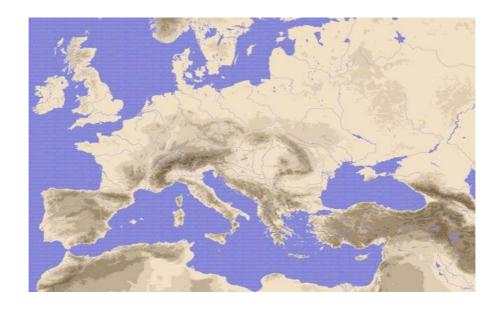THE FLETCHER SCHOOL OF LAW AND DIPLOMACY

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**Civic Learning through Citizenship Education:
The Promise of a Transnational Project**

by

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Civic Learning through Citizenship Education:
The Promise of a Transnational Project

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> To provide students with an understanding of the reflections that have taken place on such matters as the nature of the best state and on the relationship between and among citizens and subjects and rulers and governments seems to me to offer them both a sense of, and a capacity for membership of a human community one of the primary characteristics of which is its member's ability –too often latent– to reflect on the conditions of their common existence.
>
> Peter F. Butler – *Do not go gentle into that Good Night*

Preface

This paper is about the promotion of civic learning, drawing from the experience of the Council of Europe's programme 'Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education' (EDC/HRE). The programme reflects the Council's core democratic values and constitutes the first pan-European civic project designed to encourage young people to play an active and decisive part in democratic life as well as to promote, through their participation, an open and tolerant civic space in Europe. The EDC/HRE project aims at promoting knowledge about democracy with reference to its multiple formal and informal institutional settings, by helping European schoolchildren to seek and develop a more profound understanding of their rights and duties in society. In general, the project aspires to advance their civic competences in

practicing democratic school governance and in acquainting themselves with notions of 'the political' that, in an ever complex and globalizing, if not already globalized, world, transcend pre-existing categories of political organization. It also aims at contributing to the internalization of democratic norms and values, by offering an open public forum, through which members of the educational community learn how to practice democracy and how to prevent violence, intolerance and discrimination.

At a more specific level, the paper also draws from the Greek experience in the field of citizenship and human rights education. Of particular importance in the implementation of the Council project has been the search for strengthening the bonds of civic solidarity among young people and for promoting the concept and practice of intercultural toleration; itself, a substantive component of Europe's long-standing democratic tradition. The underlying aim thus far has been to encourage young people to engage themselves in a Europe-wide public discourse on the merits of participatory democracy in school life and beyond, as well as to underline the significance of human rights education and the way in which such rights can be exercised. Both aims chime well with the idea of placing the democratic foundations for a deliberative civic space linking together national and European public arenas. Former Greek Education Minister, Ms Marietta Giannakou, summarized the project's political philosophy well: 'Citizenship education is part of an interminable quest for good governance, which, in the case of an ever-more multicultural European social and political space, refers to the means of bringing about a new kind of "civic partnership" among highly interdependent states and societies. As citizenship and human rights education is constitutive of civic freedom itself, its means motivate citizens to take an active part in the governance of the polity to which they belong, allowing for a common European civicness to emerge'. Such a comprehensive account of the democratic potential of civic education and its relationship with the quality of governance within a European polity composed of free and equal citizens, is instructive of the kind of educational projects and policies Europe needs to face the challenges of the new era.

Identity of a Project

The Council of Europe, as the first postwar pan-European political organisation, was founded in 1949 with the view to protecting, reinforcing and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as pluralist democracy and the rule of law, in its search for encouraging common responses to the challenges facing European society.

The Council's primary objective is reflected in the *Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*, adopted in Rome in 1950, and in the *European Cultural Convention* adopted and opened for signature in 1954, setting the framework for the Council's work in the area of education, culture, heritage, youth and sports, democracy, human rights, fundamental freedoms, communication, etc. Due to the crucial political changes that have taken place during the last two decades, especially since the seismic changes post-1989, national and European experts and policy-makers have agreed that civic education is of the utmost importance for the dissemination of a shared democratic culture. Since then, we have been witnessing a notable and constructive revision and re-evaluation of the concept of citizenship education and, by extension, of its implications for the members of European civil and civic society with reference to the promotion of new collective responses to emergent demands associated with the teaching and learning of democracy and human rights.

