

Citizen formation for a new millennium in Sweden – a prognosis of our time

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to forecast the present situation of citizenship formation in the field of Swedish education. In highlighting trends and tendencies in the educational assignment to provide for democratic citizenship in the first decade of the 21st century, which can be characterised as lacking collective visions for change, three depictions of citizenship are prevailing: citizenship formation for deliberation, for entrepreneurship and for therapeutic intervention. These depictions are analysed in terms of the direction for action taking and attention that they stress and produce as concerns citizenship in the making. The first one, citizenship formation for deliberation, stresses an inward-looking and inward-feeling citizenship. The second one, citizenship formation for entrepreneurship, stresses an inward-looking and outward-making citizenship, and the third one, citizenship formation for therapeutic intervention, stresses an inward-looking and outward-making citizenship. Taking on this forecast, which actualises democracy as something that is already achieved as a consequence of an assumedly post political situation, we argue that citizenship as well as society itself risks being pictured as apolitical and democratically “saturated.” This situation is hazardous, we argue, as it does not open up for change to come into question as desirable or even possible. Put differently, it leaves us with the notion that things have to be as they are, as we are living in the best of worlds.

Keywords: citizenship, citizenship education, citizen formation, education, democracy, apolitical

Introduction

Education is not only a matter of knowledge and skills but also of training—of forming the citizen of tomorrow. In a historical light, it

becomes obvious that this citizen will not be one and the same, but one who rather takes on many different shapes. Each and every one of these shapes reflects a certain time and place, each and every one with his or her own history of origin. In order to see and relate to these shapes, like to our own time, we need to move sideways. Dramatic and revolutionary present-time events shake us, affect our secure and habitual ways, and positioning oneself a bit further away when observing and studying these contemporary events could make visible things which otherwise are taken for granted.

The citizen-training role of education needs to be understood from its given historical and social context. It is about seeing the role of education in the society, which surrounds it and, inversely, seeing in what way this society is shaping this role. In this article, we want to study our own time with the issue of the role of education as our basis when it comes to the training of today and tomorrow's citizens. We focus on Sweden as a concrete and visualized place and community, and we set out from our own time as our basis, the early 21st century, with the purpose of visualizing our own time and society from a specific national context—Sweden. In short, we are trying to make a diagnosis of our time from “case Sweden” in order to raise a general question—what (Western liberal) citizen ideals take shape as obvious when it comes to what education is providing training for? How can we understand these citizen ideals from the social conditions and contexts which we are a part of and through which we live our lives?

The structure of this article is as follows: Firstly, we will describe the concept of citizenship. After this, a description of the Swedish educational context—historically and in the light of today—will follow, based on the issue of the role and function of education in this society. Thereafter, we will focus on three central configurations of citizenship-in-the-making taking shape today. Then some typical characteristics of these three configurations will be presented before we finally will raise some related questions based on our analysis.

Citizenship as citizenship formation

The issue of the role of citizenship training in education is connected to a disputed term in social science, namely *citizenship*. According to an established definition, citizenship can be seen as a contract between an individual and the state, which guarantees the member of the community a number of rights—civil, political, and social—but also obligations (Marshall, 1950). This contract is the result of negotiations between state and individual or between different groups of individuals (Tilly, 1995). The contract has specific meanings regarding the role of citizen training in education (see for example Dahlstedt, Rundqvist and Vesterberg, 2013; McDonough and Feinberg, 2006; Olson, 2008, 2012d).

Lately, a number of researchers have emphasized dimensions of the term citizenship other than those that put the judicial dimension and the relation between state and individual in the foreground. One can here point to the fact that citizenship also includes collective, social and cultural dimensions, among other things identity (Arnot and Dillabough, 2000) and citizen participation in civic life. In this context, a door has been opened for a broader view of citizenship as “a total relation, which concerns identity, social positions, cultural concepts, institutional practices and a sense of belonging” (Werbner and Yuval-Davis, 1999, p. 4). Citizenship is in this light seen as action; i.e. not only as something that people have or are, but also as something that is being done or carried out (van Gunsteren, 1998). In order to understand how citizens are trained, we need to, in view of this, study a number of conditions, phenomena and processes in society. One important part is to take a closer look at the prevailing way of thinking around citizenship and citizens within the framework of education (Olson, 2008, 2012c; Dahlstedt and Olson, 2013).

