



Eurozine Editorial

Cultural Citizenship

In the multicultural context of contemporary European and world societies, the concern with equality, integral to the formal–democratic concept of citizenship, is increasingly being complemented with a concern with difference. The concept of cultural citizenship responds to this development in stressing the centrality of culture for a concept of citizenship. Cultural citizenship is not simply equated with nationality and is not about assimilation or tolerance, but instead is based on notions of recognition and empowerment. The concept proves a vital instrument for rethinking identity and difference and more specifically, for conceptualizing a Europe where a concern with social and political rights includes the full recognition of minority groups and cultural diversity.

Authors employing the concept of cultural citizenship are unanimous in stressing that it is an underdeveloped notion that, if it is not to remain simply on an abstract level, will have to be further theorized and articulated in connection to specific issues and particular contexts. Eurozine's focus on "cultural citizenship" groups together a number of texts that, while not all dealing with the concept as such, put forward a sustained reflection on issues central to its articulation.

Introducing the focus is a text by [Gerard Delanty](#), one of the main proponents and theorists of the concept of cultural citizenship. Delanty's notion of cosmopolitan citizenship is based on the sociological idea of cultural citizenship, an idea that, as he makes clear, shifts the focus of citizenship onto common experiences, learning processes, and discourses of empowerment. Delanty has particularly stressed the learning dimension of citizenship as opposed to the disciplinary dimension. Such an understanding of cultural citizenship is crucial to the development of strategies of empowerment based on the everyday dimension of citizenship.

We have selected a number of texts that, in one way or another, are very much relevant to this discussion. Not surprisingly, some of these texts address the question of translation ([Ribeiro](#), [Ivekovic](#)). If understood as the establishment of a dialogic relationship where mutual intelligibility is developed without difference being sacrificed to the interests of blind assimilation, translation is indeed crucial to the learning processes leading to cosmopolitan citizenship. Widening the democratic canon, as proposed by [Avritzer and Santos](#), and, simultaneously, reflecting upon processes of exclusion, as [Axel Honneth](#) and [Charles Taylor](#) do, are an essential part of those learning processes.

Original in English
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