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Does the Democratization of Polities Entail the Democratization of Citizenship Education?

A Theoretical Framework for Researching the Democratic Quality of Citizenship Education in Transformation Countries and Elsewhere

Abstract

In the last 30 years, the process of institutional democratization prevailing in Western Europe since at least the end of World War II has spread to Southwestern, Southeastern and Eastern European countries. To what extent has this democratic transformation of polities been followed by a *genuinely* democratic transformation of citizenship education in these countries? Unfortunately, recent research on citizenship education does not provide a satisfactory answer, because it has mainly focused on institutional and organizational issues. Nothing was said about the question how well-sounding, but quite general – and therefore ambiguous – officially proclaimed goals and contents of citizenship education in transformation countries are educationally construed in textbooks and the teaching practice. However, there are quite a few empirical examples and indications which clearly show that citizenship education in transformation countries (and elsewhere) shows a number of facets which are hardly in line with core democratic values. Therefore, this article proposes a theoretical framework for systematically researching the democratic quality of citizenship education in transformation countries (and elsewhere). With recourse to Max Weber`s analytical concept of ideal-types, this framework differentiates between a democratic and a non-democratic ideal-type of citizenship education (as outer points of a continuum between them). These two ideal-types of citizenship education are characterized by structurally different ways of thinking about 1) human rights, 2) international relations, 3) current institutions and norms, 4) authoritarian political structures and human rights violations in the history of the country, and 5) differences in society.

Contents

Keywords

Democratisation of polities, democratisation of citizenship education, democratic mentalities.

"Some people are in ecstasy
About the true democracy
But once you look close
They clearly expose:
It`s nothing but hypocrisy

(Abromeit 2002)

1. Democratic Institutions Need Democratic Mentalities

In the last 30 years, the process of institutional democratization prevailing in Western Europe since at least the end of World War II has spread to Southwestern, Southeastern and Eastern European countries (which will be called `transformation countries´[i] here). However, the establishment of liberal-democratic *institutions* alone is only a necessary, but not sufficient condition for the durable maintenance of democracy. Democratic institutions cannot function democratically without a corresponding political *culture*, i.e. democratic convictions of political elites and citizens (Rosa 2005, 8 f.; Strazay 2003; Morlino 2004, 11). A basic liberal-democratic citizenship identity committed to the humanistic values of peace, human dignity, plurality, liberty and justice is the central cultural bedrock of the project of European integration and an important precondition for the mutual understanding between European nations with different historical trajectories (ibidem, 13). Furthermore – as it can be derived from Immanuel Kant`s definition of enlightenment – democracies need not only citizens who adhere to these liberal-democratic values, but who also dispose of the ability to form their own political judgments instead of uncritically relying on the assertions of their political authorities. According to an international empirical study performed by Welzel (2006), mass motivations are crucial for democracy because liberty aspirations, i.e. the priority that citizens place on the freedom of expression (civil freedom) and on people empowerment (political freedom), facilitate progress and impede regress in the process of democratization.
A democratic culture in the sense described above does neither automatically ensue from nor is guaranteed by the existence of democratic institutions. Formal democratic institutions may be circumvented, subverted or eroded by political elites and/or by already existing or growing informal undemocratic social conventions in the population (Morlino 2004). Hence, as a former judge at the German constitutional court put it, the democratic order depends on firm moral preconditions which it cannot guarantee by itself (Böckenförde 1976, 60). Therefore, a democratic public sphere is the crucial cognitive and normative `soft-ware´ which must complement the institutional `hard-ware´ of a sustainable democracy:

"It is essential that interested, educated and informed citizens who have internalized the fundamental values of democracy remain involved in the political process. A key, basic element for effective [governmental, T.H.] accountability is a good level of citizen participation." (Morlino 2004, 14f.)

Citizenship education in schools is often regarded as an important possibility or even necessity to foster the development of liberal-democratic citizenship convictions. This may be of particular importance especially in transformation countries which cannot count on such an ingrained tradition of democracy as other countries which had more luck in history. Accordingly, some authors hope that the rising level of education will decrease the current propensity to populist and nationalist ideas in Central and Eastern Europe (Sprinz 2007). Hence, the institutionalization of citizenship education in schools in transformation countries is often seen as an auspicious sign of a democratic realignment of the educational systems in these countries.

2. Researching the Institutional Framework of Citizenship Education is not enough

However, the mere institutionalization of citizenship education in the educational system of transformation countries says nothing about *the kind* of the pedagogical aims actually pursued and the contents actually taught within citizenship education. If we want to know whether the institutionalization of citizenship education in transformation countries can actually make a contribution to the emergence/the securing of a durable, lasting democratic culture, we have to examine whether the kind of citizenship education taught in transformation countries actually corresponds to liberal-democratic standards. These liberal-democratic standards of a *genuinely democratic* citizenship education are…

a) …full acceptance of the equal applicability of human rights (including the right to a subsistence minimum) and the principle of equality of opportunity to all humans irrespective of their gender, race, provenance, sexual orientation etc. This means also the critical examination of possible contemporary (hidden) violations of these human rights in the respective country (f.e. unequal pay for women and men).

b) …full respect of all other nations as equals.

c) …open, unrestrained examination and critical discussion of the totalitarian, antidemocratic past of the respective country and/or human rights violations in the history of the country.

d) …full acceptance of the plurality of political viewpoints and cultural norms (within the basic democratic consensus).

e) …open, controversial debate about the democratic adequacy of current societal institutions and norms (f.e. examining the question whether representative democracy should be complemented by direct democratic institutions like popular referenda and initiatives or not).

Recent research (Eurydice European Unit (2005)) on citizenship education in European countries does not provide a satisfactory answer to the question whether a *genuinely democratic* citizenship education in this sense is emerging in transformation countries. It is still unknown to what extent the democratization of polities in these countries has also led to a meaningful democratization of citizenship education there. This is so because the research focus was on questions relating to the institutional frame of citizenship education, i.e. whether the subject is compulsory or optional, whether it is a separate subject or an integral part of related subjects, to what extent pupils and parents are involved in consultative or decision making bodies of schools, to what extent schools involve political/societal organizations in their teaching activities, whether pupils` and schools` performance concerning this subject is systematically assessed resp. evaluated, whether Europe is an issue in curricula and teacher education and so on.
Likewise, the `All-European Study on Education for Democratic Citizenship Policies (AESEDC)´ (Birzea et al. (2004) also mainly described the institutional and organizational frame of citizenship education, i.e. the actors concerned with citizenship education, the politics of citizenship education implementation (especially the gap between officially proclaimed goals on the one hand and the insufficient financial and organizational resources provided as well as the lack of democratic structures in schools and in policy formulation on the other hand), school organization, the various denominations of the subject, the time scale of the subject, etc.

