WHAT KIND OF CITIZEN? WHAT KIND OF DEMOCRACY? CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION AND THE SCOTTISH CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE

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ABSTRACT

The Scottish *Curriculum for Excellence* lists 'responsible citizenship' as one of the four capacities which it envisages that all children and young people should develop. By understanding citizenship as a capacity and by seeing it as a concern that should permeate the whole curriculum, the Scottish approach to education for citizenship is distinctly different from approaches developed in many other countries around the world. This paper provides a critical analysis of key-documents in the development of the Scottish approach over the past decade. It argues that the Scottish approach is characterised by a focus on individuals and their capacities, by a broad conception of the domain of citizenship, and by an emphasis on activity and community. The analysis not only reveals something about the particular choices implied in the Scottish approach but also hints at some of the more problematic sides of education for citizenship in Scotland, most notably the risk that citizenship focuses too much on the social and too little on the political dimensions of what it means to be a citizen in a pluralist democracy.

INTRODUCTION

The Scottish *Curriculum for Excellence* lists 'responsible citizenship' as one of the four capacities which it envisages that all children and young people should develop. 'Our aspiration,' as it was put in the foreword by the then Minister and Deputy Minister for Education and Young People to the 2004 *Curriculum for Excellence* document, 'is to enable all children to develop their capacities as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to society' (Scottish Executive 2004: 3). *Curriculum for Excellence* provides the overall framework for this ambition by enlisting the values, outlining the purposes and articulating the principles for curriculum design that should inform all education from the age of 3 to the age of 18. In the document responsible citizens are depicted as individuals who have 'respect for others' and a 'commitment to participate responsibly in political, economic, social and cultural life' and who are able to 'develop knowledge and understanding of the world and Scotland's place in it; understand different beliefs and cultures; make informed choices and decisions; evaluate environmental, scientific and technological issues; [and] develop informed, ethical views of complex issues' (ibid: 12).

Scotland has not been unique in its attempt to put citizenship on the educational agenda. Compared to other countries around the world, including the other UK nations such as England where citizenship was incorporated in the National Curriculum from its inception in 1988 onwards and became a statutory subject for secondary schools in 2002 (see Biesta & Lawy 2006), Scotland can actually be said to be rather late (cf. Andrews & Mycock 2007). There are, however, aspects of the Scottish trajectory and approach which are rather distinctive – particularly the fact that Scotland has not chosen to make citizenship education into a separate curriculum subject and the fact that *Curriculum for Excellence* depicts citizenship as a 'capacity' – and these warrant further exploration. This can not only help us to better understand the specific character of the approach taken within Scottish education for citizenship but can also shed light on the strengths and weaknesses of this particular approach.

The main purpose of this paper, therefore, is to analyse and characterise the conception of citizenship education articulated in the context of *Curriculum for Excellence* and related policy documents, and to locate this conception within the wider literature on education, citizenship, and democracy. This will make it possible to investigate the assumptions informing the Scottish approach and to highlight the choices made. The view on citizenship pursued in the context of *Curriculum for Excellence* is, after all, not neutral or inevitable – it is not something that 'just is' (Ross & Munn 2008: 270) – but rather represents a particular ideological position within the available spectrum of conceptions of democratic citizenship and citizenship education.

I confine myself in this paper to a discussion of documents that have framed the development of education for citizenship in Scotland. Given the specific nature of the Scottish approach it is, of course, important to complement analyses as the one conducted in this paper with an exploration of curriculum documents, educational practices and student experiences (see, e.g., Ross et al. 2007; Ross & Munn 2008; Akhtar 2008). The ambition of this paper is to contribute to the further development of a framework for such analyses.

EDUCATION FOR CITIZENSHIP IN SCOTLAND

Although there has always been attention to the role of education in the development of citizenship – the Modern Studies curriculum from 1962, for example, encompassed current affairs and the development of political literacy (see Andrews & Mycock 2007: 74) – the field received a new impetus as a result of the establishment of the Scottish Parliament in 1999. Early on the Scottish Executive announced five National Priorities for schools in Scotland. Priority number 4 focused on values and citizenship and 'echoed developments in England' but 'with a distinctively Scottish interpretation, not least the emphasis on *education for citizenship*, rather than *citizenship education*' (Blee & McClosky 2003: 3; see also Mannion 2003 on the distinction between education *for* and education as citizenship).[1] In 1999 the Scottish Executive and the Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum (now: Learning and Teaching Scotland) set up a working group to focus on education for citizenship. The group produced a discussion and consultation paper in 2000 (LTS 2000) and a more detailed paper 'for discussion and development' in 2002 (LTS 2002). The then Minister for Education and Young People endorsed the latter paper 'as the basis for a national framework for education for citizenship from 3 to 18' (ibid: 2) and commended it 'for adoption and use in ways appropriate to local needs and circumstances' (ibid). In 2003 HM Inspectorate for Education published a follow-up document intended to assist schools in evaluating the quality and effectiveness of their provision for education for citizenship (HMIE 2003). In 2004 the Scottish Executive published *A Curriculum for Excellence* (Scottish Executive 2004) which, as mentioned, presented the capacity for responsible citizenship as one of the four purposes of the curriculum from 3-18 (Scottish Executive 2004: 12). In 2006 HM Inspectorate for Education published a 'portrait' of current practice in education for citizenship in Scottish schools and pre-school centres (HMIE 2006a), followed by a similar report on provision in Scotland's colleges (HMIE 2006b).

