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## Transformed Institutions – Transformed Citizenship Education? Remarks on the Current Situation in Spain<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

Educational systems are placing great emphasis on the need to generate a sense of citizenship. In this article, we treat this question within the concrete framework of the recent history of Spain (from 1990 to current day). We make reference to three points:

1. The institutional framework of citizenship education;
2. The concepts of citizenship present in the school curriculum and the public debate;
3. The state of research into citizenship education.

Based on our analysis of the situation in Spain, we draw several conclusions regarding international research projects on citizenship education.

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1. Institutional Framework of Citizenship Education
2. Concepts of Citizenship in the School Curriculum and the Public Debate
3. The State of Research into Citizenship Education
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### Keywords

Citizenship education, Spanish educational system, international research.

### 1. Institutional Framework of Citizenship Education

Education systems are placing great emphasis on the need to generate a sense of citizenship. There are many reasons for this interest. Some are general (redefining of political areas, cultural and economic globalization, the dynamics of population change, etc.), whereas others refer to specific local conditions which affect the interest shown for this objective in each particular case. It is almost impossible, then, to comprehend how any individual country deals with the aim of including citizenship education in schools, and even more difficult to understand the public debate on the subject, if we do not consider the historical framework of the country and its education system. As Michael Walzer points out, words are not univocal, but are loaded with connotations from historical experience.<sup>2</sup> To a Spaniard, the very images evoked by the words “citizenship”, “multiculturalism”, “democracy”, or “nation” are not the same as those to a German, an Englishman or a Czech. In fact, the word “citizenship” is relatively new to

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<sup>1</sup> This article began as a preliminary contribution to the theoretical framework of Hedtke, Hippe and Zimenkova for an international research project on citizenship education: Hedtke, Reinhold; Hippe, Thorsten; and Zimenkova, Tatjana. 2006. *Transformed Institutions - Transformed Citizenship Education? The Current Situation of Citizenship Education in Southwestern, Southeastern and Eastern Europe*. University of Bielefeld, Faculty of Sociology (unpublished paper). A first version of the article was presented at the International Conference organized at Bielefeld University on June 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Walzer, Michael. 1994. *Thick and Thin: Moral Argument at Home and Abroad*. South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press.

official language in Spain. The *Diccionario Usual* of the Spanish Royal Academy did not include it until its ninth edition in 1843, when it was defined as “the quality and rights of the citizen”. In 1970 the meaning “group of citizens of a people or a nation” was added, and in 2001 the further meaning of “proper behaviour of a good citizen”.

Older and with many more nuances is the word “citizen”, which was included, in 1729, in the second edition of the so-called *Diccionario de Autoridades*, the first official dictionary of Spanish, where the definition accentuated its distinctive character. At that time, the term “citizen” was used to refer to “the inhabitant of a city, who enjoys its privileges and is obliged by its taxes, from which he has no particular exemption”. The first edition of the *Diccionario Usual de la Lengua Castellana*, in 1780, mentions two interesting nuances, which show different perspectives on the subject. The first is the direct link between “citizen” and the class system. The dictionary reminds us that, particularly in Catalonia, citizen “is a level of nobility below that of gentleman”. The 1791 edition is even more explicit, and defines it as “he who in his home town comes half way between a gentleman and a mechanical official”. The dictionary advises that this meaning is long-standing, and still in use in Catalonia and other parts of Spain. The second nuance, in 1783, refers to the moral dimension included in the term. Citizen, in its main sense, means “the same as good man”. In 1852, the moral meaning was completed with a more political one: “He who has the rights of citizenship”. This sense is strengthened in 1936, with the modern meaning of the term: “The inhabitant of an old city, or a modern state as the subject of political rights, who participates by using these rights in the government of the country”. Despite political change, since then the meaning of the word has not varied in the official dictionary. But it has changed in the less rigid *Diccionario Manual*, which, since 1927, has been published by the same Academy. In 1983, the state of citizenship and citizen are associated with the possession of those rights and obligations based on membership of the political community. The term citizenship has the added meaning of “a series of rights, obligations, guarantees, safeguards, etc., which a state offers its citizens”, and the term “citizen” also means “a person who has public rights and obligations, as a member of the organized community of the state”.

In view of this brief analysis, we see that the term “citizen” has four senses, with overlapping meanings, which Spanish vocabulary has preferred at different historical periods: (a) Generic (city dweller); (b) Class-denomination (a special condition compared to other population groups); (c) Moral (meaning good man); (d) Political (someone who has political rights and participates by using these rights in the government of the political community).

