

# Citizenship, National Identity and Political Education: Some Disputable Questions

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## Abstract

The article seeks to elucidate some controversial problems of the formation of both civic and national self-consciousness through analysing the politics of identity and citizenship, which has assumed increasing importance in Western and Eastern European countries. Citizenship is considered as a dynamic construct that should be viewed as a 'process' through which specific rights and obligations are exercised. The central task, therefore, is to analyse the evolution of various conceptions of citizenship in the light of historical experience, continuity and change, as well as the process of transformation of the model of political education that has emerged within the framework of the liberal political culture of the 19th century and has continued to exert a great impact on the development of political discourse in the modern world. Special attention is given to the comparative analysis of the models of civic and national identity in the USA, Western and Eastern Europe, including post-communist Russia. The author argues that the conception of identity as well, as the criteria for its definition, have become crucial in the discussion of problems of citizenship and political education. The issue remains whether an effective model of political education alone, i.e. without active citizens' involvement and support, can have the potential not only to transform a political culture, but also influence the whole system of both secondary and university education. The final aim of the article is to prove the idea that a new conception of citizenship and political education could, in conditions of a deepening crisis, become the most important link binding civil society and the new content of the *political* making its way through corporative interests.

**Keywords:** citizenship, political education, nation-state, civil rights, national identity, political culture, ideological transformations.

## Introduction

*A citizen is a person who owes allegiance to a specific government and is entitled to protection from that government and to the enjoyment of certain rights. It is widely recognized that effective citizenship rests on a rigorous and viable system of civic education which informs the individual of his civil rights and obligations. The long-term trend, however, has been to enhance citizen rights without effective articulation of citizen obligation. To restore a meaningful balance between the two is, in my view, the core issue in citizenship and civic education (Janowitz, 1985, p. IX).*

With this well-known definition of Morris Janowitz I would like to begin the discussion about some aspects of the modern conception of citizenship which seem to be the most crucial ones in a period when the rapprochement of positions between the Eastern and Western European countries after the failure of radical socialist experiments is creating prospects of fundamental political and ideological transformation all over the world.

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Until very recently, it was extremely unlikely to find any points of contact on the question of citizenship in Marxist and liberal literature (I mean, of course, not the legal content of the very notion of 'citizen' but the socio-political concepts of citizenship in general). Such incompatibility has always looked all the more strange because both the socialist and liberal treatments of this conception had a common ideological source in the tradition of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. The idea of citizenship appeared then as an essential part of the arising civil society.

*In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries civil society came to imply a form of universal citizenship within the nation-state, based on the one hand on the principles of individualism and on the other on the participation of these individuals in public life, a participation that was in turn based on the mutuality of citizens in the form of compacts, contracts, and the moral, economic, social, and political ties binding these individuals* (Seligman, 1992, p. 111; cf. Maatsch, 2011, pp. 19-33; Bellamy, 2008, p. 13-18).

## American or European model?

The USA – the first country where all these principles were most fully realised – has always been regarded as an ideal historical model of civil society. One can find, however, at least two points of deviation of the American model from the Western European one. The first point is the absence of a strong socialist movement. In Western Europe, the socialist movement arose and developed in the nineteenth century in response to the continued exclusion of the working class from full membership in the national community. The rights of association, freedom of speech and press, freedom to organise political parties and trade unions, and the right of franchise were denied to working class members in Western European societies. The result was a huge expansion of socialism in Europe (Seligman, 1992, pp. 102-104; Beckett, 2006, pp. 22-64). As Seymour Martin Lipset noted, *Where the working class was denied full political and economic citizenship strong revolutionary movements developed. Conversely, the more readily working-class organizations were accepted into the economic and political order, the less radical their initial and subsequent ideologies* (Lipset, 1983, p. 2).

It is quite clear why socialist ideologists regarded the very idea of the existence of an autonomous civil society uniting free and equal citizens, who are independent of state power, as a mere 'bourgeois ruse' and elaborated the concept of an ideal society where the principles of citizenship would be on firmer ground owing to the merging of civil and political spheres in a new harmonious community.

Among the factors that predetermined the failure of socialism in the USA were the mobility and flexibility of the American political system, the specific social base of the American socialist movement (for example, the absence of workers in its ranks), the open frontier, etc. However, the main factor was the American ideology

*with its inclusive definitions of citizenship and its integration of the working class as members of the national collective. More than anything else it was the very ideology of Americanism, its civil religion... that precluded the development of a socialist movement there. The uniqueness of this civil religion as a form of national identity, which in its very essence precludes a socialist ideology, was expressed by Leo Sampson as follows: 'When we examine the meaning of Americanism we discover that Americanism is to the American not a tradition, or a territory, not what France is to a Frenchman or England to an Englishman, but a doctrine – what socialism is to a socialist'* (Seligman, 1992, pp. 108-110; cf. Skocpol, 1992, pp. 5-6).

This religious character of the foundation of national identity is a second point of deviation of the American model. The concept of identity and criteria for its definition become, therefore, crucial in the discussion of the problem of citizenship. National identity implies *a complex of similar conceptions*

*and perceptual schemata, of similar emotional dispositions and attitudes, and of similar behavioural conventions, which bearers of this 'national identity' share collectively and which they have internalized through socialization (education, politics, the media, sports or everyday practices)* (Wodak, Cillia, Reisigl, & Liebhart, 2009, p. 4).