I consider Learning and Teaching Scotland's 2002 paper *Education for Citizenship in Scotland: A paper for discussion and development* the most central publication of this list, not only because it is the most detailed in its account of what citizenship is and how education can contribute to the development of the capacity for citizenship, but also because it became the official framework for further developments in the field, and clearly influenced the positioning of citizenship within *Curriculum for Excellence*. The contributions of HMIE are, however, also important, most notably because of the fact that education for citizenship in Scotland is driven by rather broad outcomes and not by specified input (such as in

citizenship education in England). As a result the Inspectorate is likely to have a much stronger influence on educational practice as it needs to judge the quality of many different operationalisations of the outcomes, than in those cases where its main task consists of checking the implementation of a pre-specified curriculum. This, in turn, highlights the importance of the particular interpretation of HMIE of the framing documents. The 2004 *Curriculum for Excellence* document occupies a middle position in all this. It is less detailed on citizenship than the 2002 *Education for Citizenship* paper because it had to cover all purposes and outcomes of education. Its specific interpretation of earlier documents is, nonetheless, significant because of its role as a framework for Scottish education from 3 to 18. What, then, is the particular view on citizenship and education for citizenship in the 2002 *Education for Citizenship* document, and how has this been taken up and further developed in Curriculum for Excellence and HMIE reports and activities?

The foreword to the *Education for Citizenship* document summarises the central idea of the paper as 'that young people should be enabled to develop capability for thoughtful and responsible participation in political, economic, social and cultural life' (LTS 2002: 3). This is said to depend on development of four aspects: 'knowledge and understanding, skills and competence, values and dispositions and creativity and enterprise' (ibid). This, in turn, is related to two 'core themes.' The first is the idea that 'young people learn most about citizenship by being active citizens' (ibid). This requires that schools should model the kind of society 'in which active citizenship is encouraged 'by providing all young people with opportunities to take responsibility and exercise choice' (ibid). The second is that the development of capability for citizenship 'should be fostered in ways that motivate young people to be active and responsible members of their communities – local, national and global' (ibid).

This already reveals in a nutshell what I see as the four defining characteristics of the Scottish approach to education for citizenship. The first is that there is a strong *individualistic tendency* in the approach, exemplified in the fact that citizenship is depicted as a capacity or capability, based upon a particular set of knowledge, skills and dispositions and understood in terms of individual responsibility and choice. The second is that the approach is based on a ***broad conception of the domain of citizenship*** which encompasses political, economic, social and cultural life. The third is the emphasis on a*ctivity*, both with regard to the exercise of citizenship as active citizenship and with regard to the ways in which citizenship can be learned, viz., through engagement in citizenship activity. The fourth is a strong emphasis on the (idea of) ***community*** as the relevant environment or setting for the exercise and development of citizenship. I will discuss the first two characteristics in some detail and will then make more brief comments about the other two.

Individualism

The individualistic take on citizenship and citizenship education is clearly exemplified in the 2002 *Education for Citizenship* document. It opens by saying that '(s)chools and other educational establishments have a central part to play in educating young people for life as active and responsible members of their communities' (LTS 2002: 6), thus reiterating the idea that citizenship resides first and foremost in a personal responsibility. The document depicts citizenship responsibility as the corollary of citizenship rights. Citizenship involves 'enjoying rights and exercising responsibilities' and these 'are reciprocal in many respects' (ibid: 8). The document emphasises that young people should be regarded 'as citizens of today rather than citizens in waiting' (cf. Biesta & Lawy 2006), an idea which is linked to the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* which states that children 'are born with rights' (ibid). The individualistic tendency is also clearly

exemplified in the overall goal of citizenship education which 'should aim to develop capability for thoughtful and responsible participation in political, economic, social and cultural life,' a capability which is considered to be rooted in '*knowledge and understanding*, in a range of *generic skills and competences*, including 'core skills', and in a variety of *personal qualities and dispositions*' (ibid: 11; emphasis in original). The document seems to hint at a distinction between necessary and sufficient conditions for citizenship, arguing, for example, that 'being a capable citizen' is not just about possessing knowledge and skills but also about 'being able and willing to use knowledge and skills to make decisions and, where appropriate, take action' (ibid: 11). Similarly, 'effective citizenship' is not just about having the capacity and dispositions to be active, but it is also about 'being able to take action and make things happen' (ibid). Capability for citizenship is therefore said to depend on a number of literacies: social, economic and cultural and also political (see ibid). In doing so it pursues a common way of thinking about the possibilities of education for citizenship, viz., one in which it is argued that education can work on (some of) the necessary conditions for citizenship, but, on its own, will never be sufficient for the development of effective and involved citizenship. This is why 'the contributions of formal education need to be seen alongside, and in interaction with, other influences' from, for example, 'parents, carers and the media and opportunities for community-based learning' (ibid: 9-10).

The 2002 *Education for Citizenship* document analyses the capability for citizenship in terms of four related outcomes which are all seen as aspects or attributes of individuals.