Against this backdrop, in this article we want to start from a perspective of citizenship, which approaches a citizenship as something not already given, but a formation and continuing process (Cruikshank, 1999; White and Hunt, 2000; Procacci, 2004). This perspective can aptly be summarized in Barbara Cruikshank’s (1999, p. 3) words: “Citizens are created, not born.” In this light, citizenship does not have a natural, given essence, but instead it is about the continual creation of citizens and

citizenship as such. This argument seems to contradict the quote used – the quote says clearly that citizens are not created, constructed, improved! Please change to reconcile this conflict. From this aspect, one could just as well talk about citizenship in terms of citizen formation, a perpetually ongoing process of creation, which takes place in a great number of places and domains (Dahlstedt, 2009). Citizenship is then not only about a relation between an individual and the state. The citizen can rather be seen as the result of a changing training project on a large scale, which is both life-long and life-wide. This training project never ends; it goes on during a whole lifetime. It is enacted not only within the field of education, but to the same extent also outside of it, not least in people's every-day life (Andersson, 2013; Olson, 2012c; Olson, Fejes, Dahlstedt and Nicoll, 2014).

From this viewpoint, the study of the citizen training role in education is about examining the perpetually on going creation of a potential citizen, a creation which takes place through a wide set of citizen-formation practices everywhere in society (Nicoll, Fejes, Olson, Dahlstedt and Biesta, 2013). This study can be described as an analysis that aims to provide a prognosis of our present time that focuses on the very role of education for civic citizen educators as well as for citizenship in general.

The Swedish educational context

A historical overview of Swedish – from centeredness on the collective to centeredness on the individual

Since the Second World War, the Swedish education system has undergone major changes. Education was a cornerstone of the “Swedish model,” the Social Democratic welfare model that emerged in Sweden in the post-war period (Esping-Andersen, 1990). The organization of the Swedish education system rested on the main pillars of non-segregation, social levelling, equality, general citizen-competence, and public responsibility for education (Lindensjö and Lundgren, 2002). One overarching objective of education policy in the “Swedish model” was to gradually level social and economic gaps and thereby to counteract the most polarizing effects of the market. Swedish education policy was dominated by a view of education as a “public good” (Englund, 1996).

Under such an education policy, every individual should be guaranteed the right to equal education, understood and institutionally underpinned as a fundamental social right. However, by the end of the 1980s, the perception of the role of education in Swedish politics changed. From having been regarded as a “public good,” schools have come to be seen more as a “private good” (Englund, 1996; Labaree, 1997). The focus shifted towards individual choice, parental responsibility for education, efficiency and competition, together with the development of individual competence as guiding principles of how schools should be run.

An increased emphasis on the principle of freedom of choice, for example, is a central feature of the education reforms implemented in the 1990s. The principle of equality, in the sense of equal outcomes, was gradually replaced by the principle of equity, in the sense of opportunities (Lindensjö and Lundgren, 2000; Olson, 2006, 2008b). An important part of the political context of this shift was also an idea that became more widely held during this time, according to which education was seen as an investment whose rewards could be evaluated in terms of increased growth and international competitiveness. In this context, the focus for educating citizens was increasingly directed toward the labour market. The increasingly overall objective of education is to create competitiveness. The meaning of education is hereby changed, from a fundamental social right to a commodity, in relation both to the population inside of the borders and outward to the surrounding world.

As in many other countries, it was more common to describe education in terms of “human capital,” i.e. as some kind of human “raw material” which can be refined in order to make profit (Simons and Masschelein, 2008; Gillies, 2011). When summarizing the main lines of development in Swedish education over the past two decades, one can thus say that during this period a significant change in the way in which education is imagined has occurred, in terms of both its design and its role in society. From essentially having been imagined as a social collective project, with the means to redistribute resources and to deal with socio-economic divisions in society, education has increasingly come to be defined as an individual project, with an increasing emphasis on individual choice,

responsibility and equivalence as the guiding principles shaping education policy (Olson, 2008a).