Both reports have hardly touched on the contents of citizenship education. To be sure, the regional reports of the AESEDC asked for the definition of citizenship education in the respective country and provided the reader with more or less comprehensive enumerations of seemingly well-sounding, but quite broadly defined sub-units and goals of citizenship and citizenship education as defined in the respective constitution and curricula like f.e. “human rights and responsibilities” (Albania), “intellectual and social skills for active and effective participation in democratic processes” (Croatia) etc. (Harrison & Baumgartl 2002, 29). Similarly, the Eurydice report briefly examined whether national curricula prescribe the conveyance of political literacy, democratic attitudes and values, and the stimulation of active participation (Eurydice European Unit 2005, 22). However, nothing was said about how all these well-sounding, but quite general – and therefore ambiguous – contents are actually educationally construed in textbooks and the actual teaching practice. But this is important because one of the main results of the AESEDC study was an organizational compliance gap between official educational aims on the one hand and financial and organizational resources provided on the other hand. Therefore it seems reasonable to suppose that one may find similar compliance gaps in terms of educational content, i.e. gaps between officially proclaimed, well-sounding democratic goals of citizenship education on the one hand and the actual, perhaps not-so-democratic practice of citizenship education (textbooks, classroom teaching) on the other hand.

Therefore, it is crucial to precisely examine *what sort of* political literacy, *what sort of* democratic values, *what sort of* active participation is taught and *how* it is taught. Does conveyance of knowledge and political literacy just mean to memorize human rights or does it also mean to openly evaluate whether the government actually fully respects these human rights (f.e. concerning the treatment of foreign refugees)? Does conveyance of knowledge and political literacy just mean to learn how political institutions function – thereby implicitly creating the impression that they function well and need no reform? Or does it also mean to critically examine possible defects and disadvantages of existing political institutions? Does it also mean learning that existing institutions are often contested? Does it also mean examining the potential gap between how institutions should function according to the constitution and how they actually function in political reality? Does it also mean to compare different, controversial scientific viewpoints according to which existing political institutions need reform or should be conserved?

Does stimulation of active participation just mean working together with and in companies and social organizations? Or does it also mean openly evaluating the motives, objectives and means of these companies and social organizations?

Does conveyance of democratic attitudes and values mean conveying the notion that values have a certain, fixed meaning with benevolent political elites acting accordingly? Or does it mean pointing out that the exact meaning and implications of general democratic values are often fiercely contested in politics? Does it also mean making pupils aware of the fact that political actors may misuse democratic values as a mere pretext legitimizing their actions in order to disguise particularistic or even anti-democratic interests?

In the following, I will explain why it is important to examine the democratic quality of citizenship education of transformation countries (but also other countries) (Chapter 3). This theoretical proposition is then illustrated by empirical examples and indications which show that citizenship education in transformation countries (and elsewhere) may be less democratic than it seems (Chapter 4). As a consequence, Chapter 5 presents a theoretical framework as a starting point for empirically examining the democratic quality of citizenship education in a systematic way. After this, Chapter 6 deals with possible objections to this theoretical framework. Finally, Chapter 7 pleads for a systematic cooperation between citizenship education research and political science in order to empirically apply the theoretical framework.

3. Citizenship Education in Transformation Countries – Genuinely Democratic?

It is not self-evident that the pedagogical aims and contents of citizenship education in transformation countries – and, of course, elsewhere – actually correspond to the basic standards of a *genuinely democratic* citizenship education noted above. There are two reasons for that.

To say the least, elected politicians in democracies – *perhaps* especially those in *young* democracies the democratic traditions of which may be not so deeply rooted – do not automatically act as benevolent actors. Elected politicians may pursue their own ideology and/or self-interest (power) which may diverge from the public interest and may even violate democratic standards like f.e. an independent press. A drastic example for this is the systematic and fierce manipulation of the media by *current,* supposedly `democratic´ governments in Romania in order to provide information biased in favour of the ruling elites (see Leeson & Coyne (2004) for a detailed account on media manipulation in Romania). Hence, it is not self-evident that the political elite in all transformation countries has an urging interest in promoting a *genuinely democratic* citizenship education which aims at politically active citizens who become more interested and sophisticated in debating politics and who are able to critically assess whether politicians` actions are actually in line with human rights and democratic values. It is not self-evident that all political elites in all transformation countries are especially engaged in promoting a *genuinely democratic* citizenship education that aims to support the development of a vigilant, critical public sphere in order to constrain the unilateral powers of the government.

Instead, political elites in some transformation countries may be more interested not only in an affirmative kind of media reporting, but also in a kind of citizenship education that primarily aims at securing compliance, i.e. support for traditional social norms, the current political system and its current power distribution, the political goals of the government, their political ideologies and their particular – perhaps questionable – interpretations of democratic values. Political elites may do act in this way either out of self-interest and/or because they are truly convinced that safeguarding compliance is the best for the `political stability´ of the country. For example, in her book about the political situation in the Czech Republic and Slovakia Innes (2001) maintains that Western policymakers often underestimate the continuing strength of the Communist legacy in post-communist countries. She also warns that the most attractive solutions for politicians in these countries are rarely the most democratic ones. *It is not my contention that the pessimistic perspective adumbrated here will inevitably realize. I just contend that it is possible. In one country it may happen, while in another it may not. Moreover, it may change over time depending on the development of the political situation of the country. It has to be researched.*

Therefore, it is no rebuttal of my argument that one could of course object to the above line of reasoning that party competition, critical reporting in the media, social movements, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or pedagogical associations may pressure the political elite into institutionalizing a *genuinely democratic* citizenship education in the sense outlined above. However, one should not overlook the fact that the functioning of these mechanisms does not only depend on the political independence and the political power of the media, the social movements, the NGOs and the pedagogical associations, but also on their ideological preferences. It is not self-evident that all these actors – *perhaps* especially those in *young* democracies the democratic traditions of which may be not so deeply rooted – automatically have an interest in promoting a *genuinely democratic* citizenship education. Some of these actors may think that loyalty to their particularistic goals and their leaders is much more important than *impartially* discussing societal conflicts, hidden violations of human rights, and the like.

