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The Politics of European Citizenship: Deepening Contradictions in Social Rights and Migration Policy

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Abstract:

The publication is concerned with the topic of EU citizenship. The authors follow a development of the concept from the 1950's through the 1990's, when the EU citizenship was officially embedded in the Maastricht Treaty, until present times.

The book *“The Politics of European Citizenship: Deepening Contradictions in Social Rights and Migration Policy”* is the final work outcome of two experts. Peo Hansen, who works at the Swedish institute REMESO, focuses on the question of European integration, and Sandy Brian Hager, who works as a researcher at the Faculty of Political Sciences at York University in Toronto, specializes in political economy and social restructuring within the EU.

The book, with the introductory chapter focusing on methodology, objectives and research questions, is divided into two main parts. The first part deals with the main theoretical approaches and historical developments of European citizenship, the second, and a more extensive part, focuses on the course of the European citizenship policy, especially on the position of this concept in relation to EU institutions and citizens.

Hansen and Hager approach the question of European citizenship on the basis of empirical analyses of its long historical development. The authors themselves categorize their work as the analyses of critical political economy. They follow on the development of European citizenship in connection with a process of strengthening the role of the EU institutions, on one side, and a relationship between EU citizens and this concept, on the other. They are concerned with the relationship of power within the EU, as a historically specific social organisation, and focus on how these relationships project in the process of European integration and influence a model of European citizenship. The main aspiration of the book is

to attempt to understand, and to explain, the limits of European citizenship and its legitimacy. In this regards, the authors examine its socio-economic content, especially who can benefit from it and which of the models of EU citizenship are advantageous to foster.

In this respect, already in the introduction of the book the authors position three inter-related research questions that intersect throughout the whole book:

- How have the policies or ‚social significance‘ of the EU developed in time? How can this historical development be explained?
- What is the exact adjustment of social and political powers that constitute the content of EU citizenship in any historical period?
- What are the concrete structural barriers or limits associated with the concept of citizenship observable in practice that influence ever pro-deepening crises of its legitimacy?

In the first part of the book, exactly in its first chapter, the authors examine a theoretical context of EU citizenship and focus on its social character. They alone approach the topic from a critic - historical perspective (p. 13); they examine the development of EU citizenship in past periods, and follow on the already implemented approaches which narrowly focus on a normative description of the concept and institutionalisation of the problem. The authors attempt to keep away from literature linked with the politics of EU citizenship, especially because of their assumption that „the political practice is unrestricted by the formal institutional framework.“ (p. 13)

The following chapter describes the historical development of European citizenship in such a way that the reader understands circumstances that have lead to the formation of the current policies. The policy of EU citizenship is closely interlinked with the project of European integration embedded in the Roma Agreements in 1958. However, the first integration processes proceeded as late as the second half of the 1960's. They were connected with the concept of free movement of people within the EU that was meant to foster European labour migration. The free movement of people itself has been considered as one of the most important factors of economic development after the World War II. EU migration policy has been central to the formation of the policy of European citizenship right from the beginning of integration. However, on the contrary, the exclusion of third countries nationals from the EU principle of free movement of people has lead to a formation of the so called „dual citizenship“ which is part of the European citizenship policy also at present.

The third chapter discusses the changes in EU citizenship policy, especially after the establishment of the European Common Market. This was a big step forward, especially in terms of integration, which the EU member states had undergone without consulting their citizens. The concept of EU citizenship was formally incorporated in the Maastricht Treaty in 1993. This has lead, as the authors note, to enrooting neoliberalism and establishing a common market area that would reduce the obstacles to the free market. Hansen and Hager

warn that this model aims at „grounding the market forces within the restricted socio-institutional framework“ (p. 14), which stems from the ethno-cultural dimension and addresses the civic, cultural and religious side of European unison. In connection with the European Common Market has internal migration within the EU become a European matter that is trying to find a common solution in the area of control, security and crime.

The Common European Market was meant to influence the lives of EU citizens, especially from the macroeconomics perspective, but also in light of influence on their social lives, migration from third countries and asylum. As the authors indicate, transformation of these policies continues and should be dealt with in terms of the common EU policy rather than nationally.

The second part of the book focuses on European citizenship more contextually, precisely in the context of Lisbon strategy signed in 2000. The authors acknowledge a better accessibility of empirical basis, they are not concerned with the formal conceptualisation of citizenship but emphasize a key position of the European migration policy which is currently the main reference in regards to the policy of European citizenship. Thus the EU migration policy is depicted in its external and internal dimensions. Its external dimension includes labour migration from third countries, asylum policy and policy of illegal immigration. Its internal dimension constitutes foreigners integration policy, anti-discriminatory policy, labour migration and free movement of people within the EU. Both dimensions are understood as inseparable and mutually integrated, and that is why this outlook allows for a better explanation of causations and effects of the EU migration policy.

In the fourth chapter, the authors focus on the concept of European citizenship after the adoption of the Lisbon strategy (2000 – 2010). They base their analyses upon assumption that European economy should have become the most competitive economy in the world by 2010. However, regarding the concept of citizenship, the Lisbon strategy has focused almost exclusively on the responsibilities and duties of European citizens, such as for example their responsibility to secure their employment in the period of transition onto a global economy. This economic orientation of the Lisbon strategy, on the contrary to the assessments provided by academics and politicians, is the reason of why the authors conclude that the Lisbon strategy, anchored in neoliberalism, does not appear to be the best basis for the European social citizenship.

In the fifth and the sixth chapter, the authors focus on the EU migration policy. They are concerned specifically with the policy of migrants' integration, anti-discrimination, policy of labour migration from third countries, asylum policies and the European policy against irregular migration. The authors note, that the EU promises to create a common asylum policy based on humanitarian values and that would also include initiatives against racism and discrimination. The multinational initiatives of the EU migration policy are the main theme of these two chapters. As noted, there is increasing tension between the restrictions posed to irregular migration and common asylum policy on one side, and strengthening of the existing

measures concerned with migrants' integration on the other side. These policies are observed in the context provided by the Tampere Program (1999 – 2004) in the fifth chapter, and in the Hague Program (2005 – 2010) in the sixth chapter. The authors discuss implications of the developing European migration policy within the context of European citizenship. At the end of the book Hansen and Hager extensively evaluate the results of their critical - historical research.

A very extensive and, for the following research, exploitable list of subject expert literature is a part and parcel of this publication. Apart from the famous and often quoted authors (for instance Castles, Mann, van Apeldoorn), engaged with the issue of European integration and citizenship, it also includes more than a hundred report citations, studies, recommendations and other publications of the European Commission, as well as regulations and instructions provided by the European Council.

Generally, this highly specialised publication focuses on the process of European integration and a relating concept of the coherent European citizenship. As the authors note, the main objective of their book is to stimulate interest in differing aspects of the citizenship policy, using a critical analysis of the relationship between EU and various existing approaches to national citizenship. It seems that Hansen and Hager have fulfilled their objective and their publication could be considered as a very valuable contribution to the discussion about EU citizenship.

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