422	0.0174843	79.41	< 2E-16			
Economy demand	-0.1211259	0.0329543	-3.676	0.000263	.038	.1815	490.4
(restricted)[a]	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Author	-0.0236454	0.023225	-1.018	0.309132			
Length	0.0007156	0.0019527	0.366	0.71416			
Style	-0.0184596	0.0125383	-1.472	0.141592			

[a] The restricted model did not converge on any of the robust regression functions used.

16.4. Effect of the centre demand coalition on the centre's presence

Table 98: Regression of centre coalition on centre presence (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.80356	0.11024	7.289	1.02E-12			
Centre coalition	0.58887	0.05604	10.508	< 2e-16	0.204	0.8223	582.4
(restricted)	0.62681	0.05687	11.02	<2e-16	0.1745	0.8369	574.7
Author	0.01098	0.10384	0.106	0.916			
Style	-0.23472	0.05128	-4.577	5.77E-06			

Article length was excluded from this model as the examined relationship presupposes a higher length of articles in order to be able to unfold.

16.5. Criticism of the centre

Table 99: Regression of perspectives on centre criticism (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.573553	0.03342	17.162	< 2E-16			
Centre criticism	0.164793	0.029923	5.507	5.56E-08	.4239	.3628	559.4
(restricted)	0.37196	0.02507	14.84	<2E-16	.2825	.4031	559
Author	0.048834	0.044196	1.105	0.27			
Length	0.053051	0.004743	11.185	< 2E-16			
Style	-0.002173	0.023198	-0.094	0.925			

Table 100: Regression of role change on centre criticism (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	1.382211	0.025385	54.45	< 2e-16			
Centre criticism	0.043276	0.014377	3.01	0.00274	0.02581	0.1687	512
(restricted)	0.03186	0.01089	2.927	0.00358	0.01696	0.1684	496.5
Author	-0.008898	0.023039	-0.386	0.69951			
Length	-0.003868	0.002223	-1.74	0.08244			
Style	-0.017148	0.011364	-1.509	0.13191			

Table 101: Regression of reciprocity on centre criticism (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.169064	0.056216	3.007	0.00275			
Centre criticism	0.251965	0.050132	5.026	6.71E-07	.433	.6143	571
(restricted)	0.63499	0.04290	14.80	<2E-16	.280	.6913	563.0
Author	0.089626	0.07437	1.205	0.22865			
Length	0.094412	0.007929	11.907	< 2E-16			
Style	-0.016441	0.039079	-0.421	0.67413			

Table 102: Regression of reflexivity on centre criticism (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.647458	0.046338	13.973	< 2E-16			
Centre criticism	0.263065	0.041444	6.348	4.44E-10	.4775	.509	574.7
(restricted)	0.58547	0.03532	16.58	<2E-16	.3232	.576	575.5
Author	0.068874	0.061464	1.121	0.263			
Length	0.082424	0.006557	12.57	< 2E-16			
Style	0.043675	0.032207	1.356	0.176			

16.6. Criticism of the economy

Table 103: Regression of perspectives on economy criticism (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.602939	0.033781	17.848	<2E-16			
Economy criticism	0.123211	0.050915	2.42	0.0158	0.4043	.4688	557
(restricted)	0.20349	0.06341	3.209	0.00141	.01896	0.4641	532.8
Author	0.078574	0.044833	1.753	0.0802			
Length	0.069179	0.003822	18.101	<2E-16			
Style	-0.035507	0.024697	-1.438	0.1511			

Table 104: Regression of inclusiveness on economy criticism (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.763465	0.020263	37.678	< 2e-16			
Economy criticism	0.122617	0.032019	3.829	0.000144	0.1003	.2059	509.9
(restricted)[a]	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Author	-0.069155	0.025386	-2.724	0.006668			
Length	0.010869	0.002428	4.477	9.34E-06			
Style	-0.006009	0.014374	-0.418	0.676083			

[a] The restricted model did not converge on any of the robust regression functions used.