Today, the dynamic interplay between Europe, as an organized political space composed of overlapping and even interlocking institutions of governance, and 'the civic', forms part of an ongoing and rapidly growing public discourse, which involves multiple actors and institutions at both national and translational levels (Schmidt 2006, Nanz 2006). In this context, the Council of Europe has taken the lead to impact on the democratic quality of social and political forms of governance, by touching upon a fundamental value of Europe's civic culture: 'democratic citizenship through education'. Since October 1997, following the second Summit of the Heads of State and Government in Strasbourg, the Council has actively promoted a large-scale campaign on civic learning, which, in 2004, was linked to the task of human rights education; to such an extent, that both objectives became a political priority for the Council's core democratic mission: to strengthen its actions in protecting, promoting and disseminating human rights and democracy, while encouraging the consolidation of Europe's cultural identity. Among the themes included in these initiatives, central to their implementation have been the notions of civic freedom and civic solidarity, intercultural learning, toleration and the development of democratic citizenship within a plurinational European setting. These foundational properties in any conception of the good polity, together with the democratic requirements for good governance, are not only linked with Europe's long-standing political traditions, but also with its efforts to bring about a transnational civic space comprised of free and equal citizens.

According to the Council, the EDC/HRE project consists of three core aims: to strengthen democratic societies by fostering a vibrant democratic culture; to create a sense of belonging and commitment to democratic society; and to raise awareness of shared fundamental values as the constitutive basis for a freer and more tolerant European political society. Linked with the above is the inclusive nature of the project and its emphasis on promoting a lifelong perspective on strengthening civic competence through the development of core democratic skills. The project rests on the dynamics of capacity-building, large-scale networking, dissemination practices and the symmetrical sharing of information and activities across all age groups and social classes; its emphasis being on the educational community, policy-makers, NGOs, regional and international institutions, voluntary and professional bodies and youth organisations. Its aim is to draw attention to the role education plays at formal and informal levels. It also provides the member countries with a general framework as well as with specific educational tools to promote peace education and to take over ownership of a collective effort. The following aims have been agreed for 2006-09: a) to promote education policy development and implementation for democratic citizenship and social cohesion, b) to advance new roles and competences of teachers and other educational staff, and c) to strengthen democratic governance in schools. They manifest the project's orientation for the promotion of social cohesion and inclusion at all educational levels, the definition of new roles for teachers linked with processes of qualification and professionalisation, and the idea of strengthening the educational capacities of the stakeholders in practicing democratic school governance.

Underlying the Council's efforts is a belief that European societies need to invest in a systematic and innovative way in a new kind of 'citizenhood', away from the minimal expectations and requirements of the classical citizenship model, which consisted in the idea of citizens exercising their political rights by voting in periodic and competitive elections. The dramatic social and political changes that led to a post-Cold War global environment, coupled with the emergent democratic challenges experienced by governments and citizens alike, raise the issue for a new conception of citizenship and, by extension, of 'civicness'. The events that prompted the departure form the classical model of citizenship, as noted by the Council in 2004 in the drafting of a tool prepared for teacher training for the purposes of the EDC project, include:

- ethnic conflicts and nationalism,

- global threats and insecurity,

- development of new information and communication technologies,

- environmental problems,

- population movements,

- emergence of new forms of formerly suppressed collective identities,

- demand for increasing personal autonomy and new forms of equality,

- weakening of social cohesion and solidarity among people,

- mistrust of traditional political institutions, forms of governance and political leaders,

- increasing interconnectedness regionally and internationally.

The general assessment of the teachers training tool is that, in the face of such challenges, it has become apparent that 'new kinds of citizens are required: citizens that are not only informed, but also *active* – able to contribute to the life of their community, their country and the wider world, and *take more responsibility* for it'. In particular, it is stated that the traditional models of citizenship 'are not equipped to create the kind of active, informed and responsible citizenry that modern democracies require … [as] they are failing to respond to the demands of a rapidly changing social, economic, political and cultural environment – for example, by continuing to:

- deny learners the opportunity to explore and discuss controversial social and political problems by emphasising the teaching of academic knowledge, at a time when they appear to be losing interest in traditional politics and forms of political engagement;

- focus on fragmented disciplinary knowledge and classic 'teacher-textbook-student' learning at a time of rapid advance in new information and communication technologies;

- restrict civic education to factual information about 'ideal' systems at a time when citizens need to be taught practical skills of participation in the democratic process themselves;

- nurture dominant cultures and 'common' national loyalties at a time when political and legal recognition of cultural difference has come to be seen as a source of democratic capital;
- detach education from the personal lives of learners and the interests of the local community at a time when social cohesion and solidarity is declining;
- reinforce the traditional divide between formal and informal and non-formal education at a time when education needs to address the needs of lifelong learning;
- promote state-focused forms of education and training at a time of increasing interconnectedness and interdependence at a regional and international level'.

