Researching citizenship: What has been done, what is to be done?

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Researching citizenship: What has been done, what is to be done?

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Introduction

Citizenship is complex and dynamic. It is contested and controversial. This guide does not define citizenship but instead highlights some of the key issues that are relevant to its characterisation. We seek to raise questions, give examples of what has already been researched and aim to stimulate readers to undertake their own research.

The guide contains four sections:

Ian Davies, Márta Fülöp,
Elisabet Näsman and Alejandra Navarro

SECTION 1: What is 'citizenship'?

We are attracted to – but not entirely convinced by - a characterisation of citizenship as given by Heater and Oliver (1994). We give this below to establish a framework within which our questions about citizenship research can be considered.

> Individuals are citizens when they practise civic virtue and good citizenship, enjoy but do not exploit their civil and political rights, contribute to and receive social and economic benefits, do not allow any sense of national identity to justify discrimination or stereotyping of others, experiences senses of non-exclusive multiple citizenship and, by their example, teach citizenship to others (p. 6)

Mapping the fundamental features of citizenship

We draw attention to four fundamentally important issues in order to characterise citizenship and so outline the nature of - and framework for - research.

Overarching considerations

Citizenship involves a commitment to justice. This does not mean that citizenship researchers are committed to the achievement of precise substantive goals or that they adopt an undifferentiated altruism. Rather, citizenship research should be driven by the highest academic standards in which we are aware of the individual and societal implications of what we do. In this sense citizenship research is no different from that undertaken in other academic fields.

Citizenship as Status

The formal aspects of the relationship between an individual and the state are necessary and can ensure that rights are made real. But, in order to avoid unhelpful exclusive characterisations, we should not restrict our understanding of citizenship exclusively to legal status. The encouragement of social and moral responsibility that ensures that all achieve an appropriate, formal and/or informal, status is important.

Citizenship as Feeling

Identity is a key issue for citizenship. I may legally be a German citizen (or Swedish or Hungarian etc.) but do I identify with that status? Do I *feel* German? It is not only national identity that is significant: social class, gender, ethnic origin and much more are important as people consider the nature of their citizenship. This sense of identity should be considered in relation to other elements of and perspectives about citizenship.

Citizenship as Practice

Citizenship is about engagement. We should not interpret this narrowly. People can think actively as well as become involved with other individuals and with groups. At times significant impact occurs as a result of deliberate or unconsidered inactivity and so we wish to be alert to the significance of a broad understanding of participation.

What are the key elements in citizenship research?

Academic focus

Citizenship is not (yet) regarded as an academic discipline in its own right (although academic posts are increasingly advertised in 'citizenship'). This means that long-established disciplines such as History, Psychology, Sociology etc., may be used in order to bring understanding to the field. Issues about the economy, child development, racism etc., are all relevant to specific academic disciplines. Citizenship may also be explored in a cross disciplinary manner. If we wanted, for example, to research notions of loyalty then it would be useful to employ insights and perspectives from more than one academic perspective. Further, cross disciplinary research can take place within areas of study (such as education) in order to explore understanding and practice.

Geographical context

Citizenship can be explored and practised locally, regionally, nationally and globally. The meaning of these terms will shift depending on one's perspective (would 'Bavaria' and 'Europe' each be described as an example of a 'region'?) The use of the word 'global' may in an age of perceived globalisation deliberately signify an attachment to something that goes further than 'internationalism' (i.e. relations between and not across the nations) but should this be used instead of, for example, 'cosmopolitan'? The nature of the citizenship that exists in these different contexts is varied although not necessarily mutually exclusive. Consideration of these matters raises questions about the extent to which citizenship is dependent upon a polity.

Conceptual framework

Citizenship is built upon understandings of individuals and society. As such there is a need to reflect upon the extent to which political, economic, moral and other ways of understanding the world are relevant to particular research questions. These very broad conceptual fields can be broken down into more precisely formulated considerations. For example, some make a distinction between fairly broad substantive concepts (e.g. power) that could be used to characterise an issue and provide a means of analysing data; and, on the other hand, procedural concepts (e.g. evidence)

that can be used to understand what people do as they negotiate paths in society.