16.7. Criticism of civil society

Table 105: Regression of reflexivity on civil society criticism (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.67465	0.046842	14.403	< 2E-16			
Civil society criticism	0.309278	0.083554	3.702	0.000235	0.4597	0.5168	572.2
(restricted)	0.27174	0.10948	2.482	0.0133	0.01072	0.6821	568.6
Author	0.096475	0.062163	1.552	0.121224			
Length	0.109351	0.005142	21.264	< 2E-16			
Style	0.007474	0.032592	0.229	0.818688			

Table 106: Regression of perspectives on civil society criticism (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.583931	0.033381	17.493	< 2E-16			
Civil society criticism	0.266795	0.060438	4.414	1.22E-05	0.3639	0.4187	557.3
(restricted)	0.26050	0.08210	3.173	0.0016	0.01875	0.4627	526.8
Author	0.059031	0.044243	1.334	0.183			
Length	0.07001	0.003707	18.886	< 2E-16			
Style	-0.02393	0.023174	-1.033	0.302			

Table 107: Regression of inclusiveness on economy criticism (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.742631	0.019831	37.448	< 2E-16			
Civil society criticism	0.177976	0.038046	4.678	3.71E-06	0.2034	0.1205	515.7
(restricted)[a]	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Author	-0.077001	0.025033	-3.076	0.00221			
Length	0.012671	0.002361	5.367	1.21E-07			
Style	0.009209	0.013399	0.687	0.49219			

[a] The restricted model did not converge on any of the robust regression functions used.

Appendix 17: Effect of criticism on the DQI_m

Table 108: Regression of reciprocity on criticism (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.269258	0.087307	3.084	0.00214			
Criticism	0.264768	0.05085	5.207	2.68E-07	0.4361	0.6121	576
(restricted)	0.65893	0.04175	15.79	< 2e-16	0.3019	0.6783	576
Author	-0.111451	0.077807	-1.432	0.15257			
Length	0.089488	0.007965	11.235	< 2e-16			
Style	-0.053627	0.038516	-1.392	0.16436			

Table 109: Regression of reflexivity on criticism (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.646242	0.070143	9.213	<2e-16			
Criticism	0.386835	0.040899	9.458	<2e-16	0.5148	0.4928	578.4
(restricted)	0.67258	0.03306	20.34	<2e-16	0.4174	0.5385	577.8
Author	-0.03318	0.062524	-0.531	0.596			
Length	0.066435	0.006392	10.394	<2e-16			
Style	-0.004419	0.030878	-0.143	0.886			

Table 110: Regression of perspectives on criticism (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.502813	0.050237	10.009	< 2e-16			
Criticism	0.28278	0.02933	9.641	< 2e-16	0.4692	0.3515	571.7
(restricted)	0.44335	0.02315	19.15	<2e-16	0.3927	0.3733	566.9
Author	0.046474	0.04478	1.038	0.3			
Length	0.038051	0.004611	8.253	1.11E-15			
Style	-0.032681	0.02214	-1.476	0.14			

Table 111: Regression of inclusiveness on criticism (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.705329	0.032248	21.872	< 2e-16			
Criticism	0.051557	0.018486	2.789	0.00549	0.0723	0.2098	504.6
(restricted)	0.08547	0.01381	6.19	1.21e-09	0.0675	0.2108	529.2
Author	0.02151	0.028101	0.765	0.44435			
Length	0.00892	0.003318	2.689	0.00741			
Style	0.010642	0.014106	0.754	0.45093			

Table 112: Regression of role change on criticism (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	1.381043	0.025801	53.526	< 2e-16			
Criticism	0.042191	0.014771	2.856	0.00446	0.02497	0.1693	511.5
(restricted)	0.03023	0.01090	2.774	0.00574	0.01531	0.1681	495
Author	-0.007467	0.02319	-0.322	0.74761			
Length	-0.003983	0.002319	-1.718	0.08641			
Style	-0.02444	0.011284	-2.166	0.03078			

