

Building a Civic Culture Post-Conflict

LYNN DAVIES

Centre for International Education and Research, University of Birmingham, UK

ABSTRACT This paper examines the role of education in (re)constructing civil society in societies emerging from conflict or violence. After examining the nature of civil society and its importance for democracy and peace, the paper looks at three areas: legal education (including human rights education); information, media and the public space; and citizenship education (exploring nationalism, democracy and accountability). It aims to dispel any romanticised mythology about the possibilities of civic regeneration, particularly if this means returning to a nationalistic, exclusionary or heroic past. The 'new normality' should be active citizens who will challenge social injustice, corruption or aggression; this is argued to apply to countries who are the instigators of international conflict as well as those traditionally labelled conflict or post-conflict..

Introduction

In the aftermath of violent conflict, concentration in education is understandably on material reconstruction of educational institutions, on trying to locate those teachers who are still alive (who may have fled into exile or found other survival means such as joining the military itself) and on dealing with trauma and stress of students (and teachers). Humanitarian efforts provide such trauma counselling as well as materials such as the 'Teacher emergency package' which contains basic essentials such as chalk, pens, blackboard paint, exercise books and games in order to provide a return to some 'normality' of schooling and hence give a sense of security. Yet two issues are immediately apparent. The first is whether there is ever a situation 'post-conflict'; the second is whether it is possible or desirable ever to 'return' to some state before the conflict.

This article builds on some of the ideas in my recent book *Conflict and Education: complexity and chaos* (Davies, 2004), which examines the potential role of education both in forging peace and in contributing to negative conflict. While education can be a key to economic development which helps to maintain or develop a stable society, it also plays a central role in the reproduction of inequality, the reproduction of militarism and the reproduction of the constructions of 'the other' which underlie much conflict. The book uses complexity theory to explain some of the causes of conflict and education's role in these, and also to suggest new forms of what I term 'interruptive democracy' in educational institutions. This involves generating positive forms of conflict which paradoxically help to maintain peace. In this article, I focus on one aspect of interruptive democracy, which is the role of civil society—and look at education's role in preparing for this. While I discuss countries or

regions conventionally associated with conflict or war, my argument is that the conclusions apply equally to those countries conventionally seen as 'stable'. The language and scope of complexity theory—non-linearity, amplification, turbulence, bifurcation, information—have wide application.

There are difficulties in making the distinctions between conflict and post-conflict, as they are certainly not dual, nor are they linear. There are phases and transitions. It was estimated in the Gulf war in 1990 that more deaths occurred *after* the hostilities ceased, through lack of food, clean water, medical care and adequate help for refugees (Richman, 1993). We may see the same after the Iraq invasion of 2003. As Miller and Affolter (2002) reiterate, the umbrella term 'post-conflict' is itself a profound simplification.

Even after fighting stops, how long does a society remain in reconstruction? And for whom? For development agencies and donors, the duration of any given phase may be linked to government stability and capacity. For individuals and communities, however, there may be no clear point when 'reconstruction' stops, since the consequences of conflict, like shrapnel, penetrate deep into minds and hearts, to be worked out over a lifetime and beyond, and affecting relationships and identities for generations. (2002, p. 5)

Also, each post-conflict situation is unique, with effective responses attuned to local histories and conditions, including the duration of the conflict, the actors involved, the intensity of the violence and the fragility of the peace.

Nonetheless, most writing on complex emergencies distinguishes common sequential phases of certain sorts, albeit categorised in a number of ways. UNICEF uses the phases 'loud', 'transition' and 'rehabilitation/reconstruction' (Pigozzi, 1994). USAID uses the four phases 'emergency', 'recovery', 'rehabilitation' and 'reconstruction'. In education, we would look for markers such as the degree of coordination of agencies, teacher provision, curriculum, language of instruction, educational supplies and information systems, and whether all are surrounded by the establishment of a viable governance of education and a Ministry of Education. The move could be seen as from a simple but turbulent system to a complex adaptive one.

This paper focuses mostly on the last of the phases. Writing on post-conflict societies often uses this language of social and economic 'reconstruction' or 'restoration' of civilian, judicial and political processes (Stewart, 1998). Yet Roche argues:

A developmental approach to recovery is about using this period to bring about change, or consolidate gains made during the crisis. It is not about returning to the 'normality' or *status quo* which led to the crisis in the first place. (1996, p. 20)

This would be particularly true of schooling and of militarisation. For Stewart, 'A culture of violence has to be transformed into a stable, non-violent normality in which the hearts and minds of the former combatants are convinced of the benefits of permanent peace' (p. 21). There is a need to go beyond the 'default imperative' of restarting education as it used to be. As Bush and Saltarelli point out, the usual 'add good education and stir' approach is unlikely to produce lasting change in conflict-ridden societies. During conflict itself, education is often seen as a 'second front', with its attempts to maintain normalcy seen as heroic and patriotic (Waters, 2005). The battle of the mind becomes a form of patriotic resistance. This presents a huge problem for reconciliation.

