

The Political in Citizenship

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Introduction

Citizenship studies are a diverse field (e.g. Isin, Turner 2002, Guillaume, Huysmans 2013, Jakobson 2014, Schahar et al 2017, Paquet et al 2018). In the myriad of theories, positions and perspectives gaining and losing scholarly attention it is useful to reconsider its relationship to the political, one of the foundational dimensions of the concept. While politics can be in principle analysed both with a long historical and more currently-oriented view, in this paper I'll take the contemporaneous one that enables to analyse the dimensions of the political with more intensity.

Citizenship has traditionally been a strongly political concept (e.g. Brubaker 1992, Torpey 2000 with a broader historical view). The key issue of citizenship is a meaningful position of a citizen (status, participation, identity) vis a vis both state authorities and fellow citizens people, and not just the legal status. Although Mayakovsky poised about pride as a Soviet citizen, his practical civic agency based on the status could be very modest in a totalitarian system. Citizenship is as much a question of practices and underlying principles as a question of formal status and administrative procedures, thus it is inevitably political.

In the following paper I will first discuss the dimensions and aspects of citizenship. This is followed by examining the key aspects of the political. Then a more detailed view will be developed on the relations of the two with a view on a concise approach for analysing citizenship as a political concept and utilising the field relational perspective. Citizenship is inherently political and the various dimensions of the political are well related to each other. Understanding this allows a more practical and less restricted or mythological account. I also seek to develop points of reference for developing more analytical and less partisan accounts.

The conceptual and analytical diversity of citizenship

Citizenship is a contested and multi-used but also heuristically rich concept. Very broadly it is an institution for establishing and ensuring the autonomous status of an individual and relating him or her to state authorities and fellow citizens. But the agency of a person can be defined in legal or/and societal terms, towards the state or/and fellow citizens (also termed vertical or horizontal), encompassing status, participation or/and identity, covering political but also civil, social, cultural, economic or/and other domains and there is plenty other aspects and approaches available (see e.g. Jakobson 2014 for an overview).

As an institution, citizenship conveys internal defining rules. In the modern form, it is expected to be unitary, meaning that all holders of the status should have full rights and obligations; sacred, meaning that citizens must be willing to make sacrifices for the state (or the community) that grants them citizenship; national, meaning that membership must be based on a community that is simultaneously political and cultural; democratic, meaning that citizens should be entitled to participate significantly in politics, and that access to citizenship should be open to all residents so that, in the long run, residence in the community and citizenship will coincide; unique, in that each citizen should belong to one and only one political community; consequential, meaning that citizenship must entail important social and political privileges that distinguish its holders from non-citizens; and individual, meaning it can only be possessed and exercised by individual human beings (Brubaker 1989; Schmitter 2001).

Citizenship is simultaneously constraining and enabling. As a constraint, it has classically been characterised by closure, enabling feedback in a bounded community, a polity (Brubaker 1992). Polity is the locus of citizen agency and membership, be it legal, political, social or other. Citizenship is also an instrument of inclusion and exclusion, creating a community of sentiment and developing its identity bases, i.e. marking the borders with others, and strengthening it with symbols, routines, rituals, division of rights and obligations, etc.

But citizenship is also an enabling institution, conveying the values of democracy, equality, empowerment and responsibility. General citizenship is the premise of modern democratic governance, says Charles Tilly (1995), for whom democracy is the prime relationship between the state and the citizen. Citizenship rights enable citizens to stand up for their other rights (Skinner and Strath 2003). This is related to citizen agency, active and democratic citizenship, etc. (e.g. Crick and Lockyer 2010; Stoker et al. 2011) and, more broadly, to political and societal participation and membership as a lived practice and also to identity construction (e.g. Sicakkan and Lithman 2005). Citizenship is the status that makes members of the community equal, regardless of their income, education or descent, as it grants people equal rights to decide over the affairs of the general community and provides equal minimal social standing. As famously noted by Thomas H. Marshall (1992), modern citizenship is the alternative to Marxist class struggle and revolution.

