

The Concept of Citizenship and the Democratic State

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Abstract

This article investigates the differences and the interrelationships between two conceptions of citizenship: one concerned with the ethical and the other with juridical dimensions concerning democratic states. To define a ‘citizen’ according to the first conception, inhabitants are classified as children or persons who cannot engage in political participation and as citizens subclassified as passive or active. Active citizens may be ideological citizens under both authoritarian or democratic regimes. According to the second conception, inhabitants may be nationals or immigrants. Nationals can be subclassified as first subjects who do not enjoy political rights who may be children and others with suspended political rights, or secondly as citizens. Such classifications are the results of research into comparing what has been understood historically and conceptually as civic-mindedness, citizenship and citizen.

All terms share their reference to collectivities generating feelings of belonging among its members, which is undoubtedly linked to its common etymological origin: *civitas*. However, such words and their different meanings can refer to collectivities in different ways. On the one hand, a reference to belonging to a particular collectivity – whilst not carrying the recognition of a certain status or social position and on the other hand, the attitude or behaviour that members of such a community through the fact of belonging to it express and demonstrate.

The purpose of this research is to provide within a democratic state a clear and consistent definition of three interrelated items - citizen, civil society and citizenship, all of which distinguish the citizen in the broad and the restricted sense - which requires a delimitation of the sociopolitical strata made up of both types of citizens, as well as establishing a series of classifications applicable to citizens in both dimensions. When one thinks logically, common sense tells us that without democracy, there can be no citizenship, although one can see that there are exceptions to this rule. Therefore, this research task investigates differing distinctions and definitions related to the various conceptions revolving around citizenship within a democratic state.

Keywords: Citizenship, Democratic State, Civil Society, Citizen, Transition

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The Concept of Citizenship and the Democratic State

Citizenship, citizen and democracy are concepts that remain highly important within the dominant political thought of our time. The purpose of this research is to provide within a democratic state a clear and consistent definition of three interrelated items - citizen, civil society and citizenship. These are, in principle, closely linked concepts. When one thinks logically, common sense tells us that without democracy, there can be no citizenship, although one can see that there are exceptions to this rule. From the outset, one has to accept that the concept of citizenship is complex, based on a series of historically established rights agreed upon both socially and legally. All these rights are a historical product that has been formed differently in each country and subject to ongoing debate and transformation.

Also, the linkage between these rights and the country's political system - whether democratic or not - is a contingent phenomenon, as it varies in each historical epoch and from nation to nation.ⁱ Indeed, the general conceptual relationship that we can establish between citizenship and democracy is expressed in history in a differentiated way in time and space. Two casual links are distinct in this relationship: first, the theoretical approach; on the other, analyses of its historical expression. Discussing citizenship places us in the two planes simultaneously. In this research, we will try to refer to both dimensions, although the theory will be our guiding light.

Definition

The definition of citizenship conjures up two meanings: citizen and nationality. Sometimes it is unclear whether to become a citizen it is required only to have certain rights and obligations, or it is also necessary to actively participate in politics. The first distinction on the path to citizenship has two meanings: the first refers to all citizens of a state, and the second to the accumulation of rights and duties that each has. It is best to consider the definition of citizenship as incorporating the accumulation of political rights and obligations that they – citizens - have as politically active actors.ⁱⁱ In other words, it is the set of duties and rights reciprocally between state agents and bodies and persons defined in function of their membership in the state. Not everyone, however, is a citizen: it is only the person who meets certain conditions of nationality, age and exercise of political rights.ⁱⁱⁱ

The second distinction is between nationality and citizenship. The concepts of nationality and citizenship should not be confused. Nationality is a unique condition of political submission of a person to a specific State, either by being born in its territory, by descent from natural parents of that state or voluntarily agreed to be politically subject to it.^{iv} Citizenship, however, is the quality that acquires that the person - having a nationality and having fulfilled the required legal conditions, assume the exercise of political rights that enable the person to take an active part in the public life of the state and submit to the duties imposed by it. Therefore, it is clear that there can be no citizenship without nationality since this is a necessary condition for it, but a person can have a nationality without citizenship, as in the case of minors or incarcerated adults, for example, as they belong to the state but do not have the use of political rights. It is also clear; the person will possess two kinds of rights: some that are inherent for his/her human qualities, and therefore are common to all other persons, and others who belong to it as an actor politically active of the state, i.e. as a citizen.