What is more, the prevailing political convictions of the adult population are also an important factor for the kind of citizenship education which is institutionalized by the government and its ministry. It is not self-evident that the prevailing political convictions

of the populace automatically favour a *genuinely democratic* citizenship education which among other things has to critically analyze prejudices possibly widespread in the populace and has to investigate former genocide committed by the grandparents of the pupils. For example, it is not quite realistic to think that a *genuinely democratic* citizenship education will emerge in a country where only a very tiny minority of 3% of all citizens cherishes the guarantee of civil liberties as an important pillar of their society, whereas 80% of them claim that their country needs an `iron hand´ to restore security and order – as it is currently the case in Russia (Volk 2006, 169 f.). Of course, Russia may be a quite extreme, singular example. But in other countries, similar, while more diluted, undemocratic social conventions of this sort may prevail within the populace. For example, according to Strazay (2003), nationalist populism, predominantly in its ethnic, economic and religious notion, has survived in the population of Poland and Slovakia until today in almost unchanged forms and meanings. He goes even further and maintains:

"From this point of view, I consider statements on the temporary character of nationalist revivals in East and Central Europe made by some scholars to be premature. On the contrary, I claim that significant presence of nationalist value orientations in political culture of countries in democratic transition is supporting a hypothesis about a long-term incongruence between political structure and political cultures of these societies. (…) Central Europe faces a deepening tension between what is "objectively" good for a country (pursuing reform and EU membership) and what is good for electoral accountability. According to Abby Innes, the way for populists and nationalists will be even more open when accession (to the European Union) becomes problematic." (Strazay 2003, 2 & 15)

Hence, problematic orientations of the population may also influence the deliberations of the government and its ministry of education concerning the question which kind of citizenship education is politically feasible and which is not. Moreover, not-so-democratic convictions and values by local social communities may keep teachers from tackling certain topics and/or taboos. Again, *it is not my contention that this pessimistic perspective adumbrated here will inevitably realize. I just contend that it is possible. In one country it may happen, while in another it may not. Moreover, it may change over time depending on the development of the political situation of the country. It has to be researched.*

4. Some Examples of Not-So-Democratic Citizenship Education

There are some contemporaneous examples and indications which show that the hypothesis according to which governments, the populace and/or other influential organizations may oppose a *genuinely democratic* kind of citizenship education is not far-fetched.

Even in the oldest democracy of the world, the United States, teachers were recently suspended or disciplined for promoting critical discussions about the Iraq War or for tolerating, among a range of views, antiwar sentiments. Parents complained about teachers allegedly `discouraging patriotism´ when the latter encouraged their pupils to examine the legitimacy of the war legislation of the Bush administration which restricted criticism of the government and the military. Free discussion of war issues is often seen as a threat to patriotism (Westheimer 2006). As Ben-Porath (2006) has shown, there is a growing emphasis in citizenship education in US-schools on social conformity, on tendentious teaching of history, and on drawing stark distinctions between `them´ and `us´.

In Turkey, the minister for education issued a decree in April 2003 according to which all principals have to obligate the pupils of their school to deny the (scientifically undeniable) genocide against the Armenians between 1915 and 1917 (which was

committed with the support of the former German military). The extreme importance of this issue for Turkish governments can be seen by the fact that the consul general Aydin Durusoy was commissioned to visit the government of the federal state of Brandenburg (Germany) in order to protest against a very short notice of the Armenian genocide in its history syllabus, which was indeed temporarily abandoned after that. According to the Turkish historian Taner Akcam, the point is that the legitimacy of the Turkish state may be in danger when it comes out that its founders were not (only) constitutional heroes, but (also) accomplices of the evil (Schmidt-Häuer 2005).

In Spain, the two major political parties had concluded a long-lasting `agreement of silence´ (Schulze 2006; Kraft 2006, 11) regarding the authoritarian past. None of the former regime members responsible for uncountable violations of human rights were brought to justice (Wandler 2006). The judicial condemnations of former regime opponents by Franco`s military tribunals were not declared invalid. The maintenance of the colossal mausoleum in Madrid where Franco and the founder of the Spanish fascist movement, de Rivera, are buried – erected by 14000 forced laborers within 18 years under extremely inhumane working conditions (Wandler 2006) – is not questioned. Moreover, this `agreement of silence´ has also consequences for contemporary politics: A detailed qualitative case study of the political culture in a small Spanish town (Schlee 2008) shows that the adamant collective tabooing of the authoritarian past has lead to a restricted understanding of democracy and to partial persistence of traditional, authoritarian forms of policy-making. As schools are embedded in local political cultures, it is not unreasonable to expect that citizenship education may be shaped accordingly.

Thus, I think it is not far-fetched to suspect that a similar `agreement of silence´ concerning the atrocious political crimes in the authoritarian past has pervaded and may still pervade Spanish citizenship education. This is so because an open political examination of the civil war in the 1930s and the crimes of the Franco regime has only begun very recently, with the new social-democratic government under Prime Minister Zapatero initiating a law providing the descendants of the regime`s victims with a compensation of round about € 70 mio. However, this new governmental approach towards the authoritarian past of the country is still heavily contested in Spanish politics and society. No less than 30% of the current Spanish population (openly) consider Franco`s insurgency against the democratically elected government of the second republic as fully legitimate (La Libre, 26.07.2006). Even the removal of the last Franco monument in Madrid (enacted as late as in March 2005) was far from being undisputed in the political debate. The chairman of the conservative opposition party, Mariano Rajoy, considered the removal “an undue break with the spirit of the transformation”. According to him, this spirit prescribes “looking forward without churning up the past” (cited in Dahms 2006). Moreover, the conservative opposition party opposed the new law concerning financial compensation as allegedly “rouvrir inutilement les plaies du passé” (i.e. “needlessly opening the wounds of the past”) (La Libre, 26.07.2006), asserted that “nobody will benefit from this quarrel about the past” (Kahl 2006) and maintained that the new law will divide and polarize the Spanish society.

In Hungary, a survey of Hungarian civic education teachers found that the latter strongly prefer the treatment of topics related to social cohesion (family, nationality) but staunchly avoid issues related to social conflict (ethnic minorities, social inequality) (Mátrai 1999, 362). According to Mátrai (ibidem, 366), the central problem in Hungary is that civic education teachers “are socialized into avoiding problems. Most teachers, even today, believe that sensitive issues should be kept out of the school.”

Some presentations during the international conference `Transformed Institutions – Transformed Citizenship Education?´ in Bielefeld in June 2007 (see the texts in the former JSSE-volume) also supported the hypothesis that governments, a majority of the populace and/or other influential organizations may oppose a *genuinely democratic* kind of citizenship education.