In modern scientific literature, the noun 'identity' is used with a great variety of attributes. One can speak of mental, ethnic, ideological, class, state, power, defensive, cultural, sexual identities, etc. The main principle of an identity (an individual or a group one) is a relationship between Me and Not Me, We and Others, which gives rise to the following dilemma – acceptance and non-acceptance of these others.

National identity is usually defined *through associating [it] with some entity or entities and accentuating their differences from the others* (Burant, 1995, p. 1125). Sometimes such a definition acquires different meanings – from sociocultural to political ones, accentuating the orientations of political elites. For example, in the early 1990s, the intention of the governments of the *Vysegrad Triangle* to join the EU and NATO were interpreted by some analysts as an intention to *develop a Central European Identity for their peoples and to help loosen the fetters that bound them to 'Eastern Europe' and then to ease their paths toward integration into European institutions* (Neumann, 1993, p. 354). In this case the 'Other' for the Central Europeans was, of course, Russia.

If the notion 'identity' is to be used only for the description of structure of the 'inner orientations' of individuals and groups, one should separate this notion from various classification and identification models and constructions. Their results depend, as a rule, on how subjective is the perception of real political processes by scholars. For example, in the late 1960s when John Armstrong wrote an article on the Soviet nations, where he defined the Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians as 'state nations' in contrast to the Ukrainians and Belarusians, who were classified as mere 'younger brothers' because they were rural, *low in education... low in geographic mobility and culturally close* to the Russians, this evaluation was not, of course, the result of pure scientific investigation but merely a literary paraphrase of the official non-recognition of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact by the USA (Armstrong 1968, pp. 21-22).

Three concepts of identity are crucial to the analysis of the problem of modern citizenship – national identity, political identity, and civic identity. It appears that in the structure of orientations determining national identity, the principles of ethnic policy, which form attitudes towards aliens, immigrants, ethnic groups and minorities on the basis of the acceptance/non-acceptance dilemma, play a decisive role. The acceptance implies exclusion or inclusion. The latter presumes, in its turn, a choice between integration, coexistence or assimilation. Non-acceptance opens the door to ghettos, reservations, expulsion and physical extermination.

In modern scientific literature, any systematic attempts at building models of national identity based on the different ethnic policy types are comparatively rare (Brubaker, 2004; Edensor, 2002; Wodak, Cillia, Reisigl & Liebhart, 2009). One example, which seems relevant to the questions discussed in this article, is the classification developed by Bourmeyster from the Centre for Slavic Studies at Stendhal University in Grenoble. Bourmeyster identifies four models of national identity: integration, apartheid (civilised and non-civilised), assimilation, and intangibility (Bourmeyster, 1994, pp. 28-30) (Table 1).

The classification cited above cannot be regarded as an indisputable one. But it helps to understand the interdependence between different models of national identity that have evolved over the long course of history and the unifying character of the modern concept of citizenship arising in contemporary Europe during the integration process.

**Table 1:** The basic models of national identity

Aspects/ dimensions	1. Integration	2. Apartheid	3. Assimilation	4. Intangibility
State	Nation-state under the rule of law.	Non-Nation-State.	The state deprived of the rule of law.	The State under the rule of law which recognises national identity based on blood relationship.
Nationality	No racial or ethnic discrimination. Acquisition of nationality by birth or naturalization.	Double nationality is possible. Coexistence of citizens living in ethnic groups recognised as fundamentally different ones.	The organic unity projected on the future.	Acquisition of quasi-impossible nationality outside this relationship. Double nationality is impossible.
Minorities	National or ethnic minorities are not accepted.	Recognition of ethnic minorities but not national minorities.	Ethnic minorities are officially recognised and regarded as ephemeral entities expected to disappear in the process of X-isation (denationalization, dechristianisation etc.) by means of administrative or terrorist measures.	Aliens enjoy the same social rights as workers and occasionally certain civic rights are granted to officially registered ethnic minorities.
Modes of realisation	The realisation of this model presumes the unity of the people, where the term 'multinational state' is non-applicable.	Pluralism provided by associated life. The guarantee of interethnic dialogue and cooperation. Coexistence of churches, sects, congregations etc.	The process of Russification, Romanisation etc. on the pretext of international normalisation.	The policy of gathering of compatriots scattered outside the native land and the defence of identity, which is on the verge of disappearance in national enclaves abroad.
The potential dangers	Incapacity to manage integration processes, destabilization, forcible recognition of multiethnicity and of the existence of national minorities, racism, intolerance.	Incapacity to manage peaceful coexistence. Secession, the breakup of unions or self-destruction during interethnic conflicts without any prospects for a political solution.	Resistance of those who refuse to be converted to new men or defend their identity as an ethnic minority leaning on an exterior metropolis, a diaspora or invisible feudal clans.	Declarative toleration for aliens is not unlimited. The incapacity of institutions to manage a growing mass of aliens. Racism, intolerance, ethnic purges as a consequence
The model application	France	The Anglo-Saxon countries.	The former socialist countries	The case with Germany at different stages of its history.