Within this dual consideration of the human being as a person and a citizen-, the former are civil rights, social rights and the new rights of man, which extend to all the individuals, domestic or foreign, higher or lower in age, living in the territory of the state, and the latter are political rights, which belong exclusively to the person as an active member of the political life of the state.^v Civil rights are granted as a broad and general set to all persons regardless of race, age, sex, language, religion, political opinion, national origin, social status, capacity, economic or another status. Political rights, in contrast, are assigned only to the nationals and, within them, only to those who have met the criteria of citizens.^{vi} Not all the inhabitants of a state are citizens. Only those who have fulfilled - the general requirements that the law requires for obtaining citizenship, which is a particular legal-political area, these persons as active members of the state are enabled to exercise political rights, that is, to participate in public life.

From this understanding of citizenship, it is a series of political rights of a people in community life. The legislation establishes the requirements to be met by persons to acquire and exercise political rights or citizenship. The first of these is nationality, which involves a legal-political link between an individual and a specific State, either because they were born in its territory or naturalised.^{vii} They have no political rights other than nationals of a State. Foreigners do not. Nationality can be of two kinds: origin and acquired. Nationality of origin belongs to the individual by the sole fact of birth in a State's territory. Nationality acquired is the one that gets the person by a voluntary act which changes their original nationality. What this means is that

a person can belong to a State by birth or by naturalisation. In any case, nationality imposes on the individual specific duties to the state while it confers certain rights, which are political rights politicians, among which is the right to vote.

The second requirement is age. To be a citizen, i.e. politically active element of the state, one must fulfil the minimum age prescribed by law, which varies according to legislation between 16 and 21 years old. This requirement represents a presumption of maturity in the person for purposes of assigning roles and public responsibilities. In this regard, citizenship rights are suspended for court convictions because of the commission of a crime and insanity.^{viii} Political rights, therefore, are: to participate in the government of the state, to elect and be elected, to take part in plebiscites, referendums, recalls and other forms of widespread consultation; fulfil public, military roles in political parties, opinions, and freely express opinions on issues of the state and the other concerning political and community life.^{ix}

Citizenship is a concept that, after decades of disinterest, acquired centrality in international public debate as a response to the significant changes the world political order was experiencing: the ending of the Cold War, the collapse of socialism, the emergence of neoliberalism as one of the new forms of globalisation and the consequent reduction of social rights and increasing inequality, "the third wave of democracy", and new mass migrations to name just a few.^x The notion of citizenship allowed addressing the complex open issues of such global changes from two simultaneous perspectives: the development of collective identities associated with the sense of belonging (to a nation, a community), and the content of justice (such as granting and utilising of rights). Indeed, the concept of citizenship combines elements of collective identity and access to justice and hence strengthens its analytical and political potential.^{xi} Moreover, in both dimensions, citizenship appeals to a sense of equality. This tension - equality presupposes citizenship and inequality of de facto imposed by modern societies, increased to the limit by globalisation, has been one of the critical axes of citizenship theories since its inception.^{xii}

Assessing how much citizenship enjoyed by the inhabitants of a country is a matter of debate, which lends itself to interpretation and requires historical research as a central element of evaluation. The same is said of democracy, which is not a concept with a unique consensual meaning. It can be understood as a minimalist democracy, as the capacity of the representatives of a country to choose their delegates, but this definition has been questioned for many years

and increasingly demands a broader definition.^{xiii} In short, the two elements of this equation: Citizenship and democracy, consist of controversial concepts that lend themselves to different definitions, each of which has, in turn, different political stances.^{xiv} It is, therefore, necessary that in this research, we define each of these concepts and draw the practical consequences for each.