Traditions of citizenship

The civic republican and liberal traditions of citizenship overlap but are also possibly distinct. Simply, the former emphasises the performance of duties in public contexts, while the latter stresses the exercise of rights by private individuals. The liberal emphasises a limited role for the state as a night watchman, while the civic republican looks for some sort of Rousseau-like social contract in which the 'will' exercised by the people cannot be separated from the priorities adopted by the state. It would be rare to see these traditions translating simply into statements and actions by individuals. However, we can use the lenses of those traditions in order to understand the different perspectives of people who view citizenship very differently.

Citizenship content

Audigier (1998) has argued that: 'Since the citizen is an informed and responsible person, capable of taking part in public debate and making choices, nothing of what is human should be unfamiliar to him (sic), nothing of what is experienced in society should be foreign to democratic citizenship' (p. 13). This allows for hugely exciting work in which all matters are open to the possibility of research. Age, gender, disability, religion, social class, ethnicity etc., are all rich potential areas for citizenship research. However, we need to ensure that we keep clearly in mind the other issues raised in this guide. We need to maintain a clear focus on citizenship that prevents both an unhelpful assumption that its meaning is endlessly elastic.

SECTION 2: Researching citizenship: Five vignettes from different countries and academic disciplines, illustrating the use of different research methods

Elusive participation: school students' perspectives on obstacles and possibilities

Elisabet Näsman

The research summarised here illustrates some of the issues that are being addressed in recent discussions in Sweden about how to strengthen democracy. Is it possible to promote participation by young people at the same time as allowing for the realisation of their citizenship rights according to the UN Convention of the rights of the Child? Theories about dynamic citizenship (SOU 2000:1) suggest that much may be achieved through active participation in everyday situations. To be included, informed, asked, listened to and able to make a difference in a mutual exchange, are some of the constituent elements of this conceptualization of participation. The research discussed here was framed by two principal considerations: are options for participation available to all pupils, as indicated in the overarching aim of the Swedish compulsory school to be 'a school for everybody'? (see http://www.skolverket.se/sb/d/493); and, are pupils who are in need of various forms of support in their learning as able to participate as other pupils? This cross-disciplinary qualitative project involved school students aged 14-15 years and was conducted by two doctoral students under the supervision of a senior project leader (Bergström and Holm, 2005). It was funded by the Swedish National Agency for Education, and focussed on the perspectives of young people in order to answer the question:

Which processes create possibilities for or hinder young people's sense of participation in school?

Grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1998; Helander, 2001) informed the processes of sampling, data collection, reading of research literature and analysis. The project used general conceptualisations relevant to citizenship such as Hart's (1997) notions of children's participation, symbolic interactionism as an overarching constructionist perspective and theorizing on the social arena and the nature of individuals' actions (e.g. Goffman 1959).

An ethnographic case study approach was chosen (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1996), framed by a qualitative analysis of the relevant national and municipal guidelines that apply to the school.

Planning the field research

- A pilot study with young people explored their understanding of the meaning of participation and considered how participation could be identified.
- A survey of schools was conducted in the municipal area about the extent to which young people seemed to participate in school. One school was selected for field work on the basis of factors relating to both its formal organization (it had been granted exception from detailed regulation and was open for pupils to participate in its governance) and its culture, particularly in relation to staff-pupil relationships which involved dialogues based on mutual respect.

Entering the field

- The headteacher of the school was contacted, informed about the research project and gave her permission for the school to participate.
- Two classes were chosen where there were some young people in need of additional support for their learning.
- The teachers and pupils of the classes were informed and agreed to participate.
- Written information about the project was distributed to parents.

Field work

- Ethnographic research was undertaken with participant observation by two researchers at two different periods in order to allow for reflection between the sessions.
- The researchers followed two school classes for one to three days each week for 11 months. The researchers did not take the role of a teacher but were, of course, still adults who provided assistance when the pupils asked for it. The extent to which the researchers' observation was passive rather than participatory was dependant on how pupils responded.
- The researchers focussed on observations of situations where something that could be understood as participation was made possible or hindered. Individual pupils were at times observed in groups that had been established for specific purposes (e.g. for training in particular skills) and this meant that staff members and pupils who had not been involved in the project from the outset were at a later stage asked to take part.
- During the life of the project, as relationships developed, the researchers' observations were complemented by informal conversations with pupils about recent or ongoing events.

