

## The review of democratic procedures in urban planning theories

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### ABSTRACT

Over the past few decades, democratic procedures have been raised as a core of most planning methods. In this regard, the present research adopts descriptive-evaluation methods and uses meta-analysis so as to review the democratic procedures at the heart of planning theories and democracy and to explore their paradigmatic interaction. The results of present research suggest that transition to post-modern era of planning perspective is accompanied by association between democratic procedures and certain subjects such as public interest, consensus, pluralism, uncertainty and agonistic arenas. In this regard, the theory of planning has experienced a paradigmatic shift towards agonistic planning which is a democratic accountability mechanism premised on intellectual support of agonistic democracy. In general, the theory regards the rational consensus of communicative planning as nothing but illusion and explains it as a strife to remove alternative discourses and eliminate democratic policy altogether. Compared with communicative planning, the essential notion of agonistic planning is turning hostility into agnostic and consequently replacing enmity by disagreement or aggression by competition.

**Key words:** *Communicative planning, deliberative democracy, agnostic planning*

### Introduction

Cities are the largest and probably the most significant heritage of mankind. They represent certain democratic values such as justice, consistency, social life, innovation and creativity. In addition, freedom-seeking nature of humankind evolves into perfection by embodiment in the cities. This democratic heritage dates back to ancient cities of Greece and Iran where the first human rights charter on clay tablets were developed based on democratic values.

As time passed, the heritage was transferred to current cities as well as urban planning knowledge

paradigms. The perfection horizon of this heritage has emerged in urban planning theories so that its developments could be traced to structure and organization of current cities.

Cities provide the condition for dialogue, consensus and unity. In addition to private relationships, dialogues of public sharing occur in public places of these cities. From this perspective, urban planning knowledge has radically changed its paradigms to provide the conditions for the betterment of nature and collective desire of human beings. On the

other hand, planning has been historically entangled with minimum degrees of democracy. Based on the analytical results detailed in this study, planning and democracy are two codependent notions since development of one results in the development of the other. In other words, planning is a means or a process which leads to evolution and promotion of democracy and along the way, the planning develops too. Therefore, one could suggest that planning theories are the primary means of realization of development based on recognition of personal and social freedoms, consensus, and unity in democratic society and in a peaceful manner (Torkame, 2015: 16).

The sociopolitical developments of last two decades of 20<sup>th</sup> century became a turning point in the shift from authoritarian and technocratic urban planning to participatory and democratic urban development. The rise of environmentalism movement and sustainable development, fall of authoritarian systems, extensive development of democracy and human rights, raising the notions of civil society, pluralism and cultural movements have exposed urban planning tradition to crisis and a type of theoretical and scientific deadlock (Mehdizadeh, 2001: 45).

The significant point to note in this field is that consideration of democratic procedures results in better control and outcomes of most urban problems and this is one of the primary challenges that the present study aims to address. Despite systematic endeavors for establishing democratic procedures in contemporary planning, we still witness the emergence of authoritarian and technocratic planning and lack of attention to main owners of the cities. As a result, the primary problem is evolution of planning based on public demand and its democratic nature. Despite different approaches to urban planning, the communicative approaches premised on Habermas's theory of communicative action and Chantal Mouffe' theory of agonistic democracy drew a lot of attention to themselves as they were more consistent with democratic procedures. Therefore, the necessity of

studying the bond and paradigmatic interaction of theories of planning with theories of democracy (e.g. agonistic, deliberative and aggregative theories) will be addressed, prevalent procedures will be criticized, and roots of modern paradigm of agonistic planning will be detailed. In fact, this paper is an effort to reread democracy theories, evolution of democratic bases of urban planning paradigms and effective changes of the field.

### **Theory and Methodology**

Since their development, urban planning theories have sought social justice, public consensus and will and they have inclined toward democratic and participative procedures. However, this section aims to detail the paradigms resulting from theories of Habermas and Chantal Mouffe. The sequence of evolutionary paradigms forms the basis of this paper.