Source: author's compilation based on Bourmeyster (1994, pp. 28-30)

## The heuristic aspects of a political culture approach

This process predetermines especially numerous aspects of modern European political identity. One usually defines the term 'political identity' as a combination of preferences, historically based, for a definite type of politics and political system. These preferences are in turn dependent on the specification of political culture, which is defined by Almond and Powell (1966) as *the pattern of individual attitudes and orientations toward politics among the members of political system* (Almond & Powell, 1966: 50).

In some academic circles, the investigation of the influence of cultural factors on the changes in political systems is often vehemently criticised. As Samuel Huntington (1968) once wrote,

*The concept of culture is a tricky one in social science because it is both easy and unsatisfying to use. It is easy (and also dangerous) to use because it is, in some sense, a residual category. If no other causes can plausibly explain significant differences between societies, it is inviting to attribute them to culture. Just exactly how culture is responsible for the political and economic differences one is attempting to explain is often left extraordinarily vague. Cultural explanations are thus often imprecise or tautological or both, at the extreme coming down to a more sophisticated rendering of 'the French are like that!' On the other hand, cultural explanations are also unsatisfying for a social scientist because they run counter to the social scientist's proclivity to generalize. They do not explain consequences in terms of relationships among universal variables such as rates of economic growth, social mobilization, political participation, and civil violence. They tend, instead, to speak in particulars peculiar to specific cultural entities* (Huntington, 1968: 22-23).

It is evident, however, that no phenomenon in modern political life (the phenomenon of post-totalitarianism, for example) can be properly understood without taking into consideration not only the cultural traditions, but also the peculiarity of national characters of the European nations, whose formation was the result of a long historical evolution. The role of historical conditions in the formation of national character was especially noted by Erich Fromm (1989),

*It is argued that every nation demonstrates a typical 'character-matrix' with corresponding positive and negative consequences, so that every nation develops in different historical conditions certain basic character traits, which though not eternal, can, however, be preserved for many generations due to the influence and change of various...factors. It is also supposed that this relatively constant character-matrix is value-neutral and can lead, under certain conditions, to the development of positive character features, under other conditions – to negative ones* (Fromm, 1989, p. 5).

Fromm's observation is well confirmed by how different ways of overcoming the totalitarian legacy were in the post-communist Central Eastern Europe on the one hand and Russia on the other. The countries in which autonomous social structures such as influential intellectuals and students, the Roman Catholic Church, independent trade unions, etc., had not completely degenerated, were found to be in the forefront of the 'anti-totalitarian wave'. This fact testifies to the thesis on the conservation of traditions of political culture, which were formed in these countries during the capitalist period.

On the contrary, the data of sociological surveys in Russia show that the reaction of the great part of the population quite corresponds to the traditions of political culture that were defined by Almond and Powell as subject-participant. The main characteristic of this type is a combination of political conformism with a traditional conservative or religious perception of political realities (Almond & Powell, 1966, p. 50). The peculiarity of the Russian version of such a culture lies in the fact that the patriarchal traditions of the former monarchical state were spontaneously transformed by the

communist regime in a very special manner: Soviet totalitarianism and the old orthodox system of beliefs were well adapted to each other. Socialist radicalism influenced only the forms of economic and political transformation as well as the character of ideological stereotypes.

All experience of post-communist constitutional experiments in Russia, first based on attempts to combine the US model of government with Soviet power and then borrow the main ingredients of constitutional practice of American and European presidential regimes, testifies to a quasi-democratic character of these experiments, which is quite compatible with traditions of domestic political culture. The awareness of this fact on the part of Russian scholars leads them, not infrequently, to quite pessimistic conclusions. As Molchanov wrote,

*If there is one common element unifying otherwise dissimilar works on Russian politics and society, the theme of the unique Russian political culture might be it. Whether it is conceptualized as political culture, national character, or even destiny, the idea that Russian politics is somehow different from what we might find elsewhere has proven surprisingly resilient. In its more dogmatic reincarnation, this view holds that Russian political culture is doomed to be authoritarian.* (Molchanov, 2002, pp. 4-5; cf. Brudny, Frankel, Hoffman, 2004, pp. 8-12, pp. 52-67; Robertson, 2011, pp. 4, 212-214)

In either case, the orientation of the new post-communist leadership towards radical liberal reforms has from the very beginning predestined the paradoxical character of new Russian model of development: by rejecting both a socialist choice and a concept of gradual rebuilding of the Soviet system, Russia – a world power by its economic and military potential – acquired (without the formal loss of its international status) some essential parameters of a ‘third world’ state.

The experience of the post-war history of these states demonstrated that *economic development and political stability are two independent goals and progress toward one has no necessary connection with progress toward the other. In some instances programs of economic development may promote political stability; in other instances they may seriously undermine such stability* (Huntington, 1968, p. 6). At the beginning of the 1990s, the assumption that the post-communist states of Eastern Europe and Russia will form a dichotomy did not seem pessimistic. While Hungary, the Czech Republic, or Slovenia may entirely follow the path of Costa Rica, South Korea, and Taiwan, there exists a possibility for Russia to reproduce some less attractive Latin American models. In this situation, the inconsistency between government policies and the expectations of a great number of citizens is quite understandable and easily explicable. Modern Russian political culture can be regarded as a model example of a conflict type of political culture. It is not only contrary to the traditions formed in Western Europe and USA, as was already noted above, but also differs considerably from the evolution of the political mentality that can be observed in Eastern Europe.