- Field notes were recorded about what was said and done by pupils and staff, and on the researchers' experiences.
- The field notes were written or tape recorded during the time in the field as well as shortly afterwards. They consist of short narratives, quotations, conversations, descriptions and images of relevant moments.
- Later in the research process, strategically chosen samples of pupils were asked for a longer interview, which took place according to their preference individually or in groups. The pupils were asked to reflect on participation and learning in the school in the past, present and future. A letter of information about the interview was sent to the parents of these pupils.
- This sample included 'young people in need of extra support' as well as other pupils in the same classes.
- The interviews were semi structured allowing for the pupils to formulate their experiences in their own words and raise the issues they found important. In the first field work period nine interviews were conducted with 11 young people and during the second phase 30 interviews were conducted with 41 young people.
- All interviews were taped and transcribed.
- Analysis was undertaken in accordance with the methods used in the exploratory strategies of grounded theory. Documents, field notes and interviews were analysed, intertwined with the ongoing fieldwork and with readings of secondary sources and theory, hence increasing the theoretical sensitivity of the researchers in the observations and refocusing their attention.
- One example of a change of focus during the project concerned the interest of the researchers in those young persons who were deemed to be in need of support. At the beginning of the project this had been the main target group, but gradually those students were regarded as part of the mainstream. This shift occurred for two reasons: firstly, the class as a whole emerged as an important unit of analysis and hence all individual members were judged to be of equal importance for understanding the construction of possibilities and hindrances for various groups of pupils; secondly, for ethical reasons it was decided that the central research issue of participation made it problematic to enact discriminatory practices in the research process, with the risk of characterising some pupils as deviant.
- A continuous dialogue between the two researchers contributed to their reflexivity.
- In the report quotations from the pupils were used extensively to support the conclusions. The report was

written in a manner that would be accessible to non-academics and then distributed to the school that had participated as the special case of good practice.

- In the final report (made available on the web and as hard copy) all cases and individuals were presented anonymously.

Conclusions

Opportunities and obstacles for young peoples' sense of participation became visible in the school's way of organizing time and place, in meetings held, and in the processes that affect learning. The adults' intentions to show young people respect proved to be important. Pupils that had been characterised by adults or peers as "not behaving", "not knowing" or "not being interested" had a limited sense of participation. The researchers suggested that the educational perspective on citizenship as an exercise for the future took priority over the idea of participation as a right to be enjoyed now. Young people's options for participation depended crucially on adult judgment and were not offered as a right for all. However, it was noticeable that young people were motivated by the possibilities for their increased participation in the planning process of the school and brought their unique understanding of what the construction and workings of a school day means from a pupil's perspective.

Researching children's attitudes

Alejandra Navarro

Citizenship is centrally concerned with identity and social justice. As such attempts to develop clearer understanding about children's attitudes towards others is of obvious relevance to citizenship researchers. The context – and need - for research in this field in Spain has been influenced by a sharp rise in immigration since the mid 1990s. Research has already been undertaken using what could broadly be described as social-cognitive developmental assumptions allowing for attitudes to be explained in relation to both cognitive ability and social context (Aboud, 1988). I will discuss issues arising from several, principally qualitative, studies carried out in Spain within the field of developmental psychology about ethnic intergroup attitudes among Spanish and Latin American children (Enesco et al in press). The objective of the studies that are reviewed here was to explore the developmental pattern of young people in relation to their understanding of self-identification, favouritism and rejections towards diverse ethnic groups (Whites, Blacks, Asians, and Latinos). The research samples were made up of children aged from between three-four years until eleven-twelve years. Data were collected by individual semi-structured interviews using the Piagetian clinical method in which children's attitudes and their explanations concerning those views were probed. Drawings and photographs of people (varied according to ethnicity, gender, age, and body types) were used during the interviews to assist with the generation of data. Overall, the findings about white children born in Spain demonstrated various differences in the development of ethnic awareness and early intergroup attitudes in comparison to other children (Aboud & Amato, 2001; Nesdale, 2001). These differences suggest that citizenship researchers are faced with the need to address significant issues in order to develop our understandings and practices.

1: 504 white children born in Spain aged 3 to 11 years (Enesco, Navarro, Giménez and del Olmo, 1999)

In this study independent tasks were used to assess preferences to and rejections of three groups: White, Black, and Asian peers. Spanish children aged 6-7 years when asked to consider three pictures showed the most polarized (i.e. extreme) attitudes of the 3-11 age group, in relation mainly to Black people, to in-group bias and out-group rejection. These results coincide with findings obtained elsewhere and seem to suggest that prejudice decreases, independent of social background, as children get older. However, we are unsure if that decline in prejudice is due to increasing cognitive ability or a reaction to social pressure.