'What is then required', the document notes, 'are new forms of education that prepare learners for *actual involvement* in society … rooted in real life issues affecting learners and their communities, and taught through participation in school life as well as through the formal curriculum'. Through the project, among other related initiatives by UNESCO and the UN High Commission for Human Rights, a different kind of teaching methods has emerged, creating innovative relationships between teachers and learners. This strategy calls attention to a philosophy of teaching that stresses the importance of current affairs in understanding historical systems, as well as in inventing in critical thinking and teaching skills that are related to knowledge transmission, co-operative working and professional autonomy. It also states: 'It requires a change in how we perceive learning, from an idea of learning as teacher-centred to learning through experience, participation, research and sharing'.

The Remaking of Civic Europe

For all its conceptual and interpretative antinomies, it is commonly acknowledged that democracy constitutes a method for organizing public life that reflects the concerns and articulates the interests of the demos, those entitled to participate in the political process. Institutionalized control, meaningful legislative representation and the setting of civic inclusion mechanisms emanate as democracy's defining properties, where the members of the demos participate in the making of authoritative decisions that affect their lives most closely and importantly. Two different approaches to democracy are in order here: the first, in line with Schumpeter's (1943) democratic theory, takes

democracy as an institutional arrangement for arriving at publicly binding decisions, whose legitimacy rests on competitive periodic elections. In that sense, democracy is closer to becoming an end-in-itself, irrespective of the actual content of the decisions produced in the context of a representative assembly. The second, drawing from a republican understanding of the polity and, hence, of a positive conception of liberty (as self-control, self-knowledge and, crucially, self-realization), takes democracy as a means of maximizing civic freedom through the institution of active citizenship.

The issue, however, is not between a value-driven approach to democracy and a more competitive democratic design. Rather, it is about how to involve citizens in the deliberation, making as well as taking of authoritative political decisions, instead of being passively submitted to them. This brings to the fore one of the greatest dilemmas of contemporary democracies: whether to pursue a strategy for 'democracy in input', through active civic involvement, or 'democracy in output', by focusing on policy and decisional outcomes and, hence, on an output-oriented form of legitimacy (Scharpf 1999). Whatever the definition of democracy, it is fair to suggest that the term relates both to the safeguarding of a pluralistic form of society as well as to upgrading the participative potential of the demos in the process of government. Democracy is thus a synthesis of an ideal and a procedural arrangement, where the demos steers the political process. This implies that the concentration of authority in unaccountable hands is incompatible with democracy, whose 'true' meaning refers both to a set of values shared by the community of citizens as well as to the means through which these values are embodied in the actual workings of public institutions.

Contemporary democratic thinking has focused more on the question of which set of institutions can best ensure the transformation of democratic norms into policy structures. For many of its students, democracy is taken as an interactive process between government and the demos, where ultimate authority to produce publicly binding decisions is located in the demos itself and not elsewhere. But for democracy to exist as such, it should maintain high levels of public accountability over elected representatives and policy-makers. Equally, the need for governmental responsibility stems from the principle that government must give an account of its public actions to the demos and answer questions in the legislature, where the representatives of the demos assemble to discuss and decide on public issues. Accountability may then be seen as a dynamic process, by which those who govern are publicly held to account for their actions or lack of action. Democracy is thus intimately linked to the exercise

of institutionalized control over government. This can be exercised in practice through parliamentary control, court rulings, discussions in the media, pressure from interest groups and social movements, or from individual citizens. In a period, however, when transnational forces challenge relations not only among but also within polities, there is no reason for democracy to remain narrowly confined within the boundaries of the state. Not only does this view contradict the classical Hobbesian 'realist' doctrine of international politics, in that the latter is not subjected to moral principles; it goes even further, taking 'democracy within borders' as equally important to 'democracy across borders'. It thus challenges the conventional view that democracy is exhausted by the institutions of the modern nation-state as the ultimate source of legitimate political authority within a territory. If, then, intrastate democracy is to be sustained and further advanced, it needs to keep pace with the emergence of large-scale regional and international formations, whose decisions should also reflect popular sentiments.

