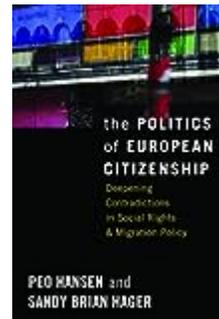




Peo Hansen, Sandy Brian Hager. *The Politics of European Citizenship: Deepening Contradictions in Social Rights and Migration Policy.* New York: Berghahn Books, 2010. xii + 238 pp. \$70.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-1-84545-733-4; \$29.95 (paper), ISBN 978-0-85745-621-2.



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Out of Many ... None? Transforming Citizens' Rights into Workers' Responsibilities

For several decades, political scientists have pondered the prospective demise of the democratic nation-state, often rooting their predictions in the impact of globalized economic and communication networks. The market, multinational corporations, and trade lobbies are recognized, more consciously than ever before, as fundamental agents of foreign policy. In *The Politics of European Citizenship*, Peo Hansen and Sandy Brian Hager convincingly argue that, at least within the European Union (EU), the primacy of the market, while not inherently new, increasingly threatens the very underpinnings of European nation-states: the rights of citizens.

Hansen and Hager's critical overview of supranational initiatives in Europe over the past sixty years documents a redefinition of citizenship that prioritizes the needs of the market, exploits apprehensions about non-European immigrants, and perpetuates the supremacy of neoliberalism.[1] As their extensive bibliography shows, Hansen and Hager are not the first to explore how economic interests shape government policy, nor the first to suggest that, perhaps, a "democratic deficit" contin-

ues to undermine the legitimacy of the EU. Unlike other studies, however, Hansen and Hager's work focuses on the contradictions between the EU's market-driven economy and its rights-driven political and intellectual roots. While postwar visionaries saw Europe's economic integration as a means to promote peaceful relations and individual protections, the past twenty-five years suggest that economic development has become an end in and of itself. Supranational structures, the authors argue, lean on Europeans and third country migrants to shoulder the burden of perpetually reinventing themselves as members of a flexible, mobile, and undemanding workforce. The once critical social and legal rights of citizens, asylum seekers, and labor migrants alike, while in theory untouched in the name of national sovereignty, find only occasional and vague voice in the numerous treaties lauded as securing a more united Europe.

The strengths of this text are many, starting with the structure of the six chronologically organized chapters. Each has a clear introduction and conclusion, both of which go beyond simply restating main points to remind

readers of the complexity of the European project. Part 1 (composed of three chapters) succinctly summarizes how conceptualizations of EU citizenship have evolved since the early postwar period, shaped by national, EU internal, and EU external factors. The authors draw on both extensive secondary literature and the public statements of the Commission of the European Communities (CEC) and Council of the European Union to reveal that, at least early on, the EU elite understood social and economic policies as mutually reinforcing ways to foster inclusive collective identity and integration.

Part 2 offers a more comprehensive examination of the period after 1995, during which, the authors argue, citizenship became more explicitly linked to employability and even social democratic parties shifted platforms away from social safety net to employment preparation. Throughout, Hansen and Hager emphasize the inseparability of economic and social issues, highlighting the interconnected nature of debates about freedom of movement within the EU, third country labor migrants, formal asylum seekers, and informal migration. Most compelling is their claim, rooted in statements of the CEC and Council of the European Union, that third nation immigrants are expected to simultaneously integrate and remain explicitly mobile, i.e., NOT attached to any particular European host nation. Furthermore, Hansen and Hager suggest, European conceptualizations of citizenship have become increasingly vague, resting on a presumed—and obviously false—homogeneity both among European cultures and the outsiders seeking admission into the EU.

The authors' mastery of diplomatic records, scholarly analyses, and journalistic commentary enables them to both critique EU policies and weave a narrative that is accessible even to non-experts. The result demonstrates how directly individual migrants and workers are affected by supranational negotiations and priorities, and makes for compelling—if disheartening reading; the prospect of preserving, let alone enhancing, the social rights of citizens and non-citizens alike seems nearly futile. For that reason, perhaps, I found myself scouring this narrative for concrete actors, and for some sense of

the behind-closed-doors negotiations that produced this rights-free, responsibility heavy kind of citizenship that Hansen and Hager find in the communiqués of the CEC and Council of the European Union. On the one hand, they demonstrate how far scholarship has come since the days of the “old” international history, which often reduced diverse viewpoints into national policy positions.[2] On the other hand, however, the various European institutions sometimes appear as autonomous agents of power. Similarly, readers will find little mention of any forces—human or structural—opposing these “elite” advocates of an increasingly self-sufficient citizenry and accommodating workforce. That might well be another project, however. Hansen and Hager's discussion of the persistence with which EU policy statements have advanced neoliberal economic interests over the past seventy years suggests numerous avenues for further study; many of their questions warrant full-length analyses of their own. The authors' 2012 afterword to the paperback edition of this book offers some paths such scholarship might take.[3] Just as important, this work also exemplifies how a regional—as opposed to local, national, or global—lens can reframe questions and answers of international history, defying the traditional divide between domestic and foreign policy, and highlighting the challenges of negotiating national policies within supranational structures.

Notes

[1]. Marc Mori and Howard, *The Politics of Citizenship in Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[2]. Patricia Clavin, “Time, Manner, Place: Writing Modern European History in Global, Transnational and International Contexts,” *European History Quarterly*, no. 40 (2010): 624-640; and Asbjørn Wahl, “Labor: Social Dialogue, Social Pacts, or a Social Europe?” *Monthly Review* (June 2002): 45-55.

[3]. Peo Hansen and Sandy Brian Hager, *The Politics of European Citizenship: Deepening Contradictions in Social Rights and Migration Policy* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2012).

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