In Poland, the former government was formed by a neoconservative elite which propagated a nationalistic ideology (Staniszkis 2006) and had taken control of the

council of the public media in order to systematically manipulate the public opinion (Maliszweski 2006). According to Smolar (2006), the policy of the currently governing national conservatives in Poland represented nothing less than an anti-modernist "attack on the foundations of liberal democracy in Poland". Denigrating human rights as opium for the people, the national conservatives had begun to restrict freedom of speech, to herald traditional values, to constrict freedom of assembly, to erode parliamentary control and to undermine the independence of the press, the legal authorities and the administration. In the concept for citizenship education of the former Polish minister for education, according to Radiukiewicz & Grabowska-Lusinska (2007), civic duties were overly stressed while civic rights were neglected. Here, civic education is based on nationalist values, and the teacher appeared as an unquestionable authority. Moreover, the issue of homosexuality cannot be discussed in Polish schools. Instead, homosexual teachers are subject to severe mobbing by their colleagues as well as by their pupils (Kaiser 2007), facilitated by an intense anti-gay-rhetoric of the Polish government.
In Bulgaria, according to Dimitrov (2007), the basic idea of citizenship education constitutes labour, the relationship between man and nature, instead of the public, the relationship between free and equal citizens controlling the government. Bulgarian civic education aims at creating a citizen loyal to the state and hence does not promote independent thinking, but memorizing ready-made knowledge and recitation of definitions. According to him, the following verdict on citizenship education in post-communist countries is still valid – at least in Bulgaria:

"Picture an authoritarian classroom environment where an inquisitorial teacher lectures to silent, passive, and obedient students about the virtues of their new-found civic duty to participate in open public debate and shape the course of civic life. (…) No questions from the students are entertained, and no one is encouraged to question evidence or examine the issues. Nothing resembling a discussion or debate takes place. If this sounds like a caricature, we have seen it in classrooms in Central and Eastern Europe held up to us as models of openness and innovation." (Brophy/Temple/Mederedith 2004, 38)

In Russia, the Putin administration has invested huge amounts of money into founding a patriotic, strongly hierarchical youth organization called `Nasi´ loyal to the government whose task is to create a conformist political climate in Russian society (Schmid 2006). This is in line with Karpenkow`s (2007) estimation that civic education in Russia intends to foster a nationalist consciousness propagating the existence of different human races with supposedly stable features and a de-individualized concept of citizenship, which claims that the populace is more important than the individual and which blocks a critical reflection about the actual quality of democracy in Russia.
In Turkey, according to Cayir (2007), human rights themes have been introduced into citizenship education, which surely is a major step forward. However, at the same time, the Turkish education system is still shaped by a militaristic and nationalistic logic. Therefore, Turkish citizenship education is still characterised by an exaltation of the Turkish military forces, by glorifying death, naturalizing war, and promoting xenophobic attitudes towards Kurdish and Armenian people. Moreover, it promotes prejudices and negative stereotypes toward neighbouring countries (especially Greece). Voting is portrayed as a duty, not as a right of the individual. As the Turkish state appears as a metaphysical institution which cannot be criticized, the Turkish citizen is expected to follow current rules instead of reaching decisions by her or his own reflection. Last but not least, inequalities and discriminations of women in Turkish society are no issue in textbooks.
In Estonia, according to Haav (2007), citizenship education defies current societal problems such as social inequality, injustice and discrimination because the ruling elites have remained authoritarian and are therefore not willing to introduce critical and deliberative concepts into Estonian citizenship education. Hence, textbooks promote a

passive citizen obedient to laws and current institutions and norms instead of evaluating these.

5. A Five-Piece Theoretical Framework for Investigating the Liberal-Democratic Quality of Citizenship Education in Transformation Countries (and Elsewhere)

In the face of these estimations, the question arises to what extent there actually has been a *genuinely democratic* transformation of citizenship education in the transformation countries and which theoretical concept is suitable for systematically investigating this question.
By democratic transformation of citizenship education I mean a democratic transformation of the aim of citizenship education, i.e. the "kind of citizen" (Westheimer & Kahne 2004) which citizenship education explicitly or implicitly intends to foster. In order to find out to what extent such a democratic transformation has taken place or not, Max Weber`s concept of *ideal-types* can be used. Weber defined an ideal-type as follows:

"An ideal type is formed by the one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena, which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasized viewpoints into a unified analytical construct. In its conceptual purity, this mental construct cannot be found empirically anywhere in reality. (…) Research faces the task of determining in each individual case, the extent to which this ideal-construct approximates or diverges from reality." (Weber 1949, 90).

With reference to this concept, I distinguish between two basic ideal-types of citizenship education:

- a `non-democratic´ kind of citizenship education aimed at raising `loyal, obedient´ citizens.

- a `democratic´ kind of citizenship education aimed at fostering `democratic, reflective´ citizens.

These two ideal-types do in no way imply the claim that citizenship education in the old Western democracies is "good", i.e. aimed at raising democratic citizens whereas the contrary is the case in transformation countries. One can plausibly speculate that a certain correlation may exist according to which the older the democracy in a certain country, the higher the fraction of schools with a rather democratic kind of citizenship education. However, in the end, this is a completely empirical question which has to be investigated. The research framework to be presented below can be extended to other democratic countries. For example, in times of war, very old democracies like the US or Great Britain are not immune against political efforts to restrain liberal rights and `manufacturing consent´, which are likely to have an impact on the aims and contents of citizenship education and the way it is taught. Moreover, it would also be interesting to examine the question how the democratic quality of Italian citizenship education has been and is influenced by the Berlusconi governments, which are said to have undermined some important principles of civil law and democracy (Doerfler 2008).
As I have received many – divergent – suggestions concerning the appropriate terminology of the two ideal-types, it is important to justify and define the terms `democratic´ and `non-democratic´. Critics could point out that this terminology evokes the idea that citizenship education is mainly about teaching that all citizens should have an equal political voice. Therefore, the argument goes, this terminology creates the impression that the possible problem of the tyranny of the majority – which is indeed a very important issue for citizenship education (Petrik 2007, 229f.) – is ignored.

However, I don`t think that this objection to my terminology is convincing. This is so because following Bühlmann/Merkel/Wessels (2007), the meaning of the term `democracy´ in political science is by no means restricted to political equality. According to these authors, the term `democracy´ means not only the existence of measures of political equality (same chances to influence political decisions) and popular sovereignty (control of the representatives by the people), but also the existence of what in Germany is called a `Rechtsstaat´, i.e. the guarantee of equal civil rights, which protect the freedom of the individual (against other individuals, the state and societal majorities). Moreover, Bühlmann/Merkel/Wessels (2007) explicitly argue that there is a partial tension between the first two criteria and the last one and that the term `democracy´ should be used only for those countries where civil rights are not subject to majority decisions, but are protected by constitutional law and politically independent courts. In accordance with this approach, the terms `democratic´ and `non-democratic´ (citizenship education) used by me here have to be understood in the sense that democracy is basically defined here as the existence of political equality, popular sovereignty and respect of individual civil rights (which are protected against political majorities if necessary).
The two ideal-types mentioned above can be distinguished by different ways of political thinking which are – explicitly or "between the lines" – encouraged in textbooks, the teaching process etc. These different ways of political thinking concern five societal meta-issues of crucial importance for a lasting, genuinely democratic political culture:

1) human rights,
2) international relations,
3) current institutions and norms,
4) dictatorial / authoritarian political structures and / or human rights violations in the history of the country
5) differences in society (plurality).