(1) *Knowledge and understanding* is concerned with 'the need to base opinions, views and decisions on relevant knowledge and on a critical evaluation and balanced interpretation of evidence' (ibid: 12). Knowledgeable citizens are aware 'of the complexities of the economic, ethical and social issues and dilemmas that confront people' and 'have some knowledge of political, social, economic and cultural ideas and phenomena' (ibid).

(2) Education for citizenship involves developing a range of s*kills and competencies* 'that need to be developed along with various personal qualities such as self-esteem, confidence, initiative, determination and emotional maturity in order to be responsible and effective participants in a community' (ibid: 13). Being skilled and competent means 'feeling empowered [and] knowing and valuing one's potential for positive action' (ibid).

(3) *Values and dispositions*: Education for citizenship also involves 'developing the ability to recognise and respond thoughtfully to values and value judgements that are part and parcel of political, economic, social and cultural life' (ibid). Also, education can help to foster 'a number of personal qualities and dispositions rooted in values of respect and care for self, for others and for the environment' and promoting 'a sense of social responsibility' (ibid).

(4) Being an 'effective citizen' is also supposed to entail the capacity for 'thinking and acting creatively in political, economic, social and cultural life' and 'being enterprising in one's approach to participation in society' (ibid: 14).

Finally, the document mentions the need for the development of 'the integrative ability that is at the heart of effective and purposeful citizenship' (ibid: 14) so as to make sure that the four outcomes are not developed in isolation.

While all this points towards a strong emphasis on individuals and on citizenship as an individual responsibility and capacity – something which is further exemplified by the strong emphasis on the development of values such as 'respect and care for people and a sense of social and environmental responsibility' (ibid: 11) – there are some other aspects of the 2002 *Education for Citizenship* document which point in a different direction. Most significant in this regard is a passage in which it is acknowledged that '(w)hilst all individuals share the rights and responsibilities

of citizenship, regardless of status, knowledge or skill, it is clear that citizenship may be exercised with different degrees of effectiveness' (ibid: 9). This variety is attributed both to personal and to social circumstances. Here, the document refers, for example, to homelessness as a factor which may impede (young) people from exercising their citizenship rights, just as 'poverty and other forms of disadvantage' may impact on the capacity for effective citizenship. The document therefore concludes that it is in the interest both of individuals and of society as a whole 'that rights and responsibilities of citizenship are well understood, that young people develop the capability needed to function effectively as citizens in modern society' and 'that structures are provided to enable them to do so' (ibid; my emphasis). Within the 2002 *Education for Citizenship* document this is, however, one of the few places where the possibility of a structural dimension of citizenship – and by implication a responsibility for citizenship that does not lie with the individual but rather with the state – is being considered.[2] The general thrust of the document, however, is on the individual and his or her actions and responsibilities.

This line of thinking is continued in the *Curriculum for Excellence* document where 'responsible citizenship' figures as one of the four capacities which the curriculum from 3-18 should enable all children and young people to develop (Scottish Executive 2004: 12). *Curriculum for Excellence* is explicit and upfront about the values which should inform education. It reminds its readers of the fact that the words 'wisdom, justice, compassion and integrity... are inscribed on the mace of the Scottish Parliament' and that these 'have helped to define values for our democracy' (ibid: 11). Hence it is seen as 'one of the prime purposes of education to make our young people aware of the values on which Scottish society is based and so help them to establish their own stances on matters of social justice and personal and collective responsibility' (ibid). Therefore, young people 'need to learn about and develop these values' (ibid). To achieve this, the curriculum 'should emphasise the rights and responsibilities of individuals and nations'; 'should help young people to understand diverse cultures and beliefs and support them in developing concern, tolerance, care and respect for themselves and others'; 'must promote a commitment to considered judgement and ethical action' and 'should give young people the confidence, attributes and capabilities to make valuable contributions to society' (ibid). Although the *Curriculum for Excellence* document acknowledges what we might call the situated character of citizenship, its depiction as value-based, its articulation in terms of responsibility, respect and commitment to responsible participation, plus the fact that it is embedded in capacity-based conception of education all highlight the strong individualistic tendency in the conception of citizenship and citizenship education.

One of the most interesting aspects of the 2006 HMIE publication *Education for Citizenship* (HMIE 2006a) is that it combines ideas from the 2002 *Education for Citizenship* discussion and consultation paper with the *Curriculum for Excellence* framework. The result is a view of citizenship and citizenship education which is (even) more strongly individualistic than was the case in the two documents upon which it is based. This is first of all because the HMIE document argues that the other three capacities of the *Curriculum for Excellence* framework – confident individuals, effective contributors and successful learners – are a precondition, or at least an important part of, the development of the capacity for responsible citizenship (see HMIE 2006a: 1). Secondly, it is because the HMIE document gives a prominent position to the development of citizenship *skills* which, by their very nature, are 'tied' to the individual – an idea which becomes even more central in the HMIE paper on *Citizenship in Scotland's Colleges* (HMIE 2006b). Thirdly, the HMIE document presents education for citizenship as a form of values education (see HMIE 2006a: 3), and in this context emphasises the importance of the development of personal values which, in the document, encompass political,

social, environmental and spiritual values (see ibid). Finally, the document emphasises that education for citizenship 'must enable learners to become critical and independent thinkers' (ibid), something which it also links to the development of 'life skills' (ibid). The framing of the approach presented in this document is therefore strongly focused on individuals and their attributes, skills and values. This is not to suggest that the document only pays attention to these aspects of citizenship. In the 'portraits' and 'examples of effective practice' there is also discussion of such things as the involvement and participation of children and young people in decision making, both with regard to their learning and in the context of pupils' councils, the importance of the school ethos, engagement with community and voluntary organisations, and attention for global issues. There is also a strong emphasis on environmental issues and on the Eco-Schools scheme as providing important opportunities for citizenship learning.