The objective problems frequently emerge in literature of planning under headlines of equality, social justice and democracy. Campbell and Fainstein (2009: 13) addressed the primary problem of theory of planning by raising the question, "What is the role of planning in urban and regional development when limitations of political economy of capitalism and political democratic system are taken into consideration?" Hilly (1987: 373 and 401) suggests that the challenge of contemporary planning is modern interpretation of democracy in western communities. On the other hand, Almandinger (2010: 340) suggests that the most significant aspect of planning as communicative process is its dependence on forms of participatory democracy. In his article, Fainstein notes that the basis of different approaches to planning is political thought and the political value and interests of planning procedures could be revealed. As a result, he traces four types of traditional, democratic, equity and incremental planning in technocratic, democratic, socialist and liberal political theories respectively (Berkpur, 2001: 69). Regarding agonistic procedures, Hillier notes that the inherent uncertainty of decision-

making should be recognized and unresolvable differences of values and beliefs should be accepted without value judgment. Similar to agreement, freedom of disagreement should exist too. When consensus cannot be attained through negotiation, bargain or deal could be used to achieve compromise agreement. Compromise is a part of political process (Hillier, 2008: 178). However, one of the most significant works which this paper addresses was written by Mantisalo (Mantisalo, 2010: 333). He deals with consistency of planning theories with theories of democracy and suggests that emergence of agonistic paradigm contributed to paradigmatic shift and filling the gap between theory and practice of planning.

Since this survey aims to analyze the paradigms of urban planning so as to clarify the notion of democracy, it could be recognized as a fundamental

study which draws on theoretical analysis method. As to method of approaching and dealing with the problem, it is a descriptive-evaluative study since it details the nature, characteristics and condition of the subject and the problem so as to explain the “whatness” and “howness” of the problem and its aspects. The present survey is divided into three main sections. First, evolutions of democracy paradigms in the world will be reviewed and democratic norms of urban planning procedures will be detailed. Second, paradigmatic evolution of theories of urban planning will be studied and theories of Jürgen Habermas and Chantal Mouffe will be compared so as to detail the conditions of evolution of communicative theory and modern theory of agonistic planning. Finally, conditions for emergence of the theory will be studied.

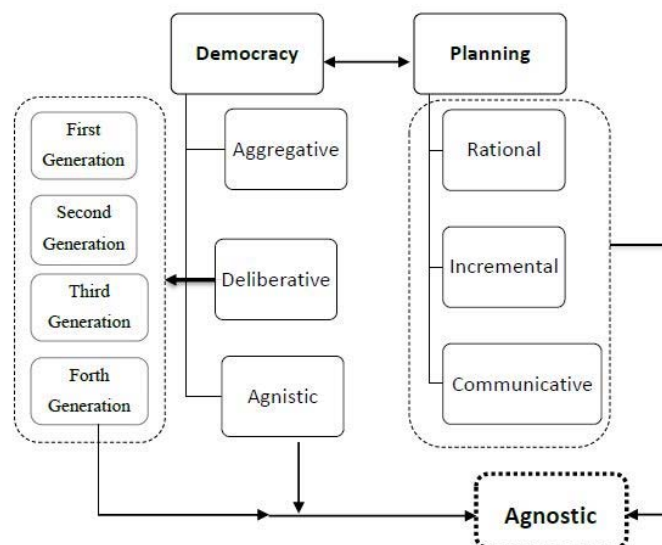


Figure 1: Paradigmatic evolution of democracy and planning theories

**Theoretical evolution of democracy (values and norms)**

In its limited and minimalistic meaning, democracy refers to a governmental system in which power is gained by those authorities which are selected through free election (Rorety, 2005: 389). Rorety regards this notion of democracy as rule of law. As intended in this study, democracy in its general meaning represents a social ideal, equal opportunities and equal use of available means.

Despite basic differences, deliberative democracy is raised as alternative to other theoretical democracies such as direct and aggregative democracy. The theory takes cooperation requirements a step further. Based on the theory, dialogue between independent and equal citizens enables real democracy (Hanberger, 2006, 23). From the viewpoint of deliberative democracy theory, if democratic systems seek to retail their legitimacy, decision-making

processes should be recognized by qualified people based on logical reasons (King, 2003: 25). One of the ways of legitimization of the processes is raising all involved discussions in a council. Lack of this arrangement could lead to deficiency of discussions raised for decision-makers to address and more difficult recognition of decisions by stakeholders. Therefore, arranging for consultation in a public place (e.g. public and media meetings) could be regarded as

a significant means of affecting planning processes and effective implementation of projects (Falleth, 2010: 749). Deliberative democracy has never been regarded as a single and unified theory (Neblo, 2007: 530). Now, the deliberative democracy theory has matured (Bohman, 1998: 473). This means that distinct steps of development of deliberative democracy theory could be differentiated as each step is derived from development of the previous step (Table 1).

