

**FOUR ASPECTS OF CIVIC EDUCATION:
TEACHING THE HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY
OF THE LAND OF ISRAEL AS A CASE STUDY**

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Introduction

The last decade of the 20th century and the beginning years of the third millennium have shown a rise of the ongoing discourse regarding the meaning of the term 'citizenship'. The challenge of the fundamental position of the nation-state has turned this debate to a vital one. The collapse of the former USSR, the further establishment of the European Union, and the declaration of war on terror organizations, as opposed to sovereign states have all contributed to this ongoing debate. In respect to this reality, the question of how to educate the young citizens of the state emerges. Although the question of what kind of citizen is promoted in this educational process is as old as the term citizen itself, it is still cardinal specifically in the context of education for citizenship in a democratic state.

In general, civic education may be seen as an answer to the question of how to educate the young citizens of the state. This question mainly examines what types of citizens the state wants to cultivate, and how to implement that concept within an educational framework (Parker, 2008). National and cross-national studies have concentrated mainly on the tasks of stimulating civic engagement amongst the youth by the means of instilling democratic knowledge, values and beliefs (Hahn & Alviar-Martin, 2008; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Nevertheless, although all agree about the importance of this topic, this field in fact encompasses various ideological conceptions regarding citizenship in the democratic state, conceptions that produce significantly differing educational plans.

This state of affairs is apparent when reviewing the research in the field of civic education. One may be overwhelmed by the abundance of topics and issues dealt with, demonstrated for example by the categorization offered by Levstik and Tyson (2008) who identify five broad categories representing the main components of this field: US democracy; cross-national comparisons; discussion and decision making; service learning; and cosmopolitan and multicultural education (pp. 2-3). From this categorization it is clear that this field in fact encompasses different conceptions of the sole term civic education. Whereas one approach may emphasize the knowledge each individual holds regarding the political sphere, another approach may emphasize the common values shared by the community as a whole. Moreover, a third approach may claim that knowledge and values are not satisfactory, and good citizenship is tested by the factor of civic engagement, while the exact character of this engagement is still up for debate.

This reality may be seen as what John Dewey (1927) described as “the great bad,” referring to “the mixing of things which need to be kept distinct” (p. 83). In the contemporary discourse regarding civic education this “great bad” occurs when different fundamental aspects and conceptions of citizenship are translated into educational practices that are incompatible with one another at best and contradictory at worst. Based on the notion of Instructional Program Coherence (Newmann, Smith, Allensworth, & Bryk, 2001), which stresses the importance of holding a solid and coherent educational plan, not holding a coherent conception of citizenship while engaging in the civic education process may be a true quandary.

Numerous studies have attempted to bring some clarity to this state of affairs, based both on its theoretical aspects (Parker, 2008) and on the evaluation of empirical case studies (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). The purpose of this study is to advance the discourse even further,

by offering a new conceptual framework that concentrates on the different aspects of the civic education process. Therefore, this study shall question the way different epistemological conceptions of citizenship and education influence the characteristics of civic education. Its main questions may be framed as what are the main aspects of civic education and on what undercurrent political conceptions of citizenship are they based? In order to answer these questions, a new typology of the term civic education shall be presented, encompassing four main aspects: *Political Knowledge, Normative Values, Individualistic Civic Behavior and Communal Civic Behavior*. The manifestation of these aspects to the educational practice shall be evaluated based on the historical case study of teaching the history and geography of the Land of Israel in the Israeli educational system, to be presented in the second part of this paper.

Methodology

As stated, the purpose of this study is to present a typology of different aspects of civic education. The assumption that is set at the base of this research is that when discussing the topic of civic education, we are in essence speaking about the task of changing people's attitudes, knowledge and behaviors regarding the relationship between the state and its citizens (Parker, 2008). Such a broad point of view may create an abundance of interpretations of this sole term. Therefore, the goal of this study is to present an attempt to bring some clarity to this field, with the use of the traditional social science method of ideal types.

The term Ideal Type has been brought forth by the founder of the field of social sciences, the German sociologist Max Weber (1949). Weber's main assumption was that researchers' knowledge is constantly influenced by the particular point of view from which she/he evaluates reality. Weber challenged the notion that a researcher can bring forth the "facts themselves"

without being influenced by his own personal characteristics, and related to this notion as naïve (p. 82). He explains that the researchers' personal beliefs and the values she/he adopts influence what is seen as valuable, important and significant regarding the phenomenon being evaluated. Weber explains that any attempt to analyze a social reality without relating to the researchers on personal beliefs "is absolutely meaningless" (p. 82).

This inherent personal bias lead Weber (1949) to set the question of what is significant about theories and theoretical conceptualization in the field of social sciences. As an answer to this question he offers the use of ideal types which are defined by him as "a mental construct for the scrutiny and systematic characterization of individual concrete patterns which are significant in their uniqueness" (p. 100). In other words, Weber proposes the use of a utopian display of a phenomenon that has been created by what he refers to as an "analytical accentuation of certain elements of reality" (p. 90). It is important to point out that Weber did not see these ideal types as a goal on itself, but rather as a means in order to conduct research in the social sphere. In this sense, he explains that when evaluating a certain social reality, the emphasis should be on what factors make this phenomenon unique, while comparing it to similar cases.

