Citizenship and Democracy in Latin America and Chile

Jaime Fierro
Ph.D. in Political Science – University of Essex

Senior Lecturer
Department of Political Science and International Relations,
University Alberto Hurtado, Santiago, Chile
jfierro@uahurtado.cl

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Political Sociology: Theoretical Approaches
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Jaime Fierro

Abstract. The main aim of this paper is to provide an account of how citizenship must be understood today, and how such a conception can be linked with (support for) democracy, both theoretically and empirically. Three different arguments are advanced. Firstly, it is argued that democratic citizenship must be understood in terms of rights and responsibilities (in an appropriate balance), identity and participation in a given political community, and that such a model of democratic citizenship only makes sense in relation to a national political community, that is, the nation state. Secondly, it is posited that there is a virtuous relationship between citizenship and (support for) democracy, which would be stronger in more republican and communitarian visions of citizenship than in those of liberal character. Finally, it is believed that higher levels of citizenship result in higher levels of support for democracy throughout Latin American countries. While the first two arguments required a theoretical reflection based on the critical analyzes of the current debate on citizenship, the last one required comparative empirical research based on Latinbarometer surveys.

1. Setting up the research problem

Never before have there been so many countries living under democratic systems and never before have Latin American democracies been so robust.
But what has been achieved is not yet secure. (UNDP 2005: 20)

During the second half of the twentieth century, the world experienced unprecedented success of the democratic idea. Never before in human history had so many people supported democratic ideas, institutions, and practices. But it was also a time when many democratic enterprises collapsed and gave way to authoritarian regimes. Later in the century, military dictatorships burst onto the democratic scene, as was the case in Latin America. Accordingly, it is reasonable to wonder whether democratic successes will be sustained in the twenty-first century. Democracy has not yet won the contest for the support of people throughout the world. It is too soon to claim that it is a fact, especially at a time when many countries face deep political and economic crises (Dahl 2000).

Nowadays, there is a broad consensus among scholars in terms of understanding that the survival of democracies rests on a broad and deep foundation of support among the citizenry. The democracies lacking such a foundation of legitimacy are seen as being at risk. Moreover, it has been argued, stable or increasing levels of citizens’ support facilitate stable democracy, whereas declining levels of citizens’ support undermine democracy and threaten its collapse. ‘What is more, democracy could not long exist unless its citizens manage to create and maintain a supportive political culture, indeed a general culture supportive of these ideals and practices’ (Dahl 2000: 51). Thereby, citizen’s support for democracy constitutes a fundamental issue in determining both the legitimacy and the stability of democratic regimes, and it would be a mistake to take it for granted (see, for example, Klingemann 1999; Mishler and Rose 1999; Diamond 1999 and 2008; Dahl 2000; Dalton 2004; Welzel and Inglehart 2007). In short: ‘Democratic political system must keep the support of their citizens if they are to remain viable’ (Dalton 2004: 24), i.e. ‘the fate of democracy depends on ordinary people’s intrinsic commitment to democratic principles’ (Welzel and Inglehart 2007: 297).

The prospects for stable democracy in a country are improved if its citizens and leaders strongly support democratic ideas, values, and practices. The most reliable support
comes when these beliefs and predispositions are embedded in a democratic political culture. ‘A democratic political culture values democracy as the best form of government’ (Diamond 2008: 155). It is in this area that the situation in Latin American countries is particularly worrisome. Almost three decades after Latin America began its return from authoritarian rule to democracy, the levels of citizens’ adhesion to democracy, satisfaction with democratic performance, and institutional confidence are among the lowest in comparison with the other regions of the world. So far such a tendency does not seem to be undergoing any change. Moreover, in recent years the situation has worsened in many countries. Why this is so is not an easy question to answer (Hagopian 2005: 321). To be clear, perhaps democracy in Latin American countries is not at risk so far, but this is not the case of democratic governability (Diamond 2008: 175; Valenzuela 2004).

At the centre of the supportive political culture for democracy, I think, citizenship plays a significant role. The importance of the concept of citizenship is fundamental for understanding and strengthening the process of democratization in our societies. In fact, one of the main challenges in current debates on theories of citizenship refers precisely to the question of the relationship between citizenship and democracy (Delanty 2000; Perczynski and Vink 2002). A number of recent political events and trends throughout the world has made it clear that the health and stability of a modern democracy depends not only on the justice of its basic institutions, but also on the qualities and attitudes of its citizens (Kymlicka 2002: 285). More specifically, democracy depends, among other things, on the citizens’ willingness to exercise personal responsibility, their desire to participate, and their sense of identity. Without citizens who possess these qualities, democracies become difficult to govern, even unstable (Kymlicka 2001, 2002). It is not a surprise, then, that in contemporary democracies, political issues are increasingly being addressed in terms of citizenship (van Gunsteren 1998). The renewed importance of citizenship in the last few years has been directly related to the ardent desire to guarantee full citizenship and, at the same time, a sustainable democracy. As Charles Taylor (1996, 1997) reminds us, a democratic project can only be successful if the people involved make it their own and feel part of a common initiative.

However, there is a significant difficulty here. The concepts of citizenship and democracy have been considered not as just controversial but as essentially controversial. This is because both concepts are contested. Citizenship and democracy are internally complex and open to divergent interpretations in terms of which of the defining characteristics are the most important in particular circumstances (Vandenberg 2000; Fahrmeir 2007). Moreover, citizenship and democracy have been frequently treated in relative isolation within separate academic disciplines, and most theorists participate in debates that take place within a single discourse. Traditionally, sociologists have studied citizenship and political scientists have studied democracy (and support for democracy), but there are areas of overlap between them which cannot be ignored (Shafir 1998). At the same time, and also surprisingly, few political scientists have examined support for democracy in any systematic or sustained way focusing on most Latin American countries, particularly because of the lack of survey data. Simultaneously, much of the research on democracy over the past years has not studied the relationship between democratic outcomes and civic culture (Sabetti 2006: 1).

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1 See the 2008 Latinbarometer report.
2 In many aspects, whatsoever the problem is, the revitalization of citizenship is considered as part of the solution (Bellamy 2008: 1). For instance, the increasing voter apathy, the resurgence of national movements, the tensions created by an increasingly multicultural and multiracial population, the failure of environmental policies that rely on voluntary citizen’s cooperation, disaffection with globalization and the loss of national sovereignty (Kymlicka 2002); the necessity for (re)democratization and its consolidation in many established democracies (van Gunsteren, 1998), including some parts of Latin America (Shafir 1998), etc.
345). Furthermore, no one has explored (support for) democracy from the perspective of citizenship, as is being proposed here.3

Based on the aforementioned, how should we understand citizenship today? How can we link citizenship with (support for) democracy? Is there an empirical relationship between citizenship and support for democracy in Latin American countries? These questions have not yet been properly explored and they require answers sooner rather than later. They can provide some vital clues to understanding how democracy works in counties where democratic rule is comparatively recent.

Responding to such questions requires an investigation which is both theoretical and empirical. On a theoretical level, I propose to describe and analyze the current debate on citizenship, subsequently moving towards the elaboration of a theoretical concept of citizenship that incorporates the dimensions of rights and responsibilities, participation, and identity and, at the same time, might be linked with (support for) democracy. This examination will be based on a critical analysis of the different approaches to citizenship in terms of their strengths and weaknesses. On an empirical level, and based on the elaboration of an Index of Citizenship and Support for Democracy, I shall analyze their relationship throughout Latin American countries. This will be carried out through statistical analysis of secondary information from the Latinbarometer survey, the largest annual survey on democracy and politics in the region.

In this regard, the study of citizenship and its link with (support for) democracy should be able both to clarify certain theoretical disjunctives in current debates and to characterize its performance in specific societies. The general theoretical hypothesis of this paper is that there is a virtuous relationship between citizenship and (support for) democracy, which would be stronger in more republican and communitarian visions of citizenship than in those of liberal character. And at the empirical level, it is believed that higher levels of citizenship result in higher levels of support for democracy throughout Latin American countries.

2. How should we understand citizenship today?

In the last few years, there has been a proliferation of work published on the subject of citizenship, yet all these studies face major obstacles when it comes to defining the concept itself.4 It is difficult to talk about a conceptual development which allows us to affirm that we are in the presence of a genuine theory of citizenship.5 Rather, what we have are various approaches to a theory of citizenship that emphasize its different aspects or dimensions, frequently generating a sense of being up against mutually exclusive approximations.6 This raises the issue that the concept of citizenship is a contested concept and thus is open to divergent interpretations, of which of its defining dimensions are the most important in certain debates.

In the current theoretical debate, the interest in citizenship has focused upon: 1) the concept of individual rights and belonging to a particular community as the source of responsibilities, one of the central aspects of the debate between liberalism and

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3 An earlier exploration in this vein was carried out in my Ph.D. thesis, *Citizenship and Democracy in Latin America*, at the University of Essex in 2006.

4 In many countries outside the Anglo Saxon world, the concept of citizenship has remained a predominantly legal concept, even in academic language. In other countries, citizenship, even in a sociological sense, mainly connotes social rights, broadly conceived. Additionally, normative and analytical theories of citizenship are often conflated. Thus, there is much confusion about the meaning of citizenship (Goul Anderson and Hoff 2001: 2).

5 Since Marshall’s works on citizenship, there have been no developments that could be described as moving towards a theory of citizenship (Janoski 1998: 3).

communitarianism; 2) the citizen civic virtues necessary to promote more civic participation in modern democracy, a key area of concern for civic republicanism; 3) the means of combining universal citizenship values with the reclamation of differences, incorporating multicultural and feminist reflections; 4) finally, there is a debate about the limits of national citizenship and the possibilities of a post-national or cosmopolitan citizenship in times of globalization, which includes liberal, communitarian, liberal-nationalist, civic-republican and cosmopolitan perspectives. 7 This last theme, however, will not be explored in the present paper.

The aim of this section is to identify and show what is at stake in such discussions, based on a critical analysis of points 1), 2) and 3) listed above, concerning the fundamental dimensions of citizenship, namely rights and responsibilities, participation and identity. To a certain extent, the analysis focuses mainly on the liberal, communitarian, republican, and multicultural perspectives on citizenship. This is not only because current debates on citizenship are organized around them, but also because they give us the fundamental clues for rethinking the concept of citizenship. In this regard, while one perspective sees citizenship mainly as a formal legal status based on rights (liberalism), the other perspectives see it as a question of participation in the political community (republicanism), and identity (multiculturalism) and responsibilities (communitarianism) (Delanty 2000; Bellamy and Castiglione 2002: 352-3).

The first part of this section outlines the debate between liberals and communitarians. Both perspectives represent a distinctive account of citizenship. The liberal emphasis on citizenship rights has dominated the debate on citizenship in Western societies. However, during the 1980s, communitarianism arose as an important criticism against liberalism and its conception of citizenship. Communitarians argue for a more adequate balance between rights and responsibilities. This constitutes an important improvement in the normative debate about citizenship. Nonetheless, the dimension of political participation is barely considered in both perspectives. The second part analyzes the debate between passive and active citizenship, focusing on the revival of the republican tradition. The neo-republican model of citizenship places great importance on citizens' participation, which, based on the promotion of civic virtues, is seen as essential to avoiding the progressive deterioration of public life. Nevertheless, the emphasis on the intrinsic value of political activity for its participants is challenged by civic republicans, who see it in more instrumental terms. The third part focuses on the debate between universal versus differentiated citizenship. Pluralistic liberals and multiculturalists raise the dimension of identity as an important component of citizenship. They reject the universal liberal conception of citizenship as the formula for accessing equality. In contrast, equality and difference are claimed as values that complement each other. One of the main issues in this debate is how pluralistic and multicultural societies can develop a sense of belonging to a political community.

Based on the critical analysis of such debates, it will be concluded in the fourth part that they give us the key points for understanding citizenship in a more complex way and, thus, for elaborating a more adequate normative model of citizenship. This is what I term the proposal for an integrated normative model of citizenship. That is, citizenship as constituted through three fundamental dimensions: rights and responsibilities, participation, and identity. Such a model of citizenship, however, only makes sense in terms of a particular political community, the nation-state.

Liberals versus communitarians: The dimension of rights and responsibilities

Contemporary political theory often presents liberalism and communitarianism as the main alternative approaches. In the history of political theory, liberalism describes a tradition of thought that develops from Locke, through Kant to Mill. Liberalism is an ideology with a long history, whilst communitarianism constitutes a contemporary response to it, which takes into consideration the contribution of philosophers such as Aristotle and Hegel (Pettit 1999; Mulhall and Swift 2001; Little 2002).

This debate primarily arises in connection with communitarian authors such as Alasdair MacIntyre, Michael Sandel, Charles Taylor and Michael Walzer, Amitai Etzioni and liberal authors such as Ronald Dworkin and John Rawls. However, when referring to communitarianism it is hard to find a single homogeneous and unified theoretical perspective, which therefore complicates the task of characterizing it (Bàrcena 1997; Mulhall and Swift 2001). Rather, communitarianism seems to revolve more around a criticism of liberalism. Perhaps communitarianism is not an alternative to liberalism, but rather a recurrent criticism of its inadequacies. Nevertheless, it is certainly a fundamental criticism (Cortina 1998; Campbell 2001). On the other hand, we see not one but several forms of liberalism in a type of continuum, where, rather than classic liberalism, the primary reference for communitarians is recent liberalism (Mulhall and Swift 2001).