**Table 1: The four generations of deliberative democracy theory**

	<i>First Generation</i>	<i>Second Generation</i>	<i>Third Generation</i>	<i>Fourth Generation</i>
Main Idea	Normative justification of deliberative democracy	A combination of ideas of Habermas and Rawls along with practical requirements	Institutionalization of deliberative democracy at micro and macro levels	Making a council based on previous three generations
Consultation	Public reasoning which is adopted by integration of approaches.	Relationship in which viewpoints are recognized publicly.	Relationship in which different viewpoints are taken into account for further decision-making.	A relationship in which opposing viewpoints are seen as opportunities.
Basis of Legitimacy	Consensus	Public recognition (e.g. agreement on disagreement; bilateral interaction)	Unofficial sources of reasoning from democracy (e.g. widespread acceptance)	Method of consultation and evaluation of quality of the process.
Main Theorists	Habermas and Rawls	Gutmann and Thompson; Buhmann	Baber and Bartlett; O'lynn; Hendrix	Mansbridge; Dryzek

Source: Mantisalo, 2016 and authors' addition

The first generation of deliberative democracy theory takes normative reasoning into account and the notion of consensus plays the main role in it. Elstub (2010) referred to Habermas and Rawls as theorists of the first generation of deliberative democracy theory. Habermas (1996) played a significant role in developing the roots of deliberative democracy thinking. He suggested that making legitimate decisions in democratic regimes is solely possible through consultative procedure so that all stakeholders have the opportunity to express their opinion in decision-making process (Elstub, 2017).

The second generation of this theory distanced itself from logic and moved toward bilateral interaction (Mansbridge et al., 2010). The common notion among second-generation theorists is "mutual action". Based on measures of mutual actions, the arguments supposed in public consultation process should be accepted mutually. Therefore, the arguments should be confirmed by each citizen under identical conditions

(Gutman & Thompson, 1996: 54). However, when the parties have limited agreement options, attaining agreement is not intended since goal is agreement based on consultation. This is embodied in the term "agreement on disagreement" (Gutman & Thompson, 2004: 78). The second-generation researchers (e.g. Dryzek, 2000; Deveaux, 2003; Young, 1996) associated deliberative democracy theory with other fields such as feminism, multiculturalism and environmental policies closely. However, the second generation of the theory emphasizes its normative nature. This enables instrumental or strategic use of the second-generation theory by authorities (Elstub, 2017: 142). Therefore, researchers tried to get deliberative democracy to real-world notions and use its institutional capabilities so as to provide the conditions for real consultation. Consequently, legitimate consultation requires certain institutions which take diversity of real-world issues (e.g. multiculturalism, personal interests and social inequality) into account.

So, relevant researchers aim to expand certain fundamental parts of the field which are premised on different cooperative elements such as citizen panel, planning units, consensus conferences and participatory budgeting (Elstub, 2017: 4). Therefore, the third step takes development of deliberative democracy a step ahead as consultation process is interpreted based on success even when involved parties adhere to their own demands and beliefs. Therefore, general argument takes the form of intense negotiation (Backlund & Mantysalo, 2010: 344).

Apart from consultation on real life policies, third-generation researchers put more effort into searching for those methods and measures which enable development of participatory institutions. Therefore, they adopted a micro-level approach which separated small general units and institutions from inclusive and general fields of discussion (Thompson, 2008; Chambers, 2009; Dryzek, 2010b; Mansbridge et al., 2010). This is exactly where researchers of deliberative democracy started to review the notion of deliberative system. The term “deliberative system” was first introduced by Mansbridge in late 1990s. In his research, Mansbridge (1999) suggested that consultation process should act like wide lenses in scrupulously identifying complexities of reasoning and counselling processes in contemporary societies (Elstub et al., 2017: 5). The deliberative system introduced a new way of thinking on theory and practice of consultation. As a result, recent studies have pointed to emergence of fourth generation of deliberative democracy theory. In this step of evolution of deliberative democracy theory, its systematic trend could be the outcome of previous three generations of deliberative democracy theory and their underlying elements of “strong normative foundations”, “institutional possibility” and “experimental results” (Elstub et al., 2016). The deliberative system suggests a new method for adding to legitimacy, inclusion and representation (Parkinson, 2006; Mendonca, 2008) and opens a new way for conceptualization of interactions between public opinions and decision-makers in the

process of consultation (Dryzek, 2010b; Elstub & McLaverty, 2013). Apart from different theoretical advantages, the approach was able to introduce a new method for review of consultation process in contemporary democracies.