A Sweden today without visions

In the new millennium, the absence of visions in Sweden is obvious. The social background is one of threats. The changes to our climate, threats of terror, epidemics, natural disasters, and the global financial crisis are illustrative examples of this threat of the political climate. At the same time, there is a great deal of concern about increasing passivity and mistrust among the citizens, who then also in the long run are seen as real “threats against democracy” (Dahlstedt, 2009; see also Irisdotter Aldenmyr, Jepson Wigg and Olson, 2012). In the centre of politics we find, just like in the 1990s, the individual rather than the collective. (S) he is at the dawn of the new millennium, however, more explicitly linked to a defined order—democracy is, to a large extent, understood by a fixed set of principles and values to which the citizen should adapt. The principal challenge seems to be forming participating and tolerant citizens as a counterweight to passivity and intolerance, which are seen as a cause behind a further aggravating threatening situation in society (Government report, SOU 1997:121). In this situation, the faith in people’s active participation becomes vital. Participation in itself is seen as having a “civilizing” effect on both society and individual, which among other things is clear from the final Government report of the Democracy commission [Demokratiutredningen]—*A sustainable democracy* (Government report, SOU 2000:1).

By participating, the citizens develop fundamental qualities in society. Mutually respectful citizens generate a great human and social capital, which benefits all spheres of society. A person who does not receive similar training in creating trust by being tolerant toward people with different opinions loses the chance for training and breeding of their more primitive instincts (p. 33).

Although there are movements that insist “another world is possible,” it does not appear as if there are many “great stories” in politics, no really explicit political coordinates. In times of threats, the preservation of the prevalent order becomes what matters most. Development seems to

partly have reached its final destination. As argued by Author 2 et al. (Tesfahuney and Dahlstedt, 2008), we are living in the best of worlds.

The visionary force that nevertheless is fostered at this time can, for example, be found in the field of the supranational economy. In the so-called Lisbon declaration of 2000, the European Commission among others formulated the goal that Europe within a ten-year period would become “the most competitive and dynamic knowledge economy in the world” (Commission of the European Communities, 2001, p. 1). In the beginning of the new millennium, the support for this sort of description of Sweden today is even greater than in the 1990s (Olson, 2012b). Social policy and labour-market politics are first and foremost aimed at labour-market supply, for example the workforce, with the ambition to create a more competitive “knowledge economy.” The social-welfare systems are made more cost-efficient in order to safeguard a “positive entrepreneur environment” and that way acquire employment for people (Rothstein and Vahlne Westerhäll, 2005). Another expression of the relatively visionless spirit characterizing the new millennium is that the ideological scale is decreasing. It becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish political alternatives, and politics is gradually transformed into “a social administration run by experts” (Mouffe, 2005; Žižek, 1999), a line-up of seemingly neutral technocrats used for correcting various social wrongs and problems in society.

In this crisis, a therapeutic interpretation framework seems to offer ways of describing contemporary problems as well as the solutions that can handle these very problems (Furedi, 2004; Fejes and Dahlstedt, 2012). Not least for pedagogues (Grönlien Zetterqvist and Irisdotter Aldenmyr, 2013). This interpretation framework, which takes shape as part of the value-system commitment in Swedish schools (Englund and Englund, 2012), hardly runs counter to an economically oriented interpretation framework. Rather than that, there are quite a few parallels. In both cases, it is the individual who is in focus: her/his behaviour, thoughts, and emotions. The environment in which the individual is found is in the background; as social, political, and financial circumstances. In both cases, it is the individual who is the root of the problem and who holds the key to the solution. In relation to the market-oriented understanding,

which since the 1990s has dominated, the recipe for success in a therapeutic perception is not only to *focus on oneself*, but also to actively work on *caring about oneself*, to look inwardly, see one's own true self, and disregard difficulties and problems, trying to see one's "inner" potential as a first step of making changes in life (Gunnarsson, 2013; Irisdotter Aldenmyr, 2012). It is about reviewing one's thinking: to see possibilities—not problems (Ehrenreich, 2010). We can see the upsurge in the phenomenon of coaching as one example of the impact of different kinds of therapeutic work methods in the new millennium, not least in professional contexts. In order to find (and keep) employment, the most important thing is to develop the "right" attitude—to look, dress, and behave "right" (Vesterberg, 2011).

All in all, this more or less visionless present-day Sweden is characterized by an ambition to secure the principles of democracy and the market by having the citizens making them their own. Critical thinking is a given part of this implementation project of certain values; however this kind of thinking no longer seems to have a clear relation to the ambition to accomplish a change in society. Change will at this time rather be seen as something threatening, something which might end up badly, something characterized by risks which must be avoided for as long as possible in order to maintain the established order. It is against the backdrop of this community form that the educational citizen formation of the new millennium takes shape.