The domain of citizenship

Whereas the conception of citizenship as a capacity based upon responsible action of individuals is clearly individualistic, and whereas the emphasis of the educational efforts on the development of knowledge, skills and dispositions has a strong focus on individuals and their traits and attributes as well, this is mitigated within the Scottish approach by a strong emphasis on the need for experiential learning within the domain of citizenship. All documents agree that the best way to learn citizenship is, as it is put in the 2002 *Education for Citizenship* document, 'through experience and interaction with others' (LTS 2002: 10). 'In short, learning about citizenship is best achieved by being an active citizen.' (ibid) This idea is one of the main reasons why the approach proposed in the document 'does not involve the creation of a new subject called 'citizenship education'' (ibid: 16). Instead, the document takes the view 'that each young person's entitlement to education for citizenship can be secured through combinations of learning experiences set in the daily life of the school, discrete areas of the curriculum, cross-curricular experiences and activities involving links with the local community' (ibid). The ethos of education for citizenship is therefore explicitly 'active' and 'participatory' and based on opportunities for 'active engagement' (ibid). This view, which is further supported by the idea that young people should be regarded 'as citizens of today rather than citizens in waiting' (ibid: 8), raises a crucial question, which is about the kind of communities and activities considered to be relevant for citizenship learning. What, in other words, is considered to be the domain for citizenship and, hence, for education for citizenship and citizenship learning.[3]

The first thing to note is that most documents denote this domain in broad terms. In the 2002 *Education for Citizenship* document the overall purpose of education for citizenship is defined as 'thoughtful and responsible participation in political, economic, social and cultural life' (LTS 2002: 11; see also p. 3, p. 5). A similar phrase is used in *Curriculum for Excellence* where responsible citizens are individuals with a commitment 'to participate responsibly in political, economic, social and cultural life' (Scottish Executive 2004: 12). This is echoed in the HMIE document (HMIE 2006a) where the purpose of education for citizenship is described as 'to prepare young people for political, social, economic, cultural and educational participation in society' (HMIE 2006a: 2). Whereas several of the documents include questions about the environment in their conception of the domain of citizenship, the HMIE document is the only document discussed in this paper which makes mention of spiritual values alongside political, social and environmental values as the set of values that education for citizenship should seek to promote (see ibid: 3).[4]

The broad conception of the citizenship domain represents a clear choice on behalf of the authors of the 2002 *Education for Citizenship* document. The document

starts from the assumption that everyone belongs to various types of community, 'both communities of place, from local to global, and communities of interest, rooted in common concern or purpose' (LTS 2002: 8). Against this background citizenship is said to involve 'enjoying rights and responsibilities in these various types of community' (ibid). The document then adds that this way of seeing citizenship 'encompasses the specific idea of political participation by members of a democratic state' but it also includes 'the more general notion that citizenship embraces a range of participatory activities, not all overtly political, that affect the welfare of communities' (ibid). Examples of the latter type of citizenship include 'voluntary work, personal engagement in local concerns such as neighbourhood watch schemes or parent-teacher associations, or general engagement in civic society' (ibid).

What is important to acknowledge about this articulation of the domain of citizenship is that citizenship *encompasses* participation in political processes but is not confined to it. Thus, the Scottish approach is based on what we might call a social rather than an exclusively political conception of citizenship, one which understands citizenship in terms of membership of and concern for the many communities that make up people's lives. This includes the more narrowly political domain of citizenship, but extends to civil society and potentially includes any community. This is why 'active and responsible citizenship' is said to have to do with 'individuals having a sense of belonging to, and functioning in, communities' (ibid: 9). The question this raises is what the role of the political dimension in the Scottish conception of citizenship actual is. This not only has to do with the extent to which citizenship is related to questions about the (democratic) quality of collective decision making, but also concerns questions about the relationships between citizens, the relationships between citizens and the state, and the role of the state more generally in relation to its citizens. It is at this point that the documents begin to diverge.