### **Evolution of democracy in urban planning theories**

Since the first half of 20th century, urban planning has been affected more than any other factor by competition of major countries, international wars and conflict of the bipolar world. In last decades of 20th century, urban planning was affected mostly by development of democracy, environmental movement, sustainable development, fall of bipolar systems, modified function of government, and higher public participation among others. As a result of these changes, urban planning shifted from central, long-term, imperative and governmental planning to gradual, democratic and participatory planning since 1960s (Sarafi, Tawakolinia & Chamani Moghadam, 2015). On the other hand, planning theories are seriously affected by political system (democratic and non-democratic), perception of people, role-play potential of the community, planners involved in planning process and planning approach (top-down and bottom-up) (Eftekhari & Beznasab, 2004: 2).

However, one could see a distinct paradigmatic interaction between evolution of theories of democracy and planning. Many planning theories have tried to carry democratic norms into planning (Sage, 2006; 237). As a result, an extensive range of theories from synoptic planning theory to recent theories of deliberative planning have attempted to promote the role of democratic decision-making processes, especially modification and improvement of knowledge base, so as to make better decisions (Healey, 1996-1997; Forester, 1999; Innes & Booher, 2003). In what follows, evolution of planning paradigms will be detailed and historical changes will be studied from the viewpoint of democratic procedures.

### **Rational planning theory**

Up to 1980s, the dominant approach to planning was a planning theory premised on rationalism or technical-instrumental approach. It developed mostly by drawing on technical knowledge of planners and scientific tools and methods (Eftekhari & Behzadnasab, 2004: 2). One of the common presumptions of rational planning is obvious difference between opinions of citizens and those of planners (Steffans, 2004; Niemenmaa, 2005; Puustinen, 2006). In addition, most participatory methods adopted in this rational model (e.g. public hearing) create limited opportunities for mutual learning (Innes & Booher, 2000). From the viewpoint of rational planning, democratic decision-making owes its legitimacy to majority decision or polling process. It is presumed that people cannot come to a consensus after consultation (Healey, 1996: 250). The theory suggests that making policy and decision in planning acts in a direct and step-by-step manner until it gets to a finale. However, the viewpoint is so deterministic that it will leave huge gaps if it is used as basis of planning theories.

The first gap is what Hindess (1997: 80) called "democratic deficit". The term refers to lack of consideration of role of democracy in public participation as long as employees (consultants) have not offered the plan. Another gap, as suggested by Yanow (1996), is between decision and implementation. The third gap is concerned with the presumption that suggestions of planning employees are traditionally unbiased and based on technical principles (Hillier, 2002: 224-225). Therefore, criticisms of rationalist paradigm in many intellectual schools especially Lindblom School provided the conditions for development of disjointed incrementalist approach.

### **Theory of incrementalism**

One of the strongest criticisms raised against theoretical development of planning (based on

aggregate-rational planning) was made by Lindblom (1959) in a paper called "The science of muddling through". He suggested that planners had to plan their suggestions by drawing on a science premised on partial approach. Therefore, Lindblom aimed to develop a new planning theory which substitutes aggregate-rational planning theory (Backlund & Mantysalo, 2010: 338). Lindblom suggested that political process is a game and all of the involved groups try to guarantee and keep their own values. On the other hand, he presumed that every decision-maker has the right to focus on and access to details of a problem because he believed that complementary knowledge is beyond a person's through of each subject (Lindblom, 1965: 146, 151, and 156). The disjointed incrementalist theory is not only seeking to increase efficiency of different groups through planning process but also to seek integration of opposing interests. The disjointed incrementalist approach to planning does this through "partisan mutual adjustment". The partisan mutual adjustment is a theoretical innovation based disjointed incrementalist approach which introduces a method of bargaining between and peace among groups interested in addressed planning challenges (Mantysalo, 2005: 6). If values of different groups contrast and all demands of those groups are not satisfied, disagreement between the opposing groups will emerge. In political field, the issue is resolved through negotiation, bargaining and seeking of agreement between groups so that they can make common decisions. In other words, Lindblom's disjointed incrementalist planning uses an aggregative model of democracy. In aggregative democracy, each group is motivated to promote the general interests of the group and polling is regarded as the primary means of political decision-making process (Backlund & Mantysalo, 2010: 341). Although disjointed incrementalist planning and aggregate-rational planning theories have widely different expectations of planning outcome, they share common notions on the nature of democracy. Despite the fact that both of them