As decision-making is conditioned by a plurality of networks and regimes of transnational interaction, new political uncertainties emerge, contesting the supremacy of the nation-state as the ultimate decision-maker in domestic and external affairs. In the case of the emerging political system of the European Union (EU) –an exercise in polity-building that represents a profound locking together of states and demoi– a timely yet acute problem has emerged; that of holding transnational decision-makers accountable to a nascent, composite demos (Chryssochoou 1998, Eriksen and Fossum 2000, Warleigh 2003). This can be achieved by discussing, defending and justifying the respective actions or inaction of the central political authorities on issues vital to the member state demoi. Therefore, the idea of 'transnational democracy' emerges as an alternative to unaccountable and technocratic rule, suggesting ways of pursuing and enacting a cluster of democratic rights within a multilevel political ordering (Anderson 2000). The aim is to build legitimate instruments of collective governance, whose outcomes are accountable to a civic-minded demos. Following the systemic changes post-1989, the emergent European order has structurally altered the role of states in determining the duties of their respective citizenries. It follows that, as the quest for common democratic arrangements will grow stronger, the questions that further integration generates for the theory and practice of democracy are far from easy to resolve. In the case of composite polities consisting of historically constituted nations –what could be called a 'synarchy' of entwined sovereignties (Chryssochoou 2008), or a 'sympolity' of quasi-autonomous units (Tsatsos 2008)– the embodiment of

democratic norms in the common working arrangements is crucial for the political viability of good governance beyond as well as alongside the traditional state level.

This, however, does not require a 'constitutional revolution' as conventionally understood, or the making of a post-national or even post-sovereign entity with a single locus of political authority. Rather, it heralds the need for a new 'civic contract' among states, peoples and central institutions (Lavdas and Chryssochoou 2005). By embedding the democratic qualities of the component parts in an 'inclusive' political community composed of free and equal citizens, the idea of a transnational civic ordering in Europe seeks to restore the confidence of citizens in the exercise of political power without, however, threatening their constitutive integrities, cultures and identities. Transnational democracy is thus designed to strike a mutual agreement among citizens about 'the democratic rules of the game' and the limits of acceptable behaviour within a polycentric 'community of communities', where the subunits are well-governed and well-served by the central political arrangements. Thus, power to make binding decisions should be given to distinct domains of authority according to the conjoint principles of democratic pluralism: decisional closeness to the demos, as reflected in the federal principle of subsidiarity, and policy responsiveness. Overall, the basic tenet of this multilevel civic order is that transnational democracy should be primarily reflected in the actual workings of the common institutions of governance.

The introduction of democratic practices into the institutional machinery of the 'inclusive' polity provides for some kind of 'popular power', which in turn demands the best possible articulation of citizens' interests at the larger level of aggregation. Far from leading to a diffusion of national democratic autonomy, the conception of transnational democracy –seen both as a new political dynamic as well a form of democratically monitoring transnational activity– is ideally suited to better equipping citizens to engage themselves in European political processes. This assertion entails far-reaching implications for the future of composite polities such as the EU, since democracy is a means of transforming the potential of citizens from being merely a collection of national voters to becoming an agency of civic change within a 'polycultural' setting (Lavdas 2007). In sketching out a normative perspective on what it means to be a citizen in and of Europe, a first point is that the once nationally-determined fix between norms of citizenship and the territorial state is being eroded. A new challenge has emerged, as citizenship establishes a kind of civic solidarity in the sense of a Habermasian public sphere, encouraging the process of democratic

will-formation (Habermas 1996). But perhaps its most celebrated property, both as a social construct and as substantive public engagement, is the actual range and depth of participatory opportunities it offers the members of the demos in order to fulfil their democratic potential. Within this civic space, a feature central to democracy becomes crucial, that of civic competence: the institutional capacity of citizens as social equals to enter the realm of political influence with a view to sustaining a vital public sphere and to creating a sense of civic attachment based on a shared sense of the public good.