Table 113: Regression of justification actors on criticism (all debates)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients				Multiple R-squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	df
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.			
(Intercept)	0.9639488	0.0562977	17.122	<2e-16			
Criticism	-0.0419638	0.0328658	-1.277	0.2022	0.01835	0.3802	530.9
(restricted)	-0.04799	0.02353	-2.04	0.0419	0.00816	0.3638	505.5
Author	-0.0428224	0.0503593	-0.85	0.3955			
Length	-0.0005926	0.0051455	-0.115	0.9084			
Style	-0.061285	0.0246754	-2.484	0.0133			

Appendix 18: Code book for the Discourse Quality Index for the media (DQI_m)

1. Unit of Analysis

The basic unit of analysis is the speech act. However, coded are only those speech acts which have a normative aspect of a political issue as their topic. This may relate not only to the issue itself, but also to the meta-level of politics, i.e. how the issue is being dealt with, etc. We can further distinguish four perspectives a speaker can adopt, i.e. four different illocutionary categories: statements, demands, criticism, and support. For a speech act to be classified as demands, criticism, or support, the relationship established between speaker and addressee through the illocution has to be explicit.

If a speaker establishes several different discursive relationships with the addressee, or similar discursive relationships but on different topics or aspects of it, then these are coded separately.

1.1. Statements

Statements relate a factual view of a normative state of affairs. The speaker seeks to relate the facts, without taking on a normative position him- or herself. The speech acts to be coded in this category mostly consist of declarations and information about the fact that the e.g. the government will take action with regard to a specific political issue, or that a bill has passed the Commons, etc. Though most statements convey a relationship between the speaker and the addressees, as long as that relationship is not made explicit, the speech acts are coded as statements.

Examples

(1) Prior to the Day of Action in 1980 the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF) showed its support of the stance taken by the TUC by announcing that no trains would be running on the 14th of May. → In this case the speech act is coded as a statement. Had the ASLEF explicitly stated that the strike is intended as a support of the TUC's struggle against the government's proposal it would have been coded as support.

(2) During the same debate in 1980, James Prior, the Secretary of State for Employment, said that further legislation might be introduced if the bill does not work as intended. It depends on unions and management whether further legislation will be introduced. → This is an announcement which makes neither demands nor does it support or criticise the addressees, hence it is coded as a statement

1.2. Demands

This category comprises not only demands in the strict sense of the terms, it also includes suggestions, requests, advice, etc. Here, the speaker establishes a relationship with the addressee in which the changing of some aspects of the status quo is the topic, and the speaker wishes the addressee to comply with his or her requests. This may concern concrete

policy proposals but can also extend to the way the political process and the discussion is structured, i.e. it can also touch upon aspects situated on a meta-level. Typically, the initiators of political change are those who voice their demands most clearly, though they are not confined to them.

Examples

(1) During the fuel protest in 2000 *The Times* reported that "[m]otorists demand a cut of at least 21.5p on a litre of petrol in a new poll today which coincides with the first rise in petrol pump prices – up an average of 2p per litre – since the fuel protests."

(2) During the same debate, Lord Prior, "the former Tory Cabinet Minister, intervened to ask, in view of the Government's new policy of listening and contrition, 'would it not be appropriate if you made some apology to the country for the complete mess the Government has made of the whole petrol crisis?'" → Here the speaker suggests appropriate behaviour which, according to our definition, is part of the category of demands.

1.3. Criticism

In the same vein of demands, criticism takes issue with the status quo, though it does not directly attempt to change it but first of all evaluates it negatively. The speaker criticises the addressee for dysfunctions caused by the political system, or for wrong behaviour, etc. and does so explicitly.

Examples

(1) During the Commons' debate of the anti-terror legislation proposed by the Labour Government, the Conservative MP David Davies stated: "Under these proposals, for the first time in modern British history, a politician will be able by order to restrain the liberties of a British subject," the shadow home secretary, David Davis, told Mr Clarke. "You are planning to sacrifice essential, long-standing principles of British liberty and justice in a way which may act to reduce that security."

(2) In the same debate "MPs accused ministers of displaying "contempt" for Parliament by forcing the bill through the Commons in just six hours, and condemned Mr Clarke for announcing major concessions without allowing MPs to debate his new proposals in detail." → this criticism does not so much concern the bill itself, but is directed against the way it is dealt with.