are premised on aggregative model of democracy, the aggregate-rational planning theory provides less opportunities for political dialogues between involved parties (Backlund & Mantysalo, 2010: 339). Since 1960s, disjointed incrementalist planning policies were criticized due to their intrinsic orientation toward organizationalism. Achievement and awareness of decision-making processes have not been fairly distributed between groups of interest but they are more easily dominated by powerful people and organized groups. As defined, disjointed incrementalism is conservative and premised on policies and power relations. Therefore, making decisions based on disjointed incrementalism is inclined to reflect the interests of those who have the power under existing conditions (Cates, 1979: 528; Sager, 1994: 160; Etzioni, 1967: 387; Mottonen, 1997: 178). Therefore, political aspect of Lindblom's disjointed incrementalism was target of strong criticisms, especially by famous planning theorists who developed communicative planning from 1980s to 1990s. Sager (1994) criticized disjointed incrementalist planning because of limited understanding of communicative planning. These criticisms pointed to modification of notion of democracy. Therefore, communicative planning theorists excluded the aggregative democracy model and adopted deliberative democracy theory as it originated their criticisms of theories of disjointed incrementalism and rational planning (Backlund & Mantysalo, 2010: 340). In this regard, Jürgen Habermas (1929) introduced a type of deliberative democracy based on theory of communication action based on which free and equal subjects enter into moral-rational dialogues so as to come to consensus (Habermas, 1984).

### **Communicative planning theory**

Since 1980s, characteristics of planning have changed radically. Compared with rational process, planning has been regarded as a communicative and participatory process which takes different players into

account and provides the conditions for citizens and persons of interest to engage, express their opinions and create changes (Hillier, 1998).

The above theoretical evolutions accompanied by the criticism of positivism and inclination toward democracy and democratic governments were introduced to the planning field. Certain figures such as Forester promoted those elements through a new planning process called "communicative planning theory" (Healey, 1992: 9-20). After introducing communicative planning theory, Habermas suggested that effective and successful planning is dependent on communication methods and the requirement for realization of constructive relationship is exclusion of instrumental rationality or technical-instrumental approach which is the only argument of rational planning. For planning to be successful, a wider range of reasoning (e.g. moral and emotional reasoning) should be taken into consideration. The emotional reasoning is people's emotional experience of their surrounding environment (Hummel Brunner, 2000: 15-17).

In this theory, authoritative decision making is replaced by a democratic condition in which decision-making is done dialogically and based on participants' agreement. Theoretically, power is transferred from minority to majority of people. Habermas was concerned with identification of the ways of embedding liberating learning process in rational and practical dialogue or ways of realization of power of the public without domination of higher force. Following the interpretation, democracy was defined as consensus which is premised on rational motive and obligation to dialogue (Rundell, 1991: 133; Hillier, 2002: 45). The theoretical framework suggests that not only experts and politicians but also typical citizens are entitled to discuss general issues and engage in resolving them. Therefore, they presumed that consensus is one of the key principles of decision-making process (Larsson & Elander, 2001). Of course, they do not expect consultation process to lead to consensus autonomously. They suggested that