## Anti-politics as a research model

It is important that political development, both in Russia and in Central and Eastern Europe, should primarily be investigated in modern Western literature with the help of the concept of anti-politics. The notion of anti-politics was introduced for better understanding the ways of legitimation of new political structures in post-communist countries. It implied that in the process of transition from totalitarian structures to democratic ones the state remains the decisive factor compensating for the absence of the appropriate premises for the creation of a market economy and the successful realisation of political reforms. In practice, during this transition, many complicated economic and social problems were solved, from the very beginning, within the framework of a specific bureaucratic policy (Mänicke-Gyöngyösi, 1995, pp. 224-225).

Anti-politics has, therefore, become the main way of providing freedom of action for a new bureaucracy that proved capable of profiting from Pareto's advice to all rulers, transforming radical anti-communist moods and energy into such a type of leadership, where the institutionalisation of market and democracy was completely mediated by a tendency to general state guardianship (Mänicke-Gyöngyösi, 1995, pp. 225, 229; Grzymala-Busse, 2007, p. 182 sq.).

In such transitional conditions, the unity of power and the overwhelming majority of citizens are not secured with the real results of democratisation but rather with the help of 'symbolic integration,' which has to *support a joint realization of democratic participation* (Mänicke-Gyöngyösi, 1996, p. 13) and help to overcome the contradictions by enforcing a mechanism of reconciling the conflicts *in process of symbolic identification of citizens with basic democratic consensus* (Mänicke-Gyöngyösi, 1996, pp. 13-14; cf. Falk, 2003, pp. 6-9, 354 sq.).

But one should view the consequences of such a policy in Russia as very doubtful compared with its Eastern European versions. Now we realise more than ever that the liberal moods, which in Yeltsin's era were the subject of optimistic prognoses, are mere elements of the 'anti-politics' conceived by radical pseudo-democrats for creating a 'symbolic space' to provide an ephemeral legitimacy of their own bureaucratic version of reforms (cf. Sakwa, 2008, p. 212-216).

The most visible special feature of the present time is the universal crisis of values. The striking easiness of rupture with socialist ideals by the majority of the population gives no promise that a program of painless gradual reforms will be brought to life. The cause of the disintegration of the USSR was not so much the rivalry of political elites but an unprecedented moral degradation of the society. Its typical manifestation lies, in particular, in the fact that part of the former nomenklatura and its ideologists who had come to power acted (instinctively, of course) in accordance with the old prescription proposed by Mussolini after the creation of the fascist regime in Italy: a suitable ideology can already be ordered after a successful solution of the main problem – political domination. At the present day, in a totally new situation, all the elements of a totalitarian order are well preserved – the dominance of politics over economy, state over society, and political will over economic and social interests.

The last elections of 2008 and 2012 showed that the legitimacy of the new political regime is not provided, because in a great majority of Russia's regions the universal values of Western liberal democracies have now stepped back precipitously to the periphery of mass consciousness to the same extent as the values of the communist past (cf. Wydra, 2006, pp. 271-274). The only way out of the existing situation could be the elaboration and implementation of alternative program of reforms, embracing all the spheres of material and spiritual life of the Russian society.

## The civic identity approach

Such a situation creates no premises for the implementation of a third component of identity – civic identity. By this notion, I imply an orientation towards a definite type of citizenship and political education.

The modern conception of citizenship was outlined more than forty years ago by T. H. Marshall (1973) in his essay *Citizenship and Social Class*, in which the principal distinction between its political, civil and social aspects had been made as follows:

*The civil element is composed of the rights necessary for individual freedom – liberty of person, freedom of speech, thought and faith, the right to own property and to conclude valid contracts, and the right to justice [that is] the right to defend and assert all one's rights on terms of equality with others and by due process of law'. The political element comprises 'the right to participate in the exercise of political power as a member of the body invested with political authority or as an elector of the members of such*

*a body'. And the social element includes 'the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security [and the] right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in society' (Marshall, 1973, pp. 71-72; Beckett, 2006, pp. 37-41).*

Following Marshall's scheme, Adam Seligman insists, for instance, on the most profound differences between Western democracies and post-socialist societies from the point of view of their relation to implementing this universal conception of citizenship. He writes,

*And if we view the contemporary scene in both the East and the West, we see that the meaning of civil society – as normative concept – in both places reflects these different meanings of citizenship. Denied both civic and political rights during forty years of state socialism, civil society is, for many in contemporary Eastern and East-Central Europe, simply a model of civil and political citizenship that never existed... In all of those countries, with the only partial exception of Czecho-Slovakia, the liberal-individualist tradition based on the principles of universal citizenship was extremely weak and never fully instituted (Seligman, 1992, p. 114).*

I think this is true, of course, but only in part. The analysis of the evolution of the idea of citizenship on the basis of a West/East opposition would be too abstract, especially when American democratic citizenship is accepted as an ideal model. There are far more similarities between the Western and Eastern experience than one could imagine. Until the end of the nineteenth century, only a small minority of the European population could be classified as citizens. The great majority identified themselves rather as subjects. The real democratic revolution that drastically transformed human and political relations took place during the twentieth century.