Education and citizen training

In this age, the role of educational citizen formation at the turn of the millennium in Sweden takes shape as a project with the purpose of equipping the individuals for times of preservation and dystopia. We will give three examples of this citizen-training project: training through a certain form of deliberation, training for entrepreneurship, and training through therapeutic intervention.

Citizen training for deliberation

Training for deliberation is about seeing to the ability and willingness of individuals to discuss as a democratic potential. Critical understanding in and through communication is included as a central element in this

training—but also to apply a certain kind of knowledge, to “establish a democratic consciousness” (Government bill, 2001/02: 80, p. 116). This is, however, during the first decade of the 21st century declining as a form of training and it rather takes shape as “a reproduction of norms and values” (The National Agency for Education [NAE], 2001b, p. 45) than as questioning the prevailing norms and calls for change.

Just like in the 1990s, reciprocity in encounters, as central in the role of education when it comes to raising a democratic mind, is emphasized. A vital difference, however, is that this reciprocity in the 21st century takes a certain systematic shape—it is about paving the way for talks, deliberative talks. At the turn of the millennium, reports and policy documents are added where this form of discourse becomes the starting point for the democratic civic function of education (Englund, 2000; NAE, 2000a, 2000b, 2001b). NAE (2000a, p. 58) states, for example, in a report that it is through deliberation that everybody’s “understanding of oneself and others is developed.” Deliberative talks, talks that are just in the sense that everybody has a chance to be heard, are emphasized as the lifeblood of democracy. It is in and through talks like these that individuals are shaped into responsible, tolerant, and active citizens. The education system is in this context described, just like in the 1990s, as one of the most central meeting points in society where various people meet in and through talks (NAE, 2000b; Zackari and Modigh, 2000). In light of this, an important challenge in the education for democracy will be to evoke a *willingness* to talk.

In this democratic citizen training, which has been highlighted as a communicative anchoring process, where values and norms are created collectively and through deliberations and agreements in and through talks, the importance of questioning and critical reflections are emphasized as a condition in order for this process to contribute to the development of a “democratic mentality.” “To question and critically interpret, assess and discuss fundamental values in school and preschool is an essential condition for keeping and developing democracy. Values must be made visible, known, confronted and discussed in order for the ‘democratic mentality’ of children and adolescents to develop” (Zackari and Modigh, 2000, pp. 8–9).

All in all, however, this approach becomes somewhat altered and also muted in Swedish schools in the early 21st century in favour of other ideas for citizen training. This happens above all when the establishing of a desire for discussion among people in school, where critical questioning is central in the democratic citizen training. In this training increased significance is given to a quite fixed kind of deliberative, rule-oriented knowledge; a knowledge that implies that the students should learn how to think and talk rationally, by testing different arguments for action (Bergh, Englund, Englund, Engström and Engström, 2013). With this, the development of a “democratic mentality” will in and through discussions to some extent serve as a visionary image of the civic citizen-training role of education.

Citizen training for entrepreneurship

At the same time as it is regarded that democracy in the early 21st century needs to be strengthened and safeguarded through talks, the adjustment to changes and needs in people’s working lives—just like in the 1990s—is a continuous dominant theme in the education policies of the new millennium. The main purpose of education from this perspective is to meet the labour market’s need for a skilled workforce. Entrepreneurship becomes a keyword in this context (Dahlstedt and Hertzberg, 2011). Entrepreneurship training will, to a high degree, be about training individuals for wanting to take responsibility for their own lives.

Within the European Union, at the turn of the millennium, there is an animated discussion on how the union can strengthen its competitiveness in the global knowledge economy. Here, “lifelong learning” is promoted as an important part of the economic growth potential of education: “the emphasis on lifelong learning is a condition for a successful transformation into a knowledge-based economy and a knowledge-based society.” Lifelong learning is here seen as a prerequisite for the individual as well as for society. “All the people who live in Europe—with no exception—should have the same opportunities to adjust to the demands caused by changes in society and the

economy, and actively take part in the shaping of the future of Europe” (The departments of the EU commission, 2000, p. 3).