2: 36 Latin American children aged between 4 and 11 years (Gómez, 2005)

A recent study with Latino children about the development of ethnic awareness found several differences in the patterns of self-identification, preferences and rejections, as compared to those found in white children born in Spain. Gómez found that before the age of 7 years, children made several mistakes in two tasks designed to explore self identification: one focussed on the identification of their membership group in pictures, and the other involved respondents drawing a 'self-portrait' using multicoloured crayons. The latter task revealed that most children aged 4-7 years chose skin colours that did not match their own colour, and half of the children aged 10-11 years produced non realistic self-portraits by using skin colours resembling the majority white Spanish group. Latino children showed a significant favouritism for the white Spanish group, and this bias reached its highest level at the age of 7-8 years. However, an independent measure of rejection revealed that the majority of children did not reject the in-group but did reject the out-groups (mainly Blacks). Gómez's findings are compatible with those obtained in other studies with ethnic minorities (see Aboud & Amato, 2001). In an attempt to explain this finding some authors (e.g. Vaughan, 1987) have suggested that identification tasks have an emotional connotation that goes beyond the simple cognitive ability to identify one's membership group. Thus, when the child has to identify herself she perhaps responds in terms of what she would like to be (perhaps with an awareness of the position of the in-group in the social hierarchy), and not how she appears to others. However, there are more complex possibilities. Enesco, Navarro, Paradela and Guerrero, 2005 suggest that although Latino children seem to be aware of the low status of their in-group and the negative perception that other people have about their group, as well as displaying a varied pattern of ethnic identification, their experience of growing up in a 'minority' group does not necessarily lead to a negative in-group orientation.

Conclusion

The above suggests that there are significant differences between the views of white children born in Spain and others. The former group identify with 'majority' groups. 'Minority' children in Spain tend to prefer members of the 'majority' group and to identify with them (before the age of 8), but simultaneously, they do not reject their in-group. Instead of in-group derogation, prejudices are directed towards other minority groups (for example, Black people) that are perceived as having relatively low social status. These children are probably developing self-ethnic assertion

strategies (Tajfel, 1981) that are employed for the purpose of assisting adjustment to a social system based on inequalities.

Citizenship researchers, who are working in a context influenced by the growth of awareness of multiple identities and a supranational European frame of identification, need to know more about these issues. The studies referred to here suggest that 5 key variables could be considered: age, gender, ethnicity, cognitive ability and social pressure. If it is possible to have a richer understanding of the ways in which these variables interact with self identification and how that influences reactions to one's own and other groups it would mean that we would greatly enhance our understanding of the actual and preferred nature of citizenship. These studies also provide suggestions for how qualitative research in this field can be conducted and help promote an awareness of alternative ways forward.

Teachers' perceptions of citizenship

Ian Davies

In order to illuminate some of the issues involved in comparative research I will refer to one study that focussed on teachers' perceptions of good citizenship and their perceptions of factors that can facilitate or hinder the preparation of good citizens (Lee and Fouts, 2005). This was led by a team from the USA and took place in five locations: USA, Australia, England, Russia and China. The researchers were faced with the challenge of ensuring that there was conceptual equivalence and valid measurement across countries that had very different traditions of citizenship education. The detail of the process by which the project methods were developed can be seen in Lee and Fouts (2005, pp. 9-17) with an account of the findings from England in Davies, Gregory and Riley (2005, pp. 131-174). Both quantitative and qualitative data were used in order to provide, through questionnaires, an overview of teachers' perceptions from a relatively large sample, as well as an opportunity to explore teachers' meanings in depth through interviews. A questionnaire was developed based on previous research studies with new questions added to fit the specific purposes of this project. An initial version of the questionnaire explored perceptions in six areas: the qualities of a good citizen; the influences on a person's citizenship; threats to a child's citizenship; support for a child's citizenship; responsibilities for developing good citizens; and, classroom activities that would be helpful in developing a child's citizenship. There were six demographic and background questions about each respondent. This original version was tested with 40 teachers to check principally for clarity of understanding and then, following modification, piloted with 201 teachers. A principal components factor analysis with varimax rotation was conducted to establish stronger construct validity with two of the six factors ('support for a child's citizenship' and 'responsibility for developing good citizenship') removed before the final version was achieved. Interviews were conducted with teachers to ask:

- when you think of the word 'citizenship' what comes to your mind? What characteristics (or words to describe) do you think of?;
- when you hear the term 'good citizen' in school what characteristics come to your mind?;
- how/are you a good citizen?;
- how/are you rewarded or reinforced in any way for being a good citizen?