1.4. Support

Contrary to criticism, support is shown by those speech acts which establish a positive relationship between the speaker and the addressee. The speaker explicitly supports the position of the addressee or the way he or she acts, or agrees with a justification forwarded by the speaker, etc.

Examples

(1) During the unilateral disarmament debate in 1960 the "Earl of Swinton [...] welcomed the courageous repudiation which Mr. Gaitskell had given to such a proposal [unilateral disarmament]" → Here, the focus is on the relationship between the Earl of Swinton, the speaker, and Hugh Gaitskell, the Labour Party leader at the time. The speaker supports the stance taken by the addressee. The criticism voiced by the addressee towards a third party is not coded.

(2) In the same debate, "[t]he Parliamentary Labour party endorsed with a few dissentients his [Gaitskell's] demand that Britain should stay in Nato and that Nato should retain nuclear weapons as long as Russia has them."

Codes

1 – Statement

2 – Demand

3 – Criticism

4 – Support

99 – Other, not defined

2. Actor classes

As speech act typically consists of a speaker, an addressee, and of actors which appear as part of the justification, if the speaker gives reasons for the validity claim he or she has raised. All these actors are coded according to the classes defined below.

The speaker is the actor who raises a validity claim through a speech act. The addressee is the actor to whom the validity claim is addressed. The justification actor is that actor who might appear in the justifications given by a speaker to support his or her validity claim.

Example: In debate in the Lords during the fuel protest "[t]he Tories seized on the Government's lack of contrition. Bernard Jenkin, the Tory Transport spokesman, said the remarks showed the Government had been weak for refusing to admit it had been wrong, while leading protestors 'up the garden path' by insisting it had been listening." Here, Bernard Jenkin is the speaker, the Labour Government the addressee, and the protestors are the justification actors as they appear as part of the reason Jenkin gives.

2.1. Actor classification

"Uncivil" society

Terrorist suspects, criminals, and generally actors who are suspected or convicted of having committed illegal acts if no further classification is given. That is, politicians embroiled in terrorist activities are coded as belonging to the political centre. If, however, they are merely referred to as actors suspected of terrorist activities, i.e. without any further specification, they are coded as part of the "uncivil" society.

Civil society

Citizens, private persons such as most of the authors of letters to the editor, established and non-established actors with roots in civil society such as Green Peace, the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination, etc. which are independent in that they are neither part of the political-administrative system nor of the economy.

Media

The media themselves, mostly represented by their journalists in columns, analysis, and commentaries.

Economy

The economic sector, represented not only by companies, factories, banks, etc. but also by employers and important employees and unions. Their primary interest is the (legal) structure and functionality of the economic system.

Political-administrative system

This includes not only the government, cabinet, the administration, but also the parliamentary bodies, i.e. the Commons and the House of Lords, and in addition to this the political parties, the local executives, etc., i.e. all those actors whose primary interest and work is concerned with policy formulation and administration and who are part of representative bodies and organisations within the political system.

Codes

1 – "Uncivil" society

2 – Civil society

3 – Media

4 – Economy

5 – Political system

99 – Other, not defined

3. Reciprocity

This variable helps us to determine the dialogicality of the debates. While speakers in most of the cases refer to something someone else has said, *reciprocity* records only those instances where the relationship is explicitly established. We can distinguish four categories according to the degree of explicitness:

No reciprocity

No reciprocity means that the relationship established between the speaker and the addressee does not include a reference to a previous utterance or action of the addressee.

Simple reciprocity

Simple reciprocity means that the speaker addresses explicitly a previous utterance or action by the addressee, without, however, giving any more detail about it. As readers we simply know that the addressee has made some utterance or been involved in some action in the past.

Example

During the union rights debate in 1980 the General Secretary of the Trade Union Congress "Mr Len Murray refused to see the Day of Action as a strike." → Here, Murray is obviously referring to an utterance made by another speaker, but we neither know whose utterance it is, nor what the exact content of it was.

