

BOOK REVIEW

Remaking Citizenship in Multicultural Europe: Women's Movements, Gender and Diversity

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Remaking Citizenship in Multicultural Europe is introduced as an analysis of the difference that women's movements and feminism have made to experiences and practices of citizenship across Europe. It presents the findings of a multi-disciplinary, cross-national feminist research project (FEMCIT), considering them in light of current theories in this area.

The book comprises nine chapters which tackle both distinct and interrelated aspects of citizenship, ranging from intimate and bodily articulations of the term (for example, chapters 3 and 6), to the term as it appears in more formal areas: for example, the formal political representation system (chapter 7). In doing so it raises important questions about the very nature of the term 'citizenship', and the ways in which it is understood and used within different contexts and by different cultures. It particularly focuses on the ways in which global migration and global interconnectedness challenge the political and theoretical assumptions of citizenship.

Chapter one introduces some of the challenges encountered when attempts are made to isolate the influence and effects of women's movements on citizenship. The discussion considers the ways that definitions and understandings of the term are rooted in both national and transnational influences and histories, raising questions over the status of migrant and minoritised women's organisations in relation to wider women's movements. Although the book is particularly focused on feminist orientated elements of women's movements, it does encompass groups who, although they do not declare specifically feminist aims, act for women's rights and interests. The concept of minoritised women's organisations appears as a leitmotif throughout the book and relates particularly to the ways in which minority women's groups, (for example Roma women), often tend to formulate their social citizenship claims on "a more materially existential level than majority women's organisations" (p.13). The book also critically explores pathways of influence, exploring ways in which women's movements have

influenced policies and practices and paying particular attention to the challenges and unexpected outcomes inherent within them.

Chapter two begins with an overview of key debates around citizenship, examining the ways that the term has been problematized in feminist literature and by feminist organisations. The chapter, written by Sabine Strasser, an anthropologist, offers engaging insights on the impact of culture on notions of citizenship, drawing on the particular example of forced marriage. Intimate aspects of citizenship are taken forward to chapter three, which focuses on five main narratives of intimate citizenship, each rooted in diverse discourses which articulate to varying degrees individuals' sense of agency within their intimate lives.

Chapters four and five focus on two key policy areas: care of the elderly and child-care. Both chapters highlight the tensions that have emerged from policies predicated on women's widespread exclusion from the labour market, and those policies explicitly aimed at encouraging their continuous employment over the life-course. Chapter five contains a particularly engaging argument on the impact upon migrant integration directly and indirectly resulting from childcare policies focusing on enabling women to care for children at home. The chapter also contains some interesting commentary on the paradoxes emerging from policies which advocate cheap childcare for all, and the ways in which expectations around childcare and the role of men vary according to the cultural histories and politics in which they are rooted. Although this chapter touches on the various ways in which the claims made by women's movements are framed to resonate with dominant national or EU discourse, I would have found it helpful to have seen this aspect expanded more fully throughout the rest of the book.

The final chapter relating to intimate citizenship examines the key areas of prostitution and abortion. One of the key findings from this chapter is the reluctance of activists to use the term 'citizenship' when framing issues and arguments around abortion and prostitution. The authors rightly question this, asking if this acts to marginalise debate on these issues. This question re-emerges in later chapters when respondents reflect on their preference for the term 'human rights' rather than citizenship. These tensions appear throughout the book, leaving the reader wondering if citizenship is a term that serves activists as well as it appears to serve academics.

Chapter seven moves on to consider citizenship in the context of formal political representation. The chapter argues that full political citizenship for women remains incomplete, outlining three principal deficits or barriers to participation. Whilst the first two (the deficit in satisfaction with the representation systems; and the ethnic representation deficit) are well defined and argued, the third remains a little more elusive. The writers term this deficit 'political citizenship', defining it as the 'agency deficit of women parliamentarians to perform representation in their newly acquired positions' (p.142). This is a difficult area that has been researched in some depth by other researchers, particularly Sarah Childs whose investigation *New Labour's Women MPs: Women Representing Women* (Childs, 2004) analysed the ways in which women felt that they represented women's issues and the barriers they encountered in the process. As this area is potentially the most occluded, it would have been helpful to the reader to have exemplified what exactly is meant by this deficit, drawing upon examples from other studies on the subject. Notwithstanding this, the chapter provides some interesting insights into this under researched area.

The volume concludes with a chapter focusing on migrant and minoritized Women's arguments in Europe and a final chapter centred upon a theme which recurs throughout the book: the extent to which the term 'citizenship' serves activists and women's movements within the EU. Overall, the book provides a coherent and cogent account of the complex and multi-faceted issues surrounding citizenship in a

multicultural Europe. In examining current tensions around the notion of citizenship, gender and diversity in the light of feminist theory, it raises a number of questions around historical, cultural, national and cross national understandings of the term, presenting the reader with the reality of the complex and diverse meanings and understandings associated with it. In the process the book presents a nuanced and considered account of women's causes that appear to be excluded from notions of citizenship, such as abortion and prostitution, and those whose activists feel their cases are better served by framing them in terms of other concepts such as human rights.

Finally, one of the key strengths of the book is the way in which the researchers probe the myriad reasons why citizenship eludes many migrants, and their consideration of the historical, political and cultural contexts that contribute to these feelings of exclusion. Particular examples drawn from the Roma community are both potent and timely in the light of current political and media attention associated with the inception of EU rights to the free movement of persons for Bulgaria and Romania from January 2014. The book effectively unpacks the tensions experienced in both intimate and public aspects of citizenship faced by female migrants through prevailing media and political discourses focusing on employment, benefits and sanctions. As such, it is a welcome volume for scholars working in the field of gender, social policy, citizenship, inclusion and women's movements.

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References

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