The interview schedule was field tested with five teachers, and following modification, a further trial took place with 20

teachers. All questionnaire data were processed by researchers at Seattle Pacific University, USA. Interview data were analysed principally by in-country researchers. The development of the research instruments and the analyses of data were achieved interactively between the project centre and the in-country teams. In England 679 teachers completed the questionnaire and 40 teachers were interviewed in different geographical and socio-economic areas. The research findings presented in the book edited by Lee and Fouts (2005) are based on results from factor 1 of the citizenship questionnaire, (i.e. qualities of a good citizen) together with the interview data relevant to that issue.

The overarching conclusion of the study is that teachers across nations are very alike in their perceptions of citizenship with all being concerned about the quality of their students' attitudes and behaviours rather than their knowledge as far as citizenship quality is concerned. In the England part of the study the characteristics that reveal teachers' perceptions of good citizenship were discussed under three headings: knowledge characteristics (knowledge of government, current events, world community, ability to question ideas); social concern characteristics (the welfare of others, moral and ethical behaviour and tolerance of diversity within society); and, conservative or subject obedient role characteristics (acceptance of authority of those in a supervisory role, patriotism, acceptance of assigned responsibilities). About 80% of the teachers in England rated social concern characteristics more important than the other factors. Conservative characteristics were rejected by 69 teachers (about 11% of the questionnaire sample, although this result may have been distorted by the extremely negative attitude revealed by the questionnaire data towards 'patriotism'). Citizenship is seen as an active concern for the welfare of others and this concern is given primarily local expression through recognition of the obligations and responsibilities we owe others.

It is clear that models of citizenship that have been developed by academics and policy makers are not necessarily consistent with the data from teachers. Post national conceptions of citizenship and historically informed characterisations, or knowledge driven citizenship curricula (either in the form of an emphasis on content or concepts) are not suggested by the England teachers' data. However, the research team do not wish to entrench as privileged the deliberations of citizenship theorists. The team attach a good deal of value to teachers' opinions. But a variety of initiatives may be necessary. The nature and effectiveness of existing programmes of teacher education and processes of communication between teachers and others are suggested as research areas.

National stereotypes and citizenship

Márta Fülöp

The concept of citizenship implies that an individual is a member of a political community (usually a state). Citizenship and the sense of belonging to a nation are, generally, categories that are perceived to overlap. As such citizenship is strongly related to a range of concepts including, for example, national identity and national stereotypes. The way people see their own group (auto-stereotypes or stereotypes related to the in-group) and other groups (mainly negative stereotypes of out-groups) are crucial aspects of interpersonal, inter-group and international relationships. Ethnocentrism (i.e. a positive discrimination of one's own group based on an auto-stereotype or prejudiced appreciation at the expense of others based on stereotypes of the out-group), may affect perceptions of 'minorities', the various nationalities within the national society and foreign nations.

The understanding of the concept of citizenship has changed dramatically during and following the political changes in the former socialist countries. These countries were for about forty years members of the Soviet block and their identity was formally defined as part of that larger unit with a distinct political and economic system. As stereotypes are a type of knowledge produced and maintained by society their nature is affected by changing historical contexts (Hunyady, 1998). The fact that these countries were part of the socialist block created certain autostereotypes and also certain stereotypes about other nations within and outside the socialist countries' circle. New political relationships would mean that citizens would perhaps change their views about national identity as well as their auto and hetero-stereotypes.

The research described here is an illustration of an aspect of the social psychological investigations carried out by György Hunyady, a Hungarian professor of social psychology. Data were gathered from several large samples (including representative samples), using partly qualitative but mainly quantitative – survey - methods with participants of different ages, educational background and social status. The unique nature of this research is that the same research questions have been followed through three decades, providing the opportunity to grasp how profound political and economic change in a society influences attitudes towards national identity and attitudes towards other nations.

The main research questions were:

- How did the conception of nation and attitudes towards it change? What kind of definitions of 'nation' do pupils of different social groups give, in the 1960s, under the influence of Marxist education?