Credit/acknowledgement

In this case, the speaker explicitly acknowledges a point made by the addressee, but remains on a general level and does not go into it in greater detail. The dialogic relationship established is strong than a simple reciprocity, but it is not dialogic in the true sense of the term.

Example

In a Commons debate on the issue of control orders for the Home Secretary as part of the Labour Government's proposed anti-terror legislation in 2005 "Mark Oaten, the Liberal Democrat home affairs spokesman, said: 'This concession is a welcome step but does not go far enough. The changes promised today mean that judges will authorise some control orders but not all. The Home Secretary will still be able to restrict suspects' movements and communications without having to go to a judge.'" → Oaten explicitly acknowledges a point, namely that the government has made certain concessions. But neither from this extract, nor from the rest of the article can we infer what these concessions consist of. We thus have a stronger relationship than on the previous level, but it still does not touch on the proper content of the addressee's previous utterance.

Full reciprocity

On the highest level the speaker not only acknowledges a previous point made by the addressee, but engages in more detail with its content.

Example

In a commentary on the debate about the anti-terror legislation proposed by the Labour Government in 2005, a journalist of *The Daily Telegraph* argued that "Mr Blair's justification for taking away these ancient freedoms is a flimsy one. He says that no one will be deprived of his liberty without this being approved within a week by a senior judge in the High Court, followed by a full High Court hearing with full rights of appeal to the High Court. This doesn't deal with the assault on civil liberties in the slightest. It is still the case that the Home Secretary can put anyone he wants under house arrest without the suspect being told what he is accused of or on what evidence. The right to a later hearing by a senior judge or any High Court appeal hardly take the edge off this initial battering of civil liberty." → Here, the speaker, i.e.

the journalist of *The Daily Telegraph*, not only raises a point made previously by the addressee in general terms, but engages with the argument in a detailed way ("He says that no one will be deprived [...]").

Codes

0 – No reciprocity

1 – Simple reciprocity

2 – Acknowledgement

3 – Full reciprocity

99 – Other, unclear

4. Reflexivity

Reflexivity refers to the number of justifications the speaker provides for his or her validity claim. Often, positions are not simply communicated by a speaker to an addressee, but they are also argued for, i.e. the speaker gives reasons why he or she supports or criticises the addressee, or why he makes demands. The give-and-take of reasons lies at the heart of the deliberative model and the reflexivity variable records the extent to which a validity claim raised by a speaker through the uttering of a speech act is supplemented with reasons. It is important to see that this variable does not code the content of the justifications given, but restricts itself to the counting the number of different justifications offered by a speaker. If the same justification is given by the same actor more than once, it is counted only as one reason. Moreover, justifications do not have to follow the raised validity claim immediately, but it has to be clear that the justification is uttered by the same speaker. Justifications with no clearly discernible speaker and/or validity claim are not coded. While very often justifications are introduced with linguistic markers such as "because", "since", "hence", "therefore", etc., this does not necessarily have to be case and we also code justifications that have only an implicit linguistic connection to the validity claim raised by the speaker. Even if they have more narrative than logical-argumentative forms they still count as justifications. We take a broad view of arguments as actors who make a case, independent of the formal aspects through which it takes shape. Additionally, therefore, justifications do not necessarily have to take the form of declaratives, they can also be made in the form of interrogatives.[1]

Because of the nature of newspaper articles and in order to keep the coding procedure simple and reliable, we only distinguish between three categories: a speaker offers no justification, one justification, or two or more justifications. Furthermore, justifications do not have to be fully fledged in order to count as a complete reason. Since we cannot expect that newspapers report the statements made by the actors verbatim, we will also count truncated arguments as justifications as long as they clearly support the speaker's position and their content is discernible (see below).

[1] Exchanges during Prime Minister's question time, for instance, by their very definition take the form of questions, yet from a pragmatic point of view MPs forward arguments.

No justification

Here, the speaker raises a validity claim, i.e. he or she makes a statement, utters a demand or criticism, or supports the addressee's position, but does not provide any further reasons for it.

Example

During the fuel protest in 2000 *The Times* reported that "[t]he Government has backed away from immediate changes in the law, although Mr Straw said that he was keeping his options open 'in the medium term'". Here, no justification for the change of heart is given, the Government simply announces the revised stance it takes on the issue.

