Citizenship In Transnational Perspective: Australia, Canada and Aotearoa New Zealand, second edition.
Edited by Jatinder Mann.
Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2023.
RRP: $149.99EUR, ISBN: 9783031343575.
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In this time of dramatic political, social, and economic upheaval, issues of citizenship have become ever-more salient. Questions around who is included in or excluded from a community, what rights and responsibilities should be associated with membership, and when, or if, it is appropriate to revoke membership, are at the centre of many heated debates. Recent decades have also witnessed a growing tendency to query the continued relevance of national citizenship models in a world dominated by multi-national organisations and agreements, and where peoples move back and forth between countries in unprecedented numbers; although such arguments have, perhaps, lost some of their lustre in the face of Brexit, Trump, and a general rise in nationalistic populism.

These pressing considerations make a second edition of *Citizenship in Transnational Perspective* very welcome. It builds on the success of the first edition, published in 2017, which was itself the product of a 2016 'Citizenship in a Transnational Perspective' conference at the University of Alberta. Edited by Jatinder Mann, who has a wealth of publications on citizenship and the British World to his name, the second edition contains several revised and updated essays, alongside six entirely new ones. The contributors examine questions of citizenship through the two overarching themes of indigeneity and ethnicity. Canada, Australia, and Aotearoa New Zealand are the focus not so much because of their shared Westminster parliamentary systems, but because of their joint histories as settler-colonies of the British Empire possessing citizenship regimes constructed in part through the suppression of indigenous claims to recognition and distinctiveness. The contributors are drawn from a range of academic disciplines and reach their conclusions by utilising a wide range of sources: legislation, political debates, legal cases, news reports, interviews, and questionnaires.

These foci and sources are combined to generally excellent effect across the book's four parts. The first examines themes of transnationalism. An especially strong piece by Daiva Stasiulis considers how Lebanese and Canadian/Australian dual citizens rated efforts to evacuate them from danger during the 2006 Lebanon War, as well as how they perceive the respective healthcare provisions available to them in Lebanon and Australia/Canada. Somewhat surprisingly, several of them assert that health services have deteriorated to such an extent in Australia/Canada under neo-liberal policies that they can receive better care through private providers in Lebanon. Another standout chapter by Pavithra Jayawardena analyses how Sri Lankan migrants in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand negotiate their status as transnational citizens. This concerns how they endeavour to preserve their Sri Lankan heritage while living in new countries, and in the extent to which they still participate in Sri Lankan domestic affairs.

The essays in part two analyse the evolution of citizenship legislation across the three former settler-colonies. Of particularly interest to me is Kate McMillan's chapter on Aotearoa New Zealand, where she discusses how that nation became the only one in the world to grant voting rights to non-citizen permanent residents after just one year of residence. Having myself arrived in Aotearoa New Zealand during 2007, I benefitted from this provision to vote in all subsequent general elections until I gained citizenship in 2016. It was fascinating to read McMillan's detailed explanation of how this uniquely generous allowance came about and the largely

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unintended consequences it has generated. While originally designed to minimise distinctions between naturalised and non-naturalised British migrants, it has in fact meant that a nation which retains many vestiges of its colonial past simultaneously promotes the rapid political incorporation of immigrants from a vast range of cultures.

Part three moves on to consider settler-indigenous relationships. The essays within neatly combine historical and future-focused analysis to consider both the suppression of indigenous conceptions of citizenship and how they might be uplifted. Mamari Stephens notes that ever since the 1938 Social Security Act, Aotearoa New Zealand's welfare legislation frequently excluded Māori or sought to erase their distinctiveness by applying universal eligibility criteria. She contends that real progress can only be made if more autonomous and relational models are permitted. Similarly, Chadwick Cowie proposes dual Canadian-First Nations citizenship as a means of challenging the currently narrow and one-sided relationship between the state and indigenous peoples. This would, he asserts, increase First Nations participation in the electoral process and thereby facilitate efforts to push for recognition of their sovereignty and nationhood.

The chapters in the final part of the book offer a mixture of hope and concern for the future. Sukhmani Khorana focuses on two civic initiatives that have successfully worked to increase a sense of belonging among second-generation migrants in Australia by advancing careers in the media and by encouraging woman to move into politics. In contrast, Yasmeen Abu-Laban argues that the apparently liberal Canadian government of Justin Trudeau has in fact overseen a tightening of the rules around migration and the granting of citizenship, while Kim Rubenstein convincingly asserts that the growing trend towards 'securitisation' has led the situation facing Australian dual citizens to become more precarious in recent years.

Despite the considerable merits of all these contributions, there are a couple of issues with the book. The first concerns the inescapable downside to engaging with a contemporary and dynamic field – parts of the book already feel a little dated. For example, Sangeetha Pillai and Harry Hobb's close their chapter by discussing the then-imminent referendum on a First Nations Voice to the Australian Parliament. That measure was, of course, decisively rejected, prompting the previously supportive government of Anthony Albanese to do everything it could to avoid discussing indigenous matters during its successful campaign for re-election. Similarly, Abu-Laban describes Justin Trudeau as a 'popular prime minister' of Canada, when in fact his approval rating declined sharply following the book's publication, eventually culminating in his resignation. Perhaps the most significant change since 2023 has occurred in Aotearoa New Zealand, where the influence wielded by the ACT Party, despite being a junior partner in the governing coalition, has prompted a major escalation in the country's 'culture wars'. Would the largely optimistic note of the book's chapters on Māori rights still hold given the introduction of the Treaty Principles Bill, the likely passage of the Regulatory Standards Bill, and the vitriol directed at anything that seems, to some New Zealanders at least, to hint at 'Māori privilege'?

If this issue is unavoidable, the biggest question mark over the book concerns its scope. Several reviewers of the first edition critiqued the fact that only a handful of the chapters were transnational in the sense of comparing how a point of citizenship has played out across multiple nations. Mann counters in the introduction to this second edition that such reviewers seem to have missed the 'important point' that individual chapters 'do not need to adopt a transnational approach specifically per se, [as] the chapters collectively … illustrate this perspective instead' (p. 2). I am not convinced this is an effective rebuttal for three reasons.

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First, the two chapters that consider multiple nations (those of Stasulis and Jaywardena) are arguably the most effective, in large part because they do point out illuminating similarities and differences across varied contexts. Second, the fact most of the contributors forgo explicit transnational comparisons means the burden of making them effectively falls on the reader. While it is, of course, highly desirable that readers draw their own conclusions from a book, leaving them to do most of the heavy lifting in a work that describes itself as providing a 'transnational perspective' seems excessive. Finally, the idea that transnational comparisons only become apparent by studying the chapters collectively creates the imperative for the reader to consult the whole book, but this seems to run counter to the way people typically engage with an edited collection of essays.

These issues only partly detract from what is an illuminating, thought-provoking, and very topical book. The continued importance of citizenship, allied to the fact several of the matters under discussion have already changed significantly in just two years, means a future third edition would be very welcome. If such a work engaged more fully with transnational comparisons, then it would rise to even greater heights than its predecessors.

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