- How do respondents conceive the concept of patriotism? How do their social place and the historical time of their responses influence their opinion?
- How are different countries evaluated and what do respondents value? How do Hungarians perceive their own country in relation to other nations?
- What is the nature of the national auto-stereotype? Is there agreement about this across different age and social groups?

Here we refer to those studies that were carried out between 1965 and 1991.

- In 1965, eight hundred 10-14 and 16-18-year-old secondary school students were asked (among other things) about their understandings of 'nation', 'social class' etc.
- In 1973 the analysis of the concept of the nation was extended to 564 people in a nationally representative sample (in relation to age, sex and location).
- In 1975 the 516 participants were young and older intellectuals and young and older workers
- In 1981 520 students, aged 14-18 participated in the study.
- Ten years later, - after the political changes - in 1991 the study was repeated with a similar student sample.

Results

I refer here only to some interesting results that demonstrate how and to what extent the content of belonging to a nation is influenced by the political system of a society.

One unexpected result of the first (1965) study was that the qualitative analysis of the data that related to the concept of nation revealed a gradual unfolding of a layperson's theory of nation rather than something occurring as a result of purposeful pedagogical development or ideological indoctrination. One of the most important conclusions was that the much-debated Marxist concept of nation had not really modified the subject matter of instruction and that even history teaching did not have a deep influence on the apparently spontaneous development of the definition of the nation. The messages about nation that were handed down in history textbooks had little effect on the students' concepts of nation.

In 1973 different criteria of belonging to the nation were identified by the qualitative analysis according to age group, social status and living place. The oldest tended to stress the formal aspects of national status (being born in the country,

being a citizen) whereas younger people emphasized commitment (those who work for the country, are ready to defend it and be loyal). It was generally observed that the more educated and the more urbanized respondents who were open to ideas from beyond the nation were more likely than others to stress personal attitude as a key condition for a sense of belonging to a nation.

In 1973 only 73% of the respondents considered national 'minorities' living in Hungary as being part of the nation. At the same time 45% of the respondents considered those Hungarians who were living in neighbouring countries as part of the Hungarian nation. It is also interesting to note that 24% of the respondents considered those who had illegally left the country (and so who were regarded officially by the government as 'defectors') as being properly part of the Hungarian nation.

In 1975 60% of university students and 82% of adult workers agreed with the statement: "One cannot be a good patriot if one does not believe in socialism unconditionally." In 1981 only 52% answered in this way. This shows a tremendous change in the responses to the political system well before institutional political change had occurred.

From 1973 until the political changes the most highly evaluated country by Hungarians was the Soviet Union but this evaluation dropped dramatically in later surveys. By 1991 Russia had the third lowest mean after Romania and Hungary. Romania was consistently regarded less positively than all other nations and this position has not been affected by the political changes. The evaluation of Hungary itself changed significantly. While it was the second most favourably evaluated country (behind the Soviet Union) in 1973 it was accorded the second lowest mean in 1991. The evaluation of the United States has gradually become more positive since 1973 and was always higher than England or France. Following the political changes the US would be regarded more positively than all other nations.

When this research began the political changes in Central-Eastern Europe could not have been predicted. Because this longitudinal research was undertaken using large and extensive samples that represented Hungarian society the changes that have been indicated can be extrapolated in a scientific way to reflect attitudinal shifts related to societal change.

History Textbook Research and Revision

Luigi Cajani

The connections between the study of History and the study and practice of citizenship are strong. Since the mid 19th century European nation states and then others across the world have used history education to promote national identities based on myths and heroes.

Explicit consideration of the connection between History textbook revision and citizenship developed initially at the beginning of the 20th century, principally in pacifist organisations. These groups were concerned to overcome a nationalistic approach within history teaching, which prevailed within and beyond Europe, and which was considered to be a dangerous warmongering tool. International organizations such as the Carnegie Foundation were particularly active as well as national associations which revised History books in a number of countries including, for example, work completed within the Netherlands in 1910.

This pacifist campaign received a fresh impetus after World War I. The work of the Comité International pour la Coopération Intellectuelle, operating on behalf of the Society of Nations (Renoliet, 1999), is an example of an initiative taken by an international organization; among the attempts made by national teachers' associations, there was that of the Syndicat National des Instituteurs, that in 1926 denied its approval to history textbooks containing chauvinistic and anti-German expressions. Similar initiatives also occurred in Germany (Schröder, 1961). The tensions among European states prevented the complete success of these actions but after World War II, in a new climate of cooperation among European states, these initiatives could be developed more fully.