Education can however help to bring about a new normality in a number of ways: peace education in schools; conflict resolution training in the police or the army as well as schools; trauma and counselling; and new types of access for previously excluded or marginalized groups. This article focuses specifically on the (re)building of political and public culture post-conflict, including the role of 'civil society'. It also aims to show the importance of such culture building in the prevention of negative conflict—and hence the relevance to apparently stable societies.

Obviously the role and priorities of education and civil society depend largely on the nature of the conflict, the cause of it and the future envisioned. If it had been violent struggle, then humanitarian education or physical rebuilding is a first priority; if (as in South Africa) the effect was not so much the destruction of schools, then the priority is the redistribution of educational opportunities. Much depends on whether the conflict was internal or external, and what the solution to the conflict was. Bosnia post-Dayton was to become a sort of plural society; Kosovo was to become for the Kosovars, with as yet no real attempt at integration. Often there is a dual new function: Ikrimov (2001) argues that in Afghanistan, peace education should be taught together with education for sustainable development, that is, the skills of surviving and developing in an integrated, co-dependent society, as the humanitarian and economic situation in the country is crucial. Darby's (1997) analysis of the problem in Northern Ireland is as 'multi-layered' with four key issues of a constitutional and political problem; a problem of inequality; a problem of violence and injustice; and a problem of community relations and cultural intimidation. So the question is what is being reconciled, and by whom: does the conflict involve everyone—in the Republic, in Britain, internationally? This question of the 'boundary' of a conflict is a recurring one.

Larger political ideologies will influence directions—currently towards neo-liberal free market ideologies. In a post-communist period, Offe (1996) distinguishes the contradictory trends between *modernizers* and *conservatives*, where the modernizers symbolise urban life, civil society, market economy, human rights, secularism, moral tolerance and a 'return to Europe'. The conservatives symbolize the rural forces with emphasis on religion, populism, national pride and a 'return to ourselves'. Against the dark past of communism, the modernizers set a bright future of liberal capitalism, while the conservatives set it against a pre-communist golden age. Offe is able to explain why people still find it rational to pursue the politics of 'ethnification': for the political elite, the engagement in ethnic and nationalist political initiatives symbolises one's distance from the old regime and has greater certainty:

It seems to be a game of (backward-looking cultural) 'pride' versus (forward looking economic) 'hope'. In the absence of some overarching constitution of a political space mediating between the two and of compelling reasons for economic hope, the longing for 'pride' is bound to hold sway. (Offe, 1996, p. 6)

Mijatovic (1999) has an interesting depiction of the processes of change in countries in transition from communism to democratic capitalism, which have resonances with complexity theory. After stages of euphoria, improvisation and controversy come crises which lead to 'retroreactions'. The 'retroreaction' in terms of the electoral situation can move in three directions, and can be influenced by war: a government of national unity; an endless and futile struggle between governing party and opposition; or a movement by the government to adopt totalitarian solutions, ushering in a dictatorship. The first is the most desirable, but would require the various parties to work on a number of areas such

as the definition of democratic development and rules of conduct and defining and implementing privatisation, decentralisation and regional development. In educational terms, it would require the training of teachers in democratic principles and pedagogy, and a radical change in what is taught in schools based on democracy, interculturalism, tolerance and education for peace. What has actually happened is what Mijatovic calls a 'Frankenstein syndrome', whereby the parties that have gained power have simply and fairly uncritically copied systems from abroad (the tax system of one country, the health system of another).

A main characteristic of pluralistic democracy is missed in this process, namely that for a democracy to function successfully a synthesis of authentic experiences, creative energies and critical self-assessment is necessary. (1999. p. 33)

This fits with dynamical systems theory's argument that real emergence should come from within.

I want to explore the specific role of 'civic culture' in forging a functioning peace and pluralistic democracy, and where education fits in this. The World Bank economist Walter McMahon (2003) has overviewed research on the link between education and development, and concludes from a range of studies that education contributes to strengthening civic institutions and the rule of law through democratisation (as authoritarian regimes accompany illiteracy); human rights (a function of democratisation and education); political stability (aided by better civic institutions); and lower crime rates (accompanied by less policing and incarceration). In examining the educational contribution to this strengthening of civic institutions, I focus on four elements: preparation for participation in civil society; legal education; information and the public space; and citizenship education.

Surrounding all of these are 'breaking the circle of hate' in Jonathan Sachs' terms (quoted in Whitehead, 2003, p. iii). I do not then classify anti-racism or breaking down nationalisms as a separate category. Violent conflict and oppression can continue when it is possible to dehumanise the enemy or the subordinate. The task is not to replace such dehumanisation or hatred with a vague and uncritical 'tolerance' of the other, but to enable a critical evaluation of actions rather than 'peoples'. This is the task of all rebuilding of culture.

Preparation for Civil Society

Civil society has a number of definitions—and debates—but most centre around voluntary civic associations that operate between the state and the family. A strong civil society is seen as a key to democracy. However, an obvious problem (and one particularly true in conflict and post-conflict societies) is of value judgements about whether a particular form of association is benign—does one include 'terrorist' groups and drug cartels as well as music clubs and voluntary reading groups? Schmitter (1995) therefore arrived at four conditions which would qualify a self-organising group as being 'civil'. They are:

- (a) relatively independent of both public authorities and private units of production and reproduction (firms and families);
- (b) capable of deliberating about and taking collective actions in defence/promotion of their interests and passions;
- (c) do not seek to replace either state agents or private (re)producers or to accept responsibility for governing the polity as a whole; and
- (d) do agree to act within pre-established rules of a 'civil' or legal nature.