The individual as a learning subject is in focus. State responsibility for her/his learning will be transferred to the citizen herself/himself. To “create opportunities and incentives for individuals, businesses, and governmental actors in order to invest in education and learning” becomes the responsibility of the state (NAE, 2001a, p. 12). The keyword is investment; education and learning should be understood as something that “individuals, businesses, and governmental actors” invest in. The reform of secondary education—senior high school—is here a telling example of the special kind of adjustment to a working life, which takes place in the early years of the new millennium (Dahlstedt and Hertzberg, 2011; Lundahl and Olson, 2013; Öhrn, Lundahl and Beach, 2011). If the ambition of the education policy in the early post-war years was to step by step create a school for all students, the reform of secondary education in the new millennium to an extent means a return to more of a divided secondary education—vocational and academic programs are more distinctly separated. Academic programs are meant to lead to continued studies while vocational programs are meant to lead to “acknowledged competence and employability” (Government report, SOU 2008:27, p. 24). This is one of several signs of a far-reaching adjustment during the early millennium.

Another sign of this adjustment is a gradually stronger emphasis on entrepreneurship in educational contexts. Between the years 2005 and 2008, a nationwide drive for education in entrepreneurship is carried out across the nation, the so-called National entrepreneurship program. This drive is aimed at the whole educational system since the intention is to create a “leitmotif” in the Swedish educational landscape.

When entrepreneurship runs like a recurring theme through all the educational system it will have an impact. An individual who is formed by entrepreneurial learning in school becomes a workforce asset for the existing organizations. Entrepreneurship also brings with it the courage to take off—to start one’s own business and realize lifetime dreams (Nutek, 2008, p. 11).

A result of this ambition is that entrepreneurship is written into the new curriculum for secondary education, which is launched with the new curriculum of 2011—Lgy11 (Öhrn, Lundahl and Beach 2011).

An important function for school is to provide a general view and coherence. School should stimulate the students' creativity, curiosity, and self-confidence as well as their will to try out their own ideas and solve problems. The students should have the opportunity to take an initiative and take responsibility as well as develop their ability in working independently and together with others. School should through this contribute to the students developing an approach that promotes entrepreneurship (Lgy11, p. 9).

The inclusion of entrepreneurship in the curriculum points at how the principles of the market are normalized in education. What previously stood out as a contradiction between the ambition of education to on the one hand train citizens for democracy and on the other hand train the workforce requested by the market (Englund, 1986/2005) now seems dissolved. Training for democracy and training for entrepreneurship at this time become integrated parts in a one and the same training project. The ends and means of politics are, just like in the 1990s, the responsible citizen—an individual who both can and wants to take responsibility for forming her/his own life. The role of education is to form this young person to *want to* take responsibility for her/his own life in the future. Less attention is applied to collective, public, and civic factors, such as the social and economic circumstances, which characterize the conditions for the will and responsibility of the individual.

Citizen training for therapeutic intervention

Citizen training in the early 2000s is, however, not only about individuals becoming able to and having a desire to take part in discussions and wanting to take responsibility in a certain way. It also tries to bridge the tension between a democratic citizenship that originates from a set of skills (something that can be learned and taught) and a democratic citizenship which originates from a set of values (something which can be created and recreated in a perpetually on-going learning process.

Democratic competence means being able to reflect on, emotionally process, relate to and act from the basic values (value system). Democratic competence also includes the ability to take part in and influence democratic decision-making processes. The ability to communicate with others on difficult and complex issues, including when opinions and views diverge, is this way put in focus. The democratic competence among children and adolescents is a part of and a condition for their lifelong learning, their social development and health (NAE, 2000b, p. 3ff.).

With the so-called value-system commitment as a basis, NAE here builds on two central concepts which both point at an understanding of learning being a process—values and lifelong learning. Democratically competent is the citizen who has the ability to actively take part in a lifelong learning process enacted all across the social field. The learning process is here not only about knowing and learning. It is also about *feeling*, about various emotional and thought processes—to reflect, process, emotionally relate to, communicate and think “right”—which in turn is put in relation to things for feeling and feeling content.