One justification

In contrast to the previous level, the speaker here supports the raised validity claim with one justification in the form that the reason supports the discursive relationship established by the validity claim.

Example

Anti-terror legislation 2005: "Critics [of the anti-terror legislation] are particularly unhappy that the home secretary would be able to impose the control orders on his own initiative, arguing that to do so would undermine the traditional separation between executive and judicial powers." → Here, those who oppose the bill do so because they fear that once enacted, the law could blur one of the basic achievements of the modern nation-state, the separation of powers. This is given as justification for their critical stance.

Example

Anti-terror legislation 2005: "The government's defendants of the new terrorism bill ask the hypothetical question: suppose we don't implement the proposed regulations and we have a terrorist attack – would we not properly be blamed for failing to protect the public? But is not an equally valid question: suppose the bill is passed into law but we do have a terrorist attack – what further restrictive measures shall we put into place?" → Here, the justification takes the form of a question: the author of a letter to the editor in the debate about the anti-terror legislation in 2005 opposes the Government's plans by arguing that even restrictive measures cannot guarantee absolute safety and that a further terrorist attack could only be answered politically by putting in place even more restrictive measures.

Two or more than two justifications

The only difference to the previous level in this case is that the speaker provides at least two justifications for the validity claim raised.

Example

Fuel protest 2000: "Industry, politicians and motoring organisations combined yesterday in a call to Gordon Brown to cut fuel duty in the face of rising world oil prices. Ministers were warned that failure to reduce petrol prices in Britain, the most expensive country in the EU for fuel, would cost thousands of jobs, provoke widespread smuggling and cost the Government seats at the next election." → Here, the protesters and those who oppose the Government's position cite three reasons why they think the Cabinet should lower the taxes – the biggest factor in the composition of the price – on fuel. Maintaining or increasing the taxes would result in a higher unemployment rate, smuggling, and a decrease in Labour's share of votes in the next general election.

Codes

0 – No justification

1 – One justification

2 – Two or more than two justifications

99 – Unclear

5. Perspectives

This variable examines more closely the content of the reasons given. In order to keep the coding simple and reliable, we record only the first of the justifications, if there are more than one. The classification is for the most part adapted from Kuhlmann (1999) who employs 49 categories. These have been further combined and simplified to 23 which are listed below. In order to be able to make the coding amenable to further statistical analysis, we do not categories the content directly, but rather code the context of the justifications, which is a more abstract aspect and more widely applicable than the details of the content.

Codes

(1) *Action, general:* this is coded, when reference is made only in very general terms to action taken, either in the past, present, or future, e.g. when a journalist writes that it is time Britain acted on the threat of terror. → Here, we do not know what kind of action is meant specifically.

(2) *Action, political:* this refers more specifically to political action, be it parties introducing a bill in parliament, the government announcing action, challengers demanding a change in the current policy, etc.

(3) *Action, other:* if the action involved is neither of a very abstract and general nature nor political, etc.

(4) *Action, meta-level:* if the actions themselves become the topic, e.g. if MPs complain that a bill is being rushed through parliament, or that the tone of the discussion prevents proper deliberation, etc.

(5) *Goals/consequences, general:* if the aims of a policy or the consequences it could cause are the main topic, or generally the actions of groups or single actors, etc.,

e.g. when a Tory MP says that the party will have to communicate it goals more clearly to the voters. → Here, we do not know what kind of goals the MP has mind, we only know that he or she is generally speaking about goals the party needs to pursue.

Note that goals/consequences overrule actions: if justifications mention consequences and actions, only the consequences are coded.

(6) *Goals/consequences, negative:* ditto, except that here the goals or consequences are viewed negatively or it is emphasised that certain actions could have negative effects, e.g. when protesters warn that keeping the high taxes on fuel would lead to people loosing their jobs. → Here, the negative effects of the government's unwillingness to act are emphasised

(7) *Goals/consequences, positive:* ditto, but here the consequences of actions are viewed from a positive perspective, e.g. when a Labour MP says that the new anti-terror legislation will make Britain safer. → Here, the government's policy proposal is depicted in terms of the positive effects it will have.