The final condition, of acting within the law, seems a clear distinction, but then raises questions of groups which sometimes break the law in order to draw attention to their cause—for example Greenpeace. Active Trades Unions could be seen to be part of civil society, yet they may engage in acts of civil disobedience in order to further their claims. Another issue is the denial of the family as part of civil society—an issue for the feminist debate about the public/private domain of politics (Arnot & Dillabough, 2000). In the UK, caring for an elderly person outside the home is seen as a voluntary or charitable activity which can attract funding, whereas caring for a relative inside the home does not. And where would the UK organisation ‘Education Otherwise’, which consists of parents wanting to educate their children at home, stand?

A major issue with a too romanticised view of civil society and civic association is the dilemma of exclusion. As Whitehead (2002) points out, civil society develops unevenly over time on a logic distinct from state formation. The resulting patterns of associative life and social communication will typically be highly structured, with insiders and marginal or excluded sectors. ‘New democracies will only tend to work well if they can restrain such exclusionary tendencies and induce those with the most “social capital” to adopt a broader and longer term view of their civic engagement with national society as whole’ (p. 77). Formal political equality might be established after a conflict or transition, but ‘the sudden creation of new inclusionary political societies may well not coincide with the pre-existing maps of associative life’ (p. 78).

Ethnic and faith groups in a post-conflict society may have unpredictable effects. In disadvantaged areas of London, strong faith groups have been found to be positive in terms of creating vibrant communities and providing support to their members (Begum, 2003). Yet in areas where religious tension has been a factor in the conflict, membership of faith groups may serve to consolidate views of ‘the other’. Something as apparently benign as music may have much symbolic or associative value: when working with educators in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2002 on curriculum harmonisation, I found there was insistence by teachers on the retention of ‘national’ songs and anthems on the curriculum, as well as poetry. Fears of ‘loss’ of identity through amalgamation of language differences or homogenisation of culture are key to understanding this apparent rigidity.

There is also the history and traditions of activism: it was said to me by a leading journalist in Pristina that ‘Kosovo without an enemy does not know how to function’. After ten years of Serbian occupation, and a highly active shadow system developed by the Albanians, it was not easy to turn the oppositional politics into pluralist or even routine ones. It was disconcerting to talk to people who said they were desperate to pay taxes again, so that roads could be mended or electricity more guaranteed. It is a commonplace that social cohesion can come from a shared enemy; remove the enemy and other sorts of fragmentations and interests will emerge—not all conducive to the new rebuilding. Whitehead explains the virtual disintegration of Solidarnosc:

Competing with activists for influence in post-transition public life would be many other formations schooled in less civil norms: pragmatic defectors from the authoritarian power structure; revanchistes, chauvinists and fundamentalists from other sectors of the opposition; the new rich, often engaged in ‘primitive accumulation’; carpet bagging foreign advisers with no durable commitment to the local society; and so on. (p. 85)

Civil society post-conflict or post transition will be very fragile and, for Whitehead, may require certain forms of constitutional engineering through a well-crafted bill of rights or even the adoption of parliamentarism or federalism.

An obvious precondition to add to those of Schmitter, then, is that (e) groups are not exclusionary nor exist in order to suppress or disadvantage other groups.

As Bardhan (1997) points out, ethnic groups are easier to organise and consolidate by political leaders than are interest groups, since the norms restricting entry and exit are more powerful, the boundaries less fluid and the defining characteristics more easily identifiable in the former.

In my book I was particularly interested in organisations or groups that work ‘across the divide’, whether in Israel/Palestine, in Kosovo, in Sri Lanka or in Northern Ireland. Such initiatives have established or supported integrated education, or brought together young people to talk across divides and break down stereotypes and ancient enmities. A conventional distinction in discussing social capital is threefold: *bonding* social capital (or exclusive), which is strong in-group cohesion or solidarity; *bridging* (or inclusive) social capital, which is outward looking networks with distant friends, associates and colleagues; and *linking* social capital which is generated from ties across different groups, class and political lines where different groups access power and resources across the social strata (Begum, 2003). While in stable societies all three types may help community renewal, in conflict societies it would seem advisable to try to work towards ‘linking’ social capital rather than to support exclusionary or ‘bonding’ groups.

This might relate to the more inclusive aspects of culture. Restoring a culture of learning post-conflict is not just about schools, but also libraries, museums and cultural resources. In Kosovo, there had been some art and music in schools, but art was of the ‘draw-an-apple’ variety and music was writing the stave and clefs. There was not a pool of music and arts teachers on which to draw, and—as in many walks of life—people were simply appointing themselves ‘directors’ of theatres and TV stations (Davies, 1999). Interestingly, the cultural editor of *Koha Ditore*, the leading daily, was unsure that getting young people together to ‘do culture’ in educational institutions was actually advisable. For him, restoration of culture was too risky to be left to schools. Sport is another potential area of inclusion or bridging: while football hooliganism in England is analysed as stemming from the need for a sense of identity, belonging and power, or a specific working class style and the collective defence of local territory (Clothier, 2004), I observed sporting events in Brcko being tried as a way of bringing together young people who would not otherwise have interacted.