The 2002 *Education for Citizenship* document is the most explicit about the political dimensions of and rationale for education for citizenship. It explicitly links the need for education for citizenship to the 'advent of the Scottish Parliament' which has encouraged a 'fresh focus' on the importance of people living in Scotland 'being able to understand and participate in democratic processes' (ibid: 6). Here citizenship is connected to the functioning of a democratic society and education for citizenship is brought in connection with concerns about 'disaffection and disengagement from society' (ibid). It is therefore concluded that education 'has a key role to play in fostering a modern democratic society, whose members have a clear sense of identity and belonging, feel empowered to participate effectively in their communities and recognise their roles and responsibilities as global citizens' (ibid: 7). The need for education for citizenship is also linked to the development of 'a healthy and vibrant culture of democratic participation' (ibid: 9) and within this context the document emphasises the need for understanding 'that perceptions of rights and responsibilities by individuals in different social groups are sometimes in conflict' (ibid: 8), so that education for citizenship must help young people 'develop strategies for dealing effectively with controversy' (ibid: 9). This is explicitly linked to democratic skills and dispositions such as 'negotiation, compromise, awareness of the impact of conflict on the overall wellbeing of the community and the environment, and development of well-informed respect for differences between people' (ibid).

Awareness of the political dimensions of citizenship is also clear in the description of the 'knowledge and understanding' dimension of education for citizenship as this includes knowledge and understanding of 'the rights and responsibilities underpinning democratic societies; opportunities for individuals and voluntary groups to bring about social and environmental change, and the

values on which such endeavours are based; (...) the causes of conflict and possible approaches to resolving it, recognising that controversy is normal in society and sometimes has beneficial effects' (ibid: 12). The 'values and dispositions' outcome makes mention of a disposition to 'develop informed and reasoned opinions about political, economic, social and environmental issues' and a disposition to 'understand and value social justice, recognising that what counts as social justice is itself contentious' (ibid: 14). When the document begins to address 'effective education for citizenship in practice' (ibid: 16-31) the emphasis on the more political dimensions of citizenship begins to be replaced by a conception of citizenship as having to do with inclusive and participatory ways of social interaction in a range of communities, but not necessarily or explicitly in the context of political and democratic practices and processes. Here, citizenship begins to veer towards active involvement in environmental projects and community service – a form of 'good deeds' citizenship – where the political dimension and purpose seems to have become largely absent. The 2002 *Education for Citizenship* document moves from a more political to a more social conception of citizenship, and although it is clear about its choice for a more encompassing conception of citizenship which includes the political but extends to the social, it is far less clear about its rationale for *why* community involvement, doing good deeds and, in a sense, being an obedient and contributing citizen, constitutes citizenship – or to be more precise: constitutes good and desirable citizenship.

Although the *A Curriculum for Excellence* document is shorter and far more general than the Education for Citizenship paper, and although, as I have shown above, it does locate questions about citizenship within a wider, political context, its articulation of the abilities involved in responsible citizenship lacks an explicit political and democratic dimension and is predominantly at the social end of the spectrum.[5] This is even more so the case in the HMIE *Education for Citizenship* document (HMIE 2006a). Although some reference to democratic processes, the Scottish Youth Parliament and issues 'such as social justice and human rights' is made, citizenship is depicted predominantly in relation to society at large, with a strong emphasis on the involvement of pupils in decision making at school level and, to a lesser extent, the wider community. This reveals that from the perspective of HMIE the school is seen as the most relevant and prominent citizenship domain and the most important citizenship 'modus' is that of active involvement and participation. What is mostly lacking is a connection of citizenship with the political domain, both in terms of the 'scope' of citizenship and in terms of the way in which relevant learning processes are understood and depicted. The HMIE document thus represents a strong emphasis on the social dimensions of citizenship and is therefore even more strongly located at the social end of the citizenship spectrum.

Active citizenship

Although the social dimension of citizenship and an emphasis on participation and active involvement are not unimportant for the development of citizenship knowledge and dispositions, and although an emphasis on the social dimensions of citizenship is definitely important for the preservation and maintenance of civil society, an almost exclusive emphasis on these aspects runs the danger that the political dimensions of citizenship, including an awareness of the limitations of personal responsibility for effective political action and change, remain invisible and become unattainable for children and young people. There is the danger, in other words, that citizenship becomes de-politicised and that, as a result, students are not sufficiently empowered to take effective political action in a way that goes beyond their immediate concerns and responsibilities. There is a similar danger with regard to the third aspect of the Scottish approach: the strong emphasis on

activity and active citizenship. On the one hand, the idea of active citizenship is important and significant, both with regard to understanding what citizenship is and entails and with regard to citizenship learning. As I have argued elsewhere in more detail (see Biesta & Lawy 2006; Biesta 2005; Biesta in press[a]) the most significant citizenship learning that takes place in the lives of young people is the learning that follows from their actual experiences and their actual 'condition' of citizenship. These experiences, which are part of the lives they lead inside and outside of the school, can be said to form the real citizenship curriculum for young people, which shows the crucial importance of opportunities for positive experiences with democratic action and decision making in all aspects of young people's lives. In this regard I couldn't agree more with the claim made in the 2002 *Education for Citizenship* document that 'young people learn most about citizenship by being active citizens' (LTS 2002: 3). But the crucial question here is what young people's active citizenship actually entails.