In this sense, communitarianism represents the revival in the 1980s of criticisms with Hegelian roots against Kantian liberalism, and communitarianism largely recaptures Hegel’s criticisms of Kant. While Kant alludes to the existence of certain universal obligations that must prevail over the more contingent obligations derived from our sense of community belonging, Hegel reversed this theory in order to prioritize our community links. Thus, instead of valuing the ideal of an autonomous individual, Hegel maintains that complete fulfillment is achieved through the most complete integration of individuals into their community (Gargarella 1999: 125).

This communitarian adoption of the Hegelian critique is primarily a response to Rawls’ Theory of Justice. The main criticisms of liberalism by communitarians focuses on its atomism, its conception of the individual, the distinction it makes between the private and public spheres and its attempt to affirm the neutrality of the state in terms of its conception of good (Gargarella 1999). In such a debate it is possible to distinguish genuine differences, but as Charles Taylor (1995: 181) states, ‘there are also a lot of cross-purposes and just plain confusion in this debate’. Moreover, in his book Political Liberalism, Rawls recognizes many of the criticisms made of his previous work. He no longer defends the same type of theory criticized by communitarians. In fact, his position has evolved substantially since the publication of Theory of Justice, which raises certain questions about the coherence of his theory and the criticisms that have been made of it (Mouffe 1997). As Mulhall and Swift (2001: 168) have observed, ‘Rawls is no longer putting forward the same kind of theory as that on which communitarians have focused their attack; a fact that necessarily complicates any assessment of its accuracy’. Additionally, it can be perceived that over time there has

8 The label “communitarian”, as Mulhall and Swift (2001: XV) point out, although often used to characterize these four theorists, ‘is not one which they themselves employ to any great extent, and it is certainly not part of their self-understanding in the same way as the term ‘liberal’ is for liberals’.

9 That is, according to Taylor (1995: 181), because participants have tended to confuse ontological issues with normative ones. Michael Walzer (1990: 7) also agrees that, these arguments are very different and there are contradictions between them. While one is aimed primarily at the liberal practice, the other focuses on the liberal theory. For Walzer, it is possible that each one is partly right but in a way that devalues the other.
been a convergence on certain issues in the debate between liberals and communitarians (Etzioni 1996).10

For Chantal Mouffe (1997: 60), however, ‘[w]hat is really at stake between John Rawls and his communitarian critics is the issue of citizenship’. Two different languages emerge here to articulate our identity as citizens. Rawls proposes representing citizens in a constitutional democracy in terms of equal rights expressed through the principles of justice, freedom and equality. Based on this liberal view, ‘citizenship is the capacity for each individual person to form, revise and rationally pursue his/her definition of good. Citizens are seen as using their rights to promote their self-interest within certain constraints imposed by the exigency to respect the rights of others’ (61). Communitarians object that it is a narrow conception of citizenship that precludes a conception of a citizen as someone who feels naturally inclined to join others in pursuit of a common goal in view of the common good. For communitarians, the main problem with liberalism is its emphasis on individualism. According to them, Kymlicka (2002: 212) points out, ‘liberals base their theories on notions of individual rights and personal freedom, but neglect the extent to which individual freedom and well-being are only possible within community’. Thereby, for communitarians, ‘[o]nce we recognize the dependence of the human being on society, then our obligations to sustain the common good of society are as weighty as our rights to individual liberty’ (212). For communitarians (and other critics), liberal citizenship represents an impoverished version of citizenship. As Keith Faulks (1999: 126) observes, ‘the failure of citizens to exercise their responsibilities has been blamed upon liberalism’s overemphasis upon rights, and communitarianism has become one of the most influential critiques of liberal citizenship’. In short, the liberal tradition is seen as too concerned with individual rights while the communitarian perspective focuses on balancing such rights with personal and social responsibilities.

### The liberal emphasis on citizenship rights

Liberalism conceives citizenship as each person’s capacity to rationally form, revise and pursue their own definition of good, within the limits imposed by the need to respect others’ rights. As a result, political community becomes merely instrumental with no room for political or social action (Garay 2000). In the liberal political tradition, citizenship is mainly a status of membership in a political community, where rights protect the individual from it, i.e. ‘[r]ights give space to the individual to develop their interest and fulfil their potential free from interference from other individuals or from the community as a whole’ (Faulks 2000: 56). Every member of the society enjoys such rights equally. In Rawls’ conception of citizenship, ‘this status is best expressed by the possession of a set of constitutional rights which both constitutes a public recognition of the status of citizen and provides the means to defend that status’ (Buttle 1997: 147). Citizenship is seen as an expression of a ‘juridical’ rather than ‘political’ conception of constitutionalism, which emphasizes both the legal mechanism for controlling the abuse of power and protecting individual rights. It is the constitution which defines citizenship and regulates citizens’ struggles (Bellamy 2001: 50).

In the liberal conception of citizenship, rights are prior to obligations because every political order is considered to be coercive. ‘Individuals can only rationally consent to being subject to an authority that may legitimately coerce them if this order not only respects their freedom and rights but is necessary to maintain them in the first place’ (Bauböck 2001: 43).

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10 According to Etzioni (1996: 155), among them are ‘the social nature of the person (an ontological issue), the relations between a community-based definition of virtue and ones provided by individuals (a normative issue), the need to balance individual rights with social and personal responsibilities, and the ways to defend against community majority’. 
Rawls, as a good Kantian liberal, prioritizes individual rights and freedoms. The idea that individuals must be respected as end in itself moves Rawls to privilege individual rights over all other principles. ‘The citizen, from Rawls’ perspective, is a rights-bearing individual who pursues their own self-interest within a minimal set of limits’ (Smith 1998: 117). Consequently, liberals are suspicious of overburdening the citizen with too many responsibilities for fear that this may undermine their freedoms (Faulks 1999: 136).

Individual rights cannot be sacrificed on the grounds of a particular conception of the good in society. 11 For Kantian liberals, their account of rights does not depend on any particular conception of the good life. The right is prior to the good. 12 Thus, the state must guarantee equality before the law for its citizens (Barry 2001). 13 For liberals, ‘[s]ince people disagree about the best way to live, government should not affirm in law any particular form of life. Instead, it should provide a framework of rights that respects persons as free and independent selves, capable of choosing their own values and ends’ (Sandel 1998: 4). In other words, most people may adhere to the prevailing values of their community but, at the same time, there is a certain proportion of them who are going to reject them. In this case, from a liberal perspective, it would be unjust to use state power to inflict criminal penalties on them (Barry 2001: 121-122). The state must treat all citizens with equal concern and respect, because individuals have equal moral worth. Individuals constitute the ultimate source of all moral value, and accordingly the state must protect and promote individual rights (Baumeister 2000: 26-7).

For liberalism, we are individuals first and members of society second. Liberals are suspicious of notions of community. They fear that ‘the community will seek to impose obligations upon the individual that constrain or contradict his or her self-interest’ (Faulks 2000: 57). They worry that the affirming of any obligation will offer a pretext for the restriction of freedom (Taylor 1985a). Liberal theory begins with the individual, and liberal citizenship is a ‘distinct conception and institutionalization of citizenship whose primary value is to maximize individual liberty’ (Schuck 2002: 132). Obligations, in general terms, are seen as an interference with the personal liberty of the citizens.

The status of liberal citizenship is a kind of negative liberty, in contrast with positive liberty, according to Isaiah Berlin’s distinction, which is based on the opportunity to pursue one’s own interest, and rests on the basis of the absence of interference. That means that one is negatively free to the degree to which no human being interferes with my activity (Berlin 2004a; 2004b). This idea of liberty is rooted in Benjamin Constant’s work, on the notion of liberty of the moderns in opposition to the liberty of the ancients. 14 For Constant, the liberty of moderns is ‘a conception of liberty that promotes the right to be free from unnecessary

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11 In this sense, Etzioni (1997) points out that contrary to the idea propagated by liberalism, communitarian arguments in the last few years have focused on the need for a greater sense of community in society, but they are not opposed to autonomy.

12 However for Rawls (1996) there are some misunderstandings of what the priority of the right means. Rawls (1996: 173) states that the priority of the right does not deny that the right and the good are complementary, i.e. ‘no conception of justice can draw entirely upon one or the other, but must combine both in a definite way’. In fact, he makes a connection between the idea of the right with five ideas about the good: 1) the idea of goodness as rationality; 2) the idea of primary good; 3) the idea of permissible comprehensive conceptions of the good; 4) the idea of political virtues; and 5) the idea of the good of a well-ordered political society.

13 For liberalism, the individual is morally prior to the community and for that reason the state should not rank the intrinsic value of different conceptions of the good life (Kymlicka 2002, Ch. 6 and Ch. 8).

14 Constant wrote in 1819: ‘We are no longer able to enjoy the liberty of the ancients which consisted in an active and constant participation in the collective power. Our liberty for us consists in the peaceful enjoyment of private independence... The purpose of the ancients was the sharing of the social power among all the citizens of the same fatherland. It is to this that they gave the name of liberty. The purpose of the moderns is security in private enjoyment, and they give the name liberty to the guarantees accorded by the institutions to that enjoyment (quoted by Honohan 2002: 113).
interferences’ (Maynor 2003: 14), i.e. it puts the emphasis on individual freedom and independence from the community. Subsequently, with the predominance of the liberty of moderns, over time ‘the political spectrum came to be dominated by liberal theory, based, for the most part, on individual freedom, understood as the absence of interference, and politically guaranteed by systems of legal rights rather than political participation and civic virtue’ (Honohan 2002: 114). In sum, liberals see a risk in the positive conception of liberty (or liberty of the ancients) because it may lead to a subordination of the individual to the community. For them, individual liberty must be understood in a negative way, as the absence of coercion or non-interference (Mouffe 1997). What is at stake in the liberal idea of liberty is that it allows individuals to pursue their own chosen ends and determine their own conception of good.

However, in the liberal tradition, the substance of citizenship has been damaged by liberalism’s emphasis upon individual rights (Faulks 2000). Such a conception is perceived as an ‘impoverished version of citizenship in which individual citizens are reduced to atomized, passive bearers of rights whose freedom consists of being able to pursue their individual interest’ (Lister 2003: 25). Thus, ‘liberalism gives too much attention to privacy and individual rights and too little to fostering the public virtues that lead people to do their duties as citizens’ (Dagger 2002: 146). In fact, liberalism puts a strong emphasis on the individual and so most rights are negative rights, or freedoms from state or social interference. Consequently, individual rights have precedence over obligations and are balanced by only a few responsibilities, which, except for obeying laws and paying taxes, are not emphasized (Janoski and Gran 2002: 18, Schuck 2002, Faulks 2000: 68). Under this definition, citizenship takes on a markedly legal-formal character and represents a weak conception of it.

The communitarian emphasis on belonging and citizenship responsibilities

In contrast to liberals, communitarians are concerned with the fact that in Western democracies citizens have a strong sense of entitlement but a weak sense of obligation to the local and national communities. For this reason, they call for a balance between rights and responsibilities. As Etzioni (1995: 247) has highlighted: ‘It is a mistaken notion that just because we desire to be free from governmental controls we should also be free from responsibilities to the commons, indifferent to the community’. Accordingly, communitarians call for a recovery of community to create the necessary sense of responsibility and participation in order to make citizenship meaningful in society (Delanty 2002).

The importance of community is so central for communitarians because human nature is to a significant extent socially constituted (Etzioni 1996; 1997). Moreover, ‘[n]either human existence nor individual liberty can be sustained for long outside the interdependence and overlapping communities to which all of us belong’ (Etzioni 1995: 253). Consequently, outside of society our distinctively human capacities as such, for example, the appropriate development of rationality, or of becoming a moral agent, or of becoming a fully-responsible, autonomous being, could not develop. Such human capacities do not simply belong to us due to being alive; rather we need others in order to develop as complete human beings. And these others form a community. We can only flourish fully as persons or individuals in relation with other human beings. In short, the free individual is only what he is by virtue of the society which brought him to be and which nourishes him (Taylor 1985).

If we recognize that community plays a very important role in our lives, in our constitution as human beings, we must recognize an obligation to support such a community. The crucial point is that, as Taylor (1985: 207) points out, ‘since the free

15 Charles Taylor (1985: 197) has expressed such an idea in the following way: ‘If we cannot ascribe natural rights without affirming the worth of certain human capacities, and if this affirmation has other normative
individual can only maintain his identity within a society / culture of a certain kind, he has to be concerned about the shape of this society / culture as a whole’. Likewise, ‘freedom and individual diversity can only flourish in a society where there is a general recognition of their worth’. In this view, the liberal conception of the person is seen as too thin to account for the full range of obligations we commonly recognize in society and thus some stronger conception of the community may be required, even to sustain the citizenship rights that liberals defend (Sandel 1998: 16). In Sandel’s words:

Such obligations are difficult to account for if we understand ourselves as free and independent selves, unbound by moral ties we have not chosen. Unless we think of ourselves as encumbered selves, already claimed by certain projects and commitments, we cannot make sense of these aspects of our moral and political experience.