It would seem then that preparation for civil society in educational institutions should revolve around two aspects: membership of non-exclusionary groups and strong links with the political and cultural life of the community. This includes not just volunteering (which has different traditions in different cultures) but also practice in advocacy, protest and listening—components of active citizenship which I will come back to later. I turn now to the role—and rule—of law in civil society.

Legal Education

Legal reconstruction efforts post-conflict include a variety of tasks, from drafting laws on property restitution to establishing war crimes trials. Law graduates are also needed to interpret new laws—for example the new Constitution of Afghanistan provides that no law can be contrary to the beliefs of Islam. Whether, as some observers worry, this will be ‘Taliban lite’ (Marshall, 2004) depends on how jurists draft laws and plead and decide cases. Waters (2004) in a pioneering overview article on post-conflict legal education examines its significance in rebuilding a country, but also some of the tensions involved. Not only have law teachers been lost (as in the de-Baathification process in Iraq where academic staff were sacked), but a new regime may mean existing legal concepts being overturned. For example in Kosovo, the UN regulations imported legal concepts, including human rights concepts,

of which the legal academy had little understanding. Exiled Tutsis in Rwanda returned with common law, English language degrees of little immediate use in Rwanda's French language, civil law system. Legal academics may resist changes to (or reversions within) the legal system, as happened in Kosovo, and in the breakaway states of South Ossetia and Nagorno Karabakh.

Waters argues that international actors have focussed too much on the role of legal education in reconstruction and insufficiently on the role it might play in reconciliation. This is particularly true following ethno-political conflicts. Law departments may hamper reconciliation in three ways: discrimination (not admitting ethnic minority students); the substantive law taught (including promoting law as a cultural marker, a historical ethno-territorial narrative, denying legal pluralisms and ambiguities); and a failure to inculcate a culture of peace (not tackling alternative dispute resolution or the international legal basis for peace education such as in Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights). Teaching public international law has the potential to be a positive force but should be taught in a process oriented way—stressing the importance of the peaceful resolution of disputes and not as a vehicle only to reinforce an intransigent opinion such as territorial integrity or self-determination.

This leads to the importance of international human rights education and international humanitarian law education—which can be taught at school level as well as higher education. Bernath *et al.* (1999) argue strongly that human rights education (HRE) is not only an essential component of just societies, but is a necessary element of re-establishing stable and just post-war societies. Their research claims 'strong empirical evidence' that HRE reduces violence in situations of conflict. Three fields are needed in order to tackle factors of violence and social trauma: these are cognitive (the knowledge needed to promote human rights); attitudinal (self-help, trust, commitment to fairness); and behavioural (mobilising, organising, documenting violations). Bernath *et al.* say, 'In practice, the content we saw varied from lectures to illiterate peasants on the French Revolution to harangues to overthrow the government'. The challenges start with the planning of HRE for incorporation in the activities of local institutions such as schools, community groups and religious organisations 'however embryonic or war-torn they might be' (p. 4). There may be a dilemma of making HRE consistent with authoritarian schooling: it would seem obvious that teachers who demand unquestioning obedience or use physical punishment undermine the development of non-violent, democratic behaviours among students (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000).

Spencer (2000) gives an example of activities in South Africa in which young people can learn about the law and about conflicts between fundamental rights, while developing practical skills. She reports the University of Western Cape running mock trial competitions for secondary schools, citing one example where schools had to choose between being the prosecution or the defence for a case concerning a six-year-old child with AIDS whose deeply religious parents refused medical treatment and who died. The students had to argue the cases—a lesson on the law, on criminal procedure, but also on conflicting rights. Young Peoples' Parliaments now operating in many parts of the world are also providing preparation for such debate and awareness of procedure.

A particularly interesting approach is the Education for Humanitarian Law (EHL) project (Tawil, 2001). This explores ethical issues related to human behaviour in times of armed conflict and war. The teaching modules bring together international humanitarian law and the 'hard core' of human rights law, aiming at the disposition to become involved in protecting and promoting humanitarian attitudes. EHL is distinctive in at least two ways: firstly there is an open approach to violence—which normally has a negative, condemnatory connotation and an emotive aura. But international humanitarian law takes

no position on the legitimacy of the recourse to violence in situations of armed conflict. Rather, it aims to regulate the conduct of hostilities *once armed conflict has broken out*.

Such a perspective allows for a more neutral and less judgmental examination of human behaviour in armed conflict and makes it possible to transpose these considerations to one's own immediate reality of violence. (Tawil, 2001, p. 303)

Linked to this is a second distinctive focus, on *consequences* rather than *causes*. While necessary up to a point, the argument is that discussing the causes of conflict may easily cloud humanitarian concerns by diverting into disputes over political and ideological interpretations of specific historical struggles. This appears different from some conflict resolution techniques, or encounters, where each side tries to surface histories or perceptions of 'blame'. But focussing on suffering and destruction is much less contentious and helps learners come to terms with common experiences. (Although even there, I have found young people both in Kosovo and Bosnia arguing about who suffered most—a sort of hierarchy of suffering.)

