
Routledge Studies in Affective Societies

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Routledge Studies in Affective Societies presents high-level academic work on the social dimensions of human affectivity. It aims to shape, consolidate and promote a new understanding of societies as Affective Societies, accounting for the fundamental importance of affect and emotion for human coexistence in the mobile and networked worlds of the 21st century. Contributions come from a wide range of academic fields, including anthropology, sociology, cultural, media and film studies, political science, performance studies, art history, philosophy, and social, developmental and cultural psychology. Contributing authors share the vision of a transdisciplinary understanding of the affective dynamics of human sociality. Thus, *Routledge Studies in Affective Societies* devotes considerable space to the development of methodology, research methods and techniques that are capable of uniting perspectives and practices from different fields.

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Affective Societies

Key Concepts

Edited by Jan Slaby and
Christian von Scheve

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Affective citizenship

Bilgin Ayata

The concept of affective citizenship advances a new understanding of citizenship whose affective components have largely been neglected in the social sciences. Citizenship is conventionally understood as a rights-based political membership that forms the key institutional tie between the state and the individual. Even though in very early conceptualizations, such as by Plato, affects and emotions play a critical role in discussions of what constitutes a good citizen, it is only in the past two decades that scholars have increasingly attended to the affective dimensions of citizenship. Building on feminist, queer, and postcolonial critiques, the concept of affective citizenship departs from rationalist paradigms that undergird most scholarly approaches to the state, bureaucracy, and citizenship. Focusing on the affective and emotional dimension of citizenship, the concept enables us to decipher and problematize how states “govern through affect” (Fortier, 2010), how citizenship policies endorse particular feelings as legitimate while discrediting others, how desire configures state–subject relations, or, to put it more broadly, how affects and emotions are employed within mechanisms of exclusion and inclusion. While a plethora of scholarship has pointed to the various forms of inclusion and exclusion enacted through citizenship policies and practices, focusing on the affective dimensions of citizenship allows us to analyze those hierarchies and differentiations that exceed the level of formal access or legal equality. Since crude legal discrimination based on race, gender, and class have become more complex to sustain in light of contemporary international human rights laws, political boundary-making has shifted more pronouncedly to affect and emotions to reinforce difference and differential treatment. For instance, while two individuals may be equal citizens from a legal point of view, their perceived difference in terms of religion, race, sex, gender, or class may result in identifying one individual as the proper, true citizen who is naturally entitled to the privileges and status of citizenship, whereas the other may be identified as a “quasi” or “technical” citizen, whose belonging to the political community remains in question despite holding citizenship. In this case, additional affective and emotional efforts must be performed to confirm rightful political belonging. Thus, it no longer only matters where “one is

really from,” but also “how one *really* feels” (toward the nation, state, or political community) (Fortier, 2008). With the declaration of the Global War on Terror by the United States and its allies, as well as with the problematization of migration, difference, and plurality as potential threats to social cohesion and national security, such boundary-making and governing through affect has increasingly attracted scholarly attention, and rightly so. The concept of affective citizenship allows us to critically analyze differential regimes of inclusion and exclusion by attending to the role of affect and emotions in state–subject relations, both from the perspective of states as well as that of individuals and communities (→ *affective communities*).

Historical background and context

Citizenship is one of the most elementary concepts in political life that refers to rights, status, belonging, identity, and participation (→ *belonging*). Broadly speaking, citizenship distributes rights, confers status upon its members, ascribes identity and belonging to the political community, and facilitates modes of participation. It is both a socio-cultural and legal concept as well as a political institution that sets the boundaries of national and political membership. Hence, citizenship is a powerful mechanism of both inclusion and exclusion. In the long historical journey from the *polis* to the nation state, citizenship has consolidated itself as *the* foundational principle that orders the relationship between states and subjects. States can employ citizenship both as a rewarding as well as a punitive measure through the legal act of naturalization or denaturalization.