One ought to refer to consequences not just from a legal point of view but from social and cultural perspectives concerning the citizens of a country and what, from the point of view of democratic institutions, does it mean to act as citizens. One can see that citizenship and democracy, not only must there be rights but also obligations, and that this requires that the institutions of the State function in a certain way, as components of the rule of law, a democratic state and a Social state, a welfare state. To clarify these issues, one must address the different theoretical perspectives that inform the debate on citizenship from two angles: political sociology, which explains the origin and development of rights, and political philosophy, which explains the meaning and content of citizenship.^{xv} It is necessary to approach the study of building democracy from a holistic view, i.e. integral to a proper understanding of the complexity of the processes, which involves granting and exercising the rights of citizenship and creating the cultural foundations, legal and institutions of a democracy that transcends electoral space and time. To better explain this relationship, one needs to discuss the concept of democracy and transition to democracy briefly.

The Emergence of Citizenship

Several factors explain the growing international interest in citizenship. In developed countries, interest in the concept of citizenship is a reaction to the crises of the so-called welfare state in Europe, which began in the 1970s and spilled over onto the rest of the European continent. For example, the UK witnessed a decrease in social services support and questioning universal social rights, which was considered a political given.^{xvi} There were responses to other crises, such as that of moral and cultural integration, which was interpreted in the United States as a loss of civic virtues and social capital and the crisis and reconstruction of democracy itself in other parts of the world. The democratising wave identified as the "third wave of democracy" can be seen from the perspective of democratisation or transition to democracy and citizenship reconstitution.^{xvii}

Another historical element that permits us to understand the importance of this need is the collapse of socialist ideology, signified by the fall of the Berlin Wall, which took place in 1989. The fact that socialism collapsed on the symbolic and political horizon of the West meant for the political left there was an obligation to reconsider the meaning of citizenship as part of a radical alternative to minimalist democracy and neoliberal discourse, which since then claimed to be the only political option left for the world. There was a need to reconsider that citizens rights are a central element that suggested a new way for democracy and justice.

Along with these processes, one must also consider the effects of globalisation, especially - one that is not yet adequately understood as part of and that without, however, is, without doubt, one of its constituent elements: mass migration.^{xviii} Indeed, migrations occurred at the end of the twentieth century on a scale reminiscent of what happened at the end of the nineteenth century and early twentieth.

This took place in a totally new situation and environment. It was no longer a matter of populating empty spaces and colonising territories, as was intended at the end of the 19th century, for example, in America, at a time when all the countries in the area still had a border to conquer. What was experienced concerned and emigration to constituted territories as economic migration to occupy new jobs, workplaces as part of a new national and international division of labour.^{xix} This migration goes directly into an established society and poses enormous challenges that are not considered in the concept of citizenship, traditionally associated with that of nation and nationality. Indeed, millions of people who are legally citizens of other countries live in third countries, not citizens. However, they live, work and in some cases are beneficiaries of specific social and civil rights.

For its part, the feminist movement has shown that the idea of citizenship has been historically exclusive because women lacked political rights and almost any other rights until very recently and still suffer different forms of exclusion.^{xx} In another form of recognising difference, the LGBT movement has made it clear that existing laws do not recognise their existence and specific needs. In turn, juveniles in many countries raised the problem of exclusion of young people from public life. There have been demands made to lower the electorate age to 16 in several countries.^{xxi} Ecological movements, for their part, have exposed the need to reconsider the relationships between humans and nature, and within that context, the possibility of demanding a right to a healthy environment. These social movements have brought to the public

agenda that citizenship can no longer be bounded to the classical themes and subjects and must recognise a new generation of rights.

One must recall that the exclusions referred to do not refer only to a process of legal deprivation. The exclusion referred is also based on a cultural process, one that can be termed social authoritarianism.^{xxii} Such social authoritarian precedes and accompanies the legal exclusion and is even more harmful and dangerous as culturally justified acts of denial of justice are antithetical to the concept of citizenship. A further dimension of globalisation has been the growing prominence of international organisations and multilateral agencies as part of their work - generally under the aegis of the United Nations - which have set up discussion forums that have accumulated decades of agreements and resolutions concerning rights which most nations of the world have ratified.^{xxiii} These have defined to protect and promote human rights and gradually constitute an international standard of rights. As can be seen, citizenship is relevant for our time and our national space.