In order to compose an ideal type, Weber (1949) explains that an individual phenomenon should be evaluated from numerous points of view. In this manner, a synthesis of the different components of this phenomenon is created, thus forming a "unified analytical construct" (*Gedankenbild*) (p. 90). Weber clarifies that with this use of numerous points of view, the final ideal type is in fact a utopian portrayal of the phenomenon that "cannot be found empirically anywhere in reality" (p. 90).

Brian Holmes (1981) refers to the use of ideal types while conducting research in the field of education. He recommends the use of ideal types in order to understand the normative

statements regarding education that people “debate, accept or reject” (p. 112). In this manner ideal types may be used as a means of obtaining a better understanding of the proposed norms underlying contemporary debates in the field of education. Holmes explains that ideal types provide “conceptual clarity and simplicity” (p. 113) of a complex reality. This insight relates to Weber’s main point, seeing ideal types as a way of understanding the manifestation of ideas, rather than attempting to portray reality itself.

There are few examples of the use of ideal types in the field of civic education. Sears and Hughs (1996) held a research regarding the existing conceptions of civic education in Canada, utilizing the method of ideal types in a social studies research. The framework for these ideal types was the political conceptions of the term citizenship. In order to compose the different ideal types that represented these different conceptions, they evaluated numerous official documents regarding civic education from throughout the country, representing all of Canada’s states. Based on the evaluation of these documents, the researchers derived the existing conceptions of civic education and presented them as ideal types. These types include a *liberal conception*, a *state based conception*, a *cosmopolitan conception* and a *social justice* one.

In the same manner, Westheimer and Kahne (2004) surveyed the different undercurrent beliefs of good citizenship in educational programs aimed at promoting democracy in the USA. In their research, Westheimer and Kahne pinpointed three concepts of good citizenship that may be seen as the base for the ideal types of civic education: *personal responsibility*, *participation* and *justice driven*. The main flaw of these two studies is the lack of a strong theoretical ground on which the ideal types presented are based. This is due to the choice of the inductive methodology, resulting in a creation of ideal types that were created based on a reality at a given place and time. In other words, these types represent the specific reality of the cases studied by

the researches and thus, leave place to question the process of generalization that is based on these cases alone. In fact, this methodology contradicts Weber's original suggestion to compose ideal types based on numerous case studies in order to create a true utopian representation of the phenomenon.

The ideal types to be presented hereinafter are different in the sense that they are based on a theoretical-philosophical debate rather than on a specific case study. This deductive research method was chosen in order to insure that the ideal types will not represent a given reality but rather the anthological and epistemological debate regarding the different conceptions of civic education that may be traced in the general contemporary discourse.

Four Aspects of Civic Education

After discussing the rationale of utilizing the research method of Ideal Types, herein the four aspects of civic education shall be brought forth. These aspects may be seen as ideal types due to the fact that *de facto* they don't exist in reality, but rather bring forth the utopian manifestation of the ideas they represent. In order to compose these aspects, numerous assumptions, insights and thoughts have been derived from both the field of education and the field of political thought, and together they in fact create the theoretical framework.

Theoretical Framework

John Dewey's (1906/1990) insights regarding the educational process shall be seen as the fundamental basis of this proposed framework. In his book "The Child and the Curriculum" Dewey points at the two primary aspects of education: the psychological force and the sociological one. Emphasizing these two forces Dewey acknowledges the fact that the

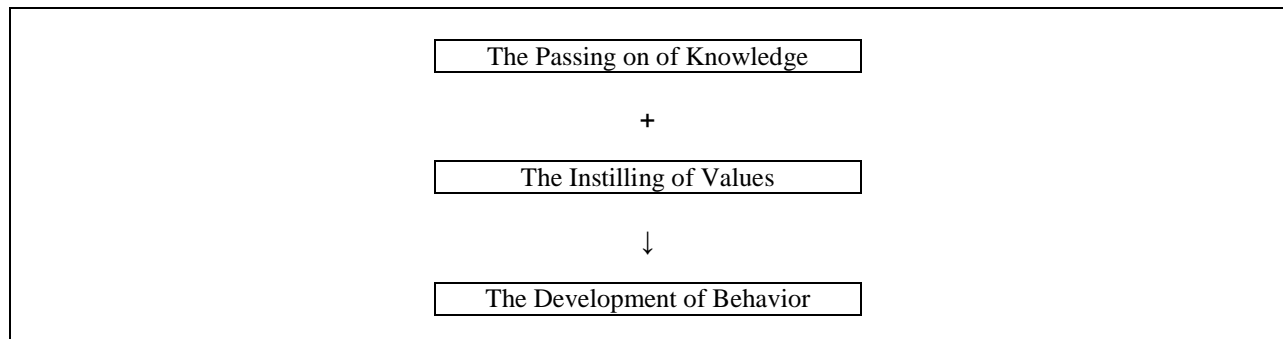
educational process is an outcome of the connection between one's self and the social environment in which she/he lives. The first aspect concentrates on the individual's opinions, characteristics and tendencies, whereas the latter focuses on the social meanings of the individual's behavior in society. Dewey explains that "the educative process is the due *interaction of these forces*. Such a conception of each *in relation to the other* as facilitates completest and freest interaction is the essence of educational theory" (pp. 104, italics added).