(Sandel 1998: 13-4)

Moreover, because of the fact that certain goods such as citizenship rights are only available through the political community to which one belongs, one has an obligation to such a community. Therefore, in this context, citizenship implies that membership in a community establishes special responsibilities towards it, which are associated with the fact that individuals identify themselves socially. Citizenship, then, is a specific kind of social identity attached to the fact of belonging to a particular community, the political community (Oldfield 1990) behind which stands a patriotic identification (with its way of life). This type of loyalty goes far beyond the validity of institutionally enforced legal responsibilities (duties). Each member recognizes loyalty towards the community, which he or she expresses through a readiness to sacrifice personal gains in order to promote community interest (see see Habermas 1995), i.e. obligations to society, which represent the general will, may sometimes take priority over individual rights (Janoski and Gran 2002: 18-19). Communitarians thus see the source of responsibilities in the community, which is very different from the liberal individual rights conferred by liberals upon an abstract conception of self and humanity (Bárcena 1997; Little 2002: 92). Accordingly, communitarians are reacting against the liberal individualism and the interpretation of citizenship as the enjoyment of rights, which has mainly undermined the values of community and responsibility (Heater 1999). The liberal emphasis on citizenship rights often involves an irresponsible silence about citizenship obligations (Janoski 1998: 2-3; Selznick 1998: 17; Heywood 2000: 52). Without a sense of responsibility, of the good of citizenship, as Taylor suggests, ‘individuals may fail to consider themselves as citizens, as members of a political community, and may only regard themselves as individuals with their own private concern’ (see Buttle 1997: 149). From a communitarian standpoint, a good society is one that promotes social responsibilities as well as individual rights (Etzioni 1995: 263; 2001: 28).

Consequently, for communitarians, ‘[a]ll policies that impinge on the balance between individual rights and social responsibilities should be reviewed and adjusted accordingly’

consequences (i.e., that we should foster and nurture these capacities in ourselves and others), then any proof that these capacities can only be developed in society or a society of a certain kind is a proof that we ought to belong to or sustain society or this kind of society.’ Accordingly for Taylor, ‘to assert the rights in question is to affirm the capacities, and granted the social thesis is true concerning these capacities, this commits us to an obligation to belong. This will be as fundamental as the assertion of rights, because it will be inseparable from it. So that it would be incoherent to try to assert the rights, while denying the obligation or giving it the status of optional extra which we may or may not contract’ (197-8). In such a communitarian affirmation, however, Taylor ‘is not proposing that individuals are obliged to perpetuate their society no matter what its character, nor even every aspect of their society’. Thus, it does not seek to promote a sense of identification and loyalty to societies that, for example, are corrupt or exploitative. ‘Rather the idea is that in so far as a person values, affirms and identifies with the good of his or her society, then he or she is obligated to contribute to their maintenance and reproduction’ (Abbey 2000: 106).
What is more important is that, to a certain extent, individual rights and social responsibilities mutually reinforce each other. Moreover, ‘while individual rights and social responsibilities are mutually enhancing up to a point, they turn antagonistic if the level of either is continuously increased’ (Etzioni 1997: 44). For this reason, it is necessary to find a way to achieve and maintain such a balance. Thus, he argues, ‘the suggestion that libertarians are too preoccupied with individual rights and that communitarians are too preoccupied with social responsibilities unnecessarily polarizes the dialogue’ (Etzioni 1996: 161). At the same time, Etzioni (2001: 29) states, ‘it is a grave moral error to argue that there are “no rights without responsibilities” or vice versa’. For him, people who fail to live up to their social responsibilities are still entitled to their basic rights, and a person whose rights have been curbed is still not exempt from attending to his social responsibilities.

Passive versus active citizenship: The dimension of participation

The liberal emphasis on rights over responsibilities, dismissing the obligation to participate in public life, has given rise to passive and homogeneous citizenship. Criticism arises from the need to change passive acceptance of civic rights to active practice of civic responsibilities, including political participation (Kymlicka and Norman 1995; Kymlicka 2002; Dagger 2002). Citizenship nowadays ‘is increasingly seen to lack depth and meaning for people who feel alienated from politics and disconnected from the society beyond their personal relationships’ (Honohan 2002: 8). This concern has led some republican thinkers to draw attention once again to the importance of cultivating certain civic virtues in order to ensure greater civic participation in politics (Gargarella 1999; Dagger 1997, 2002), i.e. to promote an active citizenship. From a republican perspective, ‘citizenship requires commitment to the common good and active participation in public affairs. It requires civic virtue’ (Dagger 2002: 149). Nevertheless, a distinction has to be made here.

Because the label “republicanism” is very ambiguous in the literature and is often applied quite broadly, like the terms “liberalism” and “communitarianism”, it is useful to make a distinction between the two main approaches. The classical view (also called Aristotelian republicanism, neo-Athenian republicanism, civic humanism or neo-republicanism) emphasizes the intrinsic value of political participation in self-government and the realization of certain common good among citizens. The liberal view (also called instrumental republicanism, neo-Roman republicanism or civic republicanism) emphasizes its instrumental importance, i.e. as a means of preserving individual freedom to pursue individual ends, rather than as an activity or relationship which has significant intrinsic value (Rawls 1996: 205-206; Held 1998: 44-45; Pettit 1998: 48-49; Bellamy 2000: 178; Kymlicka 2002: 287; Honohan 2002: 8-9; Janoski and Gran 2002: 19-20; Honohan and Jennings 2006a and 2006b).

The classical view (which henceforth will be called neo-republican) of citizenship is associated with theorists such as Hannah Arendt, Benjamin Barber, J.G.A. Pocock, Adrian Oldfield, Charles Taylor, Ronald Beiner and Michael Sandel. The liberal view (from now on

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16 The fact that rights and responsibilities are mutually enhancing, argues Etzioni (1997: 42), ‘can be demonstrated both regarding to specific rights and on a more general level. For instance, the right to free speech presumes that those who are exposed to protected speech -as distinct from those who exercise it- must be willing to endure what they find offensive. Without members of the audience assuming this responsibility, the right to free speech is contested at best, and at worst ultimately stultified’.

17 However, as Ruth Lister (2003) points out, the point in conflict here, then, is about what we consider an appropriate balance between them, and how such a balance can reflect gender and other power relations.

18 In the liberal tradition this is attributed mainly to T.H. Marshall’s work Citizenship and Social Class. Marshall’s work strong emphasis on citizenship rights tends to neglect the citizenship responsibilities (Marshall 1998).
referred to as civic republican) is associated with Quentin Skinner, Philip Pettit and Richard Dagger (Beiner 1995; Kymlicka 2002; Honohan 2002). However, it should be noted that not all of them describe themselves as republicans in any of its main versions.

- **Political participation in neo-republicanism**

Neo-republicanism represents a contemporary criticism of modern or liberal democracies from the perspective of a recovery of a richer concept of citizenship of the ancient polis or republic (Rivero 1998; Taylor 1995). The feature that distinguishes neo-republicanism is its emphasis on the intrinsic value of political activity for its participants. Neo-republicanism is a vision of politics which ‘takes participatory self-rule as a good in itself – not simply as something instrumental to other goals’, it is considered ‘as something valuable for its own sake’ (Taylor 1995: 141). Being a citizen, in this sense, is to consider human beings to be political beings. Paul Clarke has expressed this idea with great clarity:

> The political figure of Being, being a citizen, which is apparently one of the most partial and specific modes of Being, turns out to be fundamental; for where a full, rich concept of citizenship is lacking politics is absent, in abeyance, hiding, side-tracked, or even suppressed. Where citizenship and politics are absent the project of Being human is itself side-tracked.
>
> (Clarke 1994: 3)

The recovery of the inheritance of citizenship, Clarke argues, thus ‘lies in the recognition that being is also a political being, of the mutual recognition of equals participating in a shared life and sharing in the operation of their own life’ (23).

The neo-republican emphasis on the intrinsic value of political participation brings it closer to the ideal of a community of individuals in control of their own lives (Gargarella 1999; Bárcena 1997). In this way, liberty depends on sharing in self-government, which means ‘deliberating with fellow citizens about the common good and helping to shape the destiny of the political community’ (Sandel 1998: 5). In other words, ‘liberty depends on self-government, and self-government depends on the members of a political community’s identifying with the role of citizen and acknowledging the obligations that citizenship entails’ (117). One is free only to the extent that one participates in the self-government of a political community that controls its own fate.

Therefore, in this tradition the conception of freedom as positive freedom plays a central role. A citizen is thus a person ‘who is not simply subjected to power but participates in his/her own rule’ (Taylor 1995: 141). Neo-republicanism views a citizen as someone who has three characteristics. Firstly, as someone who is conscious of his or her role as a responsible and active member of society, and thus actively participates in the future configuration of society through debate over and elaboration of public decisions. Secondly, as someone who recognizes political communities as indispensable and decisive environments for his or her full development, and accordingly identifies himself or herself with the political community to which he or she belongs. Thirdly, as someone who places great emphasis on the public sphere, and consequently is committed to promoting the common good through active political participation (Miller 2002; Llano 1999: 15).

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19 Its major thinkers include Machiavelli, Montesquieu, Rousseau, de Toqueville, and more recently Arendt (Taylor 1995: 141). In classical times, the ideal of citizenship was connected with Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries BC. It is in Aristotle’s *Politics*, where we find the notion of citizen as someone who rules and is ruled. In this view, politics is a good in itself, not the prerequisite of the public good. Accordingly, citizenship is not a means to be free, but the way of being free itself. The conception of the human person is of a creature formed by nature to live a political life. To Aristotle the politics was a good in itself, and not merely instrumental to other goods beyond it (Pocock 1995).
For neo-republicans, the solution to the legitimization crisis affecting the democratic system lies in the re-evaluation of the political sphere and rehabilitation of the notion of public virtue. Otherwise, citizenship will continue losing its importance due to the withdrawal of the citizen from the political realm into a self-regarding isolation. However, although political virtues are fundamental in the neo-republican perspective, what Kingwell (2001: 97-102) calls the Aristotelian temptation must be avoided. This is the temptation to ask too much of citizens, by identifying private and public virtue too closely. To some extent as well, by asking the state to commit actively to a certain conception of the good, the neo-republican proposal may imply very high risks (Gargarella 1999). For this tradition to share in self-rule requires that citizens possess certain civic virtues, which means that ‘republican politics cannot be neutral toward the values and ends its citizens espouse’ (Sandel 1998: 6). Thus, public commitment to certain civic virtues implies that the state should use its coercive power to develop certain behavior patterns considered appropriate for strengthening the community; it also implies the state should curtail others considered undesirable for this purpose (Gargarella 1999).

Liberals, as Rawls, sees neo-republicanism in fundamental opposition to political liberalism. This occurs because, ‘as a form of aristotelianism, it is sometimes stated as the view that man is a social, even a political, animal whose essential nature is most fully realized in a democratic society in which there is widespread and vigorous participation in political life’ (Rawls 1996: 2005). Thus, it represents a kind of comprehensive conception of the good in politics. Such a view of participation, as engaging in political life, Rawls argues, ‘can be a reasonable part of many people’s conception of the good and for some it may indeed be a great good’, but according to his perspective, ‘to make the good of civil society subordinate to that of public life it views as mistaken’ (420-1). For Rawls, outside the civic sphere itself a citizen is someone who subscribes to a determined group of principles of justice. Therefore, he does not consider a citizen to be an active participant in politics, since he sees the division between politically-active citizens and the rest of the population as advantageous in order for people to develop different talents and complementary abilities, and to establish mutually beneficial bounds of cooperation (Garay 2000: 84). Although political rights are included in the first principle of justice, where by definition all citizens are entitled to political participation, the only element really required is the recognition of the principles of justice. Participation is only required as necessary to protect people’s basic rights and freedoms (Miller 1995). Accordingly, for Rawls participation cannot be considered to be of any moral value itself. Moreover, if individuals choose to place a greater value on private life instead of being politically active, then they cannot be condemned because the rights of citizens cannot be lost if persons choose not to engage in forms of public activity (Buttle 1997).

However, by emphasizing the value of political participation, and attributing a central role to our presence in a political community, neo-republicanism tends to conceive of citizens in a way that is, as its own supporters admit, clearly in conflict with most people’s understanding of both citizenship and the good life. Most people do not find their primary source of happiness in politics, but rather in family life, work, religion or leisure. Politics very rarely draws attention to those citizens who are supposedly the real protagonists (Kymlicka and Norman 1995; Walzer 1995). Thus, the difficulty with this overly idealistic model is that ‘it makes the democratic process dependent on the virtues of citizens devoted to the public weal’ (Habermas 1998: 244). The problem with such a vision, then, is that politics involves many issues aside from those related to ethical self-understanding.

According to its critics, the neo-republican conception of citizenship in practice becomes an elite activity because ‘normally only the well-educated and the adequately wealthy have the inclination and the time to participate in formal politics’ (Heater 1999:73). Such emphasis on political participation is seen as particularly problematic by feminists,
because it entails direct implications for women due to the rigid separation between the public and private spheres. Citizenship as political participation is located in the public sphere (Lister 2003; Baumeister 2000). Thus, the neo-republican conception of citizenship ‘runs the danger of casting out from the body of citizens all those unable or unwilling to match up to its demanding requirements’ (Lister 2003: 34).

While it is necessary to keep this risk in mind, it is also important to remember the neo-republican criticism of liberalism’s deep-rooted individualism, which is considered responsible for the progressive deterioration of public life. The liberal vision of freedom (as non-interference) ‘lacks the civic resources to sustain self-government’, i.e. ‘it cannot inspire the sense of community and civic engagement that liberty requires’ (Sandel 1998: 6).

