

past “as an intellectual guide that encourages ethical and critical thought in the present” (p. 42) after the manner of Herodotus (p. 42) and Thucydides (pp. 12, 33–34).

In practice, this means that as well as developing a large-scale historical narrative—examining the discourse and deeds (or *logos* and *erga*, as Wallach puts it) of successive democracies from the ancient Greeks to the present (disappointingly not including republican Rome, called a *demokratia* by near contemporaries such as Cassius Dio)—each of the five core chapters features “a kind of hermeneutic loop between present, past and future” (p. 6). That is to say, each chapter moves from the present to the past and back again, the better to model the kind of ethical and critical thinking that Wallach hopes to inspire.

Thus described, the project may sound eyebrow-raisingly ambitious, and Wallach admits that he “covers an amount of ground not usually allowed for one book” (p. 11). Yet the book is made manageable not only by the similar structure of the core chapters but also by Wallach’s selectivity with his material. Democracy has been taken to be many good things, but he pursues only five—variously described as “versions” (p. 7), “constellations” (p. 49), or “conceptual practices” (p. 274) of goodness—treating them as “gauntlets through which democratic ethics have been centrally constituted for us” (p. 8). These five gauntlets are virtue (Greek *arete*, chap. 2), representation (chap. 3), civil rightness (a combination of equal opportunity and meritocracy; chap. 4), legitimacy (chap. 5), and human rights (chap. 6). Each “illustrates a kind of political goodness that emerge [d] at distinct historical periods in which democracies reach [ed] for new ethical sanctions to foster their well-being,” and each, Wallach argues, remains relevant today (p. 49).

Each excursus is illuminating, whether one agrees with all of Wallach’s interpretations; I myself disagreed with his accounts of both Aristotle and Hobbes (so a significant portion of his story) and wished that he had made more supporting textual evidence available. The final chapter, on human rights, is perhaps most successful in integrating discussion of a particular ethical “guidepost” (in this case the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) with theoretical discourse (exemplified by John Rawls, Jürgen Habermas, Amartya Sen, and Seyla Benhabib, among others) and the actions of actual democracies (from “humanitarian” military interventions to the French regulation of headscarves). It is a significant achievement to do all this while developing a coherent argument for the semidetached relationship that ought to obtain between democracy and particular forms of goodness if either is to maintain its critical bite, as well as assessing the problems that arise when democracy and goodness are either collapsed into one another or categorically opposed.

The five forms of democratic goodness that Wallach explores are puzzling in one respect: they do not all refer to the same kind of thing. Most importantly, only one—virtue—is (at least potentially) an attribute of a human

agent. Representation, legitimacy, civil rightness, and human rights are attributes of a political system, not of a person or people. And this matters, because human action—specifically “demotic agency”—is at the heart of Wallach’s argument (pp. 7, 14–17, 43–44, 273). It is what *demoi* do that allows us to judge their ethical orientations and that makes a historical approach to democratic ethics valuable and even possible. As Wallach argues, “citizens cannot express solidarity mostly in imaginations. Their commonality and potential for democratic activity takes place in the forum, on the streets, in the presses, amid legislative activity” (p. 51, cf. p. 251). Yet in representative democracy, as Wallach emphasizes, the *demoi* does not in fact do very much (pp. 13, 51, 101, 109–10, 227). Whereas ancient *demoi* acted every time they assembled to make a decision, modern *demoi* typically look on while a select few make decisions on their behalf. Indeed, as Wallach points out, a significant feature of electoral representation is that it transposes the expected location of political virtue from the *demoi* to its representatives (pp. 99, 105, 107). Demotic virtue becomes unnecessary precisely to the extent that the *demoi* is no longer, in practice, the primary political agent.

Given that representative democracy does not seem likely to vanish any time soon, what are the prospects for demotic agency? The probability of climate catastrophe, if nothing else, calls for collective action on an unprecedented scale. But the political mechanism through which multitudes of individuals used regularly to be transformed into what Hobbes, in *Leviathan*, called “one Person” (quoted on p. 114, although differently interpreted)—namely, mass assemblies of the ancient Greek and Roman kind, which could, through majoritarianism, develop a single will and thereby act collectively—has fallen into disuse. Wallach joins John Dewey in asking for “more democracy”: that is, for “increasing the authoritative power of democratic citizenship” (p. 226), “bringing demotic power closer to the state,” and “putting maximum pressure on the few” who have precipitated our current crises (p. 269). Without overstating the impact of a single theoretical contribution, he also hopes that future democratic discourse and deeds (*logos* and *erga* again) may be improved by attending to the material presented in this book. Let us hope that he is right.