Citizenship Education as Demos-Formation

From a citizenship education standpoint, the development of civic competence at the grassroots aims at institutionalizing a firm commitment to participatory governance, by embracing a central task of democratic life: active involvement in public affairs through education. Overall, the democratic potential of civic education is threefold: it gives access and voice to the demos; it motivates greater civic participation; and it strengthens the bonds of belonging to an active polity. This means that the distribution of civic competence passes through the capacity of citizens to determine the functions of the polity to which they belong. For what is vital to the moral ontology of citizenship education and to the value spheres of civicness is the endurance of an inclusive civic space. From a developmental democratic perspective, civic norms may bring about a *civis europeus* characterized by shared notions of belonging to an extended public sphere. The making of a European civic ordering composed of multiple forms of fellowship and non-territorial associative relations aims to harness the participative ethos of a composite yet self-identifying citizenry, whose members can direct their democratic claims to, and via, the central institutions. Further, the relationship between the promotion of civic learning and the social legitimation of Europe becomes a synergetic one, assigning new meaning to citizen-polity relations.

At a macro-level, the triptych symbiosis, synergy, osmosis corresponds best to the three stages in the making of a composite European demos: the first describes the current interplay between Europe, as a compound polity, and the segments, as distinct but constitutive units; the second points to the development of horizontal links among the component demoi and a corresponding strengthening of existing ties among their respective political elites; and the third represents a culmination of the previous stages in a democratic public sphere. In that sense, the strengthening of civic competence through citizenship education can be seen as a call to substantive democratic reforms

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in advancing the quality of social and political governance. The significance of tying the self-image of political elites to the dialectic between democratic citizenship education and transnational demos-formation is that no common civic identity may come into being unless all major actors in the process see themselves as part of a multilevel political space that has to evolve from the lower level 'upwards' – i.e., the everyday networks of civic learning and engagement. Of importance, here, is for a core set of democratic values to be identified, acknowledged, debated, challenged and ultimately accommodated through the institutions and practices of civic deliberation.

If, then, democracy is the highest form of civic association that human agency has ever devised –be it within a community, a state, a commonwealth or a post-statist polity– the notion of Europe as a new civic ordering among highly interdependent citizenries does not refer merely to a normative transformation derived from a 'pure' political-sociological approach. Rather, it points to an elaborate public process carried through formal and informal instruments of civic learning. What is then central to the development of a common European civicness (as a principled and active politicality) is a full-working civic space to bestow Europe with a distinctive model of democratic citizenship. The typology offered below helps to summarize the previous discussion.

Typology of Civic Governance

Civic Competence

		Latent	Institutionalized
Civic Identity	Nascent	**Civil Society** (functionalist demos)	**Civic Space** (interactive demos)
	Formed	**Public Sphere** (deliberative demos)	**Res Publica** (civic demos)

The development of a shared civic identity in Europe has not yet met the institutionalisation of civic competence at the larger level. As the above typology illustrates, this mix of variables is necessary for the emergence of a European civic space composed of an interactive transnational demos. But Europe has not yet met the conditions for the institutionalisation of a common public sphere, within which citizens deliberate through public argument and reasoning over possible ways of improving the democratic quality of their collective symbiosis. The democratic order envisaged here refers to discourse-centred processes of civic engagement. Whether or not formally instituted, such processes would serve the goal of a polycentric public sphere for diverse citizens to mobilize their democratic energies outside the state framework. Absent a principled public discourse to steer Europe's civic orientation, one cannot expect the transformation of the larger political unit from a collection of national democracies into a purposeful *res publica*, within which citizens operate at different levels of governance and sites of power. This commitment performs a crucial formative function, by encouraging civic participation and by setting the foundations for a new polity setting to emerge, within which the notion of citizenship amounts to something more than just the aggregate of its constituent parts; it becomes a normative quality to guarantee certain values (Lavdas and Chryssochoou 2007).