Citizenship is also a regime, a set of legal rules stipulating membership(s) of a (nation) state, but also of establishing rights and obligations, civil, political, social, economic and cultural agency of a person, and in case of democracies, also the foundations of the democratic system. These rules encompass embody certain political ideals, interests and preferences, whether explicitly or implicitly. Citizenship regime can be defined as the institutional arrangements, rules and understandings that guide and shape policy decisions and expenditures of states and can be characterised via four dimensions (Jenson, Papillon 2000, Jenson 2005).

- It establishes the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion of a political community. This is done through recognition of particular rights and duties (civil, political, social, and cultural; individual and collective).
- It prescribes the democratic rules of the game for a polity. It also prescribes the governance arrangements of a polity, which include the institutional mechanisms giving access to the state, the modes of participation in civic life and public debates and the legitimacy of types of claims-making.

- It contributes to the definition of nation in the narrow passport-holding nationality and the more complicated national identity and also contributes to the definition of membership and the borders of insiders and outsiders.
- It sets the geographical borders of the political community, giving meaning to the frontiers between states. It involves the expression of basic values about the responsibility mix, defining the boundaries of state responsibilities and differentiating them from those of markets, of families and of communities in the “welfare diamond”.

Citizenship as a concept and citizenship as a regime are related but different. As a concept, citizenship is broad and manifold. As a regime, it is legal and concrete. Citizenship as a concept informs the deliberations about citizenship regimes and thus acts as a potential agent of change. Citizenship as a regime provides practical anchoring influencing the development of citizenship as a concept.

This is also the key in understanding the political dimensions of citizenship. In contemporary states, there is always one (hegemonic) citizenship regime in place that has also its conceptual justification. The actors supporting alternative position(s) seek to change the hegemony both in terms of legitimation and substantive changes in regulation or administrative practice. So we have an ever-ongoing debate on the range and agency of citizenry in every state that sometimes leads to regulatory changes, whether evolutionally or revolutionally. Citizenship as a regime is visible from legal regulations and their comments, citizenship as a concept is besides theory manifested in public debates and deliberations about citizenship, usually in the context of the current citizenship regime.

As already marked, citizenship as a concept is diverse and manifold. It is synthesised of various elements and has internal tensions that could be understood as aporias, insolvable impasses stemming from equally valid but inconsistent principles or premises. These include community-autonomy and rights-privileges axes (Huysmans, Guillaume 2013).

People need to exist as parts of common will – a polity or an imagined political community – while at the same time they also need to remain autonomous, forming a plurality of wills – with various opinions, interests, and values – and negotiate their living together. (Balibar 2002: 181 cf. Huysmans, Guillaume 2013) Political authorities seek to constitute unity by claiming to represent the community and its interests as a whole. Their claims are necessarily hypocritical, because democratic political rulers cannot fully transcend the community of autonomous people, who as subjects hold different opinions and values, since they derive their legitimacy from mobilising support from within a plurality (Latour 2003 cf. Huysmans, Guillaume 2013).

Citizenship has also been an instrument both of crafting a people of equals, in which rights are universal and not a privilege, as well as dividing people into territorialised national polities turning universal rights and belonging into privileges of membership in a polity. (Huysmans, Guillaume 2013). On the one hand, citizens comprise a people united around a body of law and rights and/or a set of narratives about its origins that allow people to recognise themselves as a collective unity and a body of individuals with political status. On the other hand, citizenship is constituted in relation to those with limited or no rights, those remaining outside of the narratives of the people’s community of origin (Isin 2002).

The substantive dimensions of citizenship can be broadly outlined as six main perspectives.