Therefore, the aim of an educational act may be defined as an aspiration to influence the ways in which the *individual* behaves in *society*. In the context of civic education, a national report by the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE, 2003) states the goal of civic education as to "help young people acquire and learn to use the *skills, knowledge, and attitudes* that will prepare them to be competent and responsible citizens throughout their lives" (p. 4, italics added). Parker (2008) explains that the main civic educational goal may be referred to as Enlightened Political Engagement. With the use of this term Parker stresses the fact that the behavior, or engagement, of the citizen in society is based on her/his being enlightened by knowledge and social commitments, or in his words "political engagement refers to the *action or participation* dimension of democratic citizenship ... Democratic enlightenment refers to *knowledge and commitments* that inform this engagement" (pp. 68, italics added).

Based on these notions, civic educational acts may be seen as standing on three main pillars: (1) knowledge (2) values and (3) behavior. The pillar of knowledge will concentrate on the information regarding the life in society such as the characteristics of type of regime, the branches of government and historical facts. The values pillar will stress the common values which are seen as essential in order to maintain society such as freedom, tolerance or the value of

labor. The combination of these two pillars shall eventually lead to the skills of the individual to behave in society, based on the knowledge of the norms of society and an acceptance of the values they represent (see figure 1).

Figure 1 – The Educational Process

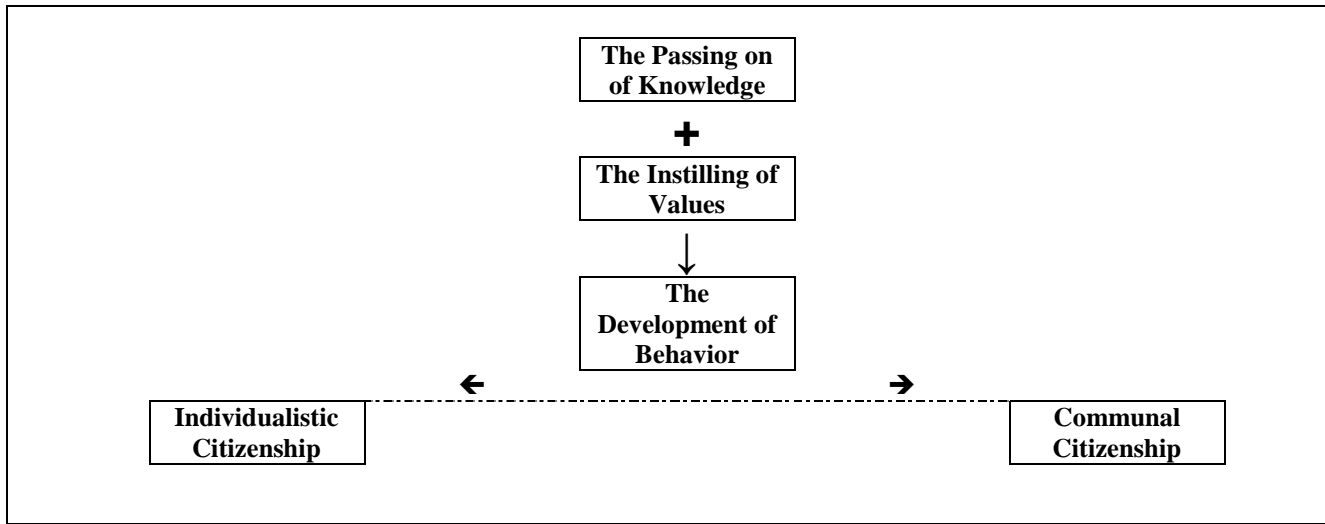


Concentrating on the subject of civic education shall bring forth the ongoing debate regarding the normative expected behavior of the citizen in the state. It is assumed that this behavior is an outcome of both the knowledge that has been passed on and the values that have been instilled. These three components of the educational process – political knowledge, normative values and expected behaviors – will stand at the base of the aspects of civic education to be presented next.

In order to better understand the optional behaviors that the civic education process may potentially cultivate, this study shall rely on the contemporary debate in the discipline of Political Thought regarding the question of citizenship (see for example: Habermas, 1996). On the one side of this debate one may find the individualistic point of view (Rawls, 1971) that emphasizes the place of the individual in the social setting. On the other side of the axis stands the communal point of view (Sandel, 1984), which stresses the communal meanings of citizenship in society. An axis between these two far points may be set at the third part of the above description,

placing the expected civic behavior aspect of the educational process in the space between them (see chart 2).