As I have already argued in the previous section, this depends partly on the domain in which citizenship activity is exercised. But it also depends on the nature of the activity. In this regard it is important not to lose sight of the specific history of the idea of active citizenship, which was introduced by conservative governments in the late 1980s and early 1990s as a way to let citizens take care of what used to be the responsibility of the government under welfare state conditions (see Lawy & Biesta 2006; see also Faulks 1998). While it is difficult to argue against active citizenship, it is important, therefore, to be precise about the nature of the activity and the domain in which the activity is exercised. Active citizenship in itself can either operate at the social or at the political end of the citizenship spectrum and can therefore either contribute to politicisation and the development of political literacy, or be basically a- or non-political. Given the different views on the domain of citizenship it is, therefore, not entirely clear how political and enabling active citizenship within the Scottish context will be, although the tendency seems to be on a form of active citizenship located towards the social end of the citizenship spectrum.

Community

The fourth and final characteristic of the Scottish approach to citizenship and *education for citizenship* is a strong emphasis on community.[6] The 2002 *Education for Citizenship* document, as I have already mentioned, opens by saying that '(s) chools and other educational establishments have a central part to play in educating young people for life as active and responsible members of their communities' (LTS 2002: 6). The point I wish to raise here is not about the fact that citizenship is depicted in relation to (local, and sometimes also global) communities, but concerns the particular way in which communities are conceived within the documents. In all documents 'community' is used as an unproblematic notion and generally also as a positive notion. The documents speak about young people and their communities, suggesting not only that it is clear what these communities are, but also suggesting that young people's membership of these communities is obvious and taken for granted. An important question, however, is what actually constitutes a community and what the difference might be between a social, a cultural and a political community.

As I have argued elsewhere in more detail (see Biesta 2004; 2006) there is a strong tendency within the literature on communities to think of communities in terms of sameness, commonality and identity. This may be true for many cultural and, perhaps to a lesser extent, social communities – and it seems to be the conception of community implied in most of what the documents have to say about community. But whereas cultural and social communities may display a strong sense of commonality and sameness, this is not how we should understand political

communities. One could argue – and many political philosophers have argued this point – that the very purpose of politics, and more specifically democratic politics, is to deal in one way or another with the fact of plurality, with the fact that individuals within society have different conceptions of the good life, different values, and different ideas about what matters to them. Ultimately, *political* communities are therefore communities of those who have nothing in common (see Biesta 2004), and it is precisely here that the difficulty of politics and 'political existence' (Biesta in press[b]) is located. Whereas, as I have shown in my discussion of the domain of citizenship, there is some awareness within the documents, particularly the earlier parts of the 2002 *Education for Citizenship* document, of the particular nature of political communities and political existence – most notably in the recognition of the plurality of perceptions of rights and responsibilities (see LTS 2002: 8-9) – the predominant conception of community in the documents is that of the community as a community of sameness (for a similar conclusion see Ross & Munn 2008). Again we can conclude, therefore, that the Scottish approach to citizenship and education for citizenship operates more at the social than the political end of the citizenship spectrum.

WHAT KIND OF CITIZEN? WHAT KIND OF DEMOCRACY?
In the previous section I have tried to characterise the particular take on citizenship and citizenship education that has been developed in Scotland over the past decade. The question I wish to address in this section focuses on the choices made or implied in this approach. After all, the idea of citizenship is itself not uncontested, and neither are views about the ways in which education might and can support citizenship. The question this raises, therefore, is what kind of citizenship is represented in the proposals, frameworks and inspection documents and, in relation to this, what kind of conception of democracy is pursued as a result of this – hence the title of this paper. In order to do so, I will map the Scottish conception onto existing literature on citizenship and citizenship education. Before I do so I wish to mention that there are very few traces of both philosophical and empirical literature in the framing documents for Scottish education for citizenship. As a result it is quite difficult to glance what has informed its authors, both in terms of their normative orientations and in terms of the empirical basis for their claims. Surely, it is not easy to come up with a framework for education for citizenship that can gain support across a broad political and ideological spectrum, which is often a reason why such documents are rather implicit about their normative orientations and political choices. Nonetheless there are real choices to be made – choices with important implications for educational practice and ultimate for the quality of citizenship and democratic life itself.

In order to locate the Scottish approach I will make use of a framework developed by Westheimer and Kahne that emerged from their analysis of educational programmes for the promotion of democratic citizenship in the United States (see Westheimer & Kahne 2004).[7] Westheimer and Kahne make a distinction between three visions of citizenship that they found as answers to the question '*What kind of citizen do we need to support an effective democratic society*' (ibid: 239). These are: the *personally responsible citizen*; the *participatory citizen*; and the *justice-oriented citizen*. Westheimer and Kahne claim that each of these visions of citizenship 'reflects a relatively distinct set of theoretical and curricular goals' (ibid: 241). They emphasise that these visions are not cumulative. 'Programs that promote justice-oriented citizens do not necessarily promote personal responsibility or participatory citizenship.' (ibid) What, then, characterises each of these visions of citizenship?

The p*ersonally responsible citizen* 'acts responsibly in his or her community by, for example, picking up litter, giving blood, recycling, obeying laws, and staying

out of debt. The personally responsible citizen contributes to food or clothing drives when asked and volunteers to help those less fortunate, whether in a soup kitchen or a senior centre. Programmes that seek to develop personally responsible citizens, attempt to build character and personal responsibility by emphasizing honesty, integrity, self-discipline, and hard work' (ibid: 241).