The concept of citizenship has developed in two main areas: political sociology and historical sociology, philosophy, and politics. They are interrelated though possess conceptually and methodologically differentiated aspects. Sociology questions the historical origin of citizenship status, its evolution and development, the content of the rights of citizenship and places these processes as part of a long historical period in which relations between the individual and the state have been redefined.^{xxiv} Political philosophy questions the character and sense of citizenship, the meaning of being a citizen, the relationship between individuals and the state, and relations between citizenship and democracy.^{xxv} The two approaches are complementary, as they inform and borrow from each other.

Civic and Republican

From the perspective of political philosophy - ethics, the concept of citizenship refers to fundamental questions about the social order and relations between individuals and states on the forms assumed by the construction of collective identities, thus on how the community is built and how it relates to the state.^{xxvi} Since the end of the 1970s, two main currents have maintained a well-known debate on the individual's primacy or the community when thinking about citizenship. On the one hand, the contemporary advocates of the classical liberalism school postulate contemporary democracies' legal order.^{xxvii} Another, called Communitarian rights, uses philosophical arguments to defend the community's primacy against the individual

as the only way under capitalism to expand civic virtues.^{xxviii} It is possible to add a third stream that has emerged in the 1990s, which postulates the centrality of civil mediation forms between individuals and the state, which are less robust compared to the community while performing their duties.^{xxix} Here one can refer to civil society's proponents, emphasising citizen participation in public affairs to develop republicanism.

The debate between liberalism and communitarianism has occurred principally in the US, with significant European implications.^{xxx} This philosophical discussion's political context was the great moral crises that paved the way towards improving African Americans' civil rights in the 1960s and the war in Vietnam. When new lifestyles were emerging, large public protests developed, and a new sense of moral emptiness questioned the consensus that seemed stagnant in the previous years. The United States faced a crisis where it had to recognise that an essential part of its population was excluded from the consensus and the conditions of citizenship and had been defeated for the first time in a war fought on foreign soil. It was then necessary to rethink how to rebuild the community in the absence of a consensus that it believed previously was established and how to respond to the emergence of new lifestyles and new values and the demand for recognition of communities that had been oppressed.

This moral or political crisis pattern led to the emergence of two ways to understand the problem of citizenship, which had always been present in politics from its birth. On the one hand, the classic liberal response insisted on the individual's centrality and the necessity to protect itself from excesses. To create conditions for the pursuit of their welfare, the subject could also establish relations of association and links with others so that institutions and practices beneficial for their interest were built. Rawls wrote, suggesting that individuals develop in pursuit of their interest the capacities and virtues that better suit the social group under conditions of the exact origin.^{xxxi} Individuals were seen as sovereign and autonomous beings on moral grounds, and their duties consisted of similar rights in respect of other citizens, paying their dues and participating in defence of the political system at a time of need. Beyond this, they had no other obligations concerning the social group as individuals, sovereign and autonomous beings could decide whether to exercise citizens' rights in the public sphere. Thus, liberalism produces substantial negative rights, that is, a separation of the individual from the state and the community, and there are few obligations against them, apart from those necessary to keep individual freedoms alive.^{xxxii}

Against this liberal vision based on classical foundations came a response, which was generically called communitarian, led by thinkers such as Taylor, Sandel and Walzer, who believed that the central problem was the breakdown of community ties that historically had characterised the American public life in the past.^{xxxiii} The urgent thing was to rescue the primacy of the bonds that make up the network of protection and significance of individuals in such a way that before thinking about the rescue of the individual and his rights would be rescued, collective goods formed the values and norms that put the community above individuals. For this, the communitarians recovered a philosophical tradition that can be traced back to Aristotle and his idea of man as a “political animal”.^{xxxiv} The idea-force behind the thinking is that individual identity is forged in the integration within the community and not in the radical autonomy of the subject.

The community's exact values to which one belongs provide the elements of judgment on what is good and correct, not individual self-determination. Therefore, the primary responsibility and the best manifestation of citizenship are the community's defence and participation in its institutions and practices. Thus, the essence of freedom is community governance participation, which may be defined as almost Aristotelian. This contemporary communitarian version is in some way related to the concepts coming from the field of sociology of Durkheim and Parsons, who maintained that social integration was produced fundamentally by shared values and norms.^{xxxv} The communitarians thus conceived of citizenship as participation in community life to defend its values and principles. Therefore, the obligations of citizenship - to participate and preserve the principles - were more significant than rights. The citizen must be active since the welfare of the community depends on his action.