- **Political participation in civic republicanism**

In contrast to neo-republicanism, which sees political participation as the highest form of life, civic republicanism with a long history dating back to Roman roots is more moderate in its stance toward individual flourishing and the value of political participation. At the centre of civic republican thought is the idea of freedom as non-domination, and this represents a strong challenge for liberalism today as well as for neo-republicanism (Pettit 1999, 2001; Viroli 2002; Janoski and Gran 2002; Honohan 2002; Maynor 2003). As Mauricio Viroli (2002) points out, throughout its long history, liberalism has been criticized in many different ways, but almost never in the name of liberty, its fundamental principle.

Liberalism has been formidably successful in defending individuals against the interference of the state or other individuals, but less so in accommodating the demands for liberty voiced by men and women who must keep their eyes cast down –or wide open to ascertain the moods of the powerful people who with impunity may at any time force them to obey, even to serve them. When liberals have wanted to struggle against this kind of domination, they have been unable to deploy a concept of liberty as an absence of interference, clearly unsuited to the purpose, and have had to allude to other ideals, such justice or equality.

(Viroli 2002: 57-8)

Quentin Skinner (1998) has demonstrated, in his historical essay *Liberty before Liberalism*, that such criticisms of the liberal concept of liberty as non-interference are partly rooted in the neo-roman theory. The neo-roman theory calls in doubt the liberal assumption that individual liberty is basically a matter of non-interference, where the state’s main purpose is to ensure that its citizens can pursue their chosen goals. Rather, Skinner argues, in the civic republican tradition

this can never be sufficient, since it will always be necessary for the state to ensure at the same time that its citizens do not fall into a condition of avoidable dependence on the goodwill of others. The state has a duty not merely to liberate its citizens from such personal exploitation and dependence, but to prevent its own agents, dressed in a little brief authority, from behaving arbitrarily in the course of imposing the rules that govern our common life.

(Skinner 1998: 119)

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20 Parallel to the development of the *polis* in Greece with the idea of active citizenship, we can see the development of the Roman concept of citizenship (Clarke 1994). According to Pettit (1999: 5), this tradition is associated with Cicero at the time of the Roman Republic. Over time, it is also associated with authors such as Niccolò Machiavelli and other writers of the Italian Renaissance republics; James Harrington, and a host of lesser figures in and after the period of the English Civil War and the brief Commonwealth; and with many theorists of republic or commonwealth in eighteenth-century England, America and France.
Thus the civic republican conception of liberty or freedom as absence of dependence or domination,\(^{21}\) differs from the liberal conception of freedom as non-interference and from the neo-republican conception of freedom as participation in the self-government. Liberty as non-domination is ‘understood as the condition of the individual who does not have to depend on the arbitrary will of other individuals or institutions that might oppress him or her with impunity if they so desired’ (Viroli 2002: 35). Accordingly, ‘it is a social ideal which requires that, though there are other people who might have been able to interfere with the person on an arbitrary basis, they are blocked from doing so’ (Pettit 1999: 272).

In this perspective, interference is not the main threat to living freely (the liberal worry) but domination (Viroli 2002; Pettit 1999; 2001).\(^{22}\) For this reason, civic republicanism focuses on ‘creating the institutional arrangements that preserve the individual freedom’ (Maynor 2003: 12), i.e. ‘this version stresses the need for strong laws and institutions that secure civic-minded individuals and leave them to pursue their chosen ends’ (13). Of course, this is insofar as those ends do not seek to dominate others. Liberals, to clarify this point, consider that all laws mean a restriction on liberty (as non-interference), ‘while a [civic] republican considers the same laws the most secure bulwark protecting liberty and is therefore willing to accept even severe interference if this reduces the weight of arbitrary power and domination over himself and others’ (Viroli 2002: 62). Accordingly, ‘[t]he political implications of such a conception of freedom are a system of laws that provide guarantees against illegitimate interference, so that citizens may be able to act independently’ (Honohan 2002: 184). In the civic republican argument, it is not law which is seen as incompatible with freedom but arbitrary power. Insofar as a just law makes us free from the arbitrary will of others, the prohibition it imposes over us is not considered a reduction of our freedom. Rather it is the condition of its possibility.\(^{23}\)

For civic republicanism, based on this conception of liberty, political participation is a means to protect liberty rather than there being an assumption that participation in self-government is the highest virtue. From this perspective, ‘[i]t is often more important to have good rulers than to have citizens participate in every decision’ (Viroli 2002: 66). However, ‘participation plays an important role in checking the power of the state and ensuring that it does not dominate’ (Maynor 2003: 104). Hence political participation may be considered essential only in the sense that ‘it is necessary for promoting the enjoyment of freedom as non-domination’ (Pettit 1999: 8). Accordingly, the civic republican conception of participation differs in an important way from the neo-republican conception, in the sense that political activity can be intrinsically valuable without being the ultimate value in human life (Honohan 2002: 11). Political participation is seen as a precondition for the chance to realize other diverse good or life plans, as long as those ends do not seek to dominate others.

Political participation should be, then, instrumental to maintaining liberty. This approach tends to see democracy as merely procedural and institutional, forgetting that it also implies confrontation and opposition. In other words, ‘the purpose of democracy cannot be achieved without the exercise of power, and systems which are hostile to all uses of power are certainly inimical to democracy – the power of the people’ (Maddox 2002: 429). Democracy,

\(^{21}\)This would be based on the principle of the Roman law. According to such a principle, political liberty ‘defines the status of a free person as not being subject to the arbitrary will of another person – in contrast to a slave, who is dependent on another person’s will’ (Viroli 2002: 8).

\(^{22}\)There are many situations where it is possible to see this in our daily life. Two of Pettit’s and Viroli’s examples are a wife who can be abused by her husband without being able to resist or to demand restitution; and workers who can be subjected to minor or major abuses by their employer. In both cases there is no interference, but dependence or domination (Pettit 1999; Viroli 2002).

\(^{23}\)As Pettit (1999: 9) argues, ‘[t]his relative indifference to power or domination has made liberalism tolerant of relationships in the home, in the workplace, in the electorate, and elsewhere, that the republican must denounce as paradigms of domination and unfreedom’.
Maddox emphasizes, ‘is above all a matter of inclusion, of respect for the rights and interests of everybody. Its interplay of political forces allows the competition of all opinions’. For that reason, ‘democracy can admit of no principle of screening; it indeed requires vigilance, and the combating of bad opinions with better ones. It requires hard work, energy and imagination to build benign majorities, but little good will be done without them’.

Civic republicanism, on the other hand, can also become a source of domination, a risk we must keep in mind. As Charles Larmore (2001: 232) has observed on this point, ‘[o]nly universal suffrage and the widespread participation of citizens in political life can ensure that the laws will be just, instead of serving particular interests and private concentrations of power’. However, such a conception of an active political participation (positive liberty) is not present in the civic republican approach, as we saw above. Therefore, it is not enough that individuals obey the law and participate in politics because of the instrumental benefits they deliver for their own private pursuits, but rather they should do so because they value belonging to a just society. The stability of just institutions, and society as a whole, requires citizens to be ready to put the common good before their own private interests when need arises, i.e. to have an active conception of citizenship (Chen 2003).

Universal versus differentiated citizenship: The dimension of identity

Citizenship, as Kymlicka and Norman (1995: 301) point out, ‘is not only a legal status defined by a set of rights and responsibilities. It is also an identity, an expression of one’s membership in a political community’. And at the individual level, such identity as member of a political community is often contrasted with other more particular identities based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual preference and so on (Kymlicka and Norman 2000: 30-31). However, it is difficult to find a democratic society without some important controversy over whether and how public institutions should recognize the identity of disadvantaged cultural minorities (Guttmann 1994; Parekh 2000). In fact, what most societies have is the predominant liberal conception of citizenship, as a legal status that combines the universal character of citizenship with the homogenization of differences as a means to achieve such universality. But when we attempt to universalize these aspects through homogenization, it becomes clear that citizenship represses differences and inequalities but does not suppress them (López 1997; Young 1995). The liberal conception of citizenship, Parekh (2000: 339) states, ‘is insufficiently sensitive to and cannot give coherent accounts of the importance of the culture, tradition, community, a sense of rootedness and belonging, and so on’.

There is a clear link between recognition and identity which is not being taken into account by the liberal conception of citizenship. Our identity provides us with an understanding of who we are and where we come from and it is partially formed through its recognition or absence. In this sense, Taylor (1994: 25) argues, ‘a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demanding or contemptible picture of themselves. Nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being.’ For Taylor, the definition of someone’s identity entails not only her stance on moral and spiritual matters but also a reference to a defining community. One is a self only in relation to certain interlocutors. Our self-interpretations about us can only be found in the context of a community of other selves (Mulhall and Swift 2001). The way in which we think and conceive of ourselves is fundamentally defined by the way in which others think and conceive of us (Thomas 1998: 365).

But liberals fear that multicultural policies may run the risk of reinforcing power hierarchies within groups leaving some individuals vulnerable to mistreatment within their
own identity groups, i.e. intra-group oppression (Shachar 2000; Kymlicka 2000). As Brian Barry (2001: 117) has expressed it, liberals ‘cannot turn a blind eye to the potential that associations and communities have for abusing, oppressing and exploiting their members’. The multicultural claim insists that ‘liberal protections for individuals should be withdrawn wherever they interfere with a minority’s ability to live according to its culture’. But if we accede to this demand, Barry says, ‘the chief sufferers would be women, children and dissidents, as a consequence of the free rein that would be given to traditional patriarchal and authoritarian cultural norms’ (327). Liberalism is criticized, then, for defending a policy of state inactivity towards cultural diversity, because liberal states are not supposed to take sides with any culturally disadvantaged minority. State activity should be limited to providing basic rights to all individuals, regardless of their specific culture. This individualism is what leads liberals to place absolute importance on individual rights over specific groups of demands for rights (Gargarella 1999). However, for Kymlicka such aspects are not well grounded, in part because the assumption that liberal principles are inherently opposed to the demand of minority groups is false, since liberalism can indeed recognize the rights of specific cultural minorities (but not all). Liberals tend to offer open resistance to what they refer to as internal restrictions, i.e. measures adopted by a certain group that act against the rights of some other members as is the case, for example, of genital mutilation. However, they do not voice such resistance to external protections (barriers in defense of a determined disadvantaged minority) against the claims of the largest social group among their constituents. That is, ‘minority rights should not allow one group to dominate other groups; and they should not enable a group to oppress its own members. In other words, liberals should seek to ensure that there is equality between groups, and freedom and equality within groups’ (Kymlicka 2000: 194).

Critics of the differentiated citizenship worry also that if groups were encouraged to reflect on themselves and focus on their differences (whether racial, ethnic, religious, sexual, etc.), citizenship would stop serving as a means for cultivating a sense of community and a sense of purpose. There would be nothing to connect the different groups that constitute society and prevent the dissemination of mutual distrust and conflict. These critics fear that differentiated citizenship can create a politics of grievance (Kymlicka and Norman 1995: 304) since they focus on differences rather than common and shared elements (Kymlicka 2000: 194). A conception of citizenship ‘based upon group rights risks freezing social differences and creating an uncommunicative, fragmented and highly statistic politics’ (Faulks 2000: 92). Many liberals, including Rawls, see in such a conception of citizenship the possibility that it will undermine the sense of shared civic identity that holds a liberal society together (Kymlicka 2000: 174).

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24 At first glance, it seems to be an unusual practice. However the practice of some form of ritual of cutting the genitalia is very common in many countries in Africa (twenty), and in some countries in Asia and South America. To give an idea about the magnitude of this practice, just in Africa around 75-80 million females were affected in the mid-1980s (Carens 2000: 145-6).

25 This can be solved, Kymlicka (2000) argues, insofar we are able to distinguish different types of rights for different types of groups. Thus, we would have special representation rights for disadvantaged groups; multicultural rights for immigrants and religious groups; and self-government rights for national minorities. Certainly, these three types of right may be superimposed, and therefore some groups may demand more than one type of group right.

26 For Rawls, a society where rights and claims ‘depended on religious affiliation, social class, and so on... may not have a conception of citizenship at all; for this conception, as we are using it, goes with the conception of society as a fair system of cooperation for mutual advantage between free and equal persons’ (see: John Rawls (1989). ‘The Domain of the Political Overlapping Consensus’, New York University Law Review, 64/2: 233-55). Quoted by Kymlicka 2000: 235, Ch. 9: fn. 1.
The sense of belonging to a political community

How pluralistic and multicultural societies can develop a sense of belonging, reconciling the demands of political unity and cultural diversity is one of the main issues in this debate (Parekh 2000 and 2008). In other words, the problem is the construction a common identity in a country where people not only belong to different political communities but also belong in different ways. Some join as individuals and others through the community. Charles Taylor calls this phenomenon ‘deep diversity’, and insists that it is the only formula that can avoid the disintegration of the multinational state (Kymlicka and Norman 1995: 309). The unity needed in a democratic country should be meaningful for the members of such a national community and cannot be a statically-defined unchanging principle, but rather should arise out of the historical experience of different societies. Taylor (1997) argues that the problem of identity originates from the fact that all democratic countries need a common identity. This allows citizens to recognize themselves as members of the same group, united with their fellow citizens on the same project, a project that does not necessarily include other human beings but calls them together in unity, as a common agent. Accordingly, citizenship as membership of a political community involves a link between people of different identities in an active commitment to membership of a common political order, and ‘without such a shared political identity it is not possible to achieve a genuinely democratic society’ (Schwarzmantel 2003: 7).