consultation process will be followed by mutual understanding and respect as well as determination of ways of living together (Dryzek, 2000: 17). The advocates of this model of planning suggest that if decisions are derived from agreement between decision-makers and people, they will produce more desirable outcome (Agger & Lofgren, 2006: 4). On the other hand, planner acts as intermediate of different dialogues and audience of distinct narratives of each group as he tries to create agreement between negotiators (Hillier, 2000). Although communicative planning theory ignores many facts of life but it plays a significant role in engagement of citizens in planning dialogues. However, seeking consensus based on communicative-rational planning is accompanied by different presumptions of the world which limit participation (Mantysalo & Rajaniemi, 2003: 127). From the viewpoint of critics, balance between power and communicative action as embodied in Habermas's theory has certain disadvantages as it does not consider power mechanisms for attaining agreement. One of the criticisms that Theodor Jones makes against communicative rationality is that although it believes in possibility of agreement, it will not suggest alternative solutions if some type of agreement is not reached. The mediating attempts at resolving disagreements or reaching agreement require recognizing the inclination of unification. In this case, risk of imposition threatens free and open discussions (Rafieian & Maroufi, 2011: 188). However, there is no guarantee in social frameworks for widespread and fair decisions on controversial areas (Purcell, 2007, 2009; Baeton, 2009). In other words, the primary weakness of communicative planning notion is lack of agreement between ideas and reality (Flyvbjerg, 2002). Although theorists of communicative planning criticized the communicative limitation of disjointed incrementalist theory which is premised on aggregative democracy, their criticism could be similarly applied to communicative rationality constraint of deliberative democracy, too. As a result, searching for a new model

of democracy started by exclusion of limitations of deliberative democracy (which communicative planning is based on) and this could enable development of a new planning theory (Backlund & Mantysalo, 2010: 341).

### **Agnostic planning theory**

The emergence of agnostic planning paradigm is influenced to a higher extent by Chantal Mouffe's theory of democracy. From Mouffe's viewpoint, western democracy could be described by tension between two distinct types of logic: a logic based on personal rights and rule of law and another logic based on equality of citizens in public domain (Mouffe, 2005: 228). The first logic characterizes aggregative democracy model and the second logic is the main characteristic of deliberative democracy model. The simple tension turned politics into a paradoxical and irrational action. Mouffe's theory of agnostic democracy seeks to resolve the tension between aggregative and deliberative models of political action and recognizes both models as legitimate interpretations of democratic behavior (Backlund&Mantysalo, 2010: 342). Disagreement between Habermas and Mouffe could be likened to modern and postmodern conditions. Habermas supported the notions of reason, legitimacy, justice and generality while Mouffe defended the principles of disagreement, multiplicity, and probability of occurrence (chance) (Kapoor, 2002: 468).

As mentioned before, the third generation of deliberative democracy theory is based on collective goal and it takes consultation process as legitimate even when the parties defend their interests as they engage in serious and hard negotiations (Mantysalo, 2014: 41). Mouffe (2005) suggested that revival of democracy requires claiming parties to participate in agonistic conflicts. Agnostic is an integral part of political meaning and action so that none of the parties deny others' legitimacy of expression of opinions. The conflicting parties are regarded not only as enemies but



also as competitors. In other words, although they do not agree they do not violate each other's rights so as to impose their own opinions. Mouffe suggested that democratic citizens can only exist in the context of diverse institutions, dialogues and lifestyles and represent democratic values (Mouffe, 2000, 7-8). As a result, efficient democratic decision-making requires lively interaction of political positions and not avoidance from interaction and emphasis on coming to consensus. On the other hand, Hillier (2003) defined the notion of agnostic in the following manner: probability of perpetual establishment of conflict and not conflict followed by domination so that some power plays in process of making decision on planning could be explained usefully (Hillier, 2003). In other words, one could suggest that notion of agnostic is mutual effect of bilateral conflict and tension on a strategic aspect which forms consistent progress

toward consensus. The mutual effect is significant as agonistic decision-making requires indetermination and probability which are primary characteristics of political discussion and action (ibid.). In fact, instead of excluding differences of values and notions of participation in communicative planning, agonistic approach tries to use the values as incentives of realization of better consensus (Flyvbjerg, 1998a and 2002; Gunder, 2003; Hillier, 2003).

Figure 1 shows the paradigmatic changes of planning theory and its relevant theory of democracy. The development step starts from aggregate-rational planning theory and aggregative democracy model and ends with theory of planning and agonistic democracy. Development of the fourth generation of deliberative democracy theory is supposed to be accompanied with new paradigmatic shifts of planning theory.