Partisanship and Political Liberalism in Diverse Societies. By Matteo Bonotti. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. 240p. \$78.00 cloth.
doi:10.1017/S1537592719004493

— Carlo Invernizzi Accetti, *City University of New York – City College*
caccetti@ccny.cuny.edu

In her 2008 book titled *On the Side of the Angels: An Appreciation of Parties and Partisanship*, Nancy Rosenblum noted that political parties have historically been the

“darlings of political science” but remained as yet “orphans of political philosophy” (pp. 1–2). The reason, she suggested, is that political philosophy has traditionally suffered from a “holist” bias, which has led it to see political parties and partisanship as threats to its more cherished concepts of “justice,” “order,” and “good government,” rather than as potential contributors to these goals (pp. 25–30).

This is not the case any longer. In the decade or so that has passed since the publication of Rosenblum’s seminal contribution, a number of important books have approached the topic of political parties from a theoretical perspective, reasserting its centrality for normative political (and especially democratic) theory. These include Russell Muirhead’s *The Promise of Party in a Polarized Age* (2014), Jonathan White and Lea Ypi’s *The Meaning of Partisanship* (2016), and—more recently—Fabio Wolkenstein’s *Rethinking Party Reform* (2019).

Matteo Bonotti’s new book belongs to this welcome strand of recent political thought, but approaches the issue from a more specific perspective. Its stated goal is to “refocus the normative examination of parties and partisanship, by narrowing it down to a specific aspect of contemporary political theory, that is, Rawls’s political liberalism” (p. 2). This has the merit of making clear the specific standpoint from which Bonotti proposes to vindicate the normative value of parties and partisanship, but it simultaneously restricts the book’s target audience.

Although Rawls’s political liberalism has occupied a prominent place in recent academic political theory, Bonotti’s restriction of focus to the question of whether parties and partisanship are compatible with it implies that the book will be of limited interest for those who are not versed in the details of Rawlsian literature and debates. Unfortunately, Bonotti does not explain why he takes this particular lens to be specifically relevant—or useful—for studying political parties.

The key argument of the book is that political parties and partisanship can play a normatively desirable role within a Rawlsian conception of political liberalism, because “when party politics is a fair scheme of cooperation, the participation of [citizens] in politics through political parties produces two desirable outcomes for liberal democracies. First, it relaxes the tension between the citizens’ political and non-political obligations, by allowing them to have a greater influence upon political decision-making. . . . Second, it provides them with a motivation to comply with the laws of their political community, thus enhancing the stability of the polity in which they operate” (p. 39).

Precisely because of this desirable political function, however, Bonotti also maintains that “partisanship generates its own distinctive kind of political obligations, additional to any political obligations people may have qua ordinary citizens” (pp. 19–20). These obligations include

a duty of “fair play” with respect to other political parties or partisans, which implies an obligation to respect their equal right to compete for public attention and political power within a framework of established rules of competition. The obligations also include a “duty of civility,” understood in Rawlsian terms as an obligation to justify their political platforms and proposals in terms that can at least in principle be accepted by any reasonable citizen committed to the basic democratic values of freedom and equality.

This argument has the signal merit of relating Rawls’s political liberalism to a dimension of real-world politics that Rawls himself had addressed only fragmentarily in his published writings and that has also remained a blind spot in the secondary literature on Rawls’s thought. In addition, it offers a clear normative framework for evaluating the behavior of democratic partisans at a time when many believe that partisanship is experiencing a hypertrophy—and perhaps even going off the rails—in several contemporary democracies.

There are, however, also a number of limitations in the analysis, most of which stem from the book’s unwillingness to engage with the extensive historical and empirical literature on parties and partisanship in the real world. First, Bonotti does not give any account of what might actually motivate real-world partisans to comply with the rather stringent normative requirements that his theory seeks to impose on them. As a result, the enunciation of the parallel duties of fair play and civility sounds a hollow note when one tries to imagine what it would mean to persuade real-life partisans such as Donald Trump, Nigel Farage, or Matteo Salvini (who are not even political liberals to begin with) to comply with them.

Second, Bonotti gives little consideration to the thorny problem of what to do with parties and partisans that fail to comply with these requirements. When he does consider this issue, his thought reveals a worryingly hard edge. Taking issue with Rawls’s own refusal to suggest that the duty of civility ought to be legally enforced, Bonotti envisages imposing hard sanctions on parties or partisans that fail to behave as he thinks they should. In this regard, he writes, “It would not be excessively difficult to monitor campaign speeches, both in public spaces and on television, in order to check whether candidates and other party affiliates make reference to comprehensive doctrines in support of their policy proposals. Those who do could be fined and/or prevented from speaking again in public for a specified length of time” (p. 75).