Chart 2: The Civic Aspect of the Educational Process

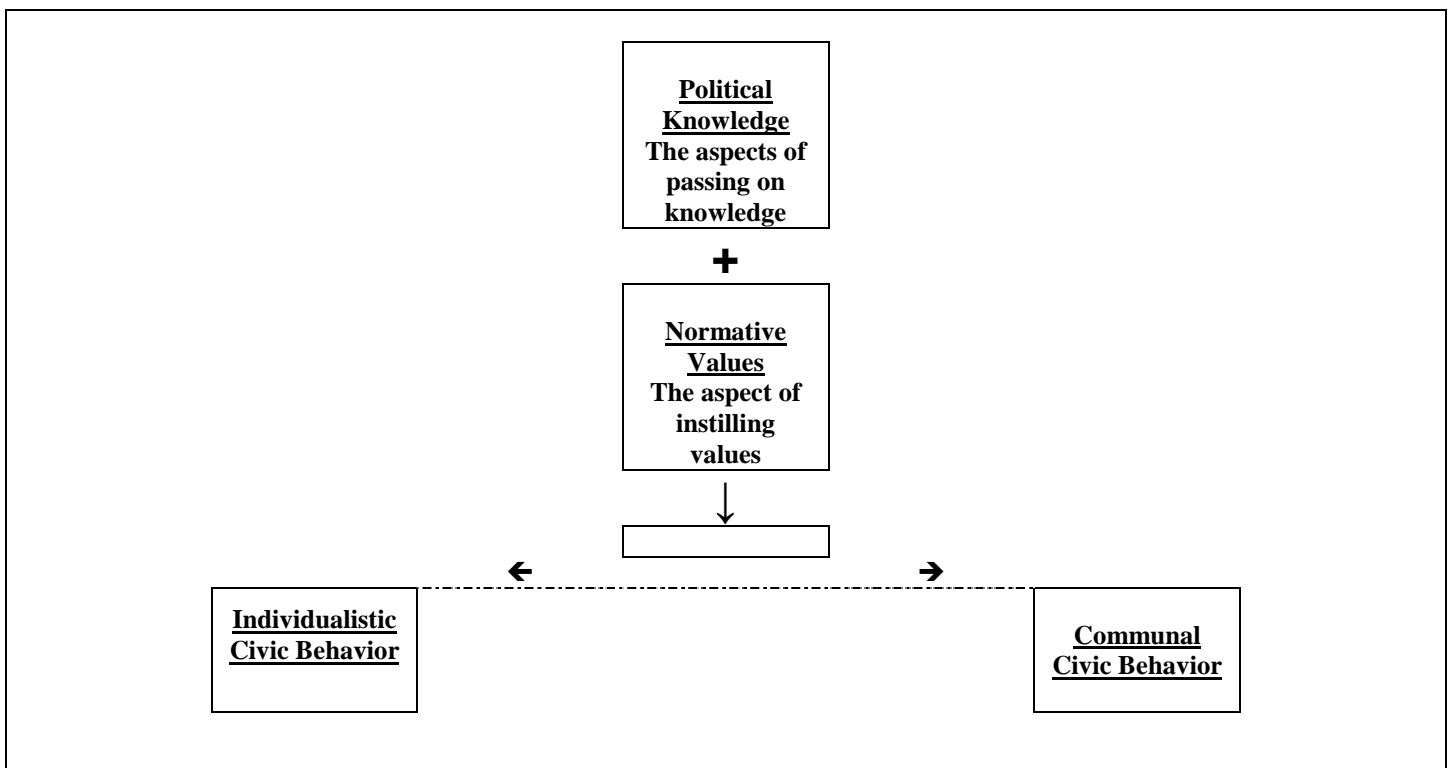


In other words, it is suggested that the combination of knowledge and values results in a specific behavior. This behavior then falls at a certain point on a theoretical spectrum, which ranges from individualistic to communal types of citizenship. The specific point on this spectrum is determined by what kind of knowledge and specific values are chosen. If the desired civic behavior is of an individualistic character the knowledge that will be passed on will include the ways in which the individual can act in the social sphere and in the same manner, the values to be instilled will stress the importance of the acts of the individual. On the other hand, if the desired outcome is of a communal nature, the knowledge to be passed on will reference facts regarding the larger national entity and communal values such as solidarity shall be stressed.

From the different components of this description the four aspects of civic education shall be derived (see chart 3): The *Political Knowledge* aspect represents the knowledge that is being

passed on; the aspect of *Normative Values* represents those values that are being instilled; *Individualistic Civic Behavior* is in fact the aspect of developing civic behavior that is based on the individualistic perception of citizenship; and the *Communal Civic Behavior* aspect regards the behavior that is influenced by the communal citizenship school of thought.