- The first is legal-substantial axis (see e.g. Bauböck 1994 nominal-substantial division, also closely linked to nationality-citizenship division) where citizenship can be treated either formally (nominal citizenship) or as containing substantive dimensions (substantial citizenship), and in latter case, which aspects and to which extent are covered.
- A second divide is of vertical and horizontal citizenship (see e.g. Jakobson 2014). Vertical denotes the relations between a citizen and a state. Horizontal citizenship is primarily exercised in civil society and means citizen to citizen relations and identities. The key interest is to examine to what extent is the horizontal aspect represented besides expectedly dominant vertical citizenship.
- A third differentiation is between the liberal, republican and communitarian understanding of citizenship (see e.g. Delanty 2000, Blatter 2011) reflecting normative expectations accompanying citizenship. Liberals focus on stipulating formal rights and safeguarding their free use, republicans emphasise political agency and contribution to the operation of political community, communitarians emphasise community cohesion as the living basis for meaningful exercise of citizenship.
- A fourth conceptual division is in interpreting citizenship as primarily nation state based, transnational or global phenomenon (see e.g. Jakobson 2014) based on emphasising the respective dimension of citizenship regimes, practices, identities etc.
- The fifth division is a classical one of civil-political-social citizenship (Marshall, Bottomore 1992) based on the area of life in focus – whether it is civil rights, political agency or socio-economic and socio-cultural domain of citizenship. Civil rights are the basis for individual freedom, are exercised in civil society and are protected by courts. Political citizenship is exercised in political activities and associations, elections and parties are just some examples. Social citizenship means being part of society both in terms of civility and ethnicity (education and culture) but also being part of welfare of this society (at least basic level is accessible for all).
- The sixth division is viewing citizenship in terms of status, identity and/or participation (see e.g. Andersen, Hoff 2001). Citizenship as status encompasses both rules on membership (acquisition and loss of the status) as well as rights and obligations accompanying it. Citizenship as identity covers issues of personal and public values and self-perceptions. Citizenship as participation focuses on practical membership of a society or political community – either being there or actively taking part in societal life.

The normatives of citizenship

For democratic citizenship, the normative diversity of the concept is of key relevance. There are different views on the good democratic citizen, and this has implications for the design and implementation of the content of civics. Political theorists usually distinguish between three normative approaches to citizenship: liberal, republican, and communitarian (e.g. Delanty 2000; Lister, Pia 2008; Blatter 2011).

The liberal understanding of citizenship sets the emphasis on citizens' rights and the ability to use these rights to further one's goals both in the private and, if need be, also in the public sphere (Schuck 2002). This is well reflected in Marshall's (1992) understanding that modern citizenship entails (at least) three types of rights: civil (e.g. personal freedom, protection of private property), political (e.g. right to vote,

organise politically, voice political opinions) and social (e.g. right to education or basic social welfare, creating the basis for effectively using one’s political rights). A liberal citizen is envisioned as moderate, pluralist, and emphatic towards others (Heater 1999). People are not obliged to exercise these rights but as moral persons tend to do so (Macedo 1990).

The republican understanding, here relevant as civic republicanism (see e.g. Peterson 2011) envisions a citizen as a primarily political being, who has not only rights, but also obligations to politically participate and further the common good in the public domain (Dagger 2002). The position and freedom of a citizen is seen as based on practical exercise of the status. Hence, a republican citizen ought to be active and know how to use their political rights, and be knowledgeable about politics, constitutional institutions, etc. that would enable them to effectively participate in political processes. This does not necessarily imply the unity of citizens in language and culture but can be based on democratic or constitutional patriotism (e.g. Habermas 1999, 2001, Heater 1999).

The communitarian understanding of citizenship also emphasises the importance of active participation and citizen’s duties over rights. Here the key rationale is the boundedness of an individual in his or her community. Thus, communitarians do not necessarily value the role of the state as highly as republicans, and rather, emphasise the citizen’s shared identity with other community members. Routines, rituals, and traditions are of importance. Often a shared cultural or ethnic identity has an important role as a value basis (Bauböck 1998). National communitarianism is the most relevant practical manifestation of the communitarian perspective.

In addition to contesting with one another, the democratic normatives are also contending against other normatives relevant at the given time point. Of these, the most important in the last decades has been the neoliberal normative that draws its grounding values from the neoclassical economic doctrine. Contrary to political participation emphasised by the democratic citizenship normatives, neoliberalism foresees citizens as mostly privately engaged people, entrepreneurs, consumers or providers of services, who have a narrowly defined residual role in political decision making, complemented by participating in the service development process as feedback givers (e.g. Newman, Clarke 2009). Instead of seeing fellow citizens as members of a democratic community of fate, the neoliberal normative defines individuals primarily as market actors making rational deals with one another. This in turn is counterbalanced by the mechanical performance definition in practical delivery (Davies 2014).

