

RESENHAS

Migrations and Mobilities. Citizenship, Borders, and Gender.

Edited by Seyla Benhabib and Judith Resnik.
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In this volume the editors gathered fourteen issues on human mobility and citizenship, written by scholars of seven different areas, with a clear intention to develop a transversal gender approach of the realities concerned, as well as the theories referred. The forty-four-page introductory essay of the editors regards to how discrimination based on gender affects “the conceptualization and implementation of opportunities, rights, and burdens, as well as the nation-state’s power” (p. 5). The book has five sections: situated histories of citizenship and gender; global markets, women’s work; citizenship of the family, citizenship in the family: women, children and the nation-state; engendered citizenship in practice; and, reconfiguring the nation-state: women’s citizenship in the transnational context.

The way the book is organized, the editors present different visions to answer to the objectives that challenged the publication, which can be summarized in 1) the concern about the effects of movements across state borders on the relationship of people and rights; 2) the intention to bring

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gender equality claims into discussions of free movement of people, protection of refugees, States' sovereignty and family ties, which are, according to them, the four major migration current themes; and, 3) investigate how the tensions between migrant cultures and those of their host nations are interlaced with gender, how it is managed by the nation-states and how it is taken in by the academy. In addition to the three thematic indicated in the title – citizenship and boundaries in human mobility contexts – the essays treated other contemporary themes, like cultural identities, democracies, nationality, emersion of 'others', migration' vulnerabilities, among others.

The migratory politics and the transformation of the migration policies – to wane the undesired immigration flows – are some of the pictures in the background that highlight the really deepened studies proposed in this volume. The prevalence of law scholars among the authors explain a special attention to the juridical site of the phenomenon, which the most important international legal spots, according to the editors, are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the two following generations, the Convention on Refugees (1951) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1981). Surprisingly, the UN Convention of Protection of All Migrant Workers and Their Families is never mentioned in the book.

Some of the texts refer to specific studies about local researches made in Canada, United States, Netherlands, Middle East and North Africa or South of Asia. However, all of them offer wide theoretical contributions. As an example, Linda Bosniak works up the concept of citizenship opening to new insights, especially those of 'others', as the domestic workers, who leave their children, their families and their countries to take care of other' children and families in host countries, where they may lose the rights of an actual citizenship. The real challenge she indicates is "the achievement of citizenship of some women through participation in paid work depending increasingly of the labor of citizenshipless others" (p. 128). Analyzing "civil citizenship" and "social citizenship" Bosniak calls the attention to the right to citizenship. At the site of borders citizenship, it is to be considered the multivalence and divisibility of citizenship in order to "make citizenship more substantive and meaningful to various groups in various ways" and not only to those who enter into the "nation-centered thinking" (p. 141-142).

Most issues of this book are to contribute to the development of the idea that, among migrants and refugees, the right to have rights is a goal to conquer. These authors are doing their part to catch it up.