

*Reviewer: Alistair Ross*

## Review of the Book: "Citizenship and Immigration"

Christian Joppke

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This is a superb synthesis of theoretical issues and empirical surveys of the current state of the art in understanding citizenship. It is not just comprehensive in its sweep – it is written with clarity, cogency and lucidity. Joppke's central and compelling thesis is that the concept of citizenship is brought into focus and defined through its relationship with migration: the introduction of the non-citizen into a state establishes the character of the nature of the status, rights and identity that citizenship confers in that state. The structure of the book is deceptively simple: he analyses the recent literature, and sets this alongside his marshalling of a wealth of empirical evidence from Europe and North America. This leads to key questions of what citizenship means in the early 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and what might be its future. His arguments have a particular resonance for the European reader, but also usefully reflect on the changing priorities and practices of the 'traditional' countries of immigration.

The opening chapter surveys the principal works of the past two decades, focusing on three 'paradigm-setting positioning of citizenship within an immigration context' (20), disentangling some popular academic misreadings of these and identifying sometimes overlooked findings that he argues, with some conviction, should be central to our developing construction of citizenship. Thus Rogers Brubaker's classic text *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (1992) does not just articulate the dualities of citizenship as being 'internally inclusive' and 'externally exclusive,' but also shows that citizenship is a mechanism for social closure – a legal mechanism regulating state membership, that is not intrinsically concerned with civic attitudes or democratic participation. Similarly, he dissects Yasemin Soysal's *Limits of Citizenship* (1994) – best known for its claims of convergence towards post-nation membership and the deterritorialisation of a person's rights – as being not in opposition to Brubaker, but as being an examination of citizenship and rights, as opposed to one of citizenship as status. Will Kymlicka's *Multicultural Citizenship* (1995) significance stems from the way it pinpoints how no single form of citizenship can be applied to diverse groups: different identity groups may require the differential provision of rights.

This provided an agenda that structures the rest of the book: citizenship as status, as rights, and as providing identity. Joppke argues that there has

been little mutual awareness and dialogue between the literatures on these three aspects, but that some synthesis is critically necessary – necessitated by, and provided by, the issue of migration. His central claim is that citizenship is no longer nationally distinctive, but has become increasingly inclusive and universalistic – ‘citizenship’s internally inclusive core has softened its externally exclusive edges’ (31) – particularly so in Europe. The liberalisation of access to citizenship that has come through the widespread acceptance of *jus soli* and of dual nationality, and the introduction of lower thresholds for naturalisation has been countered by two recent trends – restrictions on Muslim immigrants because of their perceived deficits in integration, and the ‘re-ethnicization’ of citizenship to give rights to those who have migrated from the diasporic countries of Europe. Immigration also is increasingly tied to the rights of citizenship. While, *pace* Soysal, the rights of aliens and immigrants become strengthened, we also see the stratification of rights with variations in the levels of access, and new vulnerabilities emerging for non-nationals. Joppke suggests that multicultural rights are far less supported than has been claimed: it is antidiscrimination rights that have shown the real area of progress. Moving on citizenship as status, citizenship is now being used in new ways as a tool for integration. The contradiction is that the ubiquitous systems of liberal democracy found in these states make it hard to distinguish the particularities of a citizenship into which these migrants are being integrated. There is an amusing romp around the various citizenship ‘tests’ of the US, the UK and the Netherlands that shows the impossibility of distinguishing what is the ‘national’ essence.

The book ends with a consideration of how the triangulation of status/rights/identity might be causally connected. Joppke argues that the real causality for these developments lies in the events of the 1940s – ‘the rejection of state-level racism and accompanying celebration of human rights that has come to constitute the *doxa* or *episteme* of Western societies’ (149). What is the future of citizenship? As citizenship becomes more accessible, it inevitably has less meaning in terms of rights or identity: we become ‘citizenship light.’ In particular in Europe, we are seeing judge-made law on citizenship, that awards rights without obligations, in which citizenship is ‘in itself socially inconsequential, and devoid of a particular cultural content’ (33).

This book presents a sophisticated argument, but one that is lucid and comprehensible: it is more than an excellent introduction to the field, but also provides an invaluable and provocative contribution to our understanding of the issues. Highly recommended.

## References

- Brubaker, Rogers. 1992. *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*. Cambridge MA.
- Soysal, Yasemin. 1994. *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Post-national Membership in Europe*. Chicago.
- Kymlicka, Will. 1995. *Multicultural Citizenship*. Oxford.