Participatory citizens are those 'who actively participate in civic affairs and the social life of the community at the local, state, or national level. (...) Proponents of this vision emphasize preparing students to engage in collective, community-based efforts. Educational programs designed to support the development of participatory citizens focus on teaching students how government and community-based organizations work and training them to plan and participate in organized efforts to care for people in need or, for example, to guide school policies. Skills associated with such collective endeavors – such as how to run a meeting – are also viewed as important (...). (P)roponents of participatory citizenship argue that civic participation transcends particular community problems or opportunities. It develops relationships, common understandings, trust and collective commitments [and thereby] adopts a broad notion of the political sphere' (ibid: 241-242).

Justice-oriented citizenship – 'the perspective that is least commonly pursued' (ibid, p.242) – is based on the claim 'that effective democratic citizens need opportunities to analyze and understand the interplay of social, economic and political forces' (ibid). Westheimer and Kahne refer to this approach as 'justice-oriented' because advocates of this approach call explicit attention 'to matters of injustice and to the importance of pursing social justice' (ibid). 'The vision of the justice-oriented citizen shares with the vision of the participatory citizen an emphasis on collective work related to the life and issues of the community. Its focus on responding to social problems and to structural critique make it somewhat different, however [as they seek] to prepare students to improve society by critically analyzing and addressing social issues and injustices. (...) These programmes are less likely to emphasize the need for charity and voluntarism as ends in themselves and more likely to teach about social movements and how to effect systemic change.' (ibid)

Westheimer and Kahne sum up the differences between the three approaches in the following way: '(I)f participatory citizens are organizing the food drive and personally responsible citizens are donating food, justice-oriented citizens are asking why people are hungry and acting on what they discover.' (ibid)

Although educators who aim to promote justice-oriented citizenship may well employ approaches that make political issues more explicit than those who emphasize personal responsibility or participatory citizenship, Westheimer and Kahne stress that 'the focus on social change and social justice does not imply emphasis on particular political perspectives, conclusions, or priorities' (ibid: 242-243. They do not aim 'to impart a fixed set of truths or critiques regarding the structure of society' but rather 'want students to consider collective strategies for change that challenge injustice and, when possible, address root causes of problems' (ibid: 243). From a democratic point of view it is fundamentally important that the process respects 'the varied voices and priorities of citizens while considering the evidence of experts, the analysis of government leaders, or the particular preferences of a given group or of an individual leader' (ibid). Thus 'students must learn to weigh the varied opinions and arguments' and must develop 'the ability to communicate with and learn from those who hold different perspectives' (ibid).

When we look at the Scottish approach to education for citizenship against this background, it is obvious that there are elements of all three orientations. This, as I have shown, is particularly the case in the 2002 *Education for Citizenship* document although already within that document we can see a shift which is taken up, more explicitly in later documents – most notably in the HMIE *Education for*

Citizenship paper – towards an emphasis on personal responsibility. What emerges from the analysis, so I wish to suggest, is that the conception of citizenship informing the Scottish approach is predominantly that of the personally responsible citizen. Within the documents there is also a strong emphasis on participation. Although this shifts the conception of citizenship towards a more participatory approach, I am inclined to understand this mainly in relation to the approach to educational processes aimed at promoting citizenship, than that they are central to the conception of citizenship pursued. It is, in other words, important to make a distinction between the conception of *citizenship* and the conception of citizenship *education* in the documents, and my suggestion is that the conception of citizenship veers more towards the personally responsible citizens, whereas participation is presented as a key dimension of how students can *become* such citizens. This is, of course, not all black and white, but I hope to have presented a sufficiently detailed reading of the documents to warrant this conclusion.

By mapping the Scottish approach onto the categories suggested by Westheimer and Kahne, it is possible to get a better understanding of the specific position presented in the documents analysed in this paper. It makes it possible to see, in other words, that the Scottish approach represents a particular *choice*, and that other options are possible. As such one could argue that this is all that can be said, as this is how education for citizenship in Scotland is conceived. But the further question that can be asked is whether the choice presented in the Scottish approach is the 'best' choice. Answering this question all depends on how one wishes education for citizenship to function and, most importantly, in what way and to what extent one wishes education for citizenship to contribute to a particular – democratic – configuration of society. At this point I wish to briefly discuss some of the concerns expressed by Westheimer and Kahne about the first conception of citizenship in their model, that of the personally responsible citizen which, according to them, is actually the most popular approach (see ibid: 243).

Westheimer and Kahne make it clear that in their view the emphasis on personal responsibility in citizenship is 'an inadequate response to the challenges of educating a democratic citizenry' (ibid) Critics of the idea of the personally responsible citizen have noted 'that the emphasis placed on individual character and behavior obscures the need for collective and public sector initiatives; that this emphasis distracts attention from analysis of the causes of social problems and from systematic solutions' and that 'voluntarism and kindness are put forward as ways of avoiding politics and policy' (ibid) The main problem Westheimer and Kahne see is that whilst no one 'wants young people to lie, cheat, or steal' the values implied in the notion of the personally responsible citizen 'can be at odds with democratic goals' (ibid). '(E)ven the widely accepted goals – fostering honesty, good neighborliness, and so on – are not *inherently* about democracy' (ibid; emphasis in original). To put it differently: while many of the values and traits enlisted in relation to the personally responsible citizen 'are desirable traits for people living in a community (...) they are not about democratic citizenship' (ibid). And, even more strongly: 'To the extent that emphasis on these character traits detracts from other important democratic priorities, it may actually hinder rather than make possible democratic participation and change.' (ibid) To support their point, Westheimer and Kahne report on research that that found that fewer than 32% of eligible voters between the ages of 18 and 24 voted in the 1996 presidential election, but that 'a whopping 94% of those aged 15-24 believed that 'the most important thing I can do as a citizen is to help others'' (ibid). In a very real sense, then, 'youth seems to be 'learning' that citizenship does not require democratic governments, politics, and even collective endeavours' (ibid).

