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Naturalization Policies, Education and Citizenship

Multicultural and Multination Societies
in International Perspective

Edited by

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American University of Beirut, Lebanon

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Preface

This book has grown out of a conference held in London in July 2010 – the annual conference of the International Centre for Education for Democratic Citizenship (ICEDC), a joint international centre of Birkbeck College and the Institute of Education, both of the University of London, of which I was co-director at the time. The theme of the conference drew on the concerns of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) seminar series ‘Education for “national” citizenship in the context of devolution and ethnic and religious conflict’ (RES-451-26-0577), which I co-directed with John Annette in 2009–2011.

Having been directly involved in policy developments in the UK in the domains of both naturalization and citizenship education has contributed to my theoretical understanding of the often underestimated relationship between these domains. In 2002–2003 I was invited by the then Home Secretary, David Blunkett, to serve on the UK’s Home Office ‘Life in the UK’ Advisory Group. Chaired by the late Sir Bernard Crick, the group was set up to advise government on the form of the new naturalization requirements – namely relating to language and civic knowledge requirements for new applicants for British citizenship. In 2004–2006 I was seconded to the Home Office to head up the secretariat of the Advisory Board on Naturalisation and Integration to advise on the implementation of the advisory group’s recommendations. Subsequently I was asked by the Department of Education and Skills to work with Sir Keith Ajegbo on developing a fourth strand – ‘identities and diversity’ – in the citizenship education curriculum in England, which was accepted by government and incorporated into the curriculum in 2007. I have also been involved on the advisory boards of the Ministry of Justice’s Goldsmith Review of Citizenship (2007–2008) and the Youth Citizenship Commission (2008–2009). Through these experiences, I became increasingly aware of the educative framing of the UK naturalization requirements, although the academic study of citizenship education and of naturalization has tended to be conducted in separate disciplines. Therefore the rationale underpinning the ESRC seminar series was a call for a more unified and interdisciplinary approach to the study of citizenship policy initiatives in the domains of education and naturalization, drawing together work

conducted separately by educationalists, and political philosophers or sociologists, respectively. I have argued that such compartmentalization obscures our understanding of the commonalities in academic and policy agendas across these domains, as well as obscuring the inherently educative framing of naturalization requirements and integration discourses (Kiwani, 2008, 2011).

In addition, this book illustrates a commitment to a 'contextual' methodological approach (Carens, 2004), where there is a mutual interplay between theory and practice. One of the features of this approach is the search for cases that potentially challenge dominant theoretical positions, as well as considering a range of cases, especially unfamiliar ones (Carens, 2004). The chapters in this book draw on a variety of case studies, including the more 'unfamiliar' cases outside the usual frame of Western democracies which tend to be the main academic focus for studies on citizenship and its related concepts and concerns.

The approach of the ESRC seminar series aimed to examine the roles played by both citizenship education and naturalization requirements in the contexts of perceived internal division – both in multination and multicultural state contexts, such as the UK – as well as in situations of ethno-religious diversity or conflict. Three domains were originally brought together: i) citizenship education in schools; ii) citizenship in the 'legal' sense – naturalization requirements for those applying for national citizenship (citizenship tests and courses); examined in iii) 'challenging' contexts of internal division – devolution and ethno-religious conflict. This book draws on case study examples from an interdisciplinary perspective in addressing these aims and it includes Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ukraine, the UK, Canada and Lebanon, examining these contestations of citizenship in the domains of education and naturalization.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank a number of people who have supported the writing of this book. Firstly, I am very grateful for the funding from the ESRC of the ESRC seminar series, 'Education for "national" citizenship in the context of devolution and ethnic and religious conflict' (RES-451-26-0577), which I co-directed with John Annette in 2009–2011. I would like to thank Professor Hugh Starkey for his support as co-director of our research centre, ICEDC. I would like to thank the anonymous reviewers of the original book proposal for their helpful comments. In addition, I would like to thank the editorial team at Palgrave Macmillan, especially Andrew James and Naomi Robinson, for all their advice, help and support throughout the process. Finally, I am particularly indebted to the contributing authors for their

engaging and original chapters; without them this book could not have been written.

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