It should be noted that the Russian October Revolution also made a big contribution to the development of the conception of citizenship in the same way as the French Revolution had contributed to its origins. I share Janowitz's position when he writes,

*Citizenship is not a formal and abstract conception. To the contrary, it is an idea loaded with concrete, specific meaning which reflect the changing content of political conflict. In this sense the elements of citizenship are found in all nation-states, even in the most repressive, totalitarian ones. There is a crucial threshold, however, between democratic and nondemocratic citizenship (Janowitz, 1985, pp. X, 2).*

While the norms of democratic citizenship were initially of West European origin, the historical experience of many European nations demonstrated a less favourable picture of the average citizen. Different countries had different reasons for the low development of the principle of mass participation – the revolutionary excesses in France, which produced a sense of incivism and hostility towards political discussions, the aristocratic institutions and deferential traditions of British politics, the traditions of authoritarian rule in Germany, etc. (Dalton, 1988, p. 14). As Bernard Berelson and his colleagues noted as early as in 1954,

*Our data reveal that certain requirements commonly assumed for the successful operation of democracy are not met by the behaviour of the 'average' citizen... Many vote without real involvement in the election... The citizen is not highly informed on the details of the campaign... In any rigorous or narrow sense the voters are not highly rational (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, & McPhee, 1954, pp. 307-310).*

In 1960 these data were confirmed categorically by Angus Campbell and his co-authors in their landmark study 'The American Voter', in which a lack of ideological awareness or understanding by the American electorate was proven (Campbell, Converse, Miller, & Stokes, 1960).

All these peculiarities contributed to the elaboration of a constant image of the 'unsophisticated citizen', which was the basis of an elitist theory of democracy. As Thomas Dye and Harmon Zeigler wrote,

*The survival of democracy depends upon the commitment of elites to democratic ideals rather than upon broad support for democracy by the masses. Political apathy and nonparticipation among the masses contribute to the survival of democracy. Fortunately for democracy, the antidemocratic masses are generally more apathetic than elites (Dye & Zeigler, 1970 p. 328).*

The theory of the unsophisticated citizen developed the arguments of Joseph Schumpeter, who, at the beginning of the 1940s, expressed a fundamental doubt about the possibility the 'classical conception of democracy' being made a reality due to its incompatibility with human nature and the irrationalities of everyday human conduct. In the political sphere, as Schumpeter argued, education gives no advantages, because the sense of responsibility and rational choice it forms do not usually go beyond the limits of the citizens' professional occupations. General political decisions are therefore found to be inaccessible to both educated classes and illiterate philistines. *Thus the typical citizen drops down to a lower level of mental performance as soon as he enters the political field. He argues and analyzes in a way which he would readily recognize as infantile within the sphere of his real interests. He becomes a primitive again* (Schumpeter, 1976, p. 262). The democratic theory can, therefore, have some practical value only if it defines the minimum necessary level of participation and leaves it to competing elites and bureaucracy to take major political decisions (Schumpeter, 1976, pp. 261, 262, 284-285).

Radical transformation in the characteristics of the Western general public occurred only during the last thirty years of the 20th century. The essential growth of the educational level of the American and West-European electorate has also changed the level of political sophistication, thus creating the premises for the development of the process that is usually described as a 'cognitive mobilisation'. *Cognitive mobilization means that citizens possess the level of political skills and resources necessary to become self-sufficient in politics. Instead of depending on elites and reference groups (external mobilization), citizens are now better able to deal with the complexities of politics and make their own political decisions* (Dalton, 1988, p. 18). For example, in 1948 half of the American electorate was composed of people with primary education or less. By 1984 the college-educated portion of the electorate had grown to 40%.

Such a rise of citizen consciousness contributed to the development of the conception of deliberative democracy in the mid-1980s (Matthews, 1988; cf. Rostboll, 2008, pp. 20-24). As Daniel Yankelovich wrote,

*It is a democracy that revives the notion of thoughtful and active citizenship. Now citizenship is treated like a passive form of consumer behaviour. People fail at citizenship not because they are apathetic but because they do not think their actions or views make any real difference. We need to expand the notion of citizen choice now confined to elections to include making choices on the vital issues that confront us every day (Yankelovich, 1991, p. 240).*

## Political education as a solution?

It is quite natural that the problem of political education has become crucial in the discussions on this new democratic theory. In a civilised society, political culture and political education are not only inseparable from each other, but are also, in a definite sense, equivalent. If one adheres to the above mentioned definition of political culture suggested by Almond and Powell, one can regard political education as a complex system directly integrating those elements of culture that define the character of political socialisation in the process of formation of a definite type of political conduct and consciousness, which form the property of a given society and state organisation.

The formation of the character and principles of citizenship is the immediate task of every modern political system. That is why the concept of political education often possesses a number of other equivalents [and expressions] – 'civic education', 'citizenship education', etc.

It is surprising that political education had never been considered a priority till the 1980s in spite of a most evident fact that its various conceptions had been developed in different systems of political philosophy, starting from the time of classical antiquity. In this connection, the complaint of one staff member of the US Senate seems to be very significant, *We'd like to promote citizenship education, but we can't figure out what it is. Everyone we ask gives us a different definition* (Remy & Turner, 1979, p. 1).