5.1. Human Rights

Thinking about human rights is a crucial issue of citizenship education in Europe. Research performed within the `Centre for Research on Lifelong Learning based on indicators and benchmarks (CRELL)´, which was established in order to support the European Commission`s efforts to monitor progress towards community goals education, resorts to the following basic definition of its central term `Active Citizenship for Democracy´ (Krek et al. 2006, 5; Abs & Veldhuis 2006, 3; Salema 2006, 10; Hoskins et al. 2006, 7): "Participation in civil society, community and / or political life characterised by mutual respect and non-violence and in accordance with human rights and democracy." It is stressed that "participation, thus defined, cannot be understood as activity of any kind, but rather only that which supports the values mentioned above. The definition draws a line between `right´ and `wrong´ or `desirable´ and `undesirable´ participation." (Krek et al. 2006, 5)
Accordingly, one can draw a distinction between a `non-democratic´ vs. `democratic´ kind of citizenship education which is characterised by fostering a `discriminative´ vs. `non-discriminative´ way of thinking about human rights.
By `non-discriminative´, I mean that the aim is to encourage pupils to think that human rights should be applied equally, i.e. to all people irrespective of race, gender, sexual orientation etc. Moreover, this approach also actively encourages pupils to examine whether human rights are actually fully safeguarded in the country or whether democratically elected leaders are partially subverting some civil liberties of some groups. The notion of human rights is not restricted to classical civil liberties, but includes the right to a subsistence minimum. It is also emphasized that the physical and psychological integrity of the individual person should not be dependent upon the

will of the political majority of the parliament or the people but has to be irrevocably safeguarded by constitutional law.
In contrast, by `discriminative´, I mean a kind of citizenship education that explicitly or implicitly promulgates the idea that some social category of individuals may be or even have to be excluded from human rights (non-equal application of human rights) because this exclusion (allegedly) serves the stability of the society, the interests of the government and/or the majority of the population. Here, pupils are not asked to critically examine whether the actions of the government actually adhere to human rights. For example, citizenship education in Poland as described above in chapter 4 exhibits a discriminative facet with regard to the issue of homosexuality. The same applies to citizenship education in Turkey as described above with regard to the discrimination of women in society.
Of course, the `non-discriminative´ and `discriminative´ educational stance towards human rights are ideal-types, i.e. outer points on a continuum on which the practice of citizenship education can be located. For the research process it is important to identify intermediate, mixed cases like f.e. when human rights are generally accepted on an abstract, theoretical level but where concrete violations of human rights of a specific group in the country are treated as a taboo subject in citizenship education at the same time. A further example for an intermediate case would be when torture and/or the death penalty are supported as `necessary´, though exceptional violations of human rights.

5.2. International Relations

As the acceptance of human rights and "mutual respect" (Hoskins et al. 2006, 7) should not only be a feature of the relations between individuals within a liberal-democratic society but should also characterise the outer relations between democratic countries in a globalized world, the way of thinking about international relations is a second meta-issue of citizenship education to be investigated. Here, one can draw a distinction between a `democratic´ kind of citizenship education which is characterised by fostering a `universalistic´ way of thinking about international relations on the one hand and a `non-democratic´ kind of citizenship education which is characterised by fostering a `particularistic´ way of thinking about international relations.
`Universalistic´ thinking encourages pupils to think that all countries should be generally respected as equals but that no state has the right to violate human rights. The need of multilateral cooperation in international organisations is stressed (without neglecting its problems) and the depiction of other countries has a sound scientific basis. Pupils are also encouraged to openly analyze whether the foreign policy strategy of one`s own government actually follows human rights and democratic principles.
In contrast, `particularistic´ thinking more or less resorts to the construction of emotionally loaded, ill-founded or at least starkly exaggerated black-white opposites between one`s own country and its allies ("us – the force of the good") and its supposed opponents/enemies ("them – the force of the evil") which can allegedly never be trusted. Here, citizenship education expects non-questioning loyalty to the foreign policy strategy of one`s own government (see Westheimer (2006) for a similar distinction between "authoritarian patriotism" and "democratic patriotism" with regard to current styles of civic education in US schools). For example, citizenship education in Turkey as described above in chapter 4 with its strong militaristic and nationalistic logic displays at least some elements of particularistic thinking.

5.3. Current Institutions and Norms

The definition of democratic citizenship (education) given by the CRELL network alone is not sufficient. In political science, mere allegiance towards the current kind of liberal-democratic system in a certain country alone is not regarded as sufficient for a healthy

democracy (Geißel 2006, 1; Sniderman 1981). Instead, citizens` competent criticism – based on human rights and democratic principles – towards the current political system is seen as an important resource and as a creative potential for the sustainability of democracy and its further development (Geißel 2006; Rucht 2001; Dalton 2004; Westle 1997; Reißig 1997; Budge 1996).

Likewise, citizenship education theorists like Kahsnitz (2005) state that the ability to impartially examine and evaluate the adequacy of current social institutions and norms and possible alternatives to these – under recourse to the criterion of democratic legitimacy (which includes respect of civil rights) – is an important aim of citizenship education. According to Hargreaves (1994, 32 f.) and the British commission on citizenship education (Citizenship Advisory Group 1998, 10), citizenship education is not only about civic virtues, but also about the strengths and weaknesses of current political structures and how improvements might be made. Therefore, civic education theorists promote the encouragement of "critical system loyalty" (Petrik 2007, 250 & 336; see also Ofsted 2006, 5-10) among future citizens. Teachers should undermine the "illusion of the ontological character of the *current kind* of democratic system" which is a typical misunderstanding of many young citizens (Petrik 2007, 227).

In accordance with that, political scientists like Geißel (2006) and Sniderman (1981) are in favour of citizens who are able to recognize advantages and disadvantages of the behaviour of current political actors and of the current institutional system of government in a balanced way. These authors regard a certain degree of healthy scepticism towards current political elites and the current political system as a necessary part of democracy (Geißel 2006, 2; Sniderman 1981; Axtmann 2001). "Critical citizens are good for democracy" (Nye 1999, vi), because they make corruption and other forms of self-enrichment of elites more unlikely and because this enhances the responsiveness of governments (Budge 1996, 190).

The probability that popular sovereignty (in the strict sense of the word) as a central element of democracy will be strengthened, is higher when (young) citizens openly deliberate about the adequacy of current institutions (on a sound scientific basis, of course). A strong indication for this is that according to empirical studies of discussion groups (Fishkin/Luskin 2005, 290; Luskin/Fishkin/Hahn 2007) the opinions of many citizens concerning those political questions – and, as a result, political majorities – do indeed change quite often and significantly when they debate such issues in an argumentative manner and on a scientific basis.

Therefore, my research framework distinguishes between a `democratic´ kind of citizenship education which is characterised by fostering an `evaluative´ way of thinking about current institutions and norms and a `non-democratic´ kind of citizenship education which is characterised by fostering a `submissive´ way of thinking about current institutions and norms.