European and National Experiences

Citizenship education in Europe is crucial for the development of a deliberative civic space that captures the imagination of an open, tolerant and fair European polity. It is, in other words, part of a diachronical, if not interminable, quest, for 'the good polity', which in the case of a composite civic Europe refers to the means of bringing about a shared understanding of European civicness among distinct culturally defined and politically organized demoi. Such conceptions are part of a demanding intellectual current: the search for a democratic way of constituting and organising a transnational public space that is capable of capturing the dialectic among the component national public spheres, through the institutionalisation of EDC/HRE policies and institutions. This is fully in accord with a civic understanding of Europe founded upon the fundamental values of freedom and on input-oriented forms of legitimacy that bring into focus new concerns with the conditions of democratic rule within an extended political space. Since the mid-1990s, when the Council's project was coming into

being, a 'normative turn' became evident in the study of Europe's political unity, opening the way for novel conceptualisations from a post-national angle and novel understandings about the social constitution of its ontology. This notion of Europe as an ordered and democratically constituted arrangement composed of diverse arenas for social and political action as well as of different sites of democratic contestation – i.e., not a hierarchical, nor an anarchical, but rather a heterarchical political space and policy environment– combines unity and diversity, transcends pre-existing (mainly territorial) boundaries –along with traditional forms of loyalty, allegiance and types of affiliation– and projects a plurinational configuration of institutionalized shared rule.

Developing common democratic 'grounds' in Europe or, alternatively, common understandings of European civic culture through citizenship education helps the community of citizens to capture the complexity, pluralism and hybrid nature of the present-day European condition, while discursive and input-oriented practices of civic inclusion encourage the conduct of Europe-wide democratic public debates. Citizenship education is, therefore, a means of bringing the constituent groups of European civil and civic society into equilibrium with one another, moving them to pursue the common good through various levels of governance. Arguably, this pluralist depiction of European order brings about a sense of being and belonging to a participative environment composed of free and equal citizens – i.e., a genuine European public process, within which people act and interact in the context of highly interrelated and distinct culturally constituted political spaces and civic arenas.

Citizenship education embodies, *inter alia,* a strong normative commitment to civic deliberation for the promotion of the common good (or the public interest) as well as to the setting up of democratic contestatory institutions founded on the notion and, crucially, praxis, of republican citizenship. This democratic ordering, in the form of an active polity, is committed to offering citizens 'undominanted' (or quality) choice (Pettit 1997). From a neo-republicanist perspective, the point has been clearly made in the relevant academic discourses that civic participation should not be taken as a democratic end-in-itself, but rather as a means of ensuring a dispensation of non-domination by others (or non-arbitrary rule). Another variation on the theme of *vita activa* takes participation as a process of constructing a kind of public discourse that chimes well with the promotion of a sense of civic solidarity as well as with the opposition to arbitrariness from any external interference. In that sense, Pettit's instrumental, non-domination republican thinking can be said to strike a delicate but

enduring balance between negative and positive forms of liberty, ensuring at the same time a deliberative mode of active democratic engagement. As citizenship education is constitutive of civic freedom itself, one could also imagine the gradual, if not incremental, formation of a *res publica composita*, where a multitude of normative commitments to core democratic values can bring about a sense of common civicness.

The Hellenic Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs, in its contribution to a comparative study published by the European Commission in May 2005 in the context of the Eurydice programme on *Citizenship Education in Schools in Europe*, refers to Article 16 of the Greek Constitution in relation to citizens' rights and obligations: 'Educating Greeks to become free and responsible citizens is one of the basic aims of education, which constitutes the main goal of the State'. The study continues: 'Greek policy aims to modernise the Greek curriculum. In particular, an educational reform aiming to make education universally available, raise all-round educational attainment and modernise education has been successfully implemented. This reform is contained in Law 1566/85, which has three components, namely "didactic" (practice-oriented), "pedagogic" and one concerned with participation'. Although no specific definition of 'responsible citizenship' exists in the Constitution, the term derives from the latter's reference to 'individual and social rights' (Articles 4-25), 'civic rights' (Articles 51 and 52), as well as 'civic obligations' (Article 120).

