
The Use of History in Democratization-processes

Symbols, Traditions, Education and Truth and Justice Policies in Europe

PIETER-JAN HAMELS

Supervision:

Ph.D. Erik André ANDERSEN
The Danish Institute for Human Rights
Copenhagen

E.MA Academic Year 2010/2011
University of Southern Denmark

If there is no usable past,
it can always be invented.

(Eric Hobsbawm)

I would like to thank:

Erik André Andersen

For the good advice, the open door,
and the motivation it gave me.

The Danish Institute for Human Rights

For being a fantastic environment to write a thesis:
it gave us everything we needed and more.

Special thanks therefore to
Eva Maria Lassen and *Lone Groth-Rasmussen*,
for being always there to assist us.

My parents and grandparents

For making it all possible.

Marco and Fanny

For all the discussions, laughs, support...

If it wasn't for you guys...

Abstract

This research analyzes the different ways history is used by states in democratization-processes, both in the short term transition to democracy as for the long term consolidation of democracy.

After an attempt to define certain key concepts (democracy, democratization, collective identity and collective memory), the thesis focuses on three policy-domains: (1) official symbols and traditions, (2) history-education and (3) truth- and justice-policies.

In all of the three domains, it analyzes how, when and why references to the past contribute to democratization-processes and how, when and why it proves to be detrimental for these processes. Avoiding simplifying generalizations, it looks into the role the past plays in creating national cohesion and solidarity (nation-building), the legitimation of democratic rule, and the promotion of democratic values.

By shedding a light on a sometimes forgotten, but therefore not less influential aspect of democratization-processes, this research hopes to contribute to the growing body of democratization-studies.

Table of Content

1. INTRODUCTION	7
1.1 Research questions and aim.....	8
1.2 Status Quaestionis	9
1.3 Methodology	10
1.4 Outline	11
2. KEY CONCEPTS	13
2.1 Democratization	13
2.2 Democracy	15
2.3 Collective identity	18
2.4 Collective memory	19
3. SYMBOLS & TRADITIONS	21
3.1 The role of symbols	22
3.2 Symbols, traditions and democratic transitions	25
3.2.1 <i>What to do with ‘old’ symbols?</i>	26
3.2.2 <i>The difficult choice for ‘new’ symbols</i>	28
3.3 Symbols, traditions and the promotion of democratic values and civic engagement	32
3.3.1 <i>Symbols and democratization</i>	33
3.3.2 <i>Traditions and democratization: the case of the Norwegian</i> <i>Constitution Day</i>	34
3.4 Conclusion	36

4. EDUCATION	37
4.1 Collective identity and nation-building	38
4.2 Promoting democratic values	42
4.3 Developing a critical attitude to information	44
4.4 Encouraging civic engagement	45
4.5 History curriculum reform in (new) democracies	46
4.6 Conclusion	47
5. JUSTICE	49
5.1 History	49
5.2 The impact of the historical context on the adoption and the choice of transitional justice measures	52
5.2.1 <i>The nature of the transition process</i>	52
5.2.2 <i>Previous democratic traditions</i>	53
5.2.3 <i>The legacy of dictatorship</i>	54
5.3 Transitional justice: good or bad for democratization?	55
5.3.1 <i>Amnesty</i>	55
5.3.2 <i>Punishment</i>	58
5.3.3 <i>Forgetting</i>	60
5.3.4 <i>Remembering</i>	62
5.4 Conclusion	63
6. CONCLUSION	65
BIBLIOGRAPHY	67