Contemporary citizenship rests on the principle of equality and provides protection from arbitrary treatment; it builds on the fundamental idea that humans are right-bearing subjects. This is a result of many struggles and historical developments that have shaped the tenets of citizenship over centuries. At its inception, citizenship was directly linked to the protection of property and exclusively granted to a few male property owners, but over the past two centuries, many struggles by excluded subjects such as the colonized, the enslaved, women, and migrants have led to an expansion of citizenship rights. Today, there is hardly any country in the world that has not invented, amended, or radically transformed its existing laws and regulations of citizenship. In the classic account of sociologist Thomas Marshall (1950/1992), first published in 1950, the consolidation of nation states around the globe as well as the expansion of capitalism as an economic order that perpetuates inequality has broadened the scope and content of citizenship. Accordingly, in the 18th century, citizenship related to civic rights, in the 19th century, its scope extended to political rights, and in the 20th century, social rights were added with the expansion of welfare states (Marshall, 1950/1992). While his analysis captures the larger trajectory of citizenship, his linear and limited perspective has been criticized both by feminists and postcolonial scholars, as Marshall’s analysis rests firmly on the history of white

European men. Moreover, scholars have pointed out that welfare states had indeed first strengthened social citizenship as a means of redistribution but then retracted exactly those rights under neoliberalism (Brown, 2015). Hence, it would be misleading to think of citizenship as continuously expanding in a linear, progressive way. For instance, the pressures of globalization, neoliberalism, and migration have resulted in flexible citizenship (Ong, 1998). To illustrate this with an example: you can purchase citizenship in the EU member state Malta for 1.15 million euro through investments in the country, and for much less in six other countries in the world (Tanasoca, 2016). Yet at the same time, thousands of migrants are dying each year at the shores of Europe when crossing the Mediterranean (Ayata, 2017).

To account for the multitude of developments that change or shape citizenship, myriad theories and alternative conceptualizations have amassed in the past decades. The literature on citizenship is flourishing. Scholars have explored how migration (Balibar, 2004; Bauböck, 1994; Brubaker, 1992; Joppke, 1998; Soysal, 1994), globalization (Falk, 2010; Urry, 1999), neoliberalism (Fraser, 1997; Somers, 2008), gender and sexuality (Lister, 2003; Plummer, 2003; Richardson, 1998; Siim, 2000), multiculturalism (Modood, 2011; Taylor, 1994), technology (Barns, 2005), media and culture (Klaus & Lünenborg, 2004) or political participation (Isin, 2009) have transformed the practice and theory of citizenship. While citizenship has attracted interest across the social sciences and humanities, the bulk of research on this topic has focused on the territorial, economic, legal, historical, political, and cultural aspects. The affective and emotional dimensions of citizenship, however, have been rather neglected, even though the importance of affects and emotions for political life is increasingly acknowledged (Connolly, 2002; Nussbaum, 2013; Protevi, 2009) ($\rightarrow$ *political affect*). This neglect is highly problematic, given that affect and emotions have always formed critical components of citizenship. For instance, in Plato's dialogues on *The Laws*, the emphasis on the emotional commitment of the citizen to the laws of the state already points to the affective dimension of citizenship, as Cohen De Lara convincingly demonstrates (2017). Later, during colonization, affects and emotions figure as critical components in legitimizing the withholding of rights and citizenship from colonized subjects by juxtaposing European rationality and reason against the allegedly affective states in the colonies (Fanon, 1963, 1991; Grovogui, 2006; Stoler, 2007). The historic exclusion of women from and the contemporary restriction of citizenship rights for LGBTI communities also reveal how intimately citizenship, affects, and emotions are linked (Berlant, 1997). A growing body of research has recently been emerging under the rubric of "affective citizenship." This work analyzes the affective and emotional dimensions of citizenship from various perspectives. New insights are provided into the seemingly rational apparatus of the state, administrative processes, and wider state-subject relations in the context of increasing societal and political pluralization.