This overlapping of meanings expresses the reception of the concept of citizenship as an objective for institutional education. In Spain, as in other countries, fostering a sense of citizenship is an aim which inspires the genesis of the education system itself. The 1812 Constitution had already declared that “in every village of the kingdom, primary schools should be established, where the children will be taught reading, writing and arithmetic, together with the catholic catechism, which will also include a short explanation of civic duties” (Art. 366). A historical review of the different profiles adopted as the motto of civic and citizenship education, both in the works of theorists and in the legislative regulations of the Spanish education system in the course of the last hundred years, shows that it has always been considered an instrument for the constitution of a desired type of society and a means of political practice and ideals. These ideals are expressed in different aims, such as the generation of class-consciousness as a critical, revolutionary response to established power, or, absolutely

on the contrary, the development of a national spirit and a love of the homeland understood as a community with an essential destiny.<sup>3</sup>

The final stage of evolution can be seen in the political transition period and the passing of the 1978 Constitution, which meant a break from 40 years of dictatorship. The Constitution set up a new framework for coexistence within which Spain became a social and democratic state, advocating freedom, justice, equality and political pluralism (Art. 1.1.). It proclaims the rights and freedom of its citizens (Arts. 14-38), and recognises the cultural and historical characteristics of the different territories and communities of which it is made up, and the right to self-government and solidarity (Arts. 2 y 143.1). The educational ideals of the state based on the 1978 Constitution are stated in Article 27, which is the result of a complicated agreement between the different political groups of the period. The article includes the aims of education of Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

“The objective of education shall be the full development of the human personality in respect for the democratic principles of coexistence and the basic rights and liberties.” (*Constitución Española*, Art. 27.2).

In agreement with this constitutional regulation, during the last decades Spanish governments have undertaken some legislative reforms, which have directly affected the field of citizenship education. Traditionally, this field has not been a separate nucleus for pedagogical action, but has been part of other educational goals which form a general work-area for education for values or moral and civic education. Thus, citizenship education has, for many years, been mainly linked to the moral meaning of the citizen concept. We must emphasise the hard work carried out in this area by the *Ley Orgánica de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo*, LOGSE (*Law on General Organization of the Education System*), passed by the Spanish Socialist Party in 1990, which regulated the Spanish system of education until the *Ley Orgánica de Educación*, LOE (*Law on Education*) was passed in May 2006.

The LOGSE included moral and civic education as a central cross-curricular core theme, which “must permeate the whole curriculum, and so is not organized as a specific area or subject. In particular, it is not to be an area studied by a few students only, such as those who do not choose religion, as an alternative subject. Only in the last year of compulsory education, in the area of Social Sciences, Geography and History, are some units of content envisaged which involve formal reflection on moral issues”.<sup>4</sup> However, ten years after the approval of this law it was obvious that curricular option had not had the expected results. There are several reasons for this<sup>5</sup>.

Structurally, the cross-curricular core themes are not clearly spelt out in the curriculum and, with a lack of policy support, the institutional status is weak. Indeed, to even propose moral and civic education as something that cuts across all areas of the curriculum is problematic. Hence, the infusion of moral and civic education, which also requires a reprogramming of teaching and learning, is generally not present in the curriculum. This is because the responsibility for putting into practice the multidisciplinary approach in moral and civic education has been left to teachers with little central support or encouragement.

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<sup>3</sup> Mayordomo, Alejandro. 2000. Regeneration of society, constructing patriotism or citizenship: education and political socialization in XX century Spain, Encounters on Education [Encuentros sobre Educación / Recontres sur l'Éducation], 1, 49-80.

<sup>4</sup> MEC. 1994. *Centros educativos y calidad de la enseñanza*. Propuesta de actuación. Madrid: Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia [MEC means Ministry of Education and Science]

<sup>5</sup> Naval, Concepción; Print, Murray; and Veldhuis, Ruud. 2002. Education for Democratic Citizenship in the New Europe: context and reform, *European Journal of Education*, 37: 2, 122-123. See also: Naval, Concepción; Print, Murray; and Iriarte, Concha. 2003. Civic Education in Spain: A Critical Review of Policy. In: *Journal of Social Sciences Education*, 2-2003. ([http://www.jsse.org/2003-2/spain\\_naval.htm](http://www.jsse.org/2003-2/spain_naval.htm))

A lack of clarity in the implementation of cross-curricular core themes has given rise to a wide variety of proposals in schools. In most cases, the innovative and formative potential of the "core" themes has been reduced to specific and sporadic events such as an activity or a celebration (Day of Peace, Day of the Tree or Constitution Day). The real evidence of success, provision of time within the curriculum, is considered optional or these topics are taken up in the tutorial sessions. We must also add the difficulty of evaluating the achievements of the students on such cross-curricular themes.