This view rapidly received criticism, mainly because it is impossible to find a single set of shared norms in modern societies.^{xxxvi} The cultural, ideological and religious plurality of our time prevents us from thinking of society as a culturally homogeneous set, even at the scale of a city, let alone a country. Also, traditional beliefs and values can either be a straitjacket of regulations regarding individuals who think differently, free themselves from bondage or propose new ideas and principles. While Traditional liberal principles - do not have much practical basis, since full individual autonomy can not exist in a world in which we live attached to categories of class, gender, race and religion, among others - the fact is that in societies, in modern times, the defence of values and principles can only be thought within the plurality and therefore the tolerance of others.

This observation has given rise to a third philosophical current, termed modern republicanism, whose origins can also be traced back to ancient Greece.^{xxxvii} Its primary support was Hanna Arendt, for whom citizenship is seen as the process of active deliberation on competitive identity projections whose value resides in the possibility of establishing forms of collective identity that can be recognised, tested and transformed in a discursive and democratic way.^{xxxviii}

Arendt's republicanism has a certain twinning with communitarianism, whereby the citizenry acts, in the ancient Greek manner, as exercising reason in public for public ends. Arendt has in mind a kind of agora, the public space, where individuals debate their different versions of what is right and what is just.^{xxxix} However, the difference is that it is unnecessary to have a preordained community policy whose values and norms create a substantive consensus based on which individuals act. On the contrary, it is in the debate held in the public space where these principles and norms have to be built and agreed upon. This practice, which is politics, is what makes humans human, it is the vital activity that is inherent and specific to our species, and that opens the possibility of the exercise of reason as a means of developing collective identities.

The problem with Arendt became one of taking intuition too far, of the belief that only direct democracy can guarantee that each citizen exercises those capacities for discussion and decision.^{xl} Political representation is harmful because it deprives citizens of the ability to decide. The ideal political system is not representative democracy but a federated council system where citizens participate directly in discussions and decisions, thus exercising effective agency. Other proponents offered a new concept of the citizen becoming possible with the political identity created through identification with the *res publica*.^{xli} Thus, the collective identity being built in practical politics and a political culture would have to be active and participatory, not passive nor involve patronage. In this version, the rights and obligations seem more balanced, as individual rights. They must be preserved to guarantee individuals' autonomy while they must participate fully in public life.

While such ideas are excellent and more alive than ever in the contemporary debate, it is not difficult to observe the proposal's inapplicability as a whole. In large national states and complex societies, it is impossible to cancel representation and insist on direct democracy requiring citizens to dedicate themselves only to politics, as in ancient Greece, which is

unfeasible. However, the appeal to debate in public space has incentivised other theories based on citizens' active participation inspired by the ideas of Arendt.^{xlii}

We must also note that this republican version admits another aspect of interpretation. The idea of solidarity and widespread identity based on principles and rules can be read from an anthropological perspective, as a requirement of community awareness that prevails above all individual interests, but also from a more modern perspective, based on associations, which are solidarity, voluntary, it can be translated in terms of a theory of civil society.^{xliii} This dense network of solidarity would constitute both the self-protection of modern individuals and their specific way to generate collective identities. Civil society actors must act in the public space, which discusses their different and pluralistic interpretations of right and fairness. Defining those standards is necessary to act politically (i.e., expressing their ideas and pressuring the state to legalise and implement them). The civil society version of republicanism has the advantage of recognising the pluralism of principles and norms, recognising the importance of public space and citizens' participation in public affairs, without demanding total dedication from them, while admitting political representation, that is, electoral democracy.^{xliv} Of course, in return, this version is much softer in obligations and contains a concept of citizenship much closer to liberalism than communitarianism.