Therefore, it is quite important to cite a definition suggested by Morris Janowitz, which appears to be most appropriate to the topic of this article,

*By civic education we mean (a) exposing students to central and enduring political traditions of the nation, (b) teaching essential knowledge about the organization and operation of contemporary governmental institutions, and (c) fashioning essential identifications and moral sentiments required for performance as effective citizens. Effective civic education would result in increased understanding and meaningful national identifications. It would strengthen civic consciousness.* (Janowitz, 1985, p. 12)

So, in its narrow form, civic education focuses mainly on the attitudes of the student to the central agencies of government. In this connection, it is also important to note that the very concept of political education is often discussed in the context of citizen (or civic) rights and obligations. If by rights one means the legal, political and socio-economic prerogatives that the person enjoys because of the collective action of the political system and by obligations – the contributions and sacrifices a citizen makes to keep the political system effective (Janowitz, 1985, p. 2), it also becomes evident that up to the present day the right-oriented conception of citizenship has been predominant both in Western and totalitarian democracies.

Thus, the right to be educated or informed has always been rated higher than the duty to be literate and educated. I use the term 'informed' in the Jeffersonian sense, which includes thoughtfulness, ethical soundness, and good judgment as well as factual information. Naturally, we should not confuse the compulsory laws that make parents send their children to school with the obligation to give them education. When liberally minded thinkers and scholars such as Robert Dahl and Isaiah Berlin declare accordingly, "We do not grant children the right to decide whether or not they shall go to school" or "We compel children to be educated", they do not mean the obligation as a sphere of autonomous decisions but a mere collective demand, which is dependent on the necessity of every society to survive (Dahl 1990:16, Berlin 1984: 31).

This contradiction in the conception of the rights and their benefits sometimes had a positive effect on the elaboration of the theory of liberal education. The main principles of this theory were brilliantly formulated by William Morris, a pioneer of British socialism, in his essay *How we live and how we might live*,

*Now the next thing I claim is education. And you must not say that every English child is educated now; that sort of education will not answer my claim, though I cheerfully admit it is something: something, and yet after all only class education. What I claim is liberal education; opportunity, that is, to have my share of whatever knowledge there is in the world according to my capacity or bent of mind, historical or scientific, and also to have my share of skill of hand which is about in the world, either in the industrial handicrafts or in the fine arts...; I claim to be taught, if I can be taught, more than one craft to exercise for the benefit of the community.* (Morris, 1959, p. 440)

Nevertheless, in the modern world all models of political education are widespread. Any state aspires, independently of its distinctive features and general perception of politics, to control this process by means of taking centralised decisions, i.e. to carry out a definite educational policy. In a democracy with a developed civil consciousness, the existence of independent public opinion is a sufficient guarantee for orientation towards the model of political education within the framework of

which the mechanism of civil society's control over the state is supported and intensified. Sartori calls the system based on pluralism of interests with such attributes as autonomy and freedom 'education', opposing it to 'indoctrination', i.e. the inculcation of a single model of political conduct. Oakshott divides political education into 'universal' and 'ideological' based on learning a strictly defined set of 'ideological texts' (Sartori, 1987, p. 126, n.36; Oakshott, 1962, p. 116).

Only when it is free (relatively free, of course) from state control, can a specifically Western model be called pluralist. It developed during a long evolution of both the institutes of state and the different systems of political philosophy. There are two main institutes in which the educational processes of this type have crystallised: 1) the system of universal (free) education in state and private schools; 2) the modern university system. In both systems the three main aspects of political education are realised on different levels: a) formulating, securing, and transmitting the general principles of political mentality; b) mastering a wide circle of political sciences (the scientific level of understanding politics and the phenomenon itself of the political); c) preparing for both participation in elections and professional political activity.

By exercising control over these institutes, the political elite is practically capable of influencing the mode of political socialisation, and consequently all other spheres of social conduct (Almond & Powell, 1966, pp. 65-68). The scope of such control depends on the relation between education and indoctrination in educational programs (Dahl, 1990, p. 16; Berlin, 1984, p. 31), i.e. on the degree of development of civil liberties. Certain single elements of political education can be found under authoritarian regimes as well, but they quickly disappear after such regimes have been taken to their extremes and turn into one or another type of totalitarian state.

In Western Europe and the USA, the modern character of political education has formed under the great influence of the optimistic conviction of intellectuals that it is possible to implement an educational reform through which the democratic system will reveal all of its advantages. As Dewey put it, we may produce in schools a projection in type of the society we would like to realize (Westbrook, 1992, p. 192). Such orientation can already be discovered in Mill's Considerations on representative government, who regards the very notions of 'democratic government' and 'education' as identical (Mill, 1958, pp. 31-32). By further developing Mill's ideas about the advantages and infirmities of democracy, Adler notes:

*No other form of government is to be preferred to democracy because of these infirmities, for all other forms of government are subject to the same infirmities, and they are not remediable in other forms of government, whereas remedies can be found for them in political democracy. The remedy for the incompetence of the rulers in a political democracy is the education of the people for their duties as citizens and as public officials. (Adler, 1991, p. 120)*

In the works of Adler and his adherents, modern liberals, an optimistic conviction that a consolidation of the rationalistic base of democratic politics and its transformation into the main instrument of political education and socialisation are possible with the help of appropriate school programs and didactic methods, is expressed in a concentrated form. It is not accidental that partisans of such an approach unanimously reject the propagation of vocational education and defend the introduction of various programs of liberal education in all schools. As Adler affirms, 'vocational education is training for a specific job in the economic machine. It aims at earning a good living, not living a good life. It is servile both in its aim and in its methods. It defeats democracy in the same way that economic servitude does' (Adler, 1991, p. 126).