Systematic explication of the concept

The concept of affective citizenship contributes in crucial ways to a better understanding of societies. It seeks to "destabilize citizenship as a purely rational and administrative exercise of state authority by attending to the role of affect in production of regimes of inclusion and exclusion" (Di Gregorio & Merolli, 2016, p. 934). Importantly, it highlights the relational dynamics of political boundary making in affective societies that are marked by plurality and heterogeneity. While at the horizontal level a further increase of formal equality is to be expected through naturalization processes, citizenship as a differential regime will continue to contribute to internal hierarchization among designated "true," "proper" citizens and those who are viewed only "technically" as citizens, a prominent trope in ongoing European and US debates on Islam and migration (Volpp, 2002). The concept of affective citizenship helps us to understand what else is required for a rightful belonging to the community that the legal obtaining of citizenship does not confer, such as an affective disposition toward the right feelings for the state, nation, or political community ($\rightarrow$ *affective disposition*). Take the example of debates on Islam and migration in Europe. After terrorist attacks in London in 2005, Paris in 2015, and Berlin in 2016, the political belonging of ordinary Muslim citizens was put under heightened scrutiny, questioning their emotional alliance with the victims or the "injured nation." This phenomenon was similar to the governance of public feelings after 9/11 in the United States (Anker, 2014). Relatedly, the latest modification of naturalization laws in the UK explicitly highlights the importance of *feeling British* ($\rightarrow$ *attachment*). While it was previously possible to apply for citizenship by mail, now numerous requirements and ceremonies are included into the naturalization process to ensure that citizenship is emotionally desired by the applicants (Fortier, 2013). Thus, it is not sufficient to ideologically identify with the principles, laws, and values of the state whose citizenship one seeks to obtain, but also to "feel the right way." What one grieves about, fears, enjoys, cheers for, or cherishes becomes part of proper citizen conduct. The lines of demarcation between insider and outsider are thus affectively (re)drawn. The concept of affective citizenship allows us to study the creation of "internal outsiders" even when they formally belong to the political community ($\rightarrow$ *affective communities*). It enables us to decipher the affective contract between allegedly entitled members of the community and state institutions that permeates discourse, policy, and practices through the production of citizenship. Studies on nationalism and patriotism have long addressed the affective and emotional components of political belonging, yet the relegation and confinement of emotional affairs to nation and nationalism has helped to maintain the misconception that the apparatus of the state is free of affects and emotions. As recent ethnographies on affective state bureaucracy by Didier Fassin and his colleagues (2015) have shown, this is hardly the case. In this vein, the concept

of affective citizenship contributes to dissolving the juxtaposition of the emotional nation versus the rational state, and instead pushes for an understanding of states as affective entrepreneurs, or as "affective states" (Stoler, 2007).

As a conceptual lens, affective citizenship explores practices of governance relating to people's feelings toward those they identify as "alike" and those they identify as "different" (Ahmed, 2000, 2014), and how feelings of comfort, unease, anger, empathy, (mis)trust, (dis)respect, love, and hate toward an imagined "us" and "others" are regulated and reproduced in official policies, discourses, and practices. Fortier (2010) has described this regulation of feelings as "governing through affect" (p. 22). This has consequences both for the relationship between states and subjects, but also for the relationship among subjects and different communities. Therefore, the concept of affective citizenship cannot simply be reduced to the practices of the state. Equally important is how citizens and non-citizen subjects negotiate, contribute to, or contest the state's efforts to govern through affect. For a comprehensive understanding of how citizenship in its broadest and multiple senses is produced by governance through affect, the analysis of affective citizenship must take place at the level of the state, the community, and the individual. This includes questions such as how citizens themselves respond to, engage in, or practice affective citizenship and what forms of resistance, contestation, compliance, or adaptation are expressed in acts of affective citizenship.

Affective citizenship in research

Multicultural, plural societies in which migration or the naturalization of former migrants are still publicly problematized as challenges for the social and political cohesion of the national community are the main context for discussions within literature on affective citizenship. By researching the affective dimensions of integration policies (Fortier, 2010; Merolli, 2016), naturalization (Fortier, 2013, 2017), community cohesion (De Wilde & Duyvendak, 2016; Johnson, 2010) or cultural difference (Mookherjee, 2005), scholars of affective citizenship have contributed to a more nuanced understanding of how citizenship as a mechanism of inclusion and exclusion is affectively employed by encouraging certain feelings that create *desirable* states and citizens. For instance, by analyzing integration documents in the UK, Fortier (2010) traces community cohesion policies as an attempt to manage the unease of white Britons regarding cultural and religious difference. Recognizing the social character of feelings such as unease, discomfort, and suspicion is critical to understanding how citizens are affectively produced in the course of integration policies or naturalization policies. Hence, one of the key questions to ask when analyzing affective citizenship is how states construe themselves and citizens as "desirable" and how the "fantasy of state power and desirability" is produced (Fortier, 2013, p. 700).