`Submissive´ thinking promotes – at best – the unquestioned affirmation of the current kind of political system and societal institutions in a democratic country or – at worst – the submission to (semi-)authoritarian social structures and institutions in "defect democracies" (Merkel et al. 2003/2004). According to this approach, all pupils should come to the same conclusion (that current institutions serve the `common´ interest and have to be accepted). A further feature of `submissive´ thinking is also that quite great argumentative weight is attached to specific persons (political leaders) who are in favour of or against something (a more or less pronounced personality cult). For example, civic education in Russia as described above in chapter 4 shows elements of submissive thinking because of its strong stress on conformism.

In contrast, `evaluative´ thinking tries to encourage pupils to impartially evaluate advantages and disadvantages of current institutions and norms and to explore possible alternatives to them (f.e. different proposals concerning the reform of the welfare state). `Evaluative´ thinking tolerates or even promotes divergent conclusions by different pupils in order to show that in contrast to natural sciences, `absolute truths´ are much less frequent in politics resp. the social sciences (Behrmann/Grammes/Reinhardt 2004). However, at the same time, `evaluative´

thinking takes care that the conclusions and possible reform proposals favoured by pupils respect civil rights, democratic values and have a reasonable basis in scientific knowledge.

What follows is an example what it means to promote evaluative thinking in citizenship education and why it is very important. Promoting evaluative thinking about the organisation of the public media in Spain means to raise the following questions: Is the law according to which the ruling Spanish government (unilaterally) determines and removes the powerful general director of the central Spanish public media station RTVE a democratically beneficial practice which is conducive to objective reporting? Or should this law be abolished and superseded by a different procedure because the current practice is the central source for a series of well documented and serious information manipulation scandals, one of which was even officially condemned by the European Council in Strasbourg? (see Jahn (2003) and Lobigs (2005, 270f.) for a detailed, critical assessment of public media politics in Spain). A free, independent media is a central, absolutely indispensable precondition of a truly democratic public. Citizens have to learn that and what difference it makes. Hence, it would be quite interesting to see what Spanish pupils learn about the organisation of the media and the public sphere in their country – if they learn anything about it at all. One could suspect that the government has not a very urging interest in that. Unfortunately, nothing is known about interesting issues like these until today. Are topics of this kind `too hot´ to be considered by citizenship education research?

Note that Spain is not an exception in this regard. Even if the situation of the public media in Germany is not so severe, it can hardly serve as a perfect `role model´ (see Assheuer (2004) for a critical analysis). And as was mentioned above, the violation of the central democratic principle of a free and independent media is even much more intense and blatant in a transformation country like Romania (Leeson & Coyne 2004). Media politics should represent a central topic of citizenship education because cross-national empirical studies show that low media freedom leads to poor political knowledge, low political participation, and low voter turnout (Leeson 2008).

5.4. Dictatorial / Authoritarian Political Structures and / or Human Rights Violations in the History of the Country

Democracies also need citizens with an unbiased consciousness about former authoritarian structures which violated human rights and/or the principle of political equality and popular sovereignty in the history of their country. People who have adequate knowledge about these issues are more aware of and more sensitive to possible threats to civil rights and/or their democracy lying in the future so that a repetition of the past becomes more unlikely. Civic education theorists stress that pupils should not cherish the illusion that civil rights, democratic structures and their personal liberties ensuing from these are the natural order of the world (which pupils often seem to assume) but should learn that these institutions are contingent institutions always more or less under potential threat and that these institutions had to be obtained historically in long, hard-won political fights (Petrik 2007, 226).

Therefore, one can distinguish between a `democratic´ kind of citizenship education about authoritarian political structures or human rights violations in the past which is characterised by fostering a `critical´ way of thinking about these on the one hand and a `non-democratic´ kind of citizenship education about authoritarian political structures or human rights violations in the past which is characterised by fostering an `affirmative´ way of thinking about them.

Citizenship education which promotes `critical´ thinking tries to raise a critical consciousness about violations of human rights and democratic principles in the country`s past. Moreover, the question of possible continuities between the past and the present is posed so that pupils are able to draw lessons from the past for today and the future.

In contrast, within `affirmative´ thinking, the country`s past is glorified as `good old times´ and former violations of democracy and human rights are portrayed as necessary for system stability at that time. For the research process it is important to identify possible intermediate, mixed cases like f.e. when authoritarian periods of the past are not openly heralded but where sensitive issues are (implicitly) declared as taboo subjects or neglected. Provided that Spanish schools deal with the authoritarian past in the same way as Spanish society has done heretofore (see description in chapter 4), civic education in Spain represents an example for such an intermediate case.

5.5. Differences in Society

With reference to the model of the "policy cycle" (May & Wildavsky 1978) often used in political science, many citizenship education theorists define the core of (democratic) politics as the process of dealing with public conflicts (in a democratic manner) (Petrik 2007, 42). For the British commission on citizenship education, the teaching of controversial topics is a central issue (Citizenship Advisory Group et al. 1998, 27 & 56ff.). Hence, according to Behrmann et al. (2003, Chapter 4.1.), democratic citizenship education has to be `political´ in the sense of putting the analysis of public conflicts between different social groups and their diverging interests and values on centre stage in the teaching process. An important task of the teacher here is to undermine the "illusion of homogeneity", i.e. the illusion of a single, common, "sensible" interest of the whole populace which is a typical misunderstanding of many young people who often crave harmony and detest politics with its often intractable political disputes (Behrmann et al. 2003, 341 & 343; Petrik 2007, 225f.). Pupils should learn that permanent political disputes and conflicts between different parties, interests, groups, cultures and values – as long as they are handled in a manner in accordance with civil rights and democratic principles – are an inevitable and necessary feature of a democratic, plural society. Pupils should learn to think about and deal with these conflicts in a democratic manner.

Therefore, one can distinguish between a `democratic´ kind of citizenship education about differences within society which is characterised by fostering a `pluralistic´ way of thinking about these differences and a `non-democratic´ kind of citizenship education about differences within society which is characterised by fostering a `monistic´ way of thinking about these differences.
Within `monistic´ thinking, the nation is portrayed as a harmonious entity with a single interest which is f.e. guaranteed by (fictitious or enforced) eternal comprehensive "alliances" between different social groups which allegedly causes their special interests to melt away. Individual deviation from this "alliance" is portrayed as a betrayal of one`s own country which should be punished. Actual conflicts between social groups are denied or at least downplayed. Often, this is related to the aim of concealing the actual political dominance and questionable material privileges of (a) certain interest group(s).
In contrast, if `pluralistic´ thinking is the aim of the teaching process, the acceptance of the plurality of values, cultures and interests and the concomitant political disputes is promoted. The power balance between different interest groups and its consequences for political decision-making are examined; after that, it is discussed whether something could be done to promote the ideal of democratic equality. Moreover, the pupil is also encouraged to put herself in the place of members of different social groups in order to understand divergent perspectives on the social world, to enhance empathy and to search for acceptable compromises if these are possible. Thus, pupils learn that political differences do not have to lead to mutual personal contempt (Meyer 2004, 101).