Chart 3: Four Concepts of Civic Education



Following, a detailed explanation of each one of these aspects shall be brought forth:

Political Knowledge. This aspect of civic education relates to what has been phrased as Civic Literacy (Milner, 2002) meaning the process in which specific knowledge is passed on to the

student. Political knowledge may be comprised of facts about the state, facts about the country's citizens and its political institutions. The main purpose of this concept is to create a common base of knowledge to be shared by members of society. This knowledge is seen as essential in order to take part in the in the social sphere and participate in political processes that takes place in the state (Lam, 2000).

It is important to point out that whereas this aspect may be interpreted as indoctrination, the main concern is with passing on information regarding everyday life in society rather than a grand ideology. As Milner (2002) explains, this aspect of civic education emphasizes "...the knowledge and ability of citizens to make sense of their political world" (p. 1). A good example of this is the demand that students know meanings of several terms which are seen as cardinal to the social sphere. Bernard Crick (2000) offers a list of terms seen by him as the keystones of life in the British public sphere, including the terms: "Power, Force, Authority, Order, Law, Justice, Representation, Pressure, Natural Rights, Individuality, Freedom and Welfare" (p. 95).

It is interesting to point out at this aspect does not include value based assumptions but rather sees the role of civic education as setting the base in order to enable students to choose and develop their own personal decisions (Milner, 2002).¹ In this manner, Crick does not reference the ongoing debate regarding the term "Welfare" but rather sees it as a fragment of knowledge that should be taught rather than a term that is connected to specific values.

Normative Values. This aspect of civic education is based on the assumption that for the sake of the existence of society citizens must possess certain values, aptitudes and dispositions. For

¹ Of course this statement itself may be seen as based on a specific value setting. It is important to remember that this description is part of the larger theoretical model.

example, White (1996) explains that in order for a democratic society to exist, its members must hold a democratic nature. Therefore she stresses the need for instilling the basic universal values that are perceived as essential to the existence of this democratic society. Thus this aspect of civic education concentrates on defining the values to be instilled and on the process in which these values are adopted by the students. In this context, Dan Avnon (2005) argues that the values that should stand at the center of this educational process are those values that express the complexity of the encounters between the different individuals in the social framework such as equality, freedom, and justice.

Michael Bottery (2000) explains that such values may relate to four different surroundings: (1) Values that relate to the self; (2) Values that relate to the encounter with the others; (3) Values that relate to society as a whole; and (4) Values that relate to the natural environment. He continues to explain that in order to instill these values one must examine the different levels in which they are instilled. He stresses the need to evaluate the dominant values of society in which the educational process is taking place, the values that guide the school system, the values that are present in numerous lessons taught across the curriculum and values that are mentioned in sole lessons.

Individualistic Civic Behavior. The assumption of this aspect of civic education is that society is composed of individuals, and thus civic education should cultivate the role that the individual takes in the public sphere (Nie, Junn, & Stehlik-Barry, 1996). In order to develop this role, supporters of this aspect ask if the individual is in fact competent to engage in the public sphere. It is important to point out that based on this aspects assumption the individual is seen as an autonomies being, aimed at achieving her/his own personal goals. Therefore, the ability of the

individual to be active in the public sphere is seen as essential in order to reach these personal goals.

In this sense, this aspect of civic education will emphasize the required intellectual and practical tools necessary for life in a democratic state. The emphasis is on personal behavior, such as independence and responsibility, as well as the outcome produced by these behaviors in the political sphere. Such behaviors may include acquaintance with the different opportunities for political involvement such as voting, connecting to representatives and understanding the main issues being debated. All these factors are aimed at enhancing the individual's personal situation.

It is important to point out that in order to attain these goals this aspect shall include components from both the *Political Knowledge* aspect, such as information regarding the way individuals can take part in political procedures, and from the *Normative Values* aspect, such as the importance of maintaining the ethos of individualism while confronting the state's institutions.

Communal Civic Behavior. At the basis of this aspect of civic education stands the fundamental question why are individuals willing to give up some elements of their personal freedom as part of their life in a larger community? An answer to this question is presented by Charles Taylor (1996) who explains that the feeling of belonging to a larger social entity is a natural human will. Jean-Jacques Rousseau's (1762/1947) suggested term The General Will also relates to this question, explaining the natural perception of goods shared by all human beings who live in a society. Thus, through the general will, it is possible to create a feeling of genuine belonging and unconditional devotion of the individual to the society and the state. Therefore, this concept of

civic education shall emphasize the ways in which to arouse feelings of membership and affiliation to the larger surrounding communities.

Similar to the *Individualistic Civic Behavior*, this aspect of civic education includes components from the *Political Knowledge* aspect such as facts regarding the shared history of the state, and from the *Normative Values* aspect such as Loyalty and the will to sacrifice.