The normatives can be further characterised via the aspects of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Heater 2004, 343). Knowledge is related to facts, interpretation, and personal role. Attitudes are related to self-understanding, respect for others, and values. Skills are related to intellect and judgement, communication, and action. Table 1 summarises these three key aspects of each of the four citizenship normatives.

	National communitarian	Civic republican	Liberal democratic	Neoliberal
Knowledge	National cultural and historical knowledge	Basics of the political and institutional system	Legal system with a focus on civil, political and social rights	Legal, social and entrepreneurial capacities

Attitudes	National patriotism, cultural and social harmony	Constitutional patriotism, civic mindedness, responsibility	Personal development in a civilised manner, human dignity and rights, openness	Self-efficacy, competitiveness, co-operation, flexibility, conforming to prescribed roles
Skills	Not emphasised (language, manners)	Political meaning making and participation skills	How to use the rights, possibly also critical analysis	Legal tips, market agency, social entrepreneurialism

Table 1. Normatives of citizenship. Source: Jakobson et al 2019

These normatives can be seen as systemic sets or repertoires of arguments. Usually politicians and policy makers do not use these directly but utilise these as building blocks in developing their political and argumentative strategies or are indirectly influenced. Thus the typology of the normatives is mostly a tool for researchers that enables to analyse how argumentative strategies are built and developed.

While doing this researchers need to acknowledge the contextual embeddedness and contingent dynamics of the political process. Political actors compile and develop their political and argumentative strategies in context and pragmatically, seeking to build as strong coalitions as possible (e.g. Zittoun 2014). Thus also the arguments need to be analysed not only in terms of the analytical framework or moral philosophy but relating this to the political position and strategy of the actors.

The dimensions of the political

The political encompasses politics and policy in a polity that are intertwined in a continuous political process (see Sørensen, Torfing 2017: 31). Polity refers to the locus of politics, usually territorial and in the form of a nation state. This includes the institutional framework of rules, norms, and procedures that regulates the negotiation, pursuit, and achievement of common goals that will be constantly shaped and reshaped by the contestation of the political actors in the political process.

Politics refers to the political contestation – competition and collaboration, discussions, clashes, and compromises between different political actors, such as government offices, political parties, interest organizations, social movements, and citizen groups, all of whom seek to influence how public values and goals are defined, produced, and allocated. Politics is also the art of the possible, your partisan view of the public interest – in interaction with the others but also using your power, whichever kind of if you may have. You have to develop a convincing agenda and find allies, build majorities, aim political power, gain and retain sufficient legitimacy and, if successful, also to decide, regulate and implement policies.

Policy refers to the concrete problem-solving strategies that are produced through politics taking place within a particular polity. This is key to the governing dimension of the political. Governing can be seen as a matter of both order and conscious renewal. Renewal is about managing the process of change, constantly innovating and also dismantling the old solutions. In this view, governing is the process of formulating and implementing public policy, in other words, the process of formulating and renewing

public agreements (such as programs) on a political basis, based on agreements and legitimate power. It is also a productive, innovative aspect of the functioning of public authorities. But governing inevitably involves the aspect of

All the three aspects of the political are based on the idea of the possibility of human induced change in the environment. At the heart of the policy are different approaches, rationalities, human debates and choices based on them. The political starts when there are a number of relatively sensible options, opportunities for progress that can be discussed and debated and then put into practice. There is no one truth, nor a single rationality. This differs from the natural inevitability and of the unconscious or dogmatic reliance of one incontestable truth (hegemonic, monopoly-seeking religions and ideologies). When a dogma or inevitability is contested, the political unfolds. Thus, politics, policy and polity are a profoundly human phenomenon: unlike technocratic ones, the political debates and choices cannot be instrumentalized and automated.