One of the challenges for contemporary democracies, then, is to recognise such differences without falling into a situation in which the citizens see themselves, basically, as the bearers of particular identities, otherwise ‘[s]entiments of reciprocity and mutual concern would thus be minimal’ (Schwarzmantel 2003: 14), weakening in this way the shared identity of citizenship (Parekh 2000: 343). Without a common sense of belonging among its citizens, societies cannot be stable or last long (Parekh 2000).

Liberal universal citizenship is not enough. Citizenship also requires seeking belonging as a way to be accepted and to feel welcome. Otherwise such a conception of citizenship may fail to achieve the necessary commitment to the political community. The underlying idea here is that:

Some individuals and groups might enjoy the same rights as the rest but feel that they do not quite belong to the community, nor it to them. This feeling of being full citizens and yet outsiders is difficult to analyse and explain, but it can be deep and real and seriously damage the quality of their citizenship and their commitment to the political community.

(Parekh 2000: 342)

This is what Joseph Carens (2000) calls the psychological dimension of citizenship (see also Shotter 2000; Bell 2003). It refers ‘to one’s sense of identification with the political community or communities to which one belongs’ (162), i.e. ‘to feel that one belongs, to be connected to it through one’s sense of emotional attachment, identification, and loyalty’ (166). This feeling of belonging, as a member of a political community, is different from other forms of collective identities that can be very important for people, such as ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation, because it refers to self-government. In other words, ‘[p]eople do not normally think of themselves as citizens of these sorts of groups’, rather states ‘are frequently described and experienced as political communities and use the language of citizenship’ (167).

A possible way to answer such a challenge consists in trying to appeal to the ideal of nationhood, focusing on the importance of national identity for citizenship (Kymlicka 2002; Miller 2002). Moreover, as long there is no world state, i.e. world society is composed politically of nation states, citizenship mainly means membership of a particular state (Joppke
2002) and thus national identity becomes a central concept for national citizenship, and is the primary source of identity for citizens in contemporary democratic states (Miller 2002: 6). Nevertheless, this sense of belonging should not be based on ethnic or cultural characteristics but on a shared commitment to the political community (Miller 2002: 34; Parekh 2000: 342). For this reason the challenge to national identities, which are always in a state of flux, is ‘to remake them in a way that is more hospitable to women, ethnic minorities and other groups without emptying them of content and destroying the underpinnings of democratic politics’ (Miller 2002: 80). This means that ‘the conception of national identity, and national integration, should be a pluralist and tolerant one’ (Kymlicka 2002: 362).

Conclusion

In this section I have examined three principal foci for discussion in the current debate on citizenship. Now I would like to highlight some key points in connection with each one of them. Firstly, the concept of citizenship is closely linked, on the one hand, to the idea of individual rights; and, on the other, to the notion of belonging to a community as source of responsibilities. This led us to the debate between liberals and communitarians, i.e. to the relationship and balance between rights and responsibilities in the political community. An appropriate conception of citizenship needs to give more emphasis than liberalism does to responsibilities (duties and obligations). ‘Individual rights alone make for a thin and defensive form of citizenship that does little to maintain the political community upon which rights are founded’ (Faulks 2000: 69). The free individual can only be sustained in a political community, and thus individuals have to be concerned about such a community (Shotter 2000). Moreover, ‘all rights and responsibilities are made possible by the political community’, and thus ‘[t]o maintain our rights, we must be willing to accept the responsibilities that sustain the community’ (Faulks 2000: 71). Certainly, such rights and responsibilities need to be maintained in an adequate balance. Too much emphasis on responsibilities may place personal autonomy at risk.

Secondly, interest in citizenship is marked by the importance of certain civic virtues for promoting more civic participation in modern democracies. This led us to the debate over active versus passive citizenship. According to the republican tradition, the solution to the legitimisation crisis affecting the democratic system to a certain extent involves the rehabilitation of the notion of public virtue, in the political sphere, as political participation. However, the ‘neo-republican’ proposal of civic participation currently presents itself as very demanding and time-consuming, and thus citizenship may become an elite activity and, at the same time, its emphasis on civic participation as political participation excludes a broad range of civic activities in society (Heater 1999). Thus, the emergence of ‘civic-republicanism’, and its conceptualisation of citizenship, constitutes a challenging perspective not just for liberalism but also for neo-republicanism. For civic republicans, citizenship has an instrumental importance as a means of preserving individual freedom (as non-domination) to pursue individual ends. Accordingly, it seems to be both more realistic than neo-republicanism, and deeper than liberalism, as an approach to citizenship participation in modern society. However, as seen, it is not enough that individuals obey the law and participate in politics because of the instrumental benefits they deliver for their own private pursuits, but rather they should do so because they value belonging to a just society. The stability of just institutions, and society as a whole, requires citizens to be ready to put the common good before their own private interests when need arises, i.e. to have an active conception of citizenship. Nonetheless, a weaker version of political participation of neo-republican citizenship may result in being more appropriate since ‘[c]itizens will be motivated
by the common good when they participate in politics, but politics need not occupy a central
place in their lives’ (Bell 2003: 242).

Thirdly, the predominant liberal conception of universal citizenship implies a
homogenization of differences as a means to achieve such universality. However, it cannot
suppress them, tending to discriminate against less favoured groups in society. This led us to
the debate over universal versus differentiated citizenship. This claim for a differentiated
citizenship is not necessarily in conflict with liberal principles. In fact, most modern liberal
democracies recognize some form of group-differentiated citizenship. Nevertheless, the key
issue here is the sense of belonging to a political community, i.e. citizenship identity (usually
expressed as national identity in the process of nation-building). In this respect, Kymlicka and
Norman (2000: 37) conclude that ‘minority rights have the potential to enhance, as well as to
erode, a common citizenship’, though this cannot be deduced a priori but through empirical
investigation. Thus, ‘[i]t is not clear that philosophical speculation can contribute much here:
we need to wait for more and better evidence’ (Kymlicka 2002: 368).

Through this brief review of the current debate on citizenship, I have tried to show that
what is at stake in such discussions are the fundamental dimensions of citizenship, i.e. rights
and responsibilities, participation and identity. Any attempt to elaborate a theoretical
perspective for the conceptualization of citizenship must take into consideration these three
dimensions. Otherwise, it would be a narrow conception of citizenship. This is what I call the
proposal for an integrated normative model of citizenship, which I see as an important
contribution of this paper. As has been pointed out: ‘Theory does not mean withdrawing from
the practical world; it is a way of understanding where we are and where we are heading, and
what needs changing most urgently’ (UNDP 2005: 53).

3. How can we link citizenship with (support for) democracy?

At first glance citizenship and democracy seem to be two concepts that are closely related to
each other, and thus one could expect to find extensive literature on the subject. However, this
is not the case. When we try to develop a better understanding of the relationship between
these two notions, and what they mean in the context of each other, to our surprise, we realize
that it has hardly been analyzed.

There is a notorious lack of reflection on the subject, which is particularly striking.
There are probably many reasons for this, among them: a) the fact that during the 19th and 20th
centuries both concepts were closely connected (where it was not necessary to make clear
distinctions between them). This has certainly changed by the end of 20th century, as is the
case, for instance, of the European Union (Perczynski and Vink 2002); b) the fact that both
concepts have been considered not just as controversial but as essentially controversial,
because they are internally complex and open to divergent interpretations (Vandenberg 2000);
c) and the fact that citizenship and democracy have been frequently treated in relative
isolation within separate academic disciplines, and thus most theorists participate in debates
that take place within a single discourse (Shafir 1998). But as Gerald Delanty (2000: 136)
oberves, ‘unless citizenship is linked to democracy, citizenship will be reduced to being a
pre-political privatism and, on the other side, democracy will be separated from civil society’.

In what follows, I shall define citizenship and explore some links with (support for)
democracy in theoretical terms. And to avoid any claim of tautology 27 (see Diamond 1999:
65), citizenship will rest on conceptual foundations other than what we hypothesize to be its
principal consequence: the quality and stability of democracy, and support for democracy.

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27 In this regard a tautology means a needless repetition of an idea expressed in terms of two or more concepts,
where one of them defines the other which has the same meaning, reflecting circularity of the argument.
This is a very exploratory section, but a significant one. Future reflections will be necessary, but this is beyond the scope of this paper.

The Concept of Citizenship

During the 1990s and the 2000s there was a proliferation of works published on the subject of citizenship. However, all of them faced major obstacles when attempting to define it. Moreover, most definitions only pay attention to one or, at best, two dimensions of citizenship. In contrast to them, I see democratic citizenship as constituted by three dimensions in the following terms: a) the possession of certain rights and the responsibility to carry out certain duties and obligations in an adequate balance within a given political community, the nation-state; b) a sense of belonging to a national political community, which is linked to national identity; and c) the opportunity to contribute to public life in a given political community through political participation. At the same time, we must keep in mind, that ‘citizenship is not a possession that may be achieved completely and secured forever but rather is constituted in its imperfect exercise by citizens, along the way’ (van Gunsteren 1998: 153).

Such a model of democratic citizenship is understood in reference to a particular political community, the nation-state. Democratic citizenship, in terms of rights and responsibilities, participation and identity, only makes sense in relation to a political community, and that political community will remain the nation-state, at least for the foreseeable future. As for as to post-national visions of citizenship, which suggest that the nation-state is no longer the privileged place of reference for citizenship, I considerer such arguments exaggerated and misplaced. Citizenship is above all the relationship between the individual and their political community. Such a relationship is constituted and defined by the three fundamental dimensions of citizenship. This argument, however, will be not explored in the present paper.

Based on this definition of citizenship, I will argue the existence, at least theoretically, of a virtuous relationship between citizenship (through its component dimensions) and (support for) democracy, which would be stronger in more (neo)republican and communitarian conceptions of citizenship than in those of a liberal character. This takes into account what was discussed above.

Citizenship and democracy

- Rights and responsibilities

Citizenship is a status that mediates the relation between the individual and the political community. Since citizenship rights are possible thanks to the existence of the political community we must be willing to accept a greater responsibility for its maintenance. Citizenship, as Faulks (2000: 106) argues, is an ethic of participation that is the key to uniting rights and responsibilities. There is, in consequence, a reciprocal and interdependent relationship between the polity and its citizens:

Rights imply responsibilities, since rights do not exist in a vacuum. To be effective, others must recognise and respect our rights and we have the responsibility to do the same. Rights also depend for their existence on the maintenance of the political community that sustains

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28 To certain extent, closer definitions can be founded, for example, in Held 1989; López 1997; Lukes and García 1999; Cohen 1999; Delanty 2000; UNDP 2000; Kymlicka and Norman 1995, 2000; Goul Anderson and Hoff 2001; Tambini 2001; Bauböck 2001; Kymlicka 2002; Pattie, Seyd and Whiteley 2004; Bellamy 2008.
them. Consequently, we have the responsibility to exercise our rights, where these rights are fundamental to the good of the community.

(Faulks 2000: 108)

Citizenship rights are meaningful when they are supported by a sense of obligation amongst others to help build and sustain the political institutions that make rights possible. For that reason we must enhance our level of responsibility to our political community (Faulks 2000: 108). Accordingly, it is crucial to stress the importance of an adequate balance between rights and responsibilities (Etzioni 1995; 1996; 1997; 2001).

On an individual level, our understanding of citizenship focuses on how each person sees the relationship of rights and obligations within a framework of an adequate balance or exchange (Janoski 1998: 11; Janoski and Gran 2002: 18). It also considers the way of how citizens understand and exercise their rights and responsibilities is decisive for the health and stability of any system of governance (Faulks 1999: 125). The distinction between duties and obligations is useful for a better explanation of such an idea. Citizenship responsibilities imply at the same time both duties and obligations. Duties refer to those responsibilities imposed by the law and carry some kind of legal sanction if the individual does not honor them. They contrast with obligations, which are those responsibilities imposed by our morality, and thus voluntary. So the healthy functioning of a political community can be seen in terms of its ability to rely upon obligations, which rest on moral personal responsibility, rather than imposed legal duties (Faulks 2000: 82; Parek 1993).

From the perspective of democracy, the practice of citizenship raises important concerns over citizenship responsibilities. Citizenship responsibilities are not just a matter of the simple duty to obey a democratically promulgated law, but also obligations such as taking an active interest and participating in the conduct of public affairs. The legal duties are only part of the responsibilities that citizens have (towards other citizens). Nonetheless, it might be argued that for some conceptions of politics such a sense of citizen obligation is not necessary insofar as people do not need a motive of obligation to pursue their self-interest. But if the justification of democracy is framed in terms of citizens who are political equals in pursuit of their common interest, such an interpretation of democracy becomes very difficult to maintain. Democratic politics can not be seen simply as citizens pursuing their self-interest because collective action plays a decisive role in providing political agents with an incentive to allow others to share their interests and to work for them politically (see Weale 1999: 189-91).