(8) *Interest, public:* if explicit appeals are made to the public interest, e.g. if a protest argues that the government should lower the tax on fuel because lower fuel prices benefit the whole society.

Note that as with interests overrule both actions and consequences. If interests, consequences, and actions are mentioned, only the interests are coded.

(9) *Interest, group or individual:* here, the point of reference is not the common good but the interest or the good of a group or of a specific individual, e.g. if a protester argues that the government should lower the fuel taxes on diesel because farmers and hauliers mostly rely on diesel. → Here, the speaker argues that government action is in the interest of a specific group.

(10) *Interest, unclear/other:* if the justification appeals to interests which can neither be coded as public nor as group interests or those of an individual.

(11) *Tradition, general:* if the justification makes an appeal to traditions in general abstract terms, e.g. if an MP says that the policy proposed by the government goes against the British tradition.

(12) *Tradition, positive:* if the appeal is framed positively, i.e. if the tradition is viewed appreciatively, e.g. if an MP says that the anti-terror legislation proposed by the government undermines eight hundred years of *habeas corpus* and a tradition of rights of British citizens. → Here, the tradition mentioned is viewed explicitly in positive terms.

(13) *Tradition, negative:* if the appeal is framed negatively, i.e. the tradition is explicitly devalued, e.g. if a member of the opposition states that she is against the proposed bill because it is steeped in the British tradition of oppressing the less privileged.

(14) *Situation, state, condition:* if the speaker makes a point by referring to the specificity of a situation, the condition of a state of affairs, or the nature of relationships, contexts, etc., e.g. if the Prime Minister defends the proposed

legislation by saying that "in this situation we have no other choice but to respond with the measures the cabinet has put forward".

(15) *Emotion, personal conviction:* if the justification refers to emotions of either the speaker or another actor or their convictions in terms that render them explicitly personal and subjective, e.g. when the Prime Minister argues that he is deeply convinced that legislation to be passed by parliament is the right course of action.

(16) *Basic values:* these are basic values taken to be constitutive of society, i.e. values that are not codified as judicial norms but which command common respect, e.g. if a speaker argues that the proposed law goes against the bonds of solidarity in society.

Note that if basic values are mentioned as part of a tradition, then the justification is coded as tradition.

(17) *Promise, agreement:* these concern arrangements between actors which do not have a legally binding status, e.g. if farmers join hauliers in the protest against rising fuel prices because they have agreed to push their cause together.

(18) *Judicial norm:* these justifications invoke norms as supporting the validity claim raised by the speaker and can extend to contracts between parties, single norms that might be contravened by new legislation, e.g. the European Convention on Human Rights by the anti-terror legislation of the Labour Government in 2005, etc.

Note that here we code only references to judicial norms, judicial action is coded as political action.

(19) *Status, office:* if the validity claim is justified by reference to the status of an actor or the office he or she commands, etc., e.g. if an actor supports the new anti-terror legislation because anti-terror experts are in favour of it.

(20) *Personality, character, charisma:* this is similar to the status/office category but refers to personal traits of the actor, e.g. if an actor supports a policy because the main political proponent has shown great integrity.

(21) *Expression of opinion of third parties:* here, a validity claim is justified by reference to the opinions of third parties, i.e. mostly opinion polls. The opinion or the advice of an expert is in turn coded as status/office. Example: if an actor argues that the government is misleading the people because contrary to its claims there is no widespread support for its bill as a recent opinion poll shows that in fact 70% are against it.

(22) *Background knowledge, explanation of facts, example:* here, we simply code factual statement that are given in support of a validity claims, if an actor argues that for the UK to have an independent nuclear deterrent is futile as by the time it is ready to be launched in response to an attack, the whole country would already be destroyed.

(99) *Other, unclear:* all justifications which cannot be coded in the other categories are coded here. If this code applies, note a couple of keywords in the

commentary column which summarise the justification; in this way the catalogue can be extended meaningfully.