The world is constructed as meaningful in and through discursive practices that weave together semantic and pragmatic aspects into the concrete language games that make up our lifeworld. The construction of meaning takes place in an undecidable terrain in which meaning is polyvalent, contested, and unstable, and the partial and contingent fixation of meaning through discursive practices based on logical reasoning rhetorical persuasion, and passionate appeals to 'universal values' ultimately rests on acts of inclusion and exclusion and thus on the exercise of power in the sense of more or less antagonistic battles between friends and foes. This is indeed the moment of the political that can be defined as the constitutive acts of inclusion and exclusion that are the intrinsic to decisions made in an undecidable terrain in which there is no divine, national, or rational foundation for making one decision rather than another and thus for shaping social, economic, and political life in a particular way. Everything in the world, including the existing forms of polity, politics, and policy, has a political origin and the potential is founded on the recognition of the radical contingency of social meaning and identity. (Sørensen, Torfing 2017: 31-32)

In most simple terms, issues are politicized when they became subject of deliberation, decision making and human agency where previously they were not. Accordingly, the most basic form of politicization is associated with the extension of the human influence and deliberation. This is based on the impact of influential human agency on matters previously seen as natural processes. We may also refer to issues as becoming further politicized when they become subject to public processes of deliberation, where previously such deliberation was confined to the private sphere. Further and final process of politicization is promoting issues from public (but non-governmental) sphere to the arena of direct governmental deliberation. Either through the succesful lobbying of government, the replacement of one administration by another, or the attempt by an incumbent administration to expand its political reach, issues that may already be outstanding in public discourse, are taken up and incorporated within formal legislative processs (e.g. passing of new legislation addressing politically new issues). (Hay 2007) The counterprocess is depoliticization that can either be a reversal or politicization or pressing for technocratization or automation of the issue (Fawcett et al 2017). Issues of considerable public concern can become repoliticized, newly politicized, or politicized in new ways as they become part of the formal political agenda or reappear into it.

Depoliticization involves an attempt to deny, forget or hide the undecidable, contingent, and ultimately political character of the world and thus to eliminate, or at least reduce, the space for political

contestation and debate. By contrast, repoliticization means that the public agenda is filled with a growing number of political issues that require empowered political participation and decision making and thus call for democratic regulation and control. (Sørensen, Torfing 2017)

An issue is politicized when it is regarded as a subject for collective choice – that is, political decision. A political decision is: a) taken by a legislator or government that, from a normative perspective, should be democratically legitimate, b) a contingent choice between alternative options for action, and c) collectively binding for a specified community. Depoliticization thus takes place where any of these three properties of decisions is lacking or denied. (Landwehr 2017: 51)

Even in intrapersonal decision making on merely private matters, however, reasons and their weighting do not simply emerge from within the individual mind, but are shaped by interpersonal processes of socialization and communication. This is even more true where collective decisions are concerned – that is, decisions that not only affect, but also bind others. Assuming that most people have at least some concern for the beliefs and interests of other people, we should take into account each other's preferences over alternatives for collective action and the reasons given for them. (Landwehr 2017: 57)

However, we cannot and should not do this from the perspective of an impartial observer. By, contrast, as Gerry Stoker puts it: 'To understand politics, one must above all understand the inevitable partiality of judgment. Judgment is particular to an individual because it reflects their unique set of experiences' (Stoker 2006: 5). What is required for interpersonal deliberation is, thus, not so much a spirit of impartiality, but an attitude that is dialogical (listening to others and being open to their reasons and arguments), that follows a logic of publicity and reciprocity (offering reasons that are interpersonally comprehensible and potentially transferable), and that is coordinative (aiming to accommodate conflict in decisions that take into account all relevant reasons and interests). (Landwehr 2017: 57-58)

Especially in the empirical literature on deliberation, mere argumentation is often mistaken for deliberation, and terms such as discourse, argumentation, debate, or discussion are used interchangeably with deliberation. However, focusing only on the argumentative element of deliberation – that is, its publicity and reciprocity – constitutes a misconception of the essentially political nature of deliberation that lies in its dialogical and coordinative characteristics. Argumentation as such is not inherently political and it is characteristic of many depoliticized contexts. Deliberation as dialogical and coordinative argumentation is essentially political. (Landwehr 2017: 58)

The political entails both co-operation and conflict and orientation to order or disorder. The first approach sees as political the activities that seek to order, govern, resolve social conflict and re-establish order within society. The second considers that politics are activities of contestation, opposition, conflict, partisan competition, and more broadly of social disorder. These approaches reflect different understandings of politics that can be seen as necessarily complementary. Order and disorder feed off each other. (Zittoun 2014: 7-8)

The political in citizenship

In order to relate the diversity of citizenship to the political we need to further explore the operating mechanisms of its dimensions. I do this starting from the most concise (polity) and proceed (via policy)

to the most heterogeneous (politics). Then I offer a possibility for simplification without losing too much of the complexity.