As for the main orientations of Greek educational policy, the paper states with reference to Law 1566/85, Article 1: 'The general aim of primary and secondary education is to contribute to full harmonious and balanced development of the emotional, psychological and physical capacities of pupils, in order for them to be given the opportunity to fully shape their personalities and be creative in their life irrespective of their origin or sex. One of the special objectives of primary and secondary education is "to help pupils become free, responsible and democratic citizens, as well as citizens capable of fighting for national independence and democracy". Other special objectives are the cultivation of creative and critical thinking and the development of a spirit of friendliness and cooperation with people from all over the world. Freedom of religion is acknowledged as an inviolable right of citizens. Article 28 defines "further education and postgraduate studies" of teachers in such a way that they can be informed and functional within the spirit of contemporary society. Article 37 refers to the establishment of "school professional guidance", which aims to counsel and train pupils so that they can comprehend their skills and

their responsibility for developing them and choosing a career, which will ensure their *active participation in the labour market*' (emphasis in the original).

On the Greek approach to citizenship education as reflected in the curriculum, the paper states: 'In primary education, citizenship education is both a cross-curricular educational topic and a separate compulsory subject in its own right. The separate subject of social and civic education is taught for one period a week in the fifth and sixth years of primary education. In lower and upper secondary education, citizenship education is offered as a separate subject in its own right and also integrated into several subjects (see below) … In the third year of lower secondary education, the separate subject *social and civic education* is taught in two periods a week. In the second year of upper secondary education, the separate subject of *introduction to the law and civic institutions* is taught in two periods a week' (emphasis in the original). The paper also states that compulsory education curricula include a cross-curricular dimension: 'This redesign is centred on an experiential approach to knowledge which, among other things, is also based on "education of the citizen" and aims to develop the social skills of students, namely the ability to acknowledge and accept differences, resolve conflicts without violence, assume civic responsibility, establish positive and creative, rather than oppressive, relations, and take an active part in decision-making and collective forms of democratic shared rule. An attempt is thus made to adopt at school level effective teaching models that focus more on research, co-operation and action. The unified cross-curricular framework of primary education has the following aims for citizenship education: intellectual development through an understanding of the different values of human society; moral development through helping pupils to critically evaluate issues of equality, justice, and individual and other rights and obligations in different societies; and cultural development through helping pupils to acquire a national and cultural identity and understand the nature and role of different groups to which they belong, and the multiple identities they possess'.

With reference to daily life at school, an issue linked with school culture and participation in community life, the paper states: 'Since the approach to knowledge (which includes the education of a citizen) has been redesigned as an experiential one by Law No. 1566/85 on education, current teaching models focusing on research, cooperation and action are supported by a simultaneous change of ethos at schools. The objectives of citizenship education are served by attempts to make schools a space for collective action and are supported by existing institutions, such as pupil

communities and partnerships. Every teacher plays a major role in creating the teaching framework of the class, which may be characterized as "teacher centred"'. Also: 'The choice of teaching methods that, through the development of dialogue, debate, identification of problems and the expression of different opinions, would lead students to take and consciously carry out decisions, depends to some extent on the personality, studies and training of teachers as much as on the context in which they work. Extra-curricular educational activities may raise the social awareness of the students, although initiatives of this kind are marginal in the Greek educational system'. The paper states examples of interdisciplinary and extra-curricular activities relating to EU citizenship, including the exchange of information with neighbouring schools that took part in European programmes, interviews with Greek members of the European Parliament, participation in student exchange programmes, etc.

An *All-European Study on Education for Democratic Citizenship Policies* published by the Council of Europe in November 2004 offers some information regarding the approach developed by Greece. Civic education modules are linked with cross-curricular activities and subject-specific themes at primary and upper secondary educational levels, with emphasis on democratic citizenship, introduction to law and civic institutions, ancient Greek literature, history of the social sciences, European civilisation and its roots, and sociology. To give an example, the module 'European Civilisation and its Roots', taught at the first grade of secondary education (upper level), examines the history and evolution of Europe and its distinct social and political formations. In particular, it looks at the development of European society, the nature of power and politics in Europe, the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, the notion of a 'Citizens' Europe' (with reference to parliamentarism and the rule of law), currents in European cultural development and the formation of the European Union.