In the modern conception of political education, the liberal position is manifested also in the opposition of the notion of 'civic consciousness' to the traditional comprehension of nationalism and patriotism. As Janowitz affirms,

*Civic education limited to inculcation of traditional patriotism or conventional nationalist ideology is obviously inadequate for an advanced industrial society and a highly interdependent world. I find the words national and patriotic limiting, and offer the term civic consciousness. It refers to positive and meaningful attachments a person develops to the nation-state. Civic consciousness is compatible with and required for both national and international responsibilities and obligations. It involves elements of reason and self-criticism as well as personal commitment. In particular, civic consciousness is the process by which national attachments and obligations are molded into the search for supranational citizenship. (Janowitz, 1985, pp. X-XI)*

New interpretations of this conception of civic consciousness are also directed against the principle of state monopoly in the sphere of education, which implies the compulsory attendance of public schools. The decisive arguments in favour of the deployment of an alternative system of school education were formulated by von Hayek in his work *The Constitution of Liberty*:

*If we accept the general argument for compulsory education, there remain three chief problems: How is this education to be provided? How much of it is to be provided for all? How are those who are to be given more to be selected and at whose expense? ... It is true that, historically, compulsory education was usually preceded by the governments' increasing opportunities by providing state schools ... The very magnitude of the power over men's minds that a highly centralized and government-dominated system of education places in the hands of the authorities ought to make one hesitate before accepting it too readily. Up to the point, the arguments that justify compulsory education also require that government should prescribe some of the content of this education ... There may be circumstances in which the case for authority's providing a common cultural background for all citizens becomes very strong. (Hayek, 1978, pp. 378-379)*

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, these arguments that Hayek outlined have undoubtedly acquired a more practical character. Data from sociological surveys in American towns confirm the tendency to redistribute educational functions between public schools on the one hand and private Roman Catholic and Protestant schools on the other.

The approach to the analysis of new prospects in political knowledge and education would be impossible without taking account of those impulses to the development of liberal spirit that modern universities create. The question of the place of the university as a unique cultural phenomenon in democratic politics continues to be an object of animated discussion among champions of liberal and vocational education. One cannot affirm categorically that all scholars and politicians support the opinion of J.H. Newman, the rector of the Catholic University in Dublin in the middle of the 19th century. According to him, the main task of the university as a place where one can get access to 'universal knowledge' which is 'an end in itself', has always been the 'formation of mind' as the process of training by which the intellect, instead of being formed or sacrificed to some particular or accidental purpose, some specific trade or profession, or study or science, is disciplined for its own sake, for the perception of its own proper object, and for its own highest culture (Newman, 1852-1858, pp. I.VII,1).

A testimony to the opposite approach to the tasks of university education has been the practice of creating, since the latter part of the 19th century, vocational colleges and institutes, first within the old universities and, subsequently, new 'technical universities'. It is certainly not by accident that the technological orientation process of universities has almost always been accompanied by their accusations of propagating revolutionary doctrines. These allegations came, of course, mainly from right-wing politicians and intellectuals. The new age of Russian history reproduces this tendency, confirming the idea that

*during a period of revolutionary social change such as the present, when revolutions are being overthrown by revolutions, the position of the university is inevitably dialectical; for both as institution and as idea, it is at one and the same time a seedbed of revolution and an object of attack by the revolution (Pelikan, 1992, p. 157).*

It seems apparent that at present university education possesses its own, truly high status only in democratic societies. Accordingly, the university can only become the centre of new conceptions of political education when ideologically committed politics stays outside its walls. Naturally enough, the only language to be used within university walls is the language of history and philosophy (Oakshott, 1962, pp. 331-332). It is only possible when the 'first principles' of university education are well preserved, side by side with the

*conviction that the tradition out of which the modern university has come is not to be dismissed as a quaint museum piece, with the ease and glibness that sometimes proceeds as though we in the present generation were free to define the university in any way we wish without attention to its heritage' (Pelikan, 1992, p. 31).*

There are various ways to preserve the tradition of free universal education. They sometimes might seem forced, even the only possible ones. At the end of the 1930s, when there was a widespread opinion that liberal values had been completely ruined under the attack of totalitarian dictatorships, Mannheim blamed liberal education for both the authoritarian degeneration of Germany and the incapacity of the modern democracies to handle fundamentally new situations (Mannheim, 2001, pp. 8, 21, 135).