Polity and citizenship

The polity dimension could at first seem of secondary relevance for citizenship, especially thinking of the area agency and post-nationalism oriented accounts but there are three key aspects which make it extremely important.

First, citizenship operates based on some level of closure (Brubaker 1992). This is the key premise of its ability to act as an instrument for distinguishing 'us' (compatriots) from 'them' (outsiders). Even if borders have become more open (e.g. Held et al 1999) this doesn't mean that there is no control (e.g. Bigo et al 2019) or that they wouldn't be closed if needed as well demonstrated by the COVID-19 measures. But more importantly, the boundedness extends beyond border control as it provides both a reference point for an individual in social relations and a basic status of autonomy upon which the other societal arrangements can be built.

There is a clear divergence between the understanding citizenship as a foundational status of an individual (Marshall 1992) and as a set of top-down or contractual rules (Aleinikoff, Klusmeyer 2002; Dumbrava 2014). The former is based on the idea of constructing a meaningful and integral position of a citizen in the relevant legal, political and wider societal contexts. The latter is predominantly legal, much more concrete but here citizenship becomes arbitrary, top-down and not discursively ensuring a strong position of an individual.

Second, this is well reflected in the need for a legitimate basis and system of power in a democratic state or other political community. The political community is a sum of individuals bearing equal rights where the rule of law and the legitimacy of government is derived from the consent and accountability of rights-holding citizens. Without a formal focal point of accountability, there can be no political community, nor a framework binding and subordinating individuals as political subjects (Chandler 2012: 111-115). The attenuation of politics and hollowing out of representation constitutes the collapse of any meaningful political community. Without the need to worry about the constitutive relationship between the government and citizen, political community becomes entirely abstract. There is no longer a need to formulate a political programme and gain supporters in order to challenge or overcome individual, sectional, or parochial interests. "Engagement between individuals no longer has to take a political or stable form: all that is left is ever-fluctuating (and ultimately impotent) networked communication" (Chandler 2012: 119).

An important aspect of the political at least in democracies is the performative view of public knowledge as the foundation of popular sovereignty (Chwaszsa 2012): people reproduce their status in the system based on constant observation and reflection of how the others behave. Thus, the level at which an individual citizen acts as a part and representative of the (popular) sovereign is constantly reinterpreted, and this way the actual practice of democracy is established. Citizenship is not just something that is stated or listed but is exercised, embedded in a societal context: it will be reproduced in the daily activities of people. This will make it alterable to changes, including subtle and evolutionary ones, and so

keeps it related to societal dynamics. This the way to mediate between the contradictions in citizenship and allows its sufficient flexibility as an instrument of inclusion and exclusion in establishing closure.

Third, there is a need for some kind of belief in a possibility of joint action among citizens that has the potential to make life better. In the words of Jürgen Habermas (2001: 60): “The diagnosis of social conflicts transforms itself into a list of just as many political challenges only if we attach a further premise to the egalitarian institutions of rational law: the assumption that the unified citizens of a democratic community are able to shape their own social environment and can develop the capacity for action necessary for such interventions to succeed.”

In sum, both citizens and state elites need a point of reference, locus of interaction and some belief in common future. This is provided by the polity dimension and even if the borders are more fluid for the individual people and groups the political communities and democratic states have persisted.

Policy and citizenship

Policy, that is the concrete problem-solving strategies and the contestation around them, can be studied from several angles. There is always an existing policy regime as also discussed in case of citizenship regimes. This means there are laws, rules and procedures in place and officials operate based on them enacting a certain kind of social, political and administrative order vis a vis which every person has to relate him- or herself in terms of ideas and activities. But while these are concrete, factual and obligatory they are not unchanging but are subject to constant renegotiations.

We can say that a policy design that involves problems and goals statements, targets, rules and tools, agents and implementation structures based on certain rationales and assumptions emerges out of an issue context of social constructions, types and distribution of political power and institutions and institutional culture and of a societal context of citizenship, democratic values, justice and problem solving (Schneider, Ingram 1997). The design influences the societal and issue context and is influenced by them producing translation, framing and designing dynamics as illustrated in the figure below.