A common problem across all legal and human rights education is that it may be in contradiction to existing role models—the UK still defends the right of parents to 'smack' their children, against European law. As the EHL project stresses, this means the need for mobilisation—the values and attitudes transmitted must translate into action, community service and some form of participation in the protection of life, health and human dignity. A sense of shared destiny helps in rebuilding social cohesion.

Information, Media and the Public Space

A key part of complexity theory and of complex adaptive systems is the power of information and feedback. The obvious example is the human brain, which constantly organises and reorganises billions of neural connections and pathways in order to learn profitably from experience. Yet the brain is more than a 'computer made of meat'—there are as yet only partially understood ways in which communication happens—through intuition, through music, through feelings (it is no accident that oppressive regimes sometimes ban music). In examining the nature of information in terms of conflict (and post-conflict) we have to look at 'truth' and 'myth'. The power of rumour and distorted information is significant.

An instructive account of the religious conflict in Ambon, Indonesia shows how this was triggered by wrong information (Poerwawidagdo, 2002). After centuries of peaceful coexistence between Christian and Muslim, a quarrel between two young people quickly spread into a massive conflict resulting in hundreds of deaths and destruction of property. It was fuelled by rumours about *impending* attacks, purposefully spread to provoke fear and defensive violence. Wrong information can be used intentionally by the political elite or the military; fear has a strong amplifying effect. Our question might be how to spread a rumour about peace. Is fear so much more powerful than happiness? Poerwawidagdo argues that withholding information for the sake of social and communal peace is morally correct and ethically appropriate. But it is a debatable point.

Vulnerability of groups can mean that fear drives them into pre-emptive strikes. Using a 'game-theoretic' example applied to the process of disintegration in Yugoslavia, Weingast (1994) argues that the potential damage from victimisation is often so large that even a small probability that the other group will act aggressively can induce the first group to initiate violence, even when the latter would have preferred to live in peaceful coexistence.

Weingast was of course writing before the war on Iraq in 2002; and he was talking of group behaviour. Yet the same 'fear' is what apparently drove the US, aided by the UK, into a pre-emptive strike on Iraq. Michael Moore is excellent on how the gun culture of US and the fear of attack, can be mobilised across a huge population. The power of small bits of (mis)information—the 45 minute strike—are enough to cause or justify aggression on a massive scale.

Imitative decision processes are also involved in rumour and amplification, which are what have been called 'informational cascades' (Bikhchandani et al., 1992). This is a situation in which it is optimal for an individual, having observed the actions of those ahead of him or her, to follow the behaviour of the preceding individual *without regard to his or her own information*. Bardhan applies this theory to the context of conflict, where a Hindu or Serb will ignore their private information about their friendly Muslim neighbour and go by what others have told them about the aggressive propensities of Muslims. Who controls history and memory is key to conflict. The use of 'imagined communities' (Anderson, 1983) gives considerable leverage to political leaders bent on using ethnicity as a mobilisation device. Such ethnification of politics is greatly helped by modern communications technology, which:

. . . now enables the most atavistic rhetoric of ethnic leaders to reach a far wider audience, with a great deal more vividness than the old tribal chieftain could ever dream of. Ancient prejudices are transmitted through the most sophisticated media, just as ancient vendettas are carried out with the most modern military weaponry. (Bardhan, 1997, p. 79).

On the positive side, informational cascades can be rather brittle, and sensitive to new information. Public information campaigns can sometimes be effective (as with smoking in some contexts) and if transmitted in the early stages of a conflict, public information—what actually happened, how a disturbance started, who tried to take advantage of it, instances of inter-community cooperation in the face of tremendous odds—can stop some of the vicious rumours that fuel communal riots and can calm group anxieties. It is clear that such information must be released by an agency seen as credible to all the communities involved, and government broadcasts are often not trusted, as the ruling bureaucracy is viewed as the accomplice of one the contending communities.

In educational terms, there are therefore the two areas of focus in establishing or maintaining a culture of peace: educating the providers of information (government, media) and the receivers or interpreters of information (the public). Apparently, a 'less corrupt community of journalists' has emerged in Mexico (Whitehead, 2002, p. 88), but this may not be true of all transitional societies. If not corrupt, then there may be a tradition of heavily biased and partisan reporting to favour one side in the conflict. In terms of aid to higher education after a conflict, much normally goes into infrastructure or to technology. It was significant that a different approach to aid or intervention for reconstruction was in the grant to the University of Pristina by the UK Department for Education and Employment. This was a relatively small amount of money for targeted departments to develop courses. As consultant to the project, I was very happy to endorse the decision to spend this on the departments of political science and public administration, sociology, journalism, architecture and film. All were able to show how with new or rejuvenated courses they would be able to make some contribution to the rebuilding of political and public culture in Kosovo (Davies, 2002). The ethical responsibilities of journalists was a key component of the journalism course. Codes of ethics normally place three duties on journalists: to seek after truth, to be independent

and to minimize harm (Peters, 2002). (The same could usefully be applied to teachers.) But this combination poses dilemmas. Will reporting ethnic violence incite more violence? How can journalists avoid being misused for political objectives when most sources are biased?