The main problem, therefore – and I have hinted at this already in passing – is that a too strong emphasis on personal responsibility, on individual capacities and

abilities, and on personal values, dispositions and attitudes not only runs the risk of *depoliticising* citizenship by seeing it mainly as a personal and social phenomenon. It also runs the risk of not doing enough to empower young people as *political* actors who have an understanding both of the opportunities and the limitations of individual political action, and who are aware that real change – change that affects structures rather than operations within existing structures – often requires collective action and initiatives from other bodies, including the state. To quote Westheimer and Kahne once more: the individualistic conception of personally responsible citizenship rarely raises questions about 'corporate responsibility ... or about ways that government policies can advance or hinder solutions to social problems' and therefore tends to ignore 'important influences such as social movements and government policy on efforts to improve society' (ibid: 244). An exclusive emphasis on personally responsible citizenship 'apart from analysis of social, political, and economic contexts' may therefore well be 'inadequate for advancing democracy' as there is 'nothing inherently democratic about personally responsible citizenship' and, perhaps even more importantly, 'undemocratic practices are sometimes associated with programs that rely exclusively on notions of personal responsibility' (ibid: 248; emphasis in original).

CONCLUSION

This, then, is the risk that comes with a conception of citizenship and citizenship education that focuses too strongly on individual responsibility and individual traits, values and dispositions. While the Scottish approach is definitely not one-dimensional, and while what happens in the practice of education covers a much wider spectrum of possibilities, the available frameworks for understanding and promoting citizenship in and through education raise concern and could do with more attention for the political dimensions of citizenship and the promotion of forms of political literacy that position democratic citizenship beyond individual responsibility. Such an approach, as I have suggested in this paper, does imply a particular, more political conception of citizenship but does not require a particular party-political choice. In this respect a broad consensus about education for citizenship can also be built around a view in which citizenship is more explicitly connected with wider social and political action and with a view of democracy as requiring more than just active, committed and responsible citizens.

ENDNOTES

[1]   The decision not to include citizenship as a curriculum subject but rather to see it as a cross-curricular responsibility is a distinctive quality of the Scottish approach. While I agree that citizenship can not be confined to explicit lessons in citizenship – not in the least because the rest of the curriculum often teaches much stronger implicit lessons in citizenship – one of the danger of the Scottish approach is that because it is the responsibility of everyone it becomes, de facto, the responsibility of no one. The related danger of the Scottish approach is that it provides insufficient opportunities and incentives for teachers to develop specific expertise about citizenship, democracy and the complexities of civic learning.

[2]   The discussion here is normative, i.e., it is about views of what citizenship ought to look like, ather than empirical. Nonetheless, it is important to note that in empirical research on citizenship there is a clear distinction between what are known as choice-based and structured-based theories in explaining civic action and citizenship (see Pattie et al. 2004: 137-151). This raises the question whether the emphasis on individual responsibility is empirically adequate.

[3]   I use 'domain' in this context mainly in the figurative sense, i.e. as denoting the scope of what is being considered relevant for citizenship. More literally there are, of course, important questions to be asked about the actual spaces and places where democracy can be learned (see Biesta & Lawy 2006; Biesta in press[b]; Mannion 2003).

[4]   A reference to religion is remarkably absent in the documents.

[5]   Responsible citizens are depicted as individuals who have "respect for others" and a "commitment to participate responsibly in political, economic, social and cultural life" and who are able to "develop knowledge and understanding of the world and Scotland's place in it; understand different beliefs and

cultures; make informed choices and decisions; evaluate environmental, scientific and technological issues; [and] develop informed, ethical views of complex issues" (Scottish Executive 2004,: 12).

6   It is, perhaps, significant that in the 2002 *Education for Citizenship* document the word 'community' is used 76 times and the word 'communities' 31 times, while the word 'democratic' is used 9 times and the word 'democracy' only once.

7   Westheimer's and Kahne's framework was mainly generated empirically, which is one of the reasons why I find it useful for the purpose of this paper. Elsewhere (Biesta 2007) I have developed a typology of 3 different conceptions of the democratic person – an individualistic, a social and a political conception – based on an analysis of political philosophy and literature on citizenship education. There are strong resemblances between the empirical framework developed by Westheimer and Kahne and the normative framework I developed. I refer the reader to Biesta 2007 for more on this. This is not to suggest that the categories developed by Westheimer and Kahne are entirely empirical, although the theoretical grounding of their approach is rather concise (see Westheimer & Kahne 2004: 238-240).

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