Although Bonotti himself concedes that this proposal is at odds with the basic liberal commitment to free speech, he contends that “it needs to be assessed whether and why freedom of speech is essential to political liberalism, or whether it might sometimes be legitimate, on the basis of the constraints on public reason, to impose restrictions on it” (p. 73). The abstractness of his

normative theory is therefore not just a conceptual or methodological problem. In practice, it might lead to the theory's application contradicting some of its own foundational values.

Finally, a third significant limitation of Bonotti's account is that he gives surprisingly little attention to the dimension of partisan organization. Even though partisanship is defined as "participation in politics through political parties" (p. 1), Bonotti does not seem to make much of the fact that parties are collective endeavors and therefore necessarily involve organized systems of rule and cooperation between partisans. This has been a primary area of focus in the existing empirical literature on parties and would also appear to be an obvious candidate for further normative theorization. However, Bonotti elaborates the normative obligations of partisanship as if they applied exclusively to individual partisans—and, more specifically, partisans involved in the activity of public justification of their political proposals. As a result, his theory appears truncated from an essential dimension of partisanship, which is that of organized collective action.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the contributions that the book does offer are sufficient to make it an important and welcome addition to the existing normative literature on political parties, as well as to, perhaps especially, the secondary academic literature on Rawls's conception of political liberalism.

Joyful Human Rights. By William Paul Simmons. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019. 304p. \$75.00 cloth. doi:10.1017/S1537592719004055

— Alison Brysk, *University of California, Santa Barbara*
abrysk@global.ucsb.edu

This book is a fresh and creative addition to the human rights oeuvre that moves forward our understanding of the power of the spirit of human rights beyond thin legal entitlements. In an era of extraordinary challenges to human rights norms and conditions, it is a welcome move to reconnect theory to the full range of lived experience, thereby advancing a richer concept of rights as reclaiming humanization. Because political repression always operates through trauma and atomization, William Paul Simmons's recovery of joyful connection to the self and others is a feminist strategy of resistance and agency—as he cites Audre Lorde on "the erotic as power." Reintegrating the passions with the interests can un-Locke rights from the frozen grip of Enlightenment origins and facilitate the quest for cross-cultural rights translations in a globalizing world. Moreover, the politics of joy articulates with some of the most powerful contemporary repertoires of rights practice: political theater, satire, cultural healing, and community expression.

Simmons establishes a foundation for his argument in political theory in chapter 2, tracing the phenomenology of joy as a transgressive affect by drawing on a range of classical philosophy (Baruch Spinoza), academic psychology (Carroll Izard), social theory (Jacques Lacan), and feminism (Lorde). The central insight is that joy is emancipatory as "an opening of possibilities" (p. 29) rooted in a playful aesthetics of surprise that reconstructs the subject in ways parallel to mysticism. However, tracing the ethos of joy as a transgression of hegemonic norms via Lacan does not yield a clear ethical direction. Although the goal of this section is laudable and the journey ultimately fruitful, the selection of theorists undermines its potential. There are complementary feminists on capabilities and connection (Martha Nussbaum, Iris Marion Young), and Lacan is inherently circumscribed as a source of political theory.

The following chapter ("Whither Joy"), which backtracks to the historical roots of the suppression of joy from the Enlightenment, is a more skillful and comprehensive exposition that could be read before its predecessor. Unfortunately, this chapter downplays historical context in a way that foreshadows the book's shortfalls in grappling with passionate perpetrators. Locke's plea for toleration and aversion to religious passion came from witnessing the religious slaughter of the Thirty Years' War, which claimed an estimated eight million victims—rationalist repression represented a strategy for survival from the mobilization of ideology for mass killing then as now.

Simmons's long arc treatment of the history of human rights is a commendable contrast to recent partisan partiality (Samuel Moyn), and he goes on to establish several foundational moments in which passion and positivity are excised from human rights analysis and advocacy. Thus, chapter 3 concludes with an extended defense of the Holocaust tragicomedy *Life Is Beautiful*. Although this discussion is apparently intended to establish the ethical value of joy as an empowering response to trauma, unfortunately the choice of case muddies the waters with crosscutting themes of irony, agency, and the politics of representation.

The heart of the book is found in chapters 4–6, which more successfully apply this framework of joyful political action to understanding human rights activists, perpetrators, and martyrs. As a social movement scholar who has focused on empathy and agency in human rights campaigns (Brysk, *Speaking Rights to Power*, 2013), I found Simmons's systematic attention to the role of joyful emotion in chapter 4 illuminating and authentic to my own experience with activists and advocates alike.

It is to Simmons's credit that he goes on to confront the dilemma of ethically multivalent joyful perpetrators and tries to distinguish authentic from "sinister" joy: the abusive deployment of the pleasure principle that freezes consciousness and separates the subject from the Other.