For the research process it is important to identify intermediate, mixed cases like f.e. when there is no active propagation of complete unity and harmony but when “sensitive issues” like conflicts between “ethnic groups” or between “rich and poor” people are avoided in favour of (supposedly) “social-cohesion related topics” like “family” or “nationality” which f.e. was said to be often the case in Hungarian citizenship education (Matrai 1999, 362).

6. Possible Objections

A possible objection to the theoretical research framework outlined in the previous chapter is that its dualisms are too simplistic. However, the distinctions between `discriminative vs. non-discriminative´, `particularistic vs. universalistic´, `submissive vs. `evaluative´, `affirmative vs. critical´ and `monistic vs. pluralistic´ thinking as aims of citizenship education should not be used as two separated categories in which countries are put. The framework is not meant to be a dichotomy. Instead, according to Max Weber`s concept, the task is to determine the extent to which national realities (i.e. citizenship education in a certain country) approximate / diverge from the two theoretical ideal-types. Hence, the ideal-types are the two outer points of a *continuum* so that intermediate, mixed cases can be identified. The more citizenship education in a certain transformation country has shifted from the left to the right side on the arrow lines in figure 1 in the last decades, the more intense the extent of democratic transformation of citizenship education has been. The task of identifying and describing different types of intermediate, hybrid styles of citizenship education and locating them on the continuum is an empirical issue.

The research framework also does not claim that there is only one unique style of democratic citizenship education. There may be different pedagogical approaches which all have in common that they try to foster non-discriminative, universalistic, evaluative, critical and pluralistic thinking, but which differ for instance with regard to the teaching methods that they use. However, the research framework deliberately ignores such differences because my aim is not to compile an encyclopaedia of all existing citizenship education approaches. Instead, my aim is just to find out to what extent citizenship education in a certain country can be called democratic in the sense defined above. So what I do assert is that citizenship education can be called democratic *in the full sense* only if it fulfils the five criteria specified above.

The research framework investigates explicit or implicit *aims* of citizenship education. It does not claim that these aims will be actually achieved by those who pursue them, because educational intentions can be subverted by the self-will of pupils. This is a question which depends on additional factors (f.e. teaching methods, political traditions in the family) and which can be investigated afterwards.

Another comment that I received criticized that the ideal-type of democratic citizenship education unwarrantedly neglects the importance of building a sense of “common *national* interest”. This aim was said to be essential because the notion of the democratic voice of the people is allegedly “lodged” in a sense of national community, i.e. strongly depends on an understanding not only of “belonging” but also of “boundaries”.

However, I have severe difficulties with this objection for five reasons. For me, the most important is the third one.

Firstly, there is a considerable risk in integrating a term like `common interest´ into democratic citizenship education (as defined above) which one should be very wary of. Especially the term “common national interest” was and is regularly misused for legitimising and/or whitewashing blatant or hidden violations of human rights and democratic principles as well as questionable economic strategies like protectionism. This strategy is a characteristic feature of *non*-democratic citizenship education. Of course, terms like `common local/ regional/global interest´ can also be misused in a

similar way (although this seems to be less often the case). Hence, it is very important that pupils learn to critically look behind such political phrases.
Secondly, it has become quite difficult to speak of a “common national interest” in a meaningful sociological sense insofar as contemporary national societies consist of several socio-cultural milieus with quite different social values and political interests (Meyer 2004, 27-31). Therefore, the undisputed `common national interest´ which remains for the members of these different socio-cultural milieus is to agree on and abide by ethical principles and basic political rules which handle the conflicts ensuing from these different interests and values in a humane and democratic manner. But this is already exactly the aim of the ideal-type of democratic citizenship education as defined above. Moreover, this aim represents not only a common *national* interest, but a common *global* interest. Thus, there is neither a need for supplementing the ideal-type of democratic citizenship education with a further specific aim called `building a sense of common national interest´ nor do I think it is appropriate to use the adjective “national”.
Thirdly and most importantly, it is in particular the specification `common *national* interest´ and the stress on “boundaries” which I find problematic. This specification is by no means a necessity, because `building a sense of common *global* interest´, which deliberately transgresses “boundaries”, is a possible *equivalent* alternative which a pupil should be allowed to choose. Such a sense of common global interest encompasses citizens who live in the same country as oneself, but gives no special privileges to these.
Therefore, I do not agree with the argument that a democratic citizen needs a sense of *national* belonging and a sense of “boundaries” in order to be able to exert their political voice in an acceptable manner. Of course, a citizen should understand that the laws that they vote for or against will apply only to the territory of their country. But she does *not necessarily* have to feel a special socio-emotional sense of *national* `belonging´ *which gives priority of whatsoever kind to those human beings living in the same country as she does.*
Basically, each citizen should display a certain sense of empathy towards every human being irrespective of their nationality and residence (in the sense of respecting their human rights). And in dilemma situations when there is an irresolvable trade-off between the material welfare of the people of her `home´ country on the one side and the material welfare of the people of `foreign´ countries on the other side, *it is for each single citizen herself to choose* whether she identifies herself more with the lot of `native´ citizens or with the lot of `foreign´ citizens. Here, *it is for each single citizen herself to decide* whether her socio-emotional sense of “belonging” is focused primarily on her nation-state or whether her socio-emotional sense of “belonging” deliberately ignores “boundaries” and feels the same (or perhaps even more) empathy with human beings living in `foreign´ countries. Therefore, democratic citizenship education should take up a neutral stance, so that such questions can be openly discussed in class, but it should not be prescribed that pupils should develop a sense of common *national* interest. They should be allowed to build a personal sense of common *global* interest instead if they want to.
Hence, even the fact that the modern institutionalised form of solidarity – the welfare state – is (to this day) based on the nation state does *not necessarily* imply that a citizen should have a sense of common *national* interest. It is *equally* legitimate when she instead prefers to have a sense of common *global* interest by advocating (with her democratic voice) a new, *globally* oriented welfare state which stops granting national privileges (or which at least reduces them in a significant way). What I mean is that she *could* f.e. critically ask why rich OECD countries pour immense amounts of tax money in their national welfare state while at the same time distributing only a tiny fraction of this amount to development aid (that is, to people with a greater need). As a consequence, she *could* develop the political position that taxes in general or at least her own[ii] taxes should not be *preferentially* used to ensure a lawfully guaranteed minimum standard of living for poor individuals living in the same country as she does

(as today). Rather, she *could* argue that taxes should be *equally* used to ensure that governments of `foreign´ developing countries actually have the fiscal capacity to lawfully guarantee a minimum standard of living for the much poorer individuals there. Because of her sense of common global interest, she accepts that this necessitates significant economic sacrifices for herself and the population in the rich country in which she lives (higher taxes or cuts in state expenditure in other domains). Of course, I do not assert that pupils should be taught to argue this way, but they should be allowed to do so.