Moreover, moral and civic education, as identified in the LOGSE, was inspired by a formal and procedural approach (moral dilemmas, clarification of values, moral reasoning and judgment or dialogue) in an attempt to avoid any kind of indoctrination. However, a holistic education for democratic citizenship requires many components including the acquisition of knowledge and concepts, values and attitudes, stable dispositions directed to action and the improvement of instrumental competences, particularly those that promote participation.

On the other hand, some debates which have taken place in our country during the last few years, such as the discussion about the place of Humanities in the secondary education curriculum, or the discrepancies in certain aspects of curricular regulations derived from the *Ley Orgánica de Calidad de la Educación*, LOCE (*Law on Quality Education*),<sup>6</sup> have highlighted the difficulties that the tension between the different identity environments (local, regional, national, European, worldwide) pose to the possibilities of drawing up a project for citizenship education in our schools. Indeed, there is some doubt about the effectiveness of schools when competing with information and communication systems which no longer are mere tools, but have become authentic creators of reality. At least, this is what appears to be happening in view of the results of many surveys carried out on the political attitudes of Spanish youth.

As we have seen in these surveys, the lifestyle of these young people is a reflection of the *ethos* of contemporary post-modern societies. Consumerism, self-satisfaction, desire for fast success, etc., are signs that the definitive moral rule is wellbeing, self-indulgence, and the security of a small group of friends, a satisfying job and pleasing personal relationships. The fragmentary and ever-changing ego and the loss of the great totalizing answers lead to the image of the human being as a microcosm. Having lost all confidence in the universalist and progressive ideals of modernity, young people take refuge in smaller spheres. To a certain extent, the world is fading into a blurred mix of what is virtual and what is real: in the media, recreational content, movies and music are of greater interest than news. We see an enduring longing for wider horizons, for holidays. In politics, there is a return to more private concerns (accommodation, education, work), in contrast with a certain tendency towards new, personally remote values that appeal to worldwide solidarity. Pragmatic interests prevail over ideologies, and disappointment in the traditional means of political expression adds to the apathy or gives way to new means for action, which are no longer considered, however, as forms of involvement in politics.<sup>7</sup>

The problems caused by the introduction of the cross-curricular model as suggested in the LOGSE, the evidence of the progressive lack of interest in politics among the young, and the pressure of international organizations, such as the Council of Europe, demonstrate the need to strengthen the presence of citizenship education in the

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<sup>6</sup> The *Law on Quality Education* (LOCE) was passed by the *Partido Popular* (*People's Party*) in December 2002 as an alternative to the LOGSE. The *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (*Socialist Party*) brought the application of this law to a standstill following their coming to power in 2004. The PSOE prepared the *Law on Education* (LOE) as an alternative to the LOCE. A number of social and professional groups have criticized the difficulties in defining a stable educational project amidst such political reforms.

<sup>7</sup> Jover, Gonzalo; Casares, Pilar; Gil, Fernando and Payá, Montserrat. 2001. La crisis de la sociedad actual. En Pedro Ortega, eds. *Conflicto, violencia y educación*. Murcia, Cajamurcia, pp. 23-75.

curriculum. The political opportunity to do so has come about with the approval of the *Ley Orgánica de Educación*, LOE, which will now regulate the education system in place of the worn-out LOGSE. The new law institutes citizenship education as a specific curricular area, and states:

“Its aim is to offer all students a space for reflection, analysis and study of the fundamental characteristics and working of a democratic regime, of the principles and rights established in the Constitution of Spain and in the treaties and the universal declarations of human rights, together with those values held in common which are the basis for democratic citizenship in a global context. This education, which can never be considered an alternative to or a substitute for religious education, does not contradict that democratic practice which should inspire the whole of school life and must be developed as part of the education of values with a cross-curricular character included in all school activities. This new subject will allow for in-depth research into some aspects of our life in common, and contribute to the formation of new citizens.”

