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## Book Review

*EU Citizenship Law and Policy: Beyond Brexit* by Dora Kostakopoulou, Published by Edward Elgar, 2020, 192 pp, ISBN: 978 1 78643 158 5

This is a vital book for our time of new wave of nationalism. It promotes the enduring qualities and appeal of EU citizenship, while offering concise and comprehensive but also substantive and multidimensional overview of EU citizenship law and its changes in evolving contexts of European integration. By drawing on philosophical and historic foundations of the European Union, Kostakopoulou highlights the very humanistic and universal vision of EU citizenship law grounded in a rights-based approach. The lasting vision spans from the Cynics and the Stoics' cosmopolitan aspirations of Ancient Greece to von Coudenhove-Kelergi's Pan-European federation that would guarantee peace, security and prosperity where 'nationalism and perpetual conflicts over territory and borderlines would be superseded' at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The ideals of political community and citizenship foreground an inclusive life philosophy of individual dignity and respect, which is attractive well beyond Europe.

Today, recent decades of European integration have seen state discretion and control over the entry, residence, employments, and political participation limited by EU institutions and legislation. The EU has sought to elevate European citizenship to a primary status that guarantees free movement and free residence within its territory of member States. The author made a considerable effort to reflect the reality of the EU institutional relations and practices as dynamic and interconnected network of overlapping layers of governance. The EU legal order is complex and multi-layered, 'does not begin where domestic law ends'. Multiple case studies referred to in the book illustrate ongoing tensions between the nation states and the EU institutions that promote the 'Eurozenship' that is a coherent legal status which is different from national citizenship and permanent residence.

On one side, EU law-based rights merge with international human rights into 'wider moralities that do not tolerate discrimination on the grounds of nationality and disrespect for human beings.' Thus, EU citizenships delineate legal and political space, within which local and particular 'identities can simultaneously coexist, allowing for 'different sensibilities and forms of transnational solidarity' to grow.

The recent two decades, however, marked by international terrorism, wars in the Middle East and global economic and health crises have been generating a fertile ground for the reaffirmation of nationalism and authoritarian populism. In Europe and beyond, many political elites and their nationalist leaders engage in demagoguery, division between 'Us' and 'Others' and fragmentation in their societies. As Kostakopoulou argues, state leaders often do not hide their efforts to shift democracy away from its foundations of diversity, inclusion, and respect for human beings. Motivated by political expediency, personal advantages, and ambitions they rise on a 'new wind of doctrine' that becomes acceptable because it uses its audience's feelings and beliefs while sweeping away rational arguments and political pragmatism. Brexit is the recent example, Kostakopoulou does well to analyse it to show how Brexit's political negotiations restore a pre-EU way of thinking about sovereignty and state control.

After examining the material scope of EU citizenship and its development toward a meaningful EU social citizenship and a union of welfare, the tone of the book becomes less optimistic as it discusses the internal and external obstacles that might impede the future development of the

‘Eurozenship’. The author substantiates some of these political objections by focusing on the recent process of Brexit that transformed millions of EU citizens settled in the United Kingdom into ‘guests’ or ‘foreigners’ and the same applies to UK nationals residing in other Member States who lost their EU citizenship and became ‘guests’ or ‘foreigners’.

Kostakopoulou uses the new political reality of Brexit to think imaginatively about the future of EU citizenship as an institution and explores the possibility of political reconfiguration of the European Union to offer a truly cosmopolitan option. She proposes an ‘EU protected citizen’ status as a fundamental status, which does not have to continue to be exclusively conditioned on Member State nationality and indeed could be a useful way forward to ensure openness of our societies, to provide institutional opportunities for meaningful social relations, and to protect minority rights against the backdrop of prejudice, racism, and xenophobia. And to paraphrase Paolo Freire, in order to succeed ‘Eurozenship’ project must be transformative for everyone and utopian in its orientation.

Personally, the book inspired me to think again about the principle of subsidiarity that brings the ideal of the European unity closer to the citizens of Europe and their immediate reality. It seems to be paradoxical that subsidiarity has been forgotten in the current discourses about Europe and European Union’s development, despite being one of the main organising principles of the EU. Subsidiarity should be an underpinning principle for political, legal and administrative infrastructure for the decisions to be taken close to the citizens at the most local level possible. In the current form, the exact political, legal and administrative infrastructure does not often offer satisfactory representation to the EU citizens. For example, the EU treaties prescribe that ‘the European Parliament shall be composed of representatives of the Union’s citizens’ (Article 14 TEU). Despite the growing importance of European Parliament, the elections to the EP are characterised by low turnout and notoriously little interest in European issues. The MEPs and their constituencies create a major gap between the EP and EU citizens. As a result, the European Parliament that is a body directly elected by the EU citizens, fails to properly represent them.

As European identity is necessarily work in progress, the education for European citizenship has an important role to play. Historically, schools have been important vehicles for nation-building, unifying populations culturally and politically. Through mass education, modern nation-states foster state loyalty and democratic engagement as citizens grant durable legitimacy to the political community they identify with. The same logic applies on a European scale as we think about socialising students into European citizenship, Kostakopoulou’s book can contribute to this endeavour.

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