While Fortier and other authors employ the concept of affective citizenship as a theoretical and analytical lens that allows us to explore neglected aspects of the production of citizenship, some scholars have proposed to think of affective citizenship as an alternative and more inclusive political model of belonging, and have pointed to the transformative potential of affective citizenship (e.g., Hung, 2010). In her discussion on the ban of the Muslim veil in France, Mookherjee (2005) seeks to reconcile both postcolonial and feminist discussions on female subjectivity and the autonomous subject by offering affective citizenship as an alternative model of recognition. Accordingly, this model can integrate different understandings of identity and autonomy in multicultural societies. Mookherjee takes up the dispute over headscarves, in which feminist philosophers argued that by wearing the veil women would deny their autonomy, while postcolonial critics pointed to the universalizing language in which the feminists' critique was articulated. They criticized feminists for taking the Western liberal idea of a self-constituting autonomous citizen for granted. Seeking a productive resolution of these two positions, Mookherjee argues that the autonomy of citizens is embedded in multiple affective bonds to families, intersecting communities, and so forth, that need to be equally accounted for. Support for the rejection of the veil, then, disregards these affective bonds in multicultural societies. Thus, she develops a model of affective citizenship from a postcolonial feminist perspective that responds to the need to be transformative with respect to acknowledging cultural differences and to be critical with regard to social inequality. In this model of affective citizenship, the recognition of multiple affiliations and affective belonging then unsettles the "majority and minority's perceived distinction between 'identity' and 'difference', and between 'insiders' and 'outsiders'" (Mookherjee, 2005, p. 37). Mookherjee places hybridity, group representation, and the recognition of minority values at the center of her concept. Affective citizenship, in her reading, is an inclusive concept that provides equal space for minority values and recognizes hybrid modes of female subjectivity (Mookherjee, 2005, p. 47). She suggests a concept that facilitates democratic communication and reciprocal transformations in postcolonial, hybrid societies without abandoning universal critiques of social inequality and oppression.

While Mookherjee develops her concept of affective citizenship based on ongoing debates on identity and value in Europe regarding Islam and migration, Ruyu Hung's (2010) concept of affective citizenship stems from an engagement with pragmatist and phenomenological philosophers within the field of citizenship education. He proposes affective citizenship as a more inclusive, caring, sensitive model of citizenship that can contribute to a more open public sphere. What is important to highlight is that both Mookherjee and Hung employ affective citizenship as a normative concept which carries an inclusive potential that could better account for diversity and plurality in contemporary societies than conventional notions of citizenship. Thus, in the

current research on affective citizenship, the concept is employed both analytically and normatively in a manner that points to its productive quality. Future research can further develop the concept at both levels, yet the strongest potential of affective citizenship arguably lies in its ability to analyze rather than formulate policies.

Outlook

In his awarding winning book *Between the World and Me*, US-American author Ta-Nehisi Coates (2015) writes a lyrical letter to his teenage son that offers a powerful account of what it feels like to be a black citizen in the United States. He narrates how fear, disembodiment, and affective control are daily components of black survival in a country in which formal equal citizenship does not offer equal belonging for members of visible minorities. Instead, Coates highlights the physical vulnerability of black bodies to institutional racism that informs and permeates intimate family relations, school education, neighborhood relations, and all other critical spheres of life. What it feels like to be a black citizen in the United States is a state of fear, insecurity, and vulnerability. It is a life that is not protected by the state but rather has to protect itself from the state. Written roughly 50 years after the Civil Rights Movement, the book uncompromisingly shows that achieving full citizenship rights has not protected the non-white population in the United States from racial injustice, which also relies on the governance of affect and emotions. One example of such governance of affects and emotions in this case is the normalization of the perception of young black males as threatening, violent, and irrational. This has led, through various court verdicts, to the justification of their murders by police as acts of "self-defense." In a similar vein, the construction of Muslim citizens in the United States after 2001 as threatening and dangerous also operates at comparable affective registers that delineate two categories of citizens: those who are naturally entitled and those whose citizenship is conditional, ambiguous, or relegated to a formality if they do not feel, behave, or act in desired ways. This phenomenon is of course not restricted to the United States but can be found in many countries around the world to varying degrees and in varying forms. For instance, with the ongoing polarization and problematization of migration, identity, and belonging in contemporary debates in Europe, the importance of the affective dimensions of citizenship are reinforced for dual citizens and former migrants. For decades, it was European countries themselves that encouraged countries such as Turkey, Algeria, and Morocco to set up religious and educational institutions in Germany, France, the Netherlands, and so forth from the 1970s until the 2000s. The aim of this policy was to ensure that Muslim migrants would explicitly maintain their affective bonds with their countries of origin and thus eventually return. Yet now, with increasing naturalization and the realization that former migrants and their children will stay in Europe for

good, any undesired display of affective bonds with their countries of origin can lead to questioning their rightful belonging to Europe. In light of the global intensification of struggles over entitlement, national belonging, and collective identity, our understanding of citizenship can no longer afford to exclude the realm of feelings, emotions, and affect. Affective citizenship is a promising concept with which to explore the affective ties between states and citizens from their respective vantage points. It allows us to decipher the multiple experiences, power relations, and policies that emanate from the politics of exclusion and inclusion in contemporary and future constellations of affective societies.

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