To conclude, suffice it to say that liberal, communitarian and republican citizenship mentioned above involve different concepts of democracy. The liberal version perceives a limited minimum State - complementing a maximisation of individuals' liberty, and democracy is then only a selection mechanism of weak rulers. The communitarian side thinks that identity, virtue and decisions are built from the social field and not from the state, so the democracy should be limited to citizens' ability to choose their government understood as leaders, that is, executors of decisions made by the community. The radical republicanism, espousing direct democracy, virtually nullifies representative democracy, but civil society's version opens up space for thinking complementarity between representative democracy and participatory democracy.

The link between citizenship and democracy through the state is a necessary materialisation instance of both citizenship and democracy. When thinking about the state, we must also refer to the nation's concept since the form of the state in modernity is, as accepted, the nation-state.^{xlv} The issue becomes more complex, one can talk about the isolated concepts of citizenship and democracy, but one has to refer to the conceptual set that explains rights, practices and

institutions. Talking about citizenship and democracy then forces us to talk about politics and society as a whole.

Democracy and Citizenship

As the concept of democracy has been and is the subject of extensive debate for this work, it is essential to draw attention to the concepts central to the struggle and on the historical processes that frame the current global discussion. Theories used to analyse the transition and consolidation of democracy were based on a version of democratic theory that has been quite dominant in Western political thought: democratic elitism.^{xlvi} Weber and Schumpeter understood democracy simplified as a mechanism that allows a change of rulers cyclically and predictably, i.e. choosing a particular elite.^{xlvii} The modern state is so complex that there cannot be citizen intervention in state administration. Being even more rigid, one can say that what ultimately defines democracy is the principle of uncertainty in election results. The minimalist democracy view - democracy is to elect the rulers - and the elite view - democracy only serves to change the ruling elite - is this restrictive concept. This concept of democracy implies that only citizenship is political, and therefore the only rights peoples have in a democracy is electing politicians. Indeed, in practice, only political rights are directly linked to democracy.

Habermas has explained that only the rights of political participation founded the citizen's legal position, that is, a reflexive legal position, referring to itself.^{xlviii} Negative rights of freedom and the rule of law and social state are also possible in principle without democracy. Indeed, both individual liberties and social rights can be considered a legal basis for social autonomy to make the practical realisation of political rights. The minimalist conception of democracy and its counterpart, the elitist theory of democracy, involves itself with a limited citizenship concept. There is nothing in the conventional democratic theory that requires going beyond granting political rights to found citizenship. No wonder then that the majority of studies on democracy have disregarded the other dimensions of citizenship.

Democratic theory operates based on many unsustainable assumptions. The theory of democracy would imply a state and a nation; it supposes citizens' existence as competent agents capable of choosing and free from all obstacles to exercise those capacities.^{xlix} Also, democratic theory can not consider the social conflict within its framework and limits its conception of politics to the struggle for power understood as the achievement of authorising and representation through elections. For more than fifty years, many criticisms have been made of

this concept of democracy, but to go beyond it, it is necessary to broaden the theory's canon, that is, the framework of the topics considered possible to deal with in the theoretical field of democracy.¹ Indeed, this goes far beyond our possibilities here in this work. Therefore, one can only draw attention to some elements to be taken into account.

One way to address the issue is through questioning the studies of democratic transition and consolidation. Such studies allowed theming the challenges strategically marked a historical period but did so at a very high cost as a recourse to the concepts of democratic elitism and various versions of the rational choice theory, aside from the study of democratic innovations that carried the actual practice of social actors whose participation was recognised in the transitology studies as a trigger for the process of transition, theory merely interpreted the social movement response to the opportunity cost of action arising from liberalisation.^{li} After reaching representative democracy, civil society leaves its space enabled for a society that assumes the causes and the interests of civil society and monopolises the legitimate representation functions. There is no analysis of the innovations in terms of political culture, actors, and practices resulting from the opening of new public spaces and new players' emergence. To conceive democracy as a mere exercise of political - electorally authorised - rights in the field of the state reproduces and affirms a conceptual separation between civil society and political society that prevents analysing the continuities between them and thus reads democratisation as a process that originates in and transforms the society itself. Studies on consolidation of democratic tradition continued this conceptual, concentrating on the analysis of institutional designs, covenants and the political balance between civilian and military, authoritarian and democratic forces, which enable the continuity of the democratic regime.^{lii}