The Council of Europe plays a major role in History textbook revision. It organized a series of six conferences in the period between 1953 and 1958. There were two main goals: to remove from history textbooks unacceptable biases and unjustifiable attitudes towards other European states; and, to point out the key features of a common European historical framework that ought to replace the various and conflicting national perspectives. Other conferences followed focusing on the relations between Europe and the rest of the world, and finally, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, a new round of meetings has been devoted to the states of Eastern Europe, most of which were preparing to join the European Union. As a result of these conferences a series of precise recommendations for the revision of history textbooks has been published by the Council of Europe/Council for Cultural Co-Operation (see *Against Bias and Prejudice - The Council of*

Europe's Work on History Teaching and History Textbooks, Strasbourg, 1995; download at http://lms.coe.int/uhtbin/cgisirsi/x/0/57/49?user_id=arch_fr&password=6066, using the following search criteria: CC-ED/HIST(95)3REV).

The outcome of this work has been a shift from a nationalistic to a Euro-centric approach (Pingel 1995). On the political level this achievement corresponds to the new political reality of a united Europe. But on historiographic and cultural levels an ethnocentric approach to history remains: Eurocentrism is the new ethnocentrism. Textbooks include material about the rest of the world only when Europe is involved. However, there is a discussion developing about the necessity of a world history beyond ethnocentric approaches connected with the idea of a cosmopolitan citizenship (Cajani 2003). And the very use of history as a tool for constructing pretended collective identities and political loyalty is considered a misuse of history. On the contrary, history must be simply a cognitive tool for understanding the past and present social reality, without any political bias.

The Georg-Eckert-Institut für internationale Schulbuch-forschung in Braunschweig (Germany) is the most important research institute in this field. It was founded after World Word II by the German Professor Georg Eckert as *Internationales Institut für Schulbuchverbesserung* it was in 1975, one year after his death, named after him. From the beginning it developed a set of bilateral conferences, often in cooperation with Unesco and the Council of Europe, with involvement mainly by European historians but also including others such as those from Japan. This Institute produces many publications and a journal. At present it is very active with a consulting role in difficult situations (e.g. in Bosnia, Palestine and Israel) where a revision of history textbooks is an important issue for reconciliation. The Institute's website (www.gei.de), in German and in English, offers interesting and valuable material.

Another recent event shows the sensitivity of issues about history teaching at the international level and how the politics of reconciliation can be developed through textbook revision. In 2005 the publication in Japan of a history textbook for secondary school that minimizes the crimes perpetrated in China and Korea by Japanese troops during World War II provoked riots in the Peoples' Republic of China and in South Korea (see http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/from_our_own_correspondent/4449005.stm). But at the same time a group of scholars from those three countries published a history textbook aiming to present a shared vision of the common history during the 19th and 20th centuries (see http://times.hankooki.com/lpage/nation/200505/kt2005052622492411990.htm and http://www.gwu.edu/~memory/issues/textbooks/jointeastasia.html).

The Georg-Eckert-Institut and the UNESCO published a handbook on textbook research and revision, which explains the educational aims and the methodology of this activity: (see Falk Pingel, Guidebook on Textbook Research and Textbook Revision, Hannover, Hahn, 1999, which can be downloaded at http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001171/117188E.pdf).

SECTION 3 Questions to consider when evaluating research and when developing future research

When reading or reviewing research about citizenship ask yourself a number of questions to help sharpen your reflections (see Kerr http://www.citized.info/index.php?l_menu =induction_theme&theme=3#274):

- What are the principal themes of the research?
- What specific aspects are being addressed - teachers, teaching, schools, students or citizenship education programmes, or a mixture of these?
- What is the context for the research and what topics is it addressing?
- How is the research addressing these aspects, contexts and topics?
- How well do the research findings provide answers to the research issues originally addressed?
- What audiences are the research findings addressed to – other researchers, teachers, school leaders, young people, the public or a mixture of these?

It would be unrealistic to suggest that all of these questions could be answered for every piece of research that you read or for every project that you do. But it is important to aim high: to establish significant research questions, to follow rigorous and ethically sound procedures and to be able to develop better understanding that positively influences practice.

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