However, because of liberalism’s emphasis on individual rights, and responsibilities as minimal (formal/legal) duties, citizens tend to be reduced to being passive bearers of rights. This kind of citizenship does not strengthen democracy. In fact, one source of problems for contemporary democracy is the existence of a gap between citizens’ sense of rights and their sense of citizenship responsibilities (Pattie, Seyd and Whiteley 2004). What is necessary is the fostering of the public virtues that lead individuals to perform their responsibilities as citizens, in terms of both their (formal/legal) duties and their (moral) obligations. The good political community is one that promotes citizenship responsibilities (duties and obligations) as well as citizenship rights, communitarians remind us. A morally responsible person would tend to perform citizenship responsibilities in a political community, and this is the very foundation of democracy. Moreover, democracy gives us space to act as morally responsible individuals insofar as we can participate in collective decisions and live under the laws of our own choosing (see Dahl 2000: 55). For democracy, as Robert Dahl asserts, it is desirable that citizens ‘should take into account the rights and obligations of others as well as themselves. And they should possess the ability to engage in free and open discussions with others about the problems they face together’ (56).
Participation

Both republican and democratic theorists from Rousseau onwards have either urged or assumed that a proper system of government must provide opportunities for political participation by the ordinary citizen, where voting in periodic competitive elections is the minimum condition that a governmental system must satisfy to qualify as democratic. However, for a healthy democracy further opportunities and forms of political participation are highly desirable. Democracy would be enhanced in quality if the level of participation were increased (Birch 1996: 80-1).

The concern with ensuring greater civic participation in politics and moving closer to the ideal of a community of individuals in control of their own lives is the main task of republicanism. For the republican conception of citizenship, a citizen is ‘someone who plays an active role in shaping the future direction of his or her society through political debate and decision-making’ (Miller, 2000: 53). This means that ‘citizenship is an activity or a practice, and not simply a status, so that not to engage in the practice is, in important senses, not to be a citizen’ (Oldfield, 1990: 5). Accordingly, for neo-republicans part of the solution to the legitimating crisis affecting the democratic system involves a reappraisal of the political sphere and the rehabilitation of the notion of public virtue, which implies promoting higher levels of citizenship participation in the political community.

However, from the perspective of normative theories of democracy, there are great controversies about the nature, extent and feasibility of mass citizens’ participation within democracy. At one extreme, as Albert Weale points out,

are those Rousseauian theories in which popular participation is central to the very conception of democracy, since such participation moralizes citizens, thereby enabling them to form common view of the general interest. At the other extreme is liberal constitutionalism in which the primary function of democracy is protective and popular participation, through elections, is simply seen as an ultimate control on political leaders.

(Weale 1999: 84)

We already know, however, that most citizens do not put too much value on participating in the political community. And we also know some implications of this. Many citizens feel alienated from politics and disconnected from the political community beyond their personal relationships. The liberal emphasis on rights over responsibilities has tended to dismiss the obligation to participate in public life and has caused the rise of passive citizenship. But citizenship requires some concerns for the common good and some participation in public affairs in the political community. Otherwise, citizens run the risk of not having their interests considered and of being excluded. Put simply, ‘if you are included in the electorate of a democratic state you cannot be certain that all your interests will be adequately protected; but if you are excluded you can be pretty sure that your interests will be seriously injured by neglect or outright damage’ (Dahl 2000: 53). The interests of those who choose not to participate in the political community will not be given the same attention as interests of those who do, and thus their fundamental interests will not be adequately protected and advanced by those who govern. In the end, if some citizens have greater opportunities than others for expressing their views, their policies are more likely prevail (see Dahl 2000: 77, 39). In other words: ‘a democracy in which a significant number of citizens decide not to exercise their rights or to fulfill their duties is a democracy that is in trouble’ (UNDP 2005: 145).

Finally, it is necessary to keep in mind that the content of citizenship rights and responsibilities is always contingent. This implies that
the requirements and aspirations of a community will change over the time. Political participation is therefore central to uniting rights and responsibilities. It is through active campaigns against injustice that rights have been extended to previously excluded groups and the responsibility citizens have to promote justice within the community is exercised.

(Faulks 2000: 81)

Moreover, very often ‘rights need to be defended and extended through political action. Thus, citizenship rights are not static but are always open to reinterpretation and negotiation’ (Lister 2003: 36). Insofar as disagreement over values and conflicting interest is an essential component of politics (Bellamy and Castiglione 2002: 368, 380), political participation is necessary to promote and ensure citizenship rights. Citizens’ political participation makes it possible for citizens to determine the sort of citizenship rights that they can demand and access. ‘Such participation should be understood as an equal and reciprocal right to have an effective voice in making the collective decisions on which all citizens’ life chance depends’ (373).

- **Identity**

Citizenship, like democracy, has had different meanings in different times, and today the identity dimension of citizenship is consubstantial to itself. In *Citizenship in Britain: Values, Participation and Democracy*, written by Charles Pattie, Patric Seyd and Paul Whiteley, it has been highlighted that: ‘Identity would seem to be an essential characteristic of citizenship. An ideal citizen is the person who has a sense of belonging to a community and feels a sense of obligation and commitment to other members of that community’, where, as they said, ‘people’s identity is primarily with their country’ (Pattie, Seyd and Whiteley 2004: 34). I could not agree more. Citizenship, as an expression of one’s membership in a political community, involves a link between people of different identities in an active commitment to membership of a common political community, where a shared citizenship identity is fundamental to the achievement of a genuinely democratic society. In fact, one of the problems for contemporary democracy is of recognizing the differences without falling into a situation in which the citizens see themselves as the bearers of exclusively particular identities. Without it, the sense of identification between citizens and the democratic state of which they are members would be weak. A healthy democracy requires a common citizenship identity, as Kymlicka and Norman point out:

> In such a society, where there is no common citizenship identity bridging or transcending the various group identities, politics is likely to be reduced to a mere modus vivendi amongst groups that barely tolerate, let alone co-operate with, each other. There is a little hope for the sort of mutual understanding, deliberation, trust, and solidarity required by a flourishing democracy.

(Kymlicka and Norman 2000: 35)

In this respect, Alan Touraine has also recognized that:

> The freedom to choose rulers is meaningless if the ruled are not interested in the government, if they feel no sense of belonging to a political society but merely to a family, a village, a professional category, an ethnic group, or a religious confession. This awareness of belonging is not universally present and not everyone demands the right to be a citizen.

(Touraine 1997: 27)
Accordingly, a common sense of belonging to the national political community results necessary to avoid some of the problems mentioned. And such a sense of belonging to the political community, in terms of a common citizenship identity, is provided by national identity. A sense of national identity, even in a globalizing world, can provide some elements to ensure the political cohesion necessary for the national political community. Citizenship identity allows members to know and feel that they are part of a political community and it motivates individuals to work for the good of such a community. Without such a feeling of shared national identity it is unlikely that someone will contribute towards collective goals of a given society. Moreover, without it, it is difficult to imagine how the process of decision-making could be seen as an expression of democratic self-determination especially when such decisions are not part of one’s own interest (i.e. the willingness to accept them). The shared sense of national identity, then, is essential for the legitimacy of democracy (Decker 2002: 263, Miller 2000). As Carens (2000: 168) argues, without such a sense of attachment or patriotism to the political community, it may be difficult to generate the political obligation and civic virtue necessary among citizens.

Thus the importance of the concept of citizenship identity arises from the idea that every society feels the need to form a type of identity among its members, within which they can perceive themselves, and which provides them with a sense of belonging. This involves a common project that generates a certain degree of commitment, without which it would be difficult to face challenges as a society. Citizenship identity allows members to know and feel that they are part of a community and motivates individuals to work for the good of the community (Cortina 1998). Accordingly, an appropriate sense of national identity is a key aspect of citizenship because citizens are more likely to make sacrifices for others, and this strengthens their sense of mutual obligation, which is central for democracy. But at the same time, as we said earlier, without a common sense of belonging among its citizens, societies cannot be stable or last long. In other words, citizenship identity matters for democracy to the extent that democracy requires commitment on the part of their citizens.

**Citizenship and support for democracy**

Since democracy cannot work properly without citizenship (see Perczynski and Vink 2000), citizenship matters for democracy. Democracies are being increasingly challenged due to the lack of citizen support. As Russell J. Dalton has argued:

> Contemporary democracies are facing a challenge today. This challenge does not come from enemies within or outside the nation. Instead, the challenge comes from democracy’s own citizens, who have grown distrustful of politicians, sceptical about democratic institutions, and disillusioned about how the democratic process functions.

(Dalton 2004: 1)

Much of the debate concerning the prospects for democracy involves the idea of broad popular acceptance and support (Foweraker, Landman and Harvey 2003: 60; Klingemann 1999; Mishler and Rose 1999; Diamond 1994, 1999; Dahl 2000; Dalton 2004; Welzel and Inglehart 2007). More specifically: ‘Citizens’ support for democracy is a key requirement for its sustainability’ (UNDP 2004: 51). And as we know, both support for democracy and democracy cannot be taken for granted.

History shows examples of democracies that have been destroyed by political forces that have enjoyed the backing or at least the passivity of a substantial proportion and, in some cases, majority of the members of society. Democracies become vulnerable when, inter alia,
authoritarian political forces find in the attitudes of citizens fertile territory for action. Hence the importance of being aware of the level of support enjoyed by Latin American democracies. (UNDP 2004: 51)

In the Latin American case, the reverse wave of democratization (1958-1975) had affected our countries very dramatically with a succession of military coups in Peru (1962), Brazil and Bolivia (1964), Argentina (1966), Chile and Uruguay (1973). And since we have kept records, mainly provided by the Latinbarometer survey (since 1996), low levels of support for democracy have been exposed in comparison with well established democracies. The second half of the twentieth century, therefore, has meant for us a time of hope and fear about democracy and citizens’ support for democracy. And as Diamond (1999: 273) points out: ‘The most dangerous intellectual temptation for democrats is theology – to think that the world is necessarily moving toward some natural democratic end state.’ We have seen in Latin America good reasons to be cautious about such a temptation because it is simply false. Nothing even close to a natural end state has emerged (see also Weale 1999; Dahl 2000), and we well know that. We saw how the most successful democracies in Latin America, Chile and Uruguay, fell under authoritarian regimes in the 1970s. So all this is not gratuitous theoretical speculation. It is not just an intellectual challenge. It is relevant to our lives. We know what it means to be under authoritarian rule.

But we also know that the collective memory can be very fragile. And if Diamond is right, as I think he is, our democratic future is uncertain. The Latin American third wave of democracies enjoy a considerable amount of support for democracy by default, insofar as many citizens still vividly remember their bad experiences under authoritarian regimes. ‘These memories have made people patient and sober in their expectation about what democracy can deliver in the short term. But what will happen when these memories fade with generational change?’ (Diamond 1999: 205). This is a very tough question and I do not have a clear answer for that now. All I can say in this regard, is that the quality and stability of democracy depends, to a large extent, on citizens’ support for democracy. In others words: ‘Only when support for democracy has become intrinsic and unconditional can democracy be considered consolidated and secure’ (169). And since democratic legitimacy depends on the consent or support of the majority of its citizens, democratic stability depends also on such a citizen support (Diamond 1995: 9). And if that is the case, citizenship should play a fundamental role.

Citizens’ support for democracy is understood to be important to the consolidation of democracy insofar as it constitutes the source of legitimacy of democratic government. It occurs when it is routinized and internalized in social and psychological life (Linz and Stepan 1996: 15-16; Foweraker, Landman and Harvey 2003: 196). In psychological terms, at individual-level citizens’ attitudes toward democracy are considered fundamental not just for its legitimacy but also for its consolidation. This is the belief that democratic procedures and institutions constitute the best form of government.

Attitudinally, a democratic regime is consolidated when a strong majority of public opinion, even in the midst of major economic problems and deep dissatisfaction with incumbents, holds the belief that democratic procedures and institutions are the most appropriate way to govern collective life, and when support for anti-system alternatives is quite small or more-or-less isolated from prodemocratic forces.

(Linz and Stepan 1996: 16)

Moreover, ‘[d]emocratic consolidation requires that citizens develop an appreciation for the core institutions of a democratic political society’ including ‘political parties, legislatures’ and ‘electoral rules’ among others (Linz and Stepan 1996: 16). Accordingly, democracy requires a
set of political values and orientations from its citizens, where beliefs and perception about the regime legitimacy play a critical role in the persistence or breakdown of democracy (Diamond 1994: 1). In other words, a stable democracy requires a belief in the legitimacy of the political regime as a general principle (democracy as the best form of government), as a general appreciation for the core institutions of a democratic political society and, as we will see below, the levels of satisfaction with how democracy works. In particular, transitions to democracy in Latin America can be seen, to some extent, as the result of democratization of political culture, i.e. by the growing mass acceptance of the idea of democracy among citizens (Rovner 2005: 168).

The current challenge for Latin American countries consists of improving the quality of consolidated democracies or deepening democracy, where consolidation constitutes a continuum process ranging from low-quality to high-quality democracies (Linz and Stepan 1996: 16). When the basic rules of democracy have been established, the quality of democracy becomes a main issue (Weyland 1995: 125). And what we see in most Latin American countries are low-quality democracies, where unemployment, poverty and inequality remain major problems (Peeler 2004, 175-177, 188, 203-7; UNDP 2005). Very surprisingly, however, most scholars in Latin America overlook the importance of support for democracy for the democratic process itself and see citizenship as mainly citizenship rights (see, for example, the 2005 UNDP report). This, I think, is a terrible mistake and I share the point of view of Russell J. Dalton (2004: 10) when he says: ‘I disagree that current feeling of dissatisfaction and distrust are either normal or an insignificant political development. The political culture literature argues that citizens must be supportive of the political system if it is to endure –and this seems to be especially relevant to democratic politics’.