Chomsky's statement was:

. . . a democratic society is one in which the public has the means to participate in some meaningful way in the management of their own affairs and the means of information are open and free. (1997, p. 5)

This implies a fundamental responsibility of the media. In conflict societies, however, the hate media has been a counter to democracy and peace. Hate radio played a key role in starting the genocide in Rwanda (Gardner, 2001). Privately owned but government controlled, RTLM (Radio Mille Collines) was created in mid-1993 with shareholders that had strong ties to the ruling regime and its security forces. After securing a listenership through pop music, it then broadcast political propaganda and death warrants, encouraging the killing of Tutsis. It even read over the air the names of people to be killed. In the Balkans, confrontations between the stabilization force peacekeeping troops and Serb hardliners for control of television stations in Bosnia's Srpska Republic illustrate how valuable broadcasting can be in a conflict situation, with the attempt also to try to destroy the enemy's communication lines. It is ironic that in the interests of liberation and free speech, the Americans bombed the Al-Jazeera TV stations which were presenting a different view of the situation in Iraq than the US propaganda.

In contrast, peace media can be vital to humanitarian aid immediately after a conflict—simply providing information about where food would be distributed, where separated family members could be found and where medical services can be obtained. Then it has a vital role in rebuilding civil society: by making available space or airtime for expression of grievances, it is argued that the media encourage an essential part of the healing process (Gardner, 2001). It can empower groups that had previously been voiceless or disenfranchised, as in the development of Radio 21 in Kosovo, run by women. The media can even act as mediators: in South Africa, a 'video dialogue' was broadcast on *Peace Café* in the case where parties to the communal conflict in the community were not even willing to come to the table themselves. Members of both groups spoke independently to the cameras and edited versions of each group's case were shown to the other group in a process that eventually spiralled into direct engagement of the parties through the mediating power of the video image.

In Macedonia, the 'Inter Ethnic Team Project' brought together journalists from different ethnic news organisations to work together on stories concerning the country as a whole that were then published in identical form in each of the newspapers. Conducting their interviews in mixed ethnic teams, reporters were able to talk to sources they otherwise would not have had access to and avoiding stereotyping each other's group (Gardner, 2001). Journalists played a key role in South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, in helping decide whose stories got told and in providing a context for why atrocities happened (Baumann & Siebert, 2002).

What is disturbing of course is that politicians may choose to ignore information from their constituents—in spite of current fashions for 'focus groups'. Two million people marching against the war in Iraq was denied by the Blair government in the UK as being evidence of public opinion; instead the demonstration was publicly interpreted in a twisted way by Blair simply as a sign that we were a free society which could march and protest and this somehow justified the war on Iraq—which was not such a society.

The other side to information education is political and media literacy—enabling young and adult learners to engage in critical analysis of newspapers, TV reporting and government information campaigns. This is an essential survival skill at individual level and at national level. Journalists themselves have learned to be disillusioned by information given to them by ‘informed officials’. Many reporters in former Yugoslavia have stated that they were at times astonished by claims and information given to them by the United Nations Protective Force, later proved incorrect (Gardner, 2001). Yet political and media literacy in schools is not always seen as a vital part of language learning: in Brcko, the teachers working on curriculum harmonisation preferred the safety of literature and comprehension rather than using newspapers as resources, feeling threatened by anything that appeared ‘political’. Teacher training may be a key area here, developing skills and orientations towards teaching controversial issues and analysing discourse.

Citizenship and Political Education

All these areas lead to a very specific form of citizenship education in educational institutions. I have already talked about anti-hate education, human rights education and media education. I now add three more components: understanding of nationalism, understanding of democracy and understanding of accountability.

Nationalism

As Pinson (2004) points out in her study of citizenship education for Jewish students and Palestinian students in Israel, a study of citizenship education is not just about how it might promote a particular agenda, but about citizenship education as a ‘discursive space’ in which meanings are produced and reproduced, identities are shaped and social positions in relation to citizenship are negotiated. The links between citizenship and nationhood are problematic, with a tension between the inclusionary and exclusionary nature of citizenship. This was particularly apparent in her study which contrasted the three types of school (religious/Zionist, secular Jewish and Arab) which had different ideologies and outcomes for the ‘citizens’ they were to create (for the Arabs to be skilled workers but not military participants). Thus there were huge contradictions and ambivalences among curriculum policy makers and the receiving students about a so-called ‘common curriculum’ and about their identity as a citizen. Pinson concludes that the idea that citizenship education in multicultural and conflict-ridden societies can counter particularistic identities and promote tolerance and pluralism is to some extent over-simplistic, in that it does not take into account other powerful contexts in which the education of citizens operates. On the other hand, given these political tensions the role of citizenship education becomes even more meaningful.