(LOE: preamble).

The law introduces the area of citizenship education in the third cycle of primary education (pupils from 10 to 12), and in one of the first three years of compulsory secondary education (12 to 15) where it is entitled “Education for citizenship and human rights”, in the fourth year of compulsory secondary education as “Ethical and civic education”, and as a common subject for all the different types of post-compulsory upper secondary education (16-18) under the title “Philosophy and citizenship”. Moreover, it is mentioned as an aim in professional training, sports and adult education.

The curriculum for common minimum teaching (obligatory in all autonomous communities) which corresponds to 65% of the total curricular time (55% in those communities with their own official language) for primary education, allows only a reduced space for this subject, far shorter than that of other curricular areas, in the third cycle (years 5 and 6) of this stage, with a total of 50 hours. In compulsory secondary education, the time scale within common minimum teaching for the whole country is as follows: “Education for citizenship and human rights” (years 1, 2 or 3) – 35 hours; “Ethical and civic education” (year 4) – 35 hours.

## 2. Concepts of Citizenship in the School Curriculum and the Public Debate

Unsurprisingly in our education system, the reception of the idea of “citizen” as stated in the current law returns to its moral sense. In the curricular framework coming from this law, citizenship is not taken in an exclusively or mainly political or institutional sense, as a set of formal rights, but rather as an axiological concept which implies a certain way of being and acting in society. In primary education its content in the common minimum curriculum is structured into three blocks: (1) Persons and interpersonal and group relations; (2) Life in community; (3) Living in society, and includes classical aspects of citizenship education (human rights and children’s rights; civic values and habits; knowledge of constitutional principles; contribution through taxes; evaluation of defence policy in the service of peace; etc.), and others in the realm of new awareness: gender equality; recognition of the differences in gender, social, cultural and religious diversity; identification of discriminatory situations; etc

In the subject taught in one of the first three years of compulsory secondary education, the content is structured into five blocks, which, as in primary education, include classic content together with others in the area of new awareness: civic skills (dialogue, participation, etc.); personal relations within a pluralistic context (solidarity and aid, critical evaluation of the social and gender-based division of labour, and racist, xenophobic, anti-Semitic, sexist and homophobic prejudice); systems for the protection of human rights (declarations and pacts, rights as an unfinished agenda, women’s

rights); the structure of the country (Spanish Constitution, the state of the autonomous communities, social and cultural diversity, taxes, etc.) and citizenship in a global world (inequality, conflict, globalization, etc.). In the fourth-year subject, "Ethical and civic education" there is also an in-depth analysis of a series of ethical and political issues, with the aim of contributing to "building a civic moral conscience".<sup>8</sup>

In the curricular framework, then, the idea of citizenship becomes more a moral than legal concept, and includes values as diverse as the rejection of homophobia and the defence of the Armed Forces. The detail in which this curricular framework establishes the objectives, skills, content and criteria for evaluation of the subject, especially in compulsory secondary education, has caused an outcry, particularly from catholic organizations, which see it as an attempt by the governing party to impose its secular worldview of life. The party in power has encouraged this interpretation. A manifesto entitled "Constitution, secularity and education for citizenship" presented by the Spanish Socialist Party on the anniversary of the Constitution, a short time before the primary school curriculum was officially published, said:

"Monotheistic and religious fundamentalism places barriers between citizens. Secularity is the area for integration. Without secularity there would be no new citizen rights, some freedoms such as abortion, same-sex marriage, would be crimes, ... and violence to women, clitoral ablation, and gender discrimination would no longer be illegal. Without secularity it would be difficult to avoid conduct which is in absolute disagreement with the formation of free, critical consciences, and with the development of civic virtues."<sup>9</sup>

The subject "Education for citizenship and human rights", the manifesto adds, deals precisely with the promotion of those values which make up the *minimum common ethics* established in the 1978 Constitution. The manifesto refers to the 1931 republican Constitution, just prior to the Franco regime. This latter constitution prevented religious orders from teaching in official institutions and ordered "teaching shall be secular, shall hold labour as the core of its methodology, and shall be inspired by ideals of human solidarity" (Art. 48). This was the answer of the 1931 constitution to the traditional confrontation between church and state on the issue of education.