In terms of the relationship between citizenship and support for democracy we can argue that lack of citizen support for democracy may erode the vitality of democracy, and eventually may undermine the democratic process itself (Dalton 2004: 157). We must remember that inasmuch as democracy functions with minimal coercive force because of the legitimacy of the system and compliance of the citizens, declining levels of support for democracy may undermine such a relationship and thus the workings of democracy. Those citizens who hold low levels of support for democracy are less likely to comply with paying taxes, respect governmental regulations, not abuse government programmes and respect the law (12, 159, 165,186 and 200). And in our case, almost three decades after Latin America began its return from authoritarian rule to democracy, the citizens’ adhesion to democracy, satisfaction with democratic performance, and institutional confidence are among the lowest in comparison with the other regions of the world. So far such a tendency does not seem to be undergoing any change. Moreover, in recent years the situation has worsened in many countries (see the 2008 Latinbarometer report). At the same time, in the Latin American case, there is a particular worrying pattern of instability that affects governance. As Valenzuela (2004) observes, for two decades a lengthy list of presidents failed to fulfill their stipulated presidential period. Presidents have been prematurely removed from their by means of impeachment or forced resignation, sometimes under circumstances of instability that have threatened constitutional democracy itself (see also Lagos 2005).

Support for democracy, to be sure, is understood as a multidimensional concept. For David Easton (1975), the most influential author in the field, support for the political system must be understood with reference to three different objects of political support: the political community, the political regime, and the political authorities. In what follows, I will focus on support for the political regime. To do this, I shall use three measures related to the support for the regime: a) support for the regime’s normative principles; b) support for the regime’s

29 The principle that government of, by, and for the people is the basis of the political system.
30 The voluntary compliance with laws and regulations.
performance; and c) support for the regime’s institutions. Unfortunately the political authorities dimension is not considered in the Latinbarometer survey, reason for which it has been excluded from the analysis in the present paper. The dimension of political community has also been excluded, because I consider the respective survey question (national pride) as a better indicator of citizenship identity.

Support for regime’s principles represents the levels of adhesion to the values of the political system. This involves the idea of how a political system should be organized as a democratic, authoritarian or other political form. It is a general agreement with the idea of democracy as the best form of government. On the other hand, Support for regime’s performance refers to the level of satisfaction with how the democratic political system functions in practice. For instance, one can believe in democratic values but remain critical about the way democratic government works in practice. Finally, Support for regime’s institutions represents the level of confidence towards institutions such as the executive, parliament, the legal system, the police, political parties, and the armed forces. All these institutions are related to the political system and the dynamics of support for individual institutions may show differences between them. Citizens must accept such institutions as legitimate and accept the decision made by them for a stable political order (or with some specific values of democracy) would seem to be a prerequisite for a stable democratic political order (see Easton 1975; Norris 1999a; Klingemann 1999; Dalton 1999, 2004; Fuchs 1999; Rovner 2005; Booth and Seligson 2009).

Conclusion

In this section I have tried to answers the questions of how can we link citizenship with (support for) democracy? Based on the discussion appearing above, we arrived at a definition of citizenship as constituted by three dimensions: a) rights and responsibilities; b) a sense of belonging (national identity); and c) political participation. According to such dimensions, some links between citizenship and (support for) democracy in theoretical terms were explored. Citizenship was seen closely related to democracy insofar as its constituent dimensions, rights and responsibilities, participation, and identity are essential for democracy. In first place, it was argued that there is a virtuous relationship between citizenship and democracy, which would be stronger in more civic republican and communitarian conceptions of citizenship than in those of a liberal character.

In second place, concerning support for democracy (in terms of support for the democratic regime), the assumption is that if citizens do not believe in democracy as the best form of government, feel dissatisfied with how democracy works, and do not trust the main democratic institutions, democracy will be seriously damaged and placed at risk. The health of democracy depends, among other things, on mass citizen support. On the other hand, from a citizenship perspective, citizens who have a strong sense of their rights and responsibilities (in appropriate balance), participate in the political life, and feel that they belong to the political community are more likely to support democracy.

4. Is there an empirical relationship between citizenship and support for democracy in Latin American countries?

This section approaches the problem of support for democracy from a citizenship perspective, by which I mean citizens aware of their rights and responsibilities, with a sense of belonging to the national political community (identity), and with levels of political participation in such a community, the nation-state. Support for democracy is understood in terms Easton’s conceptualization of it (as support for the political regime). The main empirical research
hypothesis is that higher levels of citizenship result in higher levels of support for democracy throughout Latin American countries. The assumption here is that there are patterns that can be appreciated across countries. Alternatively, if we find that such a relationship does not occur in some cases, it may reflect specific factors specific to a particular country which would require further explanations for each case (see Norris 1999a: 8-7). Nonetheless, I believe that the erosion of political support would not be the result of merely specific causes which can be found in countries’ specific historical contexts but also the expression of a common tendency spreading across Latin American countries. In other words, the decline of political support cannot only be explained by the singularity of political experiences of each country but requires other kind of explanations, which in this case will be the perspective of citizenship.

Methodological aspects

The theoretical discussion of citizenship and support for democracy allowed us to arrive at a specific theoretical conception of them. And based on this, I will proceed to make operational definitions of these two concepts in order to create both an Index of Citizenship and an Index of Support for Democracy. This methodological step will permit us both to characterize the Latin American countries, and to study the relationship between citizenship and support for democracy, incorporating diverse control variables.

The data analysis will focus on individual-level analysis. This will be carried out through statistical analysis of secondary information from the 2005 Latinobarometer survey, the largest annual survey on democracy and politics in the region.31 Bivariate correlations will be used to determinate the relationship between citizenship and support for democracy. Nonetheless, a second test needs to be run in order to both eliminate a possible spurious correlation between them and to estimate the impact of citizenship on support for democracy, controlling at the same time for other important variables. Such variables are: social background (gender, age, education, and socioeconomic status), evaluations of the present economic situation (economic situation of the country and personal economic situation), evaluation of public services and the justice system (health system, education system and justice system), interpersonal trust and victim of some criminal act, perception of corruption (in national elections and knowledge of cases of corruption in the last 12 months), and mass media (number of days watching news on television). This will be evaluated by OLS regression analysis, both of the pooled sample and of the Chilean case.

The Index of Citizenship. Citizenship is considered in terms of three dimensions: 1) the balance between rights and responsibilities; 2) identity and; 3) political participation. Such citizenship dimensions will be combined to create an Index of Citizenship. For details of their operationalization see Appendix.

- The dimension of rights and responsibilities: this dimension of citizenship is considered as a statement of equality (mainly formal rather than substantive), with rights and responsibilities which are balanced within certain limits. From this, it is possible to identify three different situations, at the individual level, in terms of how each person sees this balance: 1) when the rights are > than the responsibilities; 2) when the rights are \( \cong \) to the responsibilities; 3) and when the rights are < than the responsibilities (Janoski 1998; Faulks 1999 and 2000).

31 The year selected, 2005, contains the necessary indicators to build the indexes. Latinobarometer is a public opinion poll held each year (since 1995) and represents opinions, attitudes, behavior and values in 18 Latin American countries.
1) And thinking of how things function in this country, would you say that in practice you get your rights to be always respected, almost always respected, almost never respected or never respected?
2) On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means "not at all justifiable" and 10 means "totally justifiable", how justifiable do you believe it is to: Managed to avoid paying all one's taxes?

- **The dimension of participation**: this dimension considers political participation in a political national community. In terms of political participation, it includes voting in periodic and competitive local national elections, and canvassing or otherwise campaigning in elections (Birch 1996; Goul Anderson and Hoff 2001). I also include the indicator regarding the value of voting.
  1) If there were presidential elections tomorrow, which party would you vote for?
  2) Some people say that the way you vote can change the way things will be in the future. Others say that no matter how you vote, things will not improve in the future. Which statement is closest to your way of thinking?
  3) How frequently do you do each of the following things? Very frequently, fairly frequently, occasionally or never?: Work or have worked for a political party or candidate.

- **The dimension of identity**: In this dimension, national identity is associated with the sense of belonging to a national community, i.e. the Nation-State (Smith 1991 and 1995; Taylor 1990 and 1996; Miller 1995 and 2002; Schwarzmantel 2003). The sense of belonging to a community derives from a sharing of common interests, territory, and pride. This sense of national identity has usually been expressed in the form of preferences. The connection between preferences and identity is the implicit, if not always stated, pride in belonging to what one believes is to be the best (see Heater 1990: 182-210). Feeling of national pride, a strong emotional attachment to the national political community, is thus linked to attitudinal expressions of national identity. In this way, one measure of national identity is national pride (Dalton 2004: 158, 44; Dalton 1999). I also include other two indicators: sense of belonging to the majority in country; and the mother tongue.
  1) How proud are you to be [nationality]? Are you very proud, fairly proud, a little proud, or not proud at all?
  2) How would describe you? Would you say that belong to the majority or would you say that belong to the minority in [country]?
  3) What is your mother tongue?: a) Spanish, b) Portuguese, c) Indigenous language, d) Other

**The Index of Support for Democracy**: On the other hand, support for democracy will be studied in terms of: support for the regime’s principles, support for the regime’s performance and support for regime’s institutions. These three sources of political support will be combined to create an **Index of Support for Democracy**. For details of their operationalization see Appendix.

- **Support for regime’s democratic principles**: represents the levels of adhesion to the values of the political system. The questions wording in Latinbarometer are as follow:
  1) Which of the following statements do you agree with most? a) Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government; b) In certain situations, an authoritarian government can be preferable to democracy; c) It does not matter to people like me whether we have a democratic or non-democratic government.
  2) Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements: Democracy may have problems but it is the best system of government.
  3) Would you support a military government to replace the democratic government if the situation got very bad, or would you never support a military government under any circumstances?
Support for regime’s democratic performance: represents the level of satisfaction about how democratic political system functions in practice. In this case, the questions are worded as:

1) In general, would you say that you are very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in [country]?
2) Generally speaking, do you think that the elections in [country] are clean or rigged?
3) How would you describe the political situation of the country? Would you say that it is very good, good, about average, bad or very bad?

Support for regime’s democratic institutions: represents the level of confidence towards institutions. In this particular case we are interested in the political institutions (President, National Congress, and Political parties). The original Latinbarometer survey question is:
Please look at this card and tell me how much confidence you have in each of the following groups, institutions or persons mentioned on the list: a lot, some, a little or no confidence? a) The Church; b) The Armed Forces; c) The Judiciary; d) President; e) The Police; f) The National Congress [Federal in Mexico]; g) The political parties; h) Television.

The main findings

The results clearly show a significant positive influence of citizenship on support for democracy in all Latin American countries. The coefficient of Pearson Correlation is high in all Latin American countries (with exception of Nicaragua), but is particularly strong in the Chilean case (0.599). This finding confirms the main empirical hypothesis of this research: higher levels of citizenship result in higher levels of support for democracy throughout Latin American countries. Moreover, it is not very common in social science is to find such high levels of correlation at individual level of analysis, which makes this finding very remarkable (see Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citizenship Index by country</th>
<th>Support for Democracy Index</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>.437</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>.308</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>.372</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>.448</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>.368</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td><strong>599</strong></td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>.327</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>.379</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>.478</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>.414</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>.363</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>.248</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>.366</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>.323</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>.307</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>.377</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>.491</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>.568</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>.453</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Asterisks indicate the statistical significance of the coefficients with *** = p < 0.001.
Such a relationship is confirmed by OLS regression analysis. Results in Table 2 and Table 3 show that:

- **Social background** has very little impact on the Index of Support for Democracy for the pooled sample, which simply disappears in the Chilean case (with the exception of education).

- **Evaluations of the present economic situation** have a strong moderate impact on, in terms of the evaluation of the personal economic situation, the Index of Support for Democracy for the pooled sample. Such a tendency is confirmed in the case of Chile.

- **Evaluation of public services** has a very weak impact on the Index of Support for Democracy for the pooled sample and just vanishes in the Chilean case. However, the evaluation of the justice system has a moderate effect on it, which is also confirmed in Chile.

- **Interpersonal trust and having been a victim of some criminal act** have a very little impact on the Index of Support for Democracy for the pooled sample, and it disappears in the case of Chile. The same can be said about Perception of corruption and Mass media.

- Finally, the Citizenship Index has a strong positive impact on the Support for Democracy Index both in the pooled sample and in the Chilean case, after controlling for all other variables included in the model. The empirical evidence presented shows that certain patterns can be appreciated across the region in terms of the relationship between citizenship and support for democracy. In sum, such results confirm largely the hypothesis that higher levels of citizenship result in higher levels of support for democracy throughout Latin American countries.