Fourthly, one could still object that citizens nevertheless need a sense of `common *national* interest´ in order to defend their country against an unjustified military attack from a foreign country. But again, this is no necessity. Personal opposition against such an attack can also be based on a commitment to human rights and democratic principles (which are already ingredients of the ideal-type of democratic citizenship education as defined above). *Maybe* such a firm commitment to principles instead of a firm commitment to nationality has the advantage of being less susceptible to the desire for revenge during times of war.

Finally, the most important challenges of our time threatening the welfare of mankind (1. combating climate change and other ecological problems, 2. resolving the current financial crisis and preventing the next one from happen, 3. securing peace and fighting terrorism, 4. combating hunger in developing countries) are all of a global nature. Often, related multilateral efforts of effective problem-solving are impaired by national narrow-mindedness and/or by national interest groups which appeal to the alleged `common national interest´ only in order to protect their special privileges. Thus, a basic sense of mutual understanding, i.e. of common *global* interest and a critical self-reflection of national interests would be quite helpful for tackling these most pressing problems. In this context it should be reminded that time resources of citizenship education are quite scarce. Therefore, one *could* even argue that democratic citizenship education should focus on the most important issue, i.e. fostering a sense of common *global* interest. This pedagogical focus could also be justified by the empirical fact that – at least in Europe – the majority of citizens already identify themselves primarily with their own nation, whereas only a minority of them regard themselves as a European citizen (Fligstein 2008), let alone as a global citizen. Hence, one *could* even argue that a pedagogical counterweight is necessary.

To sum up, I see no convincing reason for complementing the ideal-type of democratic citizenship education with a further aim called `building a sense of common national interest´.

7. Conclusion – The Democratic Quality of Citizenship Education as a Major Future Research Issue

Sustainable democratic societies need a wary, critical public sphere. Hence, they are in need of citizens who do not just accept the contemporary form of democracy in their country as the current unchangeable `rules of the game´ (institutions, norms, and laws), but who 1) value human rights and democratic principles as such, 2) examine whether the current `rules of the game´ actually correspond to these human rights and democratic principles and – if this is not the case – 3) deliberate about what can be done to change the `rules of the game´ to make them more democratic. Democracies need *reflective,* not *obedient* citizens. As many contemporary examples of citizenship education show, it is far from self-evident that citizenship education in transformation countries (and elsewhere) actually promotes such a reflective kind of citizen. Hence, future research on citizenship education in transformation countries should go beyond describing the institutional surface and beyond enumerating well-sounding official goals of citizenship education. Rather it should examine and assess in a systematic way to what extent its fabric, i.e. its actual aims and contents really correspond to the basic demands of a democratic culture.

In this regard, citizenship education research has yet a lot to learn from political science. Here, an international scientific community has defined a basic theoretical concept of the term `democracy´ and has identified its indispensable core components as well as trans-culturally valid empirical indicators for measuring these core components. With the help of the latter, it comparatively investigates the quality of democracy (Bühlmann/Merkel/Wessels 2007; Morlino 2004; Berg-Schlosser 2004) of so-called democratic countries. Thus, this approach performs democratic audits of current political systems (see f.e. http://www.democraticaudit.com/) (Beetham 1994). This means that it systematically examines to what extent current, so-called democratic systems actually live up to basic, indispensable democratic principles (Lauth 2004).
From my point of view, international citizenship education research should follow a similar path by examining the democratic quality of citizenship education. Hence, it should perform democratic audits of citizenship education, i.e. it should systematically examine the extent to which the contents taught in citizenship education in a country actually live up to the basic principles of a democratic culture. For this, cooperation with political scientists would be advisable. At the moment, international citizenship education research often makes no or only very selective reference to concepts used in political science and its research results but instead invents its own definitions of political categories, theories and so on.
A cooperation between citizenship education researchers and political scientists would in particular help to perform the especially important task of identifying those political issues where the current rules of the game (laws, institutions, and norms in whatever societal sphere) in a country fall short of liberal-democratic principles in order to examine whether and how citizenship education in the respective country deals with these critical issues. As the example of blatant media manipulation by Romanian governments (Leeson & Coyne 2004) shows, elected politicians in formally democratic transformation countries – even members of the EU – sometimes display undemocratic behaviour and subvert democratic institutions. The pedagogical handling of these critical issues is the litmus test of democratic citizenship education.
And it is also the litmus test of citizenship education research. It is my impression that current citizenship education research sometimes tends to assume a somewhat affirmative stance heretofore by neglecting these critical issues and just enumerating the well-sounding general aims of citizenship education officially proclaimed in transformation countries (and elsewhere). However, the semantic devil is below the semiotic surface and it has to be more critically investigated whether these broad claims are actually more than shallow `impression management´ and superficial `window-dressing´ in order to please the organizations of the European Union. This article makes a first general proposal how such a critical approach may look like.

[i] The term transformation countries is defined here as encompassing all countries which did not establish an enduring democratic political order before 1975 so that their democratic tradition is relatively short and/or which are still in the unfinished process of establishing certain institutions (and ensuring their actual enforcement) generally held as core elements of liberal democracies (f.e. Turkey). One may object to this approach that it treats (seemingly) fully consolidated democracies like Greece, Portugal and Spain as transformation countries, too. However, at least in Spain the transformation towards a cultural anchoring of democratic norms in the sense of an open examination of the political crimes committed during the Franco regime is far from being finalized (see chapter 4 for evidence). As it would be very interesting to research how this unfinished, politically controversial process is reflected in Spanish citizenship education and in order to find out whether a similar situation prevails in the two other countries, the Mediterranean countries are included here.

[ii] This can be done f.e. by increasing the tax-deductible amount of personal contributions paid to organizations engaged in development aid.

FIGURE 1: An Instrument to Analyze the Extent of the Democratic Transformation of Citizenship Education

IDEAL-TYPE OF CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION / META-ISSUE	NON-DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION Aim: Loyal, Obedient Citizens	DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION Aim: Democratic, Reflective Citizens
HUMAN RIGHTS	Discriminative Thinking ◄——► Non-Discriminative Thinking	
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS	Particularistic Thinking ◄——► Universalistic Thinking	
CURRENT INSTITUTIONS AND NORMS	Submissive Thinking ◄——► Evaluative Thinking	
AUTHORITARIAN PAST	Affirmative Thinking ◄——► Critical Thinking	
DIFFERENCES WITHIN SOCIETY	Monistic Thinking ◄——► Pluralistic Thinking	

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