The Catholic Church has criticised the curricular framework of citizenship education, as it believes that the compulsory nature of the subject imposes a morality based on an anthropology that disregards the traditional values of a Catholic perspective of life.<sup>10</sup> Other social organizations, teaching associations, etc., have joined, from other perspectives, in this criticism. For many people, what is presented as an ethic of minimums is in fact an ethic of maximums that allows for very little margin for choice as the basis of a pluralistic democratic system. The state imposes its own ethics and ignores the wishes of families, religious groups, cultural communities, citizens, etc.

But the basic curricular framework will not be followed word by word in the classroom; it will be influenced by various filters. The Autonomic Communities are now completing the curricular instructions for their respective territories. Then the publishers convert these legal norms into material for the classroom, and finally, each teacher will present their reading of the subject to the pupils.

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<sup>8</sup> Royal Decree 1631/2006, December 29, which established the minimum teaching which correspond to compulsory secondary education, Boletín Oficial del Estado, 5-1-2007, p. 716.

<sup>9</sup> Partido Socialista Obrero Español . 2006. "Constitución, laicidad y educación para la ciudadanía". (<http://www.psoe.es/ambito/municipal/news/index.do?id=98410&action=View>)

<sup>10</sup> see for example, the manifesto of the Permanent Commission of the Spanish Conference of Bishops. 2007. "La Ley Orgánica de Educación (LOE), los Reales Decretos que la desarrollan y los derechos fundamentales de padres y escuelas". (<http://www.conferenciaepiscopal.es/documentos/Conferencia/LOE2007.htm>)

In a recent survey of the values of teaching staff at infant, primary and secondary levels carried out in Spain, it was found that most of the teachers (77.8%) consider the introduction of civic education as a curricular area to be positive, however, there was a notable gender-based difference (83% women and 59.5% men). But teachers have much more polarized views on their role with reference to the established values: 40.9% believe that education in values means communicating established values, while 42.6% believe the opposite (the remaining 16.6% are uninterested).<sup>11</sup>

The inclusion of citizenship in the school curriculum has received great attention in the public debate around this idea in Spain, especially during the last two years. But it has not been the only issue. In order to explore the profile of the concept in the public debate scenario, we have carried out an analysis of the content of two main national newspapers: *El País* and *El Mundo*, with plainly different ideologies. The former is leftwing, which at present means it supports the Government, while the latter has always had a liberal, provocative outlook. The analysis covered the last seven years and was carried out by means of the online search engines of the papers.<sup>12</sup> The result was 417 entries that were classified in eleven categories:

1. Citizenship education;
2. Freedom and political rights: participation, nationality, information, security, consumption, etc.;
3. The social state and public services: accommodation, education, health, subsidies, fiscal policy, etc.;
4. Cultural diversity and immigration: ethical minorities, policies on the status of foreigners;
5. Gender equality and sexual orientation;
6. Organization of the State: autonomic system, local citizenship;
7. The construction of Europe: citizenship and politics of the EU, evolution of the new member-states;
8. National and international terrorism;
9. World citizenship: international solidarity, globalization, peace;
10. Civil society: associationism, citizen mobilization, resistance, political skepticism, civic responsibility;
11. Debate and political strategy: party-political struggle, electoral strategies, etc.