**Table 2:** Support for Democracy Index Model, Latin America

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MODEL</th>
<th>Index of Support for Democracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Standardized Beta Coefficients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social background</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender: male</td>
<td>.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socioeconomic status</td>
<td>.027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion: catholic</td>
<td>-.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluations of the present economic situation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of present economic situation of the country</td>
<td>.205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of personal economic situation</td>
<td>.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of public services and justice system</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with the health system</td>
<td>.062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with the education system</td>
<td>.074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of the justice system: all are equal before the law</td>
<td>.104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal trust and victim of some criminal act</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One can trust most people: yes</td>
<td>.075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim of a crime in the last 12 months: yes</td>
<td>-.024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of corruption</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you known a corruption act in the last 12 months: yes</td>
<td>-.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass media</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of days watching news on television</td>
<td>-.046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship index</td>
<td>.334</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R Squared | .323  
Adjusted R Squared | .322


Note: The figures represent standardized beta coefficients in Ordinary Least Square Regression models. Asterisks indicate the statistical significance of the coefficients with *** = p < 0.001.
Table 3:  
Support for Democracy Index Model, Chile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MODEL</th>
<th>Index of Support for Democracy</th>
<th>Standardized Beta Coefficients</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Social background**  
  Gender: male  
  Age  
  Education: .067 **  
  Socioeconomic status  
  Religion: catholic

**Evaluations of the present economic situation**  
  Evaluation of present economic situation of the country: .202 ***  
  Evaluation of personal economic situation

**Evaluation of public services and justice system**  
  Satisfaction with the health system  
  Satisfaction with the education system  
  Evaluation of the justice system: all are equal before the law: .076 ***

**Interpersonal trust and victim of some criminal act**  
  One can trust most people: yes  
  Victim of a crime in the last 12 months: yes

**Perception of corruption**  
  Have you known a corruption act in the last 12 months: yes

**Mass media**  
  Number of days watching news on television

**Citizenship**  
  Citizenship index: .490 ***

  R Squared: .421  
  Adjusted R Squared: .413

Note: The figures represent standardized beta coefficients in Ordinary Least Square Regression models. Asterisks indicate the statistical significance of the coefficients with *** = p < 0.01; ** = p < 0.05. Non-significant coefficients are not shown.
5. Final Comments

The predominant liberal conception of citizenship is based on the idea of individual citizenship rights. The need for rights arose, Norberto Bobbio (Viroli and Bobbio 2003: 35-6) reminds us, from the need to defend ourselves against oppression, the abuse of power and all the forms of despotism that we have experienced in the world throughout history. The problem for those who were coming out of a period of oppression was asserting rights. However, today, Bobbio recognizes, we cannot understand rights without their corresponding responsibilities. But unfortunately the liberal tradition sees responsibilities mainly in terms of negative juridical obligations, i.e. the obligation not to do something rather than to do something. In this regard, the communitarian claims for a better balance between rights and responsibilities in a political community is a necessary one. An appropriate conception of citizenship needs to give more emphasis to responsibilities (duties and obligations) than liberalism does. If free individuals can exist only in a political community which is able to grant them citizenship rights, free individuals must take care of such a community which implies citizenship responsibilities. Such rights and responsibilities, at the same time, need to be maintained in an adequate balance. Too much emphasis on responsibilities may put personal autonomy at risk. At the individual-level of citizen experience, the real problem for most national political communities consists in the existence of an important gap between individuals’ sense of obligation and their sense of rights. There is an imbalance which needs to be corrected.

At the same time, because the free individual can only exist in a democratic political community, political participation is also necessary. This constitutes a new challenge for the liberal conception of citizenship since liberalism does not see an obligation for citizens to engage in political participation to secure the common good for the political community to which they belong. Most citizens can stay with their own private ends as long as they respect the rights of others. According to the republican tradition, the solution to the legitimation crisis affecting the democratic system, to a certain extent, involves higher levels of citizen political participation. If political participation has an intrinsic value itself (positive freedom) or has an instrumental importance as a means of preserving individual freedom (as non-domination) to pursue individual ends, it is what is discussed between the ‘neo-republican’ and ‘civic-republican’ perspective of citizenship. Nevertheless, the ‘neo-republican’ proposal of civic participation currently presents itself as very demanding and time-consuming, and the emergence of ‘civic-republicanism’ may constitute an alternative not just for liberalism but also for neo-republicanism. Accordingly, it seems to be both more realistic than neo-republicanism, and deeper than liberalism, as an approach to citizenship participation in modern society. However, as seen, it is not enough that individuals obey the law and participate in politics because of the instrumental benefits they deliver for their own private pursuits, but rather they should do so because they value belonging to a just society. Nonetheless, a weaker version of political participation of neo-republican citizenship may result in being more appropriate since political participation does not need to occupy a central place in citizen’s lives.

On the other hand, the predominant liberal conception of universal citizenship implies a homogenization of differences as a means to achieving such universality. However, it cannot suppress them, tending to discriminate against less favoured groups in society. This leads us to the debate over universal versus differentiated citizenship. This claim for a differentiated citizenship is not necessarily in conflict with liberal principles. In fact, most modern liberal democracies recognize some form of group-differentiated citizenship. The key issue here is our sense of belonging to a national political community, usually expressed as
national identity. It refers to our psychological attachment to such a national political community. Without this attachment it is difficult to imagine solidarity among citizens and promote the common good in a national political community. This feeling of belonging, as a member of a political community, is different from other forms of collective identities that can be very important for people, because it refers to self-government. In other words, the problem is the construction of a common identity in a country where people not only belong to different political communities but also belong in different ways. Some join as individuals and others through the community. The argument for the continuing role of national identity in cementing a sense of common citizenship is that it provides the political cohesion necessary for a democratic national community.

That is to say that democratic citizenship matters for democracy. Citizenship rights are meaningful when they are supported by a sense of obligation amongst others to help build and sustain the political institutions that make rights possible. And how citizens understand and exercise their rights and responsibilities is decisive for the health and stability of any system of governance (Faulks 1999: 108, 125). On the other hand, if democracy relies on citizen participation as a basis both of legitimacy and representative decisions making, decreasing levels of citizen participation may harm the democratic process itself (Dalton 2004: 11). Participation in elections, for example, is seen as derived from positive views about the political process and democracy. In this way, declining levels of support for democracy may be linked to decreasing levels of involvement in the electoral process, in terms of voting and campaign activity (172-3, 186). Finally, identification with a national political community, the most fundamental of (political) identities, ‘provides a reservoir of diffuse support that can maintain a political system through temporary periods of political stress’ (44). Therefore, democratic citizenship matters, not just as a normative ideal of a good society in the mind of political philosophers, but also because it matters for democracy in specific political communities. As seen in the Latin American case, in the empirical part of this research: higher levels of citizenship are related to higher levels of support for democracy throughout Latin American countries.

Accordingly, the prospects for stable democracy in a country are improved if its citizens and leaders strongly support democratic ideas, values, and practices. The most reliable support comes when these beliefs and predispositions are embedded in the country's civic culture and are transmitted, in large part, from one generation to the next. The fact that democratic political culture is seen as necessary for democracy does not mean, of course, that every person in a democratic country must be (trans)formed into a perfect democratic citizen. But, as Robert Dahl asserts,

unless a substantial majority of citizens prefer democracy and its political institutions to any nondemocratic alternative and support political leaders who uphold democratic practices, democracy is unlikely to survive through its inevitable crises. Indeed, even a large majority of militant and violent antidemocrats would probably be sufficient to destroy a country’s capacity for maintaining its democratic institutions.

(Dahl 2000: 157-8)

Democracy is a good that free individuals can not take for granted, especially in a context where it has been an unusual and uneven experience in human history. Under such conditions, the promotion of democratic citizenship among citizens may avoid the circumstance that during severe and prolonged crisis, following Dahl (2000), democracy will be overturned by authoritarian leaders who promise to end the crisis with vigorous dictatorial methods. We do not need to forget so easily the fact that Latin American political culture still has important residues of recent past authoritarian orientations. We are far away from seeing Latin American countries as already consolidated democracies. There is a lot of cynicism and
apathy among citizens, and our democratic institutions are still weak. That is to say, if new democracies in Latin America can not strengthen their political institutions and improve their democratic functioning, promoting at the same time higher levels of support for democracy among the elite and the mass of citizens, they are likely to move backward into some non-democratic or populist expressions. There is no guarantee that democratic process moves in only one direction. Democracy may lose its quality and stability; even through the more insidious processes of decay (see Diamond 1999: 64, 19). And what we see in this regard is that Latin American citizens are not ready to give support for democracy unconditionally yet. And certainly too, the promotion of democratic citizenship is not enough to ensure support for democracy, although it is essential. We also know that is not going to be easy task. To advance towards the consolidation of full citizenship in Latin American societies requires also fight against great inequalities and high levels of poverty (which is strongly correlated with the level of economic development in the region), as has been expressed in the last UNDP report Democracy in Latin America. Towards a Citizens’ Democracy:

Latin America today presents an extraordinary paradox. From one perspective, the continent can look back with great pride on more than two decades of democratic governments. From another, the region faces a growing social crisis. Deep inequalities remain entrenched, serious levels of poverty prevail, economic growth has been insufficient, and dissatisfaction with those democracies—manifest in many places by widespread popular unrest—has been growing, often with deeply destabilizing consequences.

(UNDP 2005: 13)

However, while is true that democracy in Latin America can be seen mainly as a procedural democracy which exists alongside serious economic and social problems, we must avoid reducing democratic citizenship mainly to the possession and real access to citizenship rights (political, civil and social). Otherwise, it would constitute a lamentable mistake and a as result any link between citizenship and democracy will be always partial. Rather, the three dimensions of citizenship examined (rights and responsibilities, identity, and participation) are keys to understanding citizenship in connection with and (support for) democracy in the Latin America context.

In sum, since citizenship has a strong positive effect on support for democracy, improving the levels of citizenship is thus seen as part of the challenge of democratic consolidation and democracy. The premise that strong democratic polities must be grounded in equally strong civic culture seems to be right (see Almond, Coleman, and Pye 1965; Almond and Verba 1963; 1965; Welzer and Inglehart 2007), at least in the Latin American case. By strong civic culture I mean citizens aware of their rights and responsibilities (in balance), possessing a sense of belonging to the national political community (identity), and engaging in political participation in such a community, the nation-state. Further investigations are nevertheless necessary to clarify the scope of such a conclusion.

32 The interest in a notion of citizenship rooted in Marshall’ conception of it is quite understandable. The effectiveness of full citizenship rights, particularly of social citizenship rights, is often denied. In many Latin American countries ‘individuals are citizens only in relation to the one institution that functions in a manner close to what its formal rules prescribe –elections. As for full citizenship, only the members of a privileged minority enjoy it’ (O’Donnell 1997: 51; see also O’Donnell 2004).
References


Fahrmeir, Andreas (2007). *Citizenship. The rise and fall of a modern concept* (Yale University, New Haven).


## Appendix:

### Index of Support for Democracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Values recoded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support for regimen’s democratic principles</td>
<td>Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government</td>
<td>0 = Disagree 1 = Agree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Democracy may have problems but it is still the best form of government</td>
<td>0 = Disagree 1 = Agree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Under no circumstances would support a military government</td>
<td>0 = Disagree 1 = Agree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for regimen’s democratic performance</td>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>0 = No satisfied 1 = Satisfied</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Present political situation</td>
<td>0 = Bad 1 = Good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clean or rigged elections</td>
<td>0 = Rigged 1 = Clean</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for regimen’s democratic institutions</td>
<td>Confidence in President</td>
<td>0 = No confidence 1 = Confidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confidence in National Congress / Parliament</td>
<td>0 = No confidence 1 = Confidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confidence in Political Parties</td>
<td>0 = No confidence 1 = Confidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Support for democracy = \( f(\text{Principles} + \text{Performance} + \text{Institutions}) \)**

*** The Index of Support for Democracy takes values between 0 and 9.
### Index of Citizenship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Dimensions (Indicators)</th>
<th>Values recoded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rights and responsibilities*</td>
<td>Respecting their rights (I₁)</td>
<td>0 = No, 1 = Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Avoiding paying taxes (I₂)</td>
<td>0 = Agree (other values), 1 = Disagree (values 1, 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political participation</td>
<td>Intention of voting in the next presidential election</td>
<td>0 = No, 1 = Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The vote is important to change things</td>
<td>0 = Disagree, 1 = Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Working or have worked for a political party or candidate</td>
<td>0 = No, 1 = Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Identity</td>
<td>Proud of being [nationality]</td>
<td>0 = No, 1 = Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sense of belonging to the majority of the country</td>
<td>0 = No, 1 = Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mother tongue</td>
<td>0 = Other, 1 = Country’s official tongue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Where rights and responsibilities are: ‘0’ if I₁ = 0 and I₂ = 0; ‘1’ if I₁ < I₂; ‘2’ if I₁ > I₂; ‘3’ if I₁ = 1; I₂ = 1.

\[
\text{Index of Citizenship} = f (\text{Rights and responsibilities} + \text{Political participation} + \text{National Identity})
\]

*** The Index of Citizenship takes values between 0 and 9.

**Other Latinbarometer questions:**


Have you, or someone in your family, been assaulted, attacked, or been the victim of a crime in the last 12 months? [1] Yes, [2] No / [8] Don't know / [0] No answer.


Generally speaking, would you say that [1] you can trust most people, or that [2] you can never be too careful when dealing with others? / [8] Don't know / [0] No answer.

Have you, or someone in your family, been assaulted, attacked, or been the victim of a crime in the last 12 months? [1] Yes, [2] No / [8] Don't know, [0] No answer.