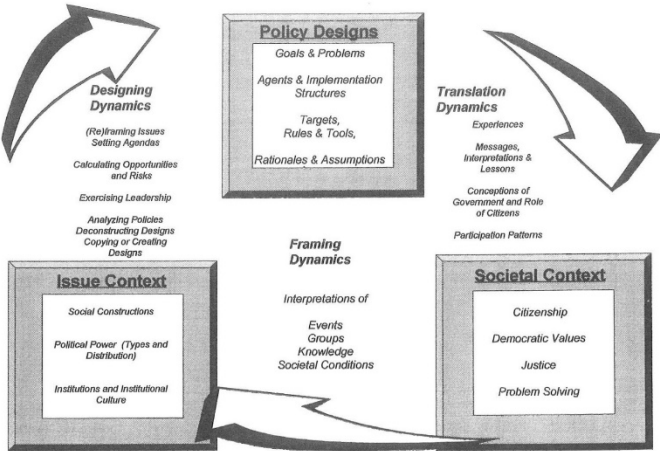


Figure 4.1. Causal portrayal of how characteristics of the policy context become embedded in policy designs and subsequently have effects on democratic values that reproduce or transform the context.

Figure 1. Policy design in democratic context. Source: Schneider, Ingram 1997: 74

The existing, dominant policy regime is legitimised and contested by different actors using various strategies and justifications. Here the aspects of frame reflection and policy filtering are of relevance and policy design can be seen as reflective conversation with the materials of the design situation (Schön 1983, 1992, Schön, Rein 1994, Knopf et al 1997). As part of the contestation alternative policy proposals will be presented and justified by the opponents. While some of the actors may be insincere and purely oriented towards power and income at least part of the debate needs to be focused on the content of citizenship policy.

Diverse ideational and interest based actors emerge and form coalitions to influence policy and power positions. Thus discourse is of key importance. The various substantive dimensions and aspects of citizenship, including the normative perspectives function as the ideational resources to build political strategies and arguments. Political contestation can be seen as building discursive coalitions around a set of policy ideas. These can be broader coalitions or issue or issue area related coalitions.

Advocacy coalitions consist of political actors who share certain ideas and interests and who coordinate among themselves in a functional way to make specific proposals to the government and influence in the decision-making process. There could be shared core beliefs when forming coalitions or just secondary beliefs based on shared interests. There also needs to be some level of trust and resources in the coalition. The policy actors play certain roles within the advocacy coalition: brokers, who work in order to reach agreements among opponents; and entrepreneurs, who play a role in leading coalitions, facilitating learning, and producing policy change. Learning refers to the way in which individuals decide to change their actions and way of thinking after having certain experiences revising the guidelines of their belief system.

In order to be successful in policymaking one needs to persuade, to develop the line of argument and its reasoning. One needs to think and interact with others to get feedback to adjust your argument for it to become more legitimate. Discussion can be seen as a test of persuasion strategies, as testing solutions and the relationship between a problem and a solution in order to reach a sufficiently convincing argument. But discussion is also testing the solution's owner's ability to develop a convincing argument and build a winning coalition. Solutions's owner needs to adjust the argument to widen the coalition and in order to do that needs to take on board issues that were not in the original agenda but are important to new co-owners. At the same time the earlier coalition needs to be maintained as well as a sufficient integrity within the coalitions expanded agenda to be convincing to the wider public and engage more possible supporters. So the agendas and coalitions are often fragile and may fall off. (Zittoun 2014: 93-138)

Thus discursive coalitions are built with a dynamic agenda and range of supporters and some ultimately become successful. Success could be passing a public policy change, maintaining the existing situation or simply reaching or keeping power positions enabling decision making. Thus the political process consists of a direct game on policy proposals and an indirect game of institutional and power relations (e.g. Knopf et al 2007, see the figure below). It can be characterised as periods of relative stability punctuated with periods of faster change, be it induced by political contestation, intra-government processes or external shocks (e.g. Baumgartner, Jones 2009).