Indeed, much effort has been directed towards a transition to democracy, characterised by a long and still unfinished electoral reform magnifying parties' role in the process and assuming that electoral democracy was the only possible democracy.^{liii} In doing so, cultural changes were not focused upon, while innovations in relations between citizens and the state remained outside the focus of such analyses. Furthermore, the role of civil society in the process was mainly considered irrelevant. The construction of citizenship was limited to guaranteeing the right to vote. This limited perspective ignored the warnings and criticisms that O'donnell had long advanced. His conception of "delegative democracy", which refers to democracies that are limited to choosing a president who then as an autocrat without limits, in a "low - intensity

democracy", refers to the lack of other rights of citizenship in democracies, are just two of how the weaknesses of democracies exist descriptively.^{liv}

O'Donnell critically investigates theories of democracy, showing that the liberal-democratic model not only operates in the absence of a solution to the problems of the nation and the state but assumes that political citizenship is a development of civil rights which are taken as given to presupposing a citizen as being rational and free. To transcend this form of democracy, according to O'donnell, it is necessary to introduce in the analysis of democracy; the study differed from the state, the nation, of the political regime and the government, especially the democratisation of the state, i.e., the components that do (bureaucracy, legal system and building practices discourse and collective national identity) indeed promote citizenship status.^{lv} From this perspective, O'donnell proposes that only integral citizenship (i.e. full access to those - civilians rights, political and social) can guarantee the existence of a true democracy. While access or enjoyment of partial rights does not exist for large sectors of the population, democratic elections will be precarious and manipulable.

Civic Associative Life

However, in a different theory of democracy, it would be necessary to retake elements of the republican theory of citizenship in its participatory and civil societal aspects, capturing a process of "democratising democracy".^{lvi} From the empirical point of view, this process viewed political rights of democracy to be used to grant other rights. That is what the feminist movement and other minorities have utilised: use political rights as a base to fight for civil and social rights. This strategy has not been linear. Instead, it has focused on a long movement that has gone back and forth, to and from the political, social and civil. This is a dialectic of empowerment in one sphere of rights, pushing for conquests in others.^{lvii}

To theorise these practices, it is necessary to address another series of debates about democracy situated on another plane, both normative and descriptive, of democratic construction. From the field of contemporary theories of participatory democracy, deliberative democracy, civil society, and the social movements emerged new ways of thinking of agency in the fight for democracy, or design of a democratic regime and the type of rights and necessary citizenship democratic project.^{lviii} This not only called for the complete fulfilment of the promises of the democratic rule of law, but it raises radical changes in thinking and practice politics, that is, the power, representation and participation of society.

Indeed, recent theories of participatory democracy, social, civil and public spaces have failed to build a comprehensive theoretical proposal of citizenship but have galvanised an essential input in terms of active citizenship that not only expects the state finally to respect and implement the universal rights of citizenship but fight for them, cooperate with the state, it faces political barriers, asserting their arguments in public space and seeks to build alliances with political society in promoting a democratic-participatory project.^{lix}

This vision of the citizen as a construction process is wholly opposed to the neoliberal camp dominant globally that merely is a passive exercise of rights, the scope of which depends on only the exercise of the vote can perceive the episodic existence of the citizen.^{lx} The centrality of citizenship and its effects run through contemporary societies, whereby it leads to questioning its significance for the democratic regime.

Schnapper observes that "Homo Democraticus" tends to think that he cannot be represented if it is not for himself.^{lxi} This would be a consequence of the decline of the republican ideal that involved building a general will that was in no way conceived as the sum of an individual or particular wills through political institutions. Therefore, in modern times, which Schnapper defined in sociopolitical terms as "providential democracy", "representation ceases to be an instrument of political significance to become how individuals' desires and identities are expressed.^{lxii} One can conclude that citizenship has reached a centrality from its emancipation from the institutional device of representation. However, it should be reiterated not to give rise to misunderstandings - that they would not be consistent with the interpretation presented here: the representation is unknown, but its legitimacy is permanently at stake.