The necessary democratic competence thereby spans knowledge that is rather concrete (for example knowledge about what the democratic system is like), to the willingness to take responsibility as a matter of inward-looking skills (such as the individual’s capability to see her/his own inner self and emotional life). Citizen training is hereby given a therapeutic element. It will both be about right thinking (about life, society, and oneself) and about emotionally adapting these thoughts. Thus, it is not enough, pointed out by NAE (2000b, p. 23) in another context, that the individual “embraces democratic values.” (S)he also needs to develop a “deeper understanding” where (s)he is capable of “giving concepts like democracy and justice a more concrete meaning in order to motivate an action or a standpoint.” This formula, which originally is aimed at and takes shape within the framework of the deliberation thought, will in the early 2000s instead be supporting of citizen training for therapeutic intervention (Bergh et al., 2013).

That people on the education-policy side emphasize that the skills which the individual acquires must become her/his own is thus nothing new. Nor the fact that those skills are considered to require anchoring in

“personal standpoints” and “own experiences” in order for the individual to independently take “her/his own responsibility” to protect democratic values—and not only pass on the responsibility for the continued existence of democracy to somebody else. What is new is that one’s emotional life is seen as a central part of this context. The key to the emotional involvement which breeds responsibility is, according to NAE (2001a, p. 25), the individual’s motivation and willingness to think “right”: “The individual must remain motivated and keep a positive attitude to education and learning.” This emotionally and motivation-based side of citizen training means generating citizens with a “desire to learn, self-confidence” (NAE, 2001a, p. 25).

Taken together, the three vital parts of citizenship training in Sweden in the 2000s—deliberation, entrepreneurship, and therapeutic intervention—take on the form of different ways in which the individual’s own creation of awareness, willingness, thinking, and knowing become important parts of citizen competence. In this threefold form of the citizenship-training role of education, the partly contradictory reference points of democracy and the market have in different ways fused. With the desirable formation awareness, knowing, thinking, and feeling—emphasized in education in the new millennium—citizen formation certainly takes shape as something aiming outward, toward others and toward surroundings and society, but we argue that this citizen formation increasingly is aimed “inwardly”.

Citizen formation for a new millennium in Sweden

The forms of citizen training during the first decade of the millennium follow the key elements of the development of society, as stated in the beginning of this article. The democratic and also market-oriented faith in the individual’s communicative and collective awareness, responsible doings and emotionally anchored assurance of basic values is accentuated. In this accentuation, where above all the deliberation thought substantially will be transformed and renegotiated, one could talk about an exciting citizen formation consisting of three connected parts: a citizenship of feeling, doing, and discussing. These connected citizen ideals will in turn increasingly be characterized by an intensified interest in people’s inner lives. The citizen training of education has increasingly

come to be about different ways of mobilizing the individual's inside, in order for her/him to take the right stance outwardly, to society and other people.

An inward, empathetic citizenship

The inward movement is perhaps most evident in therapeutically oriented citizen training. Citizen formation can here be described as focusing on the inside of a person in order for her/him to that way feel good and adequately relate to various outer courses of events and states (in society and in relation to other people).

This form of citizen formation can include anything from “exercises in social value systems in order to develop the behaviour and democratic competence of the students,” forum plays and role plays to different “variants of conversation and reflection situations as the beginning or the end of a day or a week (NAE, 2000b, p. 44). Quite often, such activities are arranged within the frame for what is called Life Skills, which can be summarized as a number of therapeutic activities taking place in many schools without having been given the formal role as a school subject (Grönlien Zetterqvist and Irisdotter Aldenmyr, 2013; Irisdotter, 2014; Löf, 2011). During the first decade of the new millennium, equivalents to Life Skills in school have an impact also in other fields, such as psychiatry, correctional treatment, and social work. All over Sweden, different therapeutically oriented models (or parts of such) are a part of the current pedagogical work.

What then characterizes this inward and empathetic citizenship?

Through holistically minded therapeutic methods, individuals learn to “protect” themselves against different “risk factors” which are said to lead to various kinds of “asocial” and “unwanted behaviour” (Fejes and Dahlstedt, 2012). Typical of the time, the individual and the inside of that individual is now in focus (Furedi, 2004). This form of citizen formation is seen as a “solution” to several of the challenges and problems of society; mental and physical ill-health, insufficient “social skills,” and insufficient ability to deal with one's feelings (Bartholdsson, 2007). Essentially, it is the individual who is regarded as being both the problem and the solution. Problems like rows and disturbances, difficulties in education,

and unemployment are largely understood as a result of a set of “risk factors.” Focus is on the inadequacy and incompetence of individuals, separated from circumstances in society such as poverty, social relations, family relations and structural inequalities.

According to this kind of citizen formation, everybody has the potential to succeed—including those who are in the “risk zone.” What each and everyone need to do to be successful in life is to think positively, to work on both one’s appearance (clothes, treatment, behaviour) and inner qualities (motivation, urge, will). A prerequisite for being able to work on one’s appearance is, however, that one first has worked on her/his inner qualities, in and through positive thinking (Gunnarsson, 2013; Irisdotter Aldenmyr, 2012). For an educator, this is about making the youngsters *themselves willing* to change—first within themselves and then outwardly, to society and other people. This citizen formation has as its purpose that the individual actively should take responsibility for herself/himself and her/his surroundings, throughout life and with complete dedication (Englund and Englund, 2012). An important element here is to create an awareness of consequences among young people; that is to teach them to see, understand and take the consequences of their actions. Herein lies the purpose to develop the ability to calculate with potential—often-beneficial—risks with different ways of acting. To act “right” is the same as to act within the framework for what is considered “normal,” something which the individual must judge in a perpetually on-going dialog, not only with people around her/him but also, and maybe especially, with herself/himself (Fejes and Dahlstedt, 2012).

An inward-looking, outward-making citizenship

The entrepreneurial aspects of citizen formation are inward-oriented, creating a basis from which it then works outwardly in more concrete or practical terms than the therapeutically oriented citizenship training. This citizen formation is to a higher degree process-oriented. It emphasizes the will to continually search for new possibilities to invest in. Citizen formation is here a kind of eternal traveling, with no final destination, a perpetually ongoing process of coming into existence, always on the way. This perpetual process of coming into existence is not only of

considerable value within the framework of the inventiveness and logic of the market (that is, to start and run a business). It is also of great value well beyond the domains of the market. “Entrepreneurial competences increase the opportunities of the individual to start and run a business. Competences such as to see opportunities, to take an initiative, and to turn ideas into action are of considerable value to the individual and to society in a wider sense (The Government Office, 2009, p. 12).

Through a willingness to foster (one’s own life) and take responsibility for this change by acting in the world, this form of citizen formation is about seeing opportunities, taking initiatives, getting things done, solving problems, planning, and cooperating. This kind of citizen form stands out as a present-day hero figure. It is as if the very survival of society depended on this existence. Although not all citizens will support themselves financially as entrepreneurs, those who form themselves through inward-oriented citizenship—to find their own urge and volition—will gain success in life, be it on the labour market, in studies or something else.

The ever-increasing impact of this form of citizen formation can be seen as an expression of further development of the principle of freedom of choice, which was dominating in the 1990s. Some years into the new millennium, above all after the change of national government in Sweden in 2006, the focus of citizen formation of education was no longer the instrumental ability and will to *choose*. Rather, it changed focus to now be in focus of the citizen formation of education. Rather, it is now about fostering an inward and emotionally anchored ability and will to *do* and *live* the right way. If the ideal working-life suited citizen in the 1990s appeared in the role as a consumer—of education—(Olson, 2008), (s)he has in the 2000s more and more come to appear in the role as a product, which can be traded in the labour market (Carlbaum, 2012).

An inward-anchored, outward-declaring citizenship

The deliberate citizen formation revolves around on the one hand the individual’s background, experience-based and made-aware anchoring of certain values and on the other hand the forms, conditions, and rules for the majority of the discourses (s) he is a part of.

In order for one's own reflections to assume an outward direction, inward looking is required, where values and thoughts are anchored. The knowledge of conversing with others—about norms, values, rules for being together and social contacts—has as its starting point inner qualities which have been made aware in a way which creates authenticity, credibility, and truthfulness in relation to other people and society as a whole. One's own reflections (and the democratic meaning of the discourse in this way of reflecting) become an indirect but still decisive part of this citizen formation.

In terms of citizen formation, it is in and through reflections and talks that young people are to look for positive outcomes of their own actions in the world. This citizen formation is not only brought to the fore within education but also within a number of other professions where a “reflecting practice” increasingly has come in focus (Fejes and Dahlstedt, 2012). It is about carrying out all-embracing and sweeping work with oneself (to anchor certain values and an awareness), which makes possible a good democratic relation and awareness to be able to act authentically and truthfully in communication with others and the surrounding society. This assumes that the individual herself/himself increases “her/his awareness and knowledge.” This citizen formation includes ongoing and active meta-reflecting in and through talks, of one's own and others' being and acting.

Concluding reflections—a prognosis of our time

Taken together there are three different citizen configurations that stand out as central in the Swedish educational context of today; *an inward empathetic citizenship*, *an inward-looking outward-making citizenship* and *an inward-anchored outward-declaring citizenship*. These three connected configurations are characterized by an intensified stress on (young) people's inner lives in education as well as in society in general. As a consequence, it seems, the citizen training of education has increasingly come to be about different ways of mobilizing the individual's inside, in order for her/him to take the right stance outwardly, to society and other people.

What then can generally be said based on these three configurations of citizen training in the Swedish educational context in the new millennium—and what does this tell us about our time? Citizen training in the 2000s takes shape in a seemingly conflict-free way, in a landscape where clear political conflict lines and clear political governance are missing. It is difficult to distinguish political alternatives shaping a future beyond the prevailing order of our time. Even if the discourse climate of the 2000s stands out as apolitical, the good citizen and citizen training still follow politically decided images of how this citizen thinks, reasons, and acts.

In the early 2000s, we can see a strong emphasis on the role of education in working life. The role of education now becomes to provide skills, which are requested and useful on a competitive, and to an even higher extent individual- and performance-focused, labour market. An expression of this is that entrepreneurship for the first time was written into the curriculum for secondary education. Just like in the 1990s, it is the individual and not the collective that is brought to the fore. According to the citizen ideal of the 2000s, initiative taking is a virtue that not only is useful and valuable on the labour market, but also in society as a whole, in nearly every walk of life. The tension between democracy and the market is almost completely dissolved, owing to the fact that an enterprising spirit is also regarded as embracing the core values of democracy. The enterprising individual—the entrepreneur—is not only economically useful but is at the same time also democratically competent. The entrepreneur is not only driven by a rational utilitarian maximization but also by her/his own feelings. (S) he is driven by the will to change as well as faith in herself/himself and her/his own ability. According to a therapeutic understanding of society and individual, one can say that the entrepreneur is animated.

Democracy is in this conflict-free climate understood as something already given. It is not citizens who form democracy but the other way around, democracy which forms citizens. The same goes for the market. Democracy is seen as a set of values, which a citizen is meant to adopt. These values are to a large extent already given. Just like a citizen is meant to adjust to and embody democratic ideals, (s) he should embrace

and adjust to the ideals of the market. Neither democracy nor the values of the market nor logic, however, seems to be open to scrutiny and questioning for the good citizen.

Accordingly, neither today's democracy nor the market is (and cannot be) open for discussion or negotiation. That way, citizen training is about consolidating the principles of the market and about having the citizens make these principles their own. In the 2000s, more radical forms of citizen training almost seem to be something threatening, something which challenges democracy rather than creating new opportunities for it. It is true that one of the aspects of the citizen in the 2000s, the entrepreneur, has the potential for a change; (s) he is driven just by a will to change and create. But there is always a pronounced and overarching purpose: to create financial gain and benefit for the sake of democracy itself. The entrepreneur as a citizen figure is subjected to the conditions of the market—(s) he is one with the market.

The only thing we can do as citizens according to the prevailing is to recreate the existing order. The striving for change is not first of all outwardly aimed, but inwardly. This ambition is about changing our selves rather than society. It is up to the individual to create her/his own future. But the future, we would argue, is something that we create together. A prerequisite for this creating is, perhaps, that we to a lesser extent than what seems to be at hand *assume* that we already are democratic or even that open discussions in which we take part actually are democratic. What is required is action and communication through which our time becomes visible as *political* and thereby possible to change through collective acting. A change of our time and our future requires outward action, not just inward reflection. Our prognosis of citizen formation in education in our time shows that this required double course for change increasingly seems to be limited to the latter, to the individual's inward-looking. There has in the new millennium been a heated debate about "the crisis of democracy" where it has been claimed that democracy is subject to various kinds of threats—in the form of, for example, terrorism, declining citizen involvement, a financial crisis, and widespread alienation. But the biggest threat to democracy is perhaps the idea that our time is post-political, democracy completed, and

citizenship introvert. As an answer to this threat, there is nothing else to do than to recapture the future as the collective room for action and change that it can be.

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