Militarism is a key part of identity in Israel, as elsewhere. Reconstructing relationships post-conflict is also about reconstructing relationships to arms. Peace education extends into the value system at a larger social level, contributing to the ‘demilitarization of the mind’ (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000, p. 28). In Somalia, a peace education programme challenged the cultural valorization of the gun as a symbol of courage and machismo, including a travelling play called *Drop the Gun, Rebuild the Nation* (Retamol & Devadoss, 1998). This helps to change reference points for the construction of identity—particularly male identity—in a society. The question becomes how to make males feel good about themselves through collaboration or reconciliation processes. Gender issues pervade all questions of civil society and what constitutes ‘civility’.

How to teach identity becomes crucial. Pinson quotes Mouffe's argument that we should aspire to a notion of citizenship that encompasses different identities but at the same time promotes a common political identity, a 'we' of radical democratic citizens. In my book I similarly discuss the possibilities for 'hybridity'—the recognition that none of us is 'pure' but we have unique combinations to forge our identity. Identification of 'we the citizens' should not consciously or unconsciously act to exclude or marginalize those who should be part of the polity. In conflict societies or neighbouring societies, the question of refugees and their status becomes crucial.

This has parallels with the distinction made by McLaughlin and Juceviciene between civic nationalism and ethnic nationalism:

Civic nationalism is democratic in character, envisaging the nation as a community of equal, rights-bearing citizens, patriotically attached to a shared set of political practices and values. In contrast, ethnic nationalism sees national identity as based on ethnicity rather than citizenship and law. While civic nationalism can be rational, flexible, pluralistic and morally rich, ethnic nationalism is tempted by irrationality, fanaticism and authoritarianism. It is more likely to be 'nationalistic' in the sense of the term which implies the inherent superiority of one nation over others. (1997, p. 27)

Unterhalter (1999) argues strongly that we should not fail to take account of difference in developing notions of democracy and citizenship. One tendency is to view citizenship in terms of universals that everyone, despite or because of their differences, should try to recognize and respect. There are strengths to this approach, but also problems. It tends to represent education as a homogenizing process, where difference (such as gender) is viewed as an obstacle to be overcome. Difference can be empowering or it can be disempowering, but the universalist view proposes either 'tolerance' (and a suspension of critique) or accommodation with dominant paradigms. 'Neither approach subjects citizenship, education or difference to critical scrutiny; education is always linear, citizenship always the goal and difference always somehow deviant or marginal' (p. 104). Similarly, Werbner and Yuval-Davis' approach to democratic citizenship is much more about ambiguity and contestation, not bland commonalities.

Democratic citizenship as a social and political construct . . . opens up spaces and arenas of freedom—of conflict, unpredictability, intimacy, the right to be different—while restricting and structuring these spaces by procedural hedges about limits. It orders conflict, channels and tames it; it labels and classifies collective differences; it determines how, where and when difference may legitimately be 'represented' and who counts as 'different' in the political arena, itself a social construct. (1999, p. 2)

How to translate that into a curriculum would then be the big contemporary challenge.

Democracy

Post conflict, in countries seen as deserving of international aid, a large body of agencies move in both as peacekeepers and as part of reconstruction. There may be educational interventions to spread democracy, based mainly on the assumption that democracies do not go to war with each other (Carothers, 1999). (At one stage there was the 'Golden Arch' theory that countries with a MacDonalds also do not go to war against each other.) But there

is a debate about the impact of formal civic or democracy education programmes on future governance. Carothers observed that short-term formal instruction on democracy that presents the subject as a set of general principles and processes generally has little effect on participants. 'Such information is too abstract and usually too removed from the daily lives of most people . . . civic education in many transitional countries is usually negated by the actual practice of politics' (p. 232). Translated to educational contexts, it is possible that dumping a democracy or civic curriculum on an otherwise authoritarian or corrupt school would find learners beginning the process of actively challenging injustice or unfairness; it is equally possible that they will cheat their way through the civic education examinations.

Civitas has a well-known programme which it uses in many countries called 'We the People', based on the words of the American Constitution. It could be criticised as exporting western or even Americanised versions of citizenship to recipient countries (perhaps the citizenship equivalent of the Teacher Emergency Package). Yet at least in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) it meant teachers finding common ground, and a network of educators was developing. Mustagrydic comments that 'bearing in mind the segregated education system in BiH, perhaps we could argue that the sheer fact that after the war, students from the whole BiH use the same textbooks in an achievement in itself' (2000, p. 44). Civitas has also worked in Northern Ireland, and launched the 'We the People . . . Project Citizen' in 1999, building on the Good Friday agreement 'by fostering cross-community exchanges between youth in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland' (Center for Civic Education, 2000). Yet in spite of astonishing levels of civic ignorance among Americans (40% could not name the vice president), this 'does not shake the confidence of US civic educators abroad' (Carothers, 1999, p. 232).

Ideological reconstruction is therefore particularly fraught with concern if imposed or seen to be imposed by outside. USAID is pursuing a particular version of democracy which is a neo-liberal, competitive market-based strategy. The Soros Foundation is very influential in the Balkans and transitional societies, with the establishment of the Central European University. Their 'Privatisation Research Project' trains local personnel in public administration and the institutional infrastructure of the market economy. Yet participatory democracy may be a better model post conflict than the somewhat passive representative democracy which is actually characteristic of the US and UK. Nonetheless, in situations where individuals have been obstructed in exercising their rights as citizens, projects focussing on an understanding of democratic processes such as voting procedures can be influential.