It is not difficult to see that both the argumentation and conclusions made by Mannheim nowadays provide much more suitable ground for discussing the controversial problems surrounding the formation of a new conception of civic identity as well as the place and role of political education in modern Russia. It is evident that the transitional character of the political process, the state of the economy and social relations offer no chance for the realisation of the Western liberal model of democracy. Russia and some other countries of Eastern Europe enter again into the period that Weber, estimating the chances of Russian liberalism in the early 20th century, prophetically called the epoch of 'pretended liberalism' (Weber, 1988, p. 66). The combination of a declarative orientation towards the principles of constitutionalism with bureaucratic regulation opens up a real path to the gradual implementation of some elements of Schumpeter's model of 'social democracy', with the competition of elites in the political sphere and the coexistence of capitalism and socialism in economy and ideology.

In a situation like this, state policy in the sphere of education will be one of the most important indicators of future political development. This thesis appears to be well grounded because the educational infrastructure left behind by the socialist state could (with appropriate support) become the sure guarantee of stability for the democratic choice.

The Soviet Union was a *technotopia* – a political regime promising its citizens a technological leap to a quantitatively better existence (Balzer, 1989, p. 1). The system of science and education supporting ideological claims was the largest in the world. Although the bulk of research projects was concentrated in special institutes of the Academy of Sciences, the training of specialists was carried out by technological institutes and universities. The university network was vast and leaned upon the strong tradition of universal school education.

Naturally, in the conditions where a single ideology dominated, the university was part of the Soviet ideocratic state. But the process of de-ideologisation, beginning with the 'perestroika', revealed the great role of university education in the formation of a new political culture.

It is characteristic that in a stormy flood of liberal rhetoric, which reached its culmination at the end of the 1980s, the problem of political education and the place of the university in its formation did not attract any attention. One only has to open the so-called 'Bible of perestroika' to realise it (Afanas'ev, 1988, pp. 97-121, 154-191, 635). The present day situation appears even more paradoxical: government policy in the sphere of science has put most of its structures on the verge of extinction, at the same time, it sanctioned the process of renaming many technical institutes universities. The connection between the trend towards overwhelming state control, dogmatisation of thought, and vocational orientation of education can hardly be considered accidental.

All these processes vividly demonstrate that the new conception of citizenship and political education may, in the conditions of a deep crisis, become the most important link binding the civil society (which is now at the initial stage of its development) and the new content of the political, making its way through the thicket of corporative interests. Only by relying upon education does Russian anti-politics have a chance to turn into a political discourse, provided the appropriate content. Otherwise the liquidation of educational structures will be a prologue to a new era of unsophisticated and manipulated citizens.

## Conclusion

It is widely recognised now that effective citizenship rests on a rigorous and viable system of civic education, which informs the individual of his civil rights and obligations. Therefore, the problem of national and civic identities as well as the criteria for their definition has become crucial in the discussion of the concept of citizenship.

Citizenship can be defined as a set of civil, political and social rights forming the foundation for civilised life in a political community. Citizenship is a multi-dimensional phenomenon that has produced differing views of the concept. In this respect, the notion and the idea itself of citizenship very often overlap with the notions of nationality and nation-state. For example, Marshall's notion of citizenship was dependent upon a firm link existing between the nation and the state: the state provides and guarantees rights, whilst the nation is the focus of identity (Beckett 2006: 41). Certainly, in the West citizenship can be characterised by an interiorised process of identification in the nation due to the deep-rooted democratic values, reflecting the 'inner orientations' of both individuals and groups. Even in the majority of post-communist states, which remained authoritarian at the early stage of their formation, *the chief 'motives' for state exploitation consisted of both short-term survival and long-term commitments to democracy* (Grzymala-Busse, 2007, pp. 2, 6; cf. Kaehne, 2007, pp. 141-153).

Today, the modern conception of citizenship is also being discussed because of the decline in reference to the nation. *Globalization has further dissipated political community. States become weaker and less able to deliver collective goods, increasing consumerist and privatized political action. National political cultures are similarly weakened by global market pressures to greater mobility and the enhanced ability to defect from collaborative arrangements* (Bellamy, 2008, p. 118). The new notions of citizenship or identity based, for example, on the new Europe are distinctly different from the more traditional concept of nation-state citizenship: these notions are more diverse, less ethnocentric, more inclusive, etc. The outcomes of the discussions depend, as a rule, on how subjective is the perception of real political processes by scholars. In order to overcome various lopsided and subjective approaches, one should reconsider the controversial aspects of the modern theory of citizenship, especially in the period when the rapprochement of positions between some Eastern and the Western European countries is becoming more and more clear cut.

In the changing conditions determined by the advent of new forms of political culture, the intensified development of the democratic tradition of political and civic education becomes inevitable. The issue of new aspects of political education and its objectives has been an ongoing debate in politics since

the early 1990s. It remains to be seen whether a purely theoretical model of political education alone, i.e. without active citizens' involvement and support, can have the potential not only to transform political culture, but also influence the whole system of both school and university education. From this point of view, the analysis of political transformations with regard to the political, cultural and educational diversity in post-communist societies demonstrates that one cannot speak of one post-communist Eastern Europe, which would imply homogeneity of the process of democratisation in the region, but rather of a marked divergence of the paths of political change in the countries joining the European Union, on the one hand, and the countries of the former Soviet bloc, on the other.

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