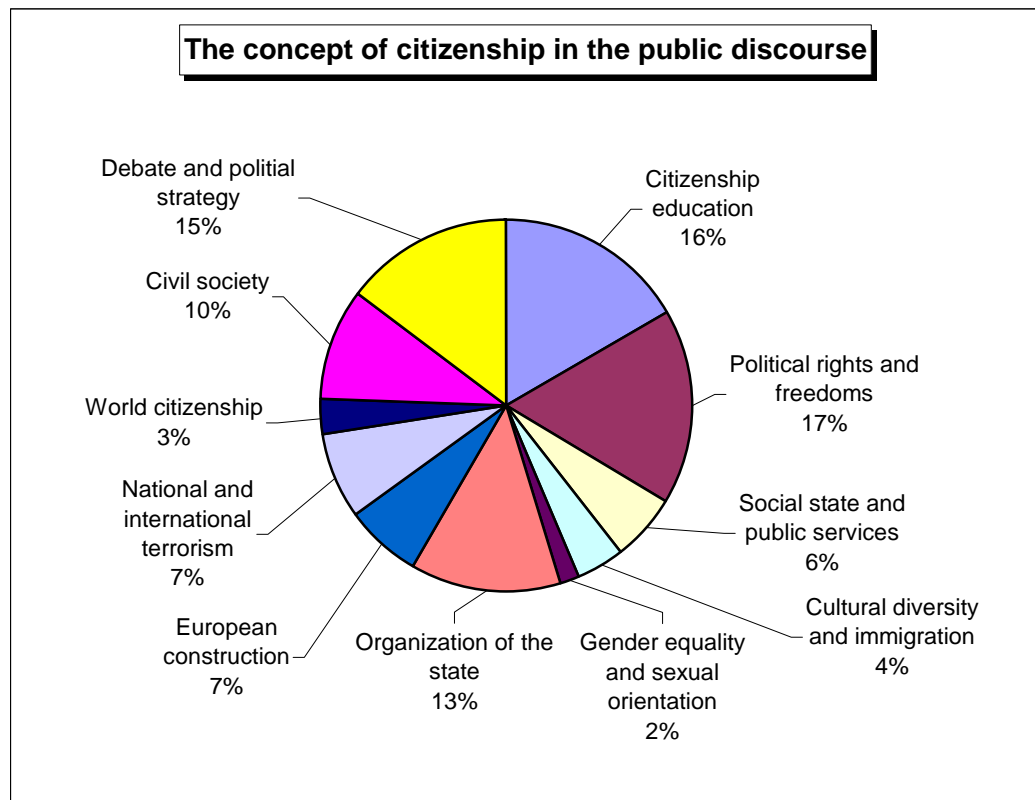
As shown in the following chart, along with the prominent role of the discussion on the inclusion of citizenship education in schools, the references to this idea in the media show the predominance of the political significance of the concept in the public debate, where it is associated with freedom and rights (particularly participation, information and security), and party-political strategies. Two other scenarios where this idea appears are the discussion about the construction of the political system of the autonomous communities and civil mobilization (associationism, citizen resistance, political scepticism, etc.), which is at times considered as an alternative to the established means of citizen expression. To a lesser degree, this concept is also mentioned in news about national and international terrorism, the construction of Europe, social policies, cultural diversity and immigration policies, international solidarity and, incipiently, gender equality and sexual orientation.

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<sup>11</sup> Marchesi, Álvaro; Díaz, Tamara. 2007. *Las emociones y los valores del profesorado*. Madrid: S.M., pp. 33-35.

<sup>12</sup> For *El País*, the following search criteria were used: a) concept: citizenship; b) localization: title and subtitle; c) source: printed press; d) date: from 1-1-2000 to 2-3-2007. For *El Mundo*: a) concept: citizenship; b) source: newspaper; c) minimum relevance: 80%; d) date: from 1-1-2000 to 2-3-2007

Graphic 1



As a general conclusion to this analysis, we must state, provisionally, that in Spain the curricular framework for citizenship education goes further than public opinion does, in as far as it appeals to some “post-conventional” criteria for life guidance, particularly on the issue of sexual options. These criteria, which have had an important role in social and political debate in the last few years, have barely appeared on the public debate scenario of the concept of citizenship, which maintains a more traditional viewpoint based on rights and political strategy.

Verification of this conclusion would demand, however, both the use of more refined research tools, and a more precise definition of what can be considered post-conventional values at any given time and place. Anything post-conventional, once it is integrated in the norm, will become conventional. If this is so, the consequence, paradoxically, is that at present in our country, post-conventional values are defended by those who oppose the inclusion of these criteria, as life guidance, in the curriculum for citizen education.

### 3. The State of Research into Citizenship Education

In Spain, the treatment of citizenship education, as an object of specialized research, has, to a certain extent, run parallel to the presence of the subject in the education system.<sup>13</sup> As happened with educational and curricular proposals, the subject has also been linked in research to the general concern about education in values and moral education. And, equally, the socio-political environment has also conditioned its

<sup>13</sup> For a more detailed description see: Naval, Concepción and Jover, Gonzalo. 2006. The Research on Moral and Civic Education in the Spanish Educational Theory: evolution and current trends. In: Journal of Social Science Education, vol. 5, n. 2, 93-104. (<http://www.jsse.org/2006-2/pdf/naval-jover-spain.pdf>) see also: Jover, Gonzalo. 2001. Philosophy of Education in Spain at the Threshold of the 21st Century – Origins, Political Contexts, and Prospects, Studies in Philosophy and Education, vol. 20, n. 4, 361-385.



treatment. During the dictatorship, moral education in our education system meant nothing further than education in a specific religious content. Consequently, at the beginning of the constitutional period it was almost completely absent from pedagogical research. For keen supporters of a scientific and technical approach to educational knowledge, any talk of moral education risked bringing back echoes of the past.