We can further understand these four aspects of civic education by comparing each ones components and undercurrent assumptions (see table 1). For instance, the *Political Knowledge* aspect sees the cognitive forces as the main drive of human beings and therefore, knowledge is seen as the base on which society should be built. On the other hand, the *Normative Values* aspect sees values as the basis of society, based on the assumption that human beings are first and foremost driven by values and not knowledge. Such a dichotomy appears when comparing the *Individualistic Civic Behavior* aspect and the *Communal* one. The former sees man as an individual and thus views society as a mere gathering of individuals. The later, on the other hand, sees man as a social creature that can fulfill her/himself only when taking part of a larger social entity, and thus society is defined more as a large family due to the a priori connections between the individuals that compose it.

The role of education and the specific goals of civic education are seen by the different aspects in a diverse manner as well. Whereas it is enough in the framework of *Political Knowledge* for knowledge to be **passed on**, the focus of *Normative Values* is the **instilling** of values. The *Individualistic Civic Behavior* aspect aims to **develop** individual skills, in contrast to the *Communal* aspect that strives to **promote** a feeling of possession. The distinct differences

between the verbs **pass on**, **instill**, **develop**, and **promote** contributes to our understanding of the complexity of this topic.

Table 1: Concepts of Civic Education – A Comparison

	Political Knowledge	Normative Values	Individualistic Civic Behavior	Communal Civic Behavior
Nature of Man	Cognitive driven	Valued and moral driven	Individual	Part of a larger social group
Nature of Society	Based on common knowledge shared by all members	Based on common values which are essential	A gathering of individuals	Society as a whole is worth more than the sum of its parts
Perception of Knowledge	The base on which society is established	Only second to values	Emphasizes knowledge that is aimed at helping the individual act in the public sphere	Emphasizes knowledge regarding the larger social entity
Perception of Values	Only second to Knowledge	The key factor that is essential for the existence of society	Emphasize the individualistic values	Emphasizes values which connect the individual to the larger social entity
Role of Education	Pass on knowledge regarding society	Instill values seen as essential for society	Develop individual skills	Promote a feeling of belonging
Normative Goals of Civic Education	Students should hold knowledge about the state's political system and actors in society	Students should adopt values seen as essential for society	The student should develop the skills essential for acting as a participating citizen.	The student should possess an authentic feeling of belonging to the state.

In sum, the presentation of these four aspects of civic education may be seen as an attempt to form a general inclusive typology that relate to the different optional processes of civic education that take place across the curriculum. It is important to point out that the same notions of education may be seen differently, based on which aspect is in fact emphasized. A short evaluation of the notion of Critical Pedagogy shall demonstrate this point. Critical Pedagogy may be seen from the *Political Knowledge* point of view, questioning what type of knowledge is being passed on in the existing systems; From the *Normative Values* point of view the importance of critical inquiry shall be stressed from a large scale social perspective; The *Individualistic Civic Behavior* aspect shall stress the development of personal critical thinking

skills; Whereas the *Communal Civic Behavior* aspect shall promote the involvement of students in activities of oppressed communities.

Teaching the History and Geography of the Land of Israel as a Case Study

In order to test the theoretical model outlined above a specific case study to be evaluated has been chosen. The chosen teaching subject is what is known in Hebrew as *Yediat Ha'aretz*, which literally means knowledge of the land. This subject consists mainly of the history and the geography of the land of Israel and was taught in the Israeli educational system from the establishment of the State, 61 years ago. It is suggested that through monitoring changes in this field's curriculum, we may witness the changes in the perceptions of civic education throughout the years.

In the Israeli context, the term *Yediat Ha'aretz* relates the topic of interest in the history and geography of the land of Israel. The origins of this interest may be traced to the beginning of the Jewish immigration to the Land of Israel that began with the establishment of the first settlements (the First *Aliya*) and the founding of Zionist education (Bar Gal & Bar Gal, 2008). This movement was interested in knowledge that encompassed several topics mainly from the field of historical geography, including the examination of historic, written sources, descriptions of Biblical sites and archaeological remains. This topic may be set in the general theoretical context of assigning value based meanings to geographical settings (Jones, Jones, & Woods, 2004). In fact, this field may be seen as an attempt to create meaningful value based connections between the Jewish national movement and the geographical setting of the land of Israel (Feige, 2002). Historically, the roots of this movement can be traced to the Zionist youth movements

that were active in Europe and that were highly influenced by German youth groups such as the “Wandervogel” (Laqueur, 1962).

Based on these roots it was natural that the principles of this movement were manifested into the state’s educational system as was represented in several school subject matters that appeared throughout the years such as *Moledet* (homeland), Geography, History, *Eretz Israel* (The land of Israel) and *Shelach* (an abbreviation of the words Field, Nation and Society). The influence of this field on creating certain civic connections between the individual and the country in which she/he lives was and continues to be significant. The fact that these subjects’ content standards have been written and approved by the Ministry of Education makes for an interesting case study in order to evaluate the official use of such subject matters as means of civic education.