At the second grade of secondary education (upper level), there exist a module under the title 'Introduction to Law and Political Institutions', which brings together the disciplines of law and political science, focusing on the nature of politics and the role of political science, the theory and practice of active citizenship, elements of democratic government, the legal and political system of the EU, social norms and the law, the Greek political and judicial system, and issues in international organization. With regard to the international dimension, it is important for students to develop a more profound understanding on how international society is being structured as well as on the workings and role of major international institutions, including the process

and dynamics of European integration. The module is expected to be replaced in 2008 by a new module on 'Politics and Law', including such crucial themes as the nature and organization of a democratic polity, the institution of citizenship at national and European contexts, new sets of individual and collective rights and liberties, constitutionalism and the rule of law, the role of the media in contemporary societies, and various developments in European and international affairs. Civic education in Greece is also linked with the rich tradition of its ancient history and philosophical movements. A relevant module at the secondary upper level on 'Social and Political Organisation in Ancient Greece' examines the nature and development of the city-state, the classical and Hellenistic periods, social institutions and everyday life in ancient Greek, the road to democracy and the functions of a democratic polity, and the formation of unions of city-states (sympolities) that preceded the confederal systems.

At the third grade of lower level secondary education, students engage themselves in the study of forms of citizenship, the organisation of social institutions and social groups, the understanding of culture, the process of socialisation and social accountability, the democratic process and the constitution, the notion of civil society, the nature of international society, issues in international relations and the EU. Linked with the above are the themes and concepts examined at the secondary upper level under the heading 'History of the Social Sciences', with emphasis on the relationship between science and the social sciences, leading thinkers in social and political thought, the study of social methods and social behaviour, and the contribution of the social sciences in contemporary Greece and the EU. Through these modules, among others that are currently being taught at the fifth and sixth grade of the primary educational level, it is expected that students cultivate specific educational and social skills that allow them to develop an active interest in public affairs and acquaint themselves with international institutions that are based on norms of power-sharing.

In general, civic education in Greece aims at establishing linkages between national, regional and international frameworks of co-operation, through which students are given the opportunity to develop their knowledge, discursive qualities and analytical skills on a range of issues that fall within the wider domain of civics and, by extension, in the field of education for democratic citizenship and human rights education. These educational arrangements at formal school settings also reflect the introduction of elements of flexibility in curricular organisation such as the institutionalization of flexible learning zones and innovative school practices, which

have been designed to meet specific learning choices, whilst combining a greater and more systematic use and application of information and communication technologies at school level. Learning through civic education activities is a crucial component of enabling students to become informed and responsible citizens, giving them the opportunity to develop their social skills, knowledge and self-confidence, all of which are required for the emergence of an open, fair, tolerant and democratic society.

In recent years, Southern European educational systems have experienced a trend towards decentralisation, both structural and functional in scope, combined with greater school autonomy. These parallel processes have led, albeit with varying results in different countries, towards greater participation of students, parents and representatives from the local communities in school life, which in most countries constituted a welcome departure from previous and less inclusionary school practices. The introduction and extension of participative processes in formal education are now considered an important and defining aspect of school life, in terms of tackling organizational and other difficulties related to issues of resources, funding and effective school management. Likewise, throughout the countries of Southern Europe, educational policy is being increasingly linked with additional support structures for lifelong learning, a process that already constitutes a policy priority in most European countries. In that regard, a challenge confronting the countries of Southern Europe is to adjust their policies and institutions, especially those related to the Council's project, into the development of core educational skills and civic competences, thus allowing individual students to take an active part in both national and international life. Such aims are fully in line with the tradition of the Greek educational system, which has been characterized as open and democratic, contributing to social mobility.

A Virtuous Promise

This paper has attempted to situate the present stage of transnational civic projects in Europe's democratic imagination, suggesting that they could act as a learning ground for civic empowerment through the promotion of active citizenship, dialogical public processes and institutionalized participation at all educational levels. It also argued the case for a republican understanding of civic learning, where the idea of a *res publica composita* is not just any kind of union set up 'for narrowly instrumental purposes', but rather a system of virtue-centred practices, where civic freedom comes first. This normative claim relates to the search for a 'democracy of ideas' in Pettit's (2005)

sense of the term, bringing together two different incentives of civic learning: the promotion of a participatory ethos at the national level, and of active citizenship at a level beyond the state. The Council's project is a good case in point, for it favours a deliberative public process, through which civic learning can facilitate the emergence of a shared sense of European civicness. Linked with that is the question posed by Ignatieff (2000) whether Europe can be seen as 'a community united in a common argument about the meaning, extent and scope of liberty'. As no easy answer can be said to exist, this paper has argued that civic learning through citizenship education offers the promise of a 'Republic of Europeans' with its own sense of 'demos-hood'.

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