This uncontrolled citizen mobilisation, incomparable with the mass mobilisations of the past, framed and organised by leaderships, has given rise to an idealisation of the good society that would have a restorative quality or would be the bearer of a principle of justice.^{lxiii} One sees that it is not inherently necessarily a source of politicisation, reform or progress. However, despite the warnings that may be made about the deceptive illusion of considering citizens and their mobilisation as endowed by nature with civic virtues, what does seem pertinent is the legitimacy accompanied by the claim of knowledge about what has happened in the past and about the responsibilities of the different stakeholders.

The presence of the media and organisations aimed explicitly at influencing public opinion coexist with citizen participation in partnerships with public purposes, for which one often uses the term civil society. This civic associative activity forms another dimension of public space. Alongside traditional association, from which stakeholders are the expression, develops a territorial character but no longer carrying a trace of the social morphology. Citizenship refers to individuals' public dimension in a range that goes from their eventually passive condition of rights holders to their various forms of public intervention.^{lxiv} Nevertheless, this citizenship is extracted from the social condition, from the belongings in the world of work and the state network's classification when defining rights, beneficiaries, and public charges. Citizenship is marked by this basic social and institutional morphology, but its current autonomous expansion implies the detachment - or rather the reformulation - of these conditions. The public identities that it acquires are not determined, although a social condition or institutional device influences them.^{lxv}

The process of democratic expansion, under various forms, has emphasised citizen participation.^{lxvi} This participation recognises two different sources. Governments, political actors and associative networks have promoted various and contradictory postulates of citizen participation, some inspired by the reduction of the role of the state as a counterpart in the accountability of individuals and groups, others in the search for expansion and civic interference in the decision and execution of public policies.^{lxvii} On the other hand, civic and popular mobilisations have tried to influence or condition decisions, and various participatory experiences have thus emerged.

Conclusion

Hardt and Negri suggest that social fragmentation excludes the constitution of a cohesive subject by demand or a project; what emerges instead is the image of the crowd gathered by a common denominator which can be the rejection of an order or even an enemy.^{lxviii} Rosanvallon (2006), for his part, considers that democracy is mutating in such a way that together with its traditional pillar, the representative system, a citizen presence and action are expanding that goes beyond the electoral act and representation since mistrust is the permanent sign of the relationship between the rulers and the ruled and it is this distrust which enables public devices parallel to those of representation.^{lxix} Giddens has emphasised a characteristic of the contemporary individual: reflexivity.^{lxx} Individualism is understood as the expansion of freedom in which everyone decides to be independent of restrictions. In such a perspective,

citizens with autonomous capabilities could take over decisions and develop links in a strengthened civil society at the expense of a welfare state with less interference. The market would find limits to the commodification of human bonds and relations.

New citizenship is the entry point to the proposed inquiry, faced with the political regime. Citizenship without attachments, the electorate, public opinion, social or civic movements, just the people in their classic versions of popular or trade unions that is, a variety of names that are not precisely equivalent but refer to a common principle, that of the source of political legitimacy in democratic societies, are denominations that should be re-examined in their antecedents and novelty since they are a priority for understanding the mutation in which the political regime is heading.^{lxxi} This centrality of individuals, their pronouncements, and their associative life derive from two relatively recent circumstances and from transformations that are still unfolding before our eyes.

In the final analysis, democracy has gained force and a universal value, and this, despite the challenges of anti-secular traditions that reject the principle according to which the political and social order is left to men's free will. At the very least free elections and civil liberties have been expanded. The scope of these essential practices is not the same in all latitudes, and their validity is highly variable according to social conditions. There are also inherited aspects, corporate realities and bonds of submission that persist in the challenge of democratic expansion and new inequalities. Indeed, the universalisation of democracy has not disabled the demands for more just social order and significant reforms, but essentially these aspirations have been channelled within the framework of democratic societies and not of a providential alternative regime or order. The expansion of the democratic political order - considered a result of men's activity at their discretion - entails, as a consequence, the centrality of citizenship.^{lxxii}

Thus, this term, "citizenship", condenses a range of variations but emphasises what is increasingly common: a space for individuals endowed with or claiming rights and who constitute changing associative and identitarian links. The experience of public life and the deinstitutionalisation or perhaps the institutional changes that are being witnessed are the results of this civic activity, which is the source of meaning in democratic public life.

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