The question that stands at the base of this research is how the different aspects of civic education manifested into the curriculum of the field of *Yediat Ha’aretz*. In other words, this study deals with the use of this educational field as a means of civic education in the Israeli context throughout the years. The historical analysis of these content standards resulted in the understanding that that the 60 years of Israeli history may be divided into three main periods: (1) from the establishment of the state in 1948 until the 1970s (2) the 1970s and (3) from the 1980s until the current day. From the evaluation of these three time periods it is clear that the civic aspect of teaching about the land of Israel shifted and changed throughout the years. Whereas the first period is dominated by a coherent civic education plan that emphasized the *Communal Civic Behavior* aspect of citizenship, the second time period is dominated by a coherent *Individualistic Civic Behavior* plan. The third time period, which exists until today, is characterized by a

noncoherent and unbalanced civic education plan that in fact may be seen as an amalgamation of the different aspects of civic education.

(1) From the Establishment of the State until the 1970s

The first 20 years of the state existents can be characterized as a period in which the main goal of civic education was based on the *Communal Civic Behavior* aspect. The clear goal of the teaching about the land of Israel in this period was to create an authentic feeling of affiliation between the individual and the state, a feeling that was to result in the students will to contribute their personal activities to the building of the new state. The widely accepted assumption of this period was that the use of *Political Knowledge* was the best avenue in order to attain this goal of increasing the students' feeling that they are rooted in the specific geographical area. This feeling was seen as crucial due to the main task that was presented to this young generation of citizens, the task of building and developing the homeland.

It is important to point out that throughout this period all of the subjects reflected a clear distinction between the geographical terrain of the land and the social-political conception of the state. Knowledge of the *land* was to be taught in order to create a strong affiliation to the *state*. As opposed to the future situation that shall be presented in the third time period, these two dimensions did not merge.

A good illustration of this trend may be found in the 1954 general content standards for the subject of *Moledet* (Homeland) that was taught in elementary level. It is stated that the aim of this subject matter is to “root the students in the land of Israel; the land of our forefathers, the homeland of the Hebrew nation in which, after 2000 years, the state of Israel was established” (General Content Standard for the Elementary Schools, Grades 1 – 4, 1954, p. 3). Following, it is

stated that this subject matter will create an acquaintance between the students and the topics of “the scenery and climate [of the land], its soil and natural resources, its water resources, its fauna and flora, the different settlements, the social structure, the peoples occupations ... and the public and political framework” (General Content Standard for the Elementary Schools, Grades 1 – 4, 1954, p. 3). Thus, it is clear that the writers of these standards maintained a coherent plan in which the *Communal Civic Behavior* goal was to be achieved mainly by the means of *Political Knowledge*.

(2) The 1970s

In 1968, the Israeli parliament decided to adopt the findings of a subcommittee dedicated to raising the achievement levels of students while decreasing the achievement gaps between students from different origins. This decision brought forth a reformation of the education system including a rewriting of the subject matters standards and curriculum. One of the main changes regarded the overall purpose of the Israeli educational system, which morphed from a *communal* perception to that of an *individualistic* one (Yariv-Mashal, 2004). As opposed to the first period, the emphasis was put on the needs of the individual students and not on the needs of the state as a whole.

A feature that continued to exist from the first period is the use of the *Political Knowledge* aspect as the main means in which to achieve the civic educational goal. In other words, whereas the goal of the teaching this topic has altered widely, the means in which to achieve this goal continued. For example, in the 1970 state standards for the subject of geography, it is stated that the emphasis should be the “development of the geographical thinking” (Geography Content Standard, 1970, p. 4). Due to the trend of continuity regarding the

means in which to achieve this goal, it is not surprising to find the list of subjects that is similar to that of the first period: “understanding the relationships between man and his natural surroundings, creating learning opportunities that begins with the closer environment and then expand to farther away geographical settings (Geography Content Standard, 1970, pp. 5 - 6).

Therefore, the transition from the first period to the second may be seen as a transition from a *Communal Civic Behavior* aspect to that of an *Individualistic* one. Whereas in the former period the emphasis was put on the collective identity, the later was more concerned with the individual development. These two periods share the view that the *Political Knowledge* aspect should be seen as the main means in order to achieve the larger educational goal, be it *Communal* or *Individualistic*. For this reason the separation between the physical landscape and the abstract social-political order were clear. Knowledge about this landscape was seen in both these periods as a means in order to create a certain type of citizen of the state.

(3) From the 1980's until Current Time

In 1977, Israel experienced its first dramatic political change when the dominant Labor party lost the general election to the long time opposition party of the *Likud* (Galnoor, 1988). As part of the new government the responsibility of the Ministry of Education was given to the religious-nationalistic *Mafdal* party. This shift in power brought forth a religious messianic approach to the teaching about the land of Israel. However, this new conception did not cancel those aspects that were dominant in the previous periods, but rather was incorporated into them. This situation created a period in which no one coherent aspect of civic education can be identified, but rather an amalgamation of the different aspects ruled.