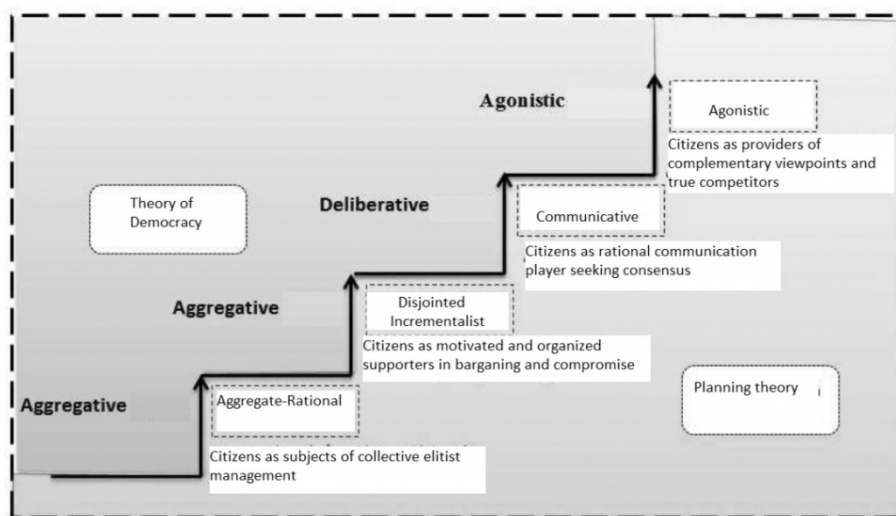


Figure 1: Planning and democracy theories (Source: Backlund & Mantysalo, 2010: 344)

In general, the agonistic approach provides for renewal and consequent planning of primary issues which urban projects are facing. On the other hand, the approach offers suitable solutions based on local processes and notions (Mouat, Legacy & March, 2013). So, agonistic planning could be regarded as a democratic and responsive mechanism through which existing inconsistencies are addressed by engagement of groups of interest in decision-making process (Hillier, 2002, Mouffe, 2000; Ploger, 2004; Purcell,

2009). In fact, instead of perfect consensus derive from communication the necessity of existence of opposition in planning processes is among main ideas of this type of planning.

**Conclusion**

Planning is the primary means of development based on peaceful recognition of personal as well as social freedom and consensus and agreement in a democratic

society. Planning is historically entangled with minimal democracy and as the analytical findings of the present study suggest, planning and theory are correlated notions when their philosophical and theoretical principles are taken into account. As a result, progress in one notion contributes to promotion of the other notion. In other words, planning is a means or a process which results in emergence and promotion of democracy and in the process it will develop, too (Torkameh, 2011: 15). Since modern democracies are based on ideals of equality and freedom, nature of democracy and planning theories enables equal opportunities for all citizens and beneficiaries of the planning. Meanwhile, presumptions of postmodern planning were made based on openness of decision-making processes and acceptance of changes in dynamic frameworks. As a result, providing the condition of discussion and creating equal opportunities of participation in determination of future of the city are among goals of planning theories. Therefore, one could suggest that there is no preconceived idea of decision-making processes and certainty was substituted by dialogues of interest parties, challenge and change. From this viewpoint, emerging theories of deliberative democracy in a deliberative system enable conceptualization of interactions between public opinions and decision-makers in consultation process. Consistent with theoretical frameworks of consultation process, planning paradigms have changed and evolved to realize consensus, legitimacy, public demand, uncertainty, multiplicity. The end result is providing agonistic conditions for dealing with change. The above-mentioned theoretical changes were accompanied with criticism of positivism and inclination toward democracy both of which play a significant role in evolution of consultation processes.

The findings of present survey suggest that planning theory has undergone a paradigmatic shift from rational and technical-instrumental approaches to communicative and agonistic ones so that legitimacy of

planning could be guaranteed through the development of deliberative assemblies and providing the conditions for turning typical citizens to active citizens who engage in urban decision-makings. The relationship between communicative action and power as detailed in Habermas' theory suffers certain disadvantages as the ability of power game to achieve consensus was not taken into account. In alignment with recent theoretical changes of deliberative democracy, agonistic planning theory adopts a democratic mechanism so as to create an interactive consensus and to use inconsistent values and concepts in discursive process as incentives of coming to consensus and reducing shadows of power. Evidently, theory of agonistic planning is in its middle way and emergence of different theories and schools of thought (e.g. fourth generation of democracy theory) has led to frequent adjustments of the theory. However regardless of power relations, planners should be more active to encourage and support fluid structures. Also, in the context of social action, planners should try to turn aggression to agnostic, enmity to opposition, and violence to competition.

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