As of the second half of the 1980s, various research groups at several Spanish universities began looking into the possibilities and means of inserting moral education into the curricula and schools. With a few exceptions, interest in the more operative side of the subject outweighed any interest in shedding light on the theoretical foundations. Anything that even sounded like foundationalism, much less adopting a moral position based on material ethics, was discarded. Several years behind what had been happening on the international scene, practically the only resource left in this climate was the appeal to a system of ethics without content. The formal and procedural approach of moral development represented a kind of guarantee.

The difficulties surrounding the prickly topic of moral education may explain why in the second half of the nineties research turned towards citizenship and civic education. The latter was free of many of the negative connotations that made people cringe from the former. In fact, quite the opposite occurs. Talking about citizenship meant talking about democracy and democratic values, its discourse brimmed with words of tolerance, pluralism, and peaceful coexistence among different options. As opposed to ethical formalism, the civic alternative instead allowed the justification of an education based on the values of a material ethics, without the negative undertones of moral education. Besides, contrary to the operative and technical orientation that initially presided the predominant interest in moral education, the subject of citizenship was more open to theoretical discussion, since it was a central issue in ethics and political philosophy at the end of the twentieth century, especially in relation to the phenomenon of multiculturalism.

Once its institutional identity had been established, a much more critical debate has developed. Based on the work of Hannah Arendt, Bárcena, for example, has criticised the de-politicising of the pedagogical discourse on citizenship, which was a victim of that “social boom” that made the concept a mere mechanism for the standardization of behaviour, thus losing its power of mobilization against what is no longer queried.<sup>14</sup> And for Reyero, the coercive aim of the State in fostering civic values, by means of educational regulations, undermines the very foundations on which the possibility of citizenship is constructed, as a commitment for freely adopted coexistence.<sup>15</sup>

#### 4. Conclusions

Based on the analysis of the situation of citizenship education in Spain, we come to two main conclusions regarding international research projects on the topic. The first is the need to combine the comparative approach with a greater attention to the historical and local conditions of each country analysed. Otherwise, the result will be a one-dimensional image in which we cannot see what lies behind each element. It is necessary to create a tri-dimensional image showing the existing reality without concealing the many stories involved in the systems. The circumstances in which the political situations in different countries developed during the XX century, on which their

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<sup>14</sup> Bárcena, Fernando. 2006. La re-politización del discurso cívico: una mirada filosófica. In F. Revilla, eds. *Educación y ciudadanía. Valores para una sociedad democrática*. Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, pp. 75-96.

<sup>15</sup> Reyero, David. 2006. ¿Pero todavía alguien cree que es posible la educación cívica? In Concepción Naval and Montserrat Herrero, eds. *Educación y ciudadanía en una sociedad democrática*. Madrid: Encuentro, pp. 181-196.

education systems are based, are so wide-ranging that, without this longitudinal perspective, any comparison is doomed to failure. This means that any attempt to use the same coordinates to analyse realities that are very different, even though they are included under the same title – citizenship education for example – is bound to fail.

The second consequence is the need to give a more precise definition of some concepts proposed as categories of analysis in research, such as post-conventional values or pedagogical autonomy.<sup>16</sup> Since the age of Socrates, teachers have been persecuted if they did not defend the values of the dominant political situation. In Spain, we experienced this trend during the Second Republic and the Franco regime with their purges of teachers. Schools are, or should be, the driving force for social advancement, and should play a certain role in breaking with the status quo. Even in democracies, progress comes from the tension between the existing conditions and what they suggest for the future. However, what characterizes these systems is that there is not one sole option that can be considered as the direction for progress. Perhaps this explains why, as we have seen, teachers, who are the final arbitrators of reality for their pupils, disagree on whether they should continue to defend established values or they should not. Many will wonder, “If not these values, which ones?” Consequently, there are two problems. a) What justification is there for adopting a certain path towards progress? Why this route and not another? And b) Should pedagogy and teachers be responsible for drawing this path? On what authority? Should this path, or, even better, paths, not be drawn by society and personal choice within a common framework for coexistence?

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<sup>16</sup> see Hedtke, Reinhold; Hippe, Thorsten; and Zimenkova, Tatjana, op. cit.

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