Turmoil in the Israeli political system in the years to follow created a reality in which the head executive of the Ministry of Education constantly switched. Fourteen different ministers have served in the 32 years between 1977 and today, an average of 2.2 years per minister. Many factors contributed to the fractionalization in the educational system during this period: varying agendas of different ministers, ongoing conflict with the Palestinians regarding the future of the West Bank and Gaza Strip territories, as well as the presentation of the post modern school of thought into the educational discourse. In reality, the different civic aspects continue to exist side by side with no clear correlation, and thus, the disciplines lack coherence regarding the civic aspects they attempt to promote.

For example, in the early 1980's the new subject matter of *Eretz Israel* (the Land of Israel) was presented, following a few years later by the additional subject of *Shelach* (an abbreviation of the words Field, Nation and Society). These two new subject matters did not cancel out the subjects of Geography and *Moledet* (Homeland) but rather existed parallel to them. Although these different courses are aimed for different grade levels, it is clear that the topic of the teaching of the land suffers from an overflow of subjects, educational goals as well as means with which to achieve those goals.

One may claim that this abundance of topics may be seen in a positive light because it leaves teachers with the opportunity to choose the civic aspect most appropriate for them and their students. Nevertheless, this reality may lead to a situation in which the teachers are overwhelmed by the multitude of choices, leaving them with no option rather than not to relate to any civic aspect of this topic. As the Hebrew Talmudic idiom "If you have seized a lot, you have not seized". In this situation the teachers and students are in fact supplied with more items than they can actually grasp, which leads them to abandon any civic aspect what-so-ever.

A good example of this trend may be seen in the content standard of the subject *Eretz Israel* (the Land of Israel) in which not one but several general goals are stated. These goals range from knowledge based topics such as “creating acquaintance with the land” and “understanding the historical, political, religious, economical, social and cultural process that have influenced the land” to other potentially contradictory value-based goals such as “creating an emotional attitude of affiliation towards the land” on the one hand while “developing a relationship of understanding, tolerance and respect toward the different nationalities, minorities and believers of different religions” on the other (*Eretz Israel* Standard, High School Level, 1993, p. 10). As if this is not enough, these goals are accompanied by skill based goals such as “developing the personal ability to understand the landscape”. In other words, based on these standards, the students are expected to attain knowledge about the land while adopting simultaneously both *Communal* (feeling of affiliation) and *Individualistic* (respect to others) civic attitudes and develop his/her own personal skills.

An additional feature of this period is the relationship to the physical terrain of the land. Whereas in the first two periods the study of the terrain was seen as a resource of which the goal of creating a civic attitude toward the state was to be achieved (a *Communal* attitude in the first period and an *Individualistic* one in the second), the study of land, in this period, is seen as a goal in its own right. A strong emotional meaning has been added to the geographical setting, manifesting in an educational goal that is to be taught with no connection to the other civic aspects. For example, the writers of the *Shelach* content standards (*Derech Eretz BeDarchi Eretz, Shelach* Standards, 2007) state that the “creation of a connection to the land of Israel” (p. 25) is a main goal. Note that the connection is not to the social-political construct of the state of Israel as presented in the first period, but rather to the physical landscape itself.

In sum, looking at the case study of teaching of the land of Israel through this theoretical lens presents the transitions that the field of civic education overcame throughout the years. Where in the first period the aspect of developing *Communal Civic Behavior* was dominant, the second period is one of developing *Individualistic Civic Behavior*. Although this fundamental difference in the educational goal, in both these periods a coherent civic education plan was implemented. The aspect of *Political Knowledge* was seen in both cases as the main means in order to achieve the final goal, while maintaining a clear separation between facts regarding the geographical setting and the affiliation to the abstract national intent. The third period presents an incoherent and unbalanced civic education plan, one that may be seen in fact as an amalgamation of the four different aspects with no clear correlation between them. One outcome of this situation is the portrayal of the teaching of the geographical setting as a goal itself, thus weakening the civic aspects of this subject matter.

Conclusions

This study emerged from a reality in which a true discrepancy exists between the abundance of writings regarding the field of civic education and the actual implementation of such plans in the classrooms. As a remedy to this reality, the purpose of this paper was to bring some much needed clarity to this convoluted field, in order to place grounds for future understanding of the civic education process for teachers, practitioners, scholars and researchers alike.

With the use of ideal types, in the first part of this paper, the four theoretical aspects of civic education have been constructed. Grounding these types in both the fields of political thought and education enabled a wide representation of the different conceptions that influence this educational process. With the examination of the specific case study, the actual

implementation of these aspects was brought forth. While stressing the importance of holding a coherent civic educational plan that is based on the understanding of the interactions between the four aspects, the theoretical model was proven to be an analytical tool of the first degree.

It is important to point out that the teaching of History and Geography of the Land in the Israeli educational system is merely a case study and that additional topics regarding civic education in different national settings must be further scrutinized. Only in this manner shall we enhance the educational process of the world's future generation of citizens.

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