But there can be interesting double standards. Arnhold *et al.* (1998) quote Michael Balfour: 'The British were very conscious of the fact that the faith which they wished to propagate involved a disbelief in the value of imposing faiths by order' (p. 12). They argue that this must be one of the first lessons for any forces or other agencies involved with the reconstruction of an education system in another country, to show deference to local conditions and traditions. Without such sensitivity and local knowledge, huge mistakes can be made. There can be the assumption that cultural integration is new, that hatreds go back thousands of years. Yet as Piggot (1995) pointed out with regard to UNICEF projects on peace education in the former Yugoslavia, policy-makers seemed unaware of the fact that Yugoslavia had nearly 50 years experience of education which celebrated cultural diversity.

Hence we need to beware of over-simplistic connections between stability and democracy. In ethnically based political parties, first past the post electoral systems can cement extreme demands. Sri Lanka is an obvious example where Tamils were pushed to take up arms by the anti-Tamil sentiments of the two main Sinhalese parties who vied with each other in pandering to the anti-Tamil sentiments of the Sinhalese. If one group is permanently excluded as a consequence of electoral and party systems, 'the legitimacy of democracy is undermined

and the excluded group sees violence as the only alternative' (Bardhan, 1997, p. 80). A sound political education needs to include a critical appraisal and awareness of the different forms of democracy, and the consequences of different systems in particular countries.

Accountability

Citizenship education thirdly has to play a key role in enabling people to demand accountability from governments or other agencies in power. There is a skills and a dispositions element to this. As we saw, a strong civil society is based on a degree of trust between different groups; it could be argued however that a strong civil society has a healthy degree of mistrust for the government and a willingness to question policy and practice. Part of this comes from media education and critical literacy, as discussed above. But also it comes from an understanding of how relationships work in a particular country—and whether these are in the end functional. Much has been written about the damaging nature of corruption, for example—with a negative association between the corruption index and the investment rate or growth rate (Mauro, 1995). Yet definitions of corruption and nepotism are very culture-specific and in some contexts act as a mechanism for social cohesion or financial survival.

Yet mostly, corruption and particularism are seen as disadvantageous to stability and economic growth; the educational task is to understand its continuation. Tirole (1995) has argued that the persistence of corruption in a society may be partly explained by the bad collective reputation of previous generations: younger generations may inherit the reputation of their elders, with the consequences that they have no incentive to be honest themselves. Hence a one-shot reduction in corruption (through, say, an anti-corruption campaign) may have no lasting effect: a minimum number of periods without corruption may be needed to return to a path which leads to the low-corruption steady state. As I have argued in educational contexts, the hierarchies of corruption are important: when the whole system is seen as corrupt (with local governments creating ghost schools, teacher postings depending on bribes or family connections, exam questions being stolen and then sold to the highest bidder, head teachers falsifying pupil figures to get more funds), then there is little incentive for students not to cheat in examinations.

Just as there can be a tip in equilibrium in ethnic violence, the expected gain from corruption depends crucially on the number of other people expected to be corrupt. Policy issues are how we can orchestrate a discrete move from one equilibrium to another, how a critical mass of people can be convinced about the 'superior' equilibrium, how institutions of credible pre-commitment (against taking aggressive or opportunistic action) can be constructed and how a downward spiral of negative expectations can be averted. In Cuba, criticising Fidel Castro may be illegal, but active vigilance of local communities is quite effective in keeping public health and education officials on their toes. Community participation seems to be key to accountability at local and national level.

Lessons From Conflict to Stability

While this article focuses on post-conflict societies, it can be argued that the dimensions apply to other societies, not just those formally labelled 'in transition'. The civil renewal agenda is a contemporary one in the UK, for example, and has the similar components of cohesion, community participation and active citizenship that I have identified above. What a focus on conflict and post-conflict societies does is to dispel any romanticised mythology about the possibilities of such civic regeneration. The whole ideology of 'renewal' is dangerous if returning to some nationalistic, exclusive or heroic past where tight inclusion

or simple bonding reigned; instead should be a new normality of some attempts at hybridity, at border crossings, at transversal politics. Laws and rule frames will need review and putting under contemporary umbrellas of human rights and humanitarian law; legal education is important at all ages and levels. In a vibrant civil society, the active citizen is one who challenges conflict, not just within a society, but in terms of one's own society's actions internationally—whether this is armed aggression or trade wars. Accountability, trust and transparency are important elements of democracy, more perhaps than simple electoral choices. All this puts a heavy burden on education—first of all not to reproduce the elements which contributed to conflict in the first place (such as inequality, militarism, frustration and segregation) and then to prepare for a new normality of cooperation across groups, critical literacy and active challenge to injustice.

Correspondence: Professor Lynn Davies, Centre for International Education and Research, School of Education, University of Birmingham, Birmingham B15 2TT, UK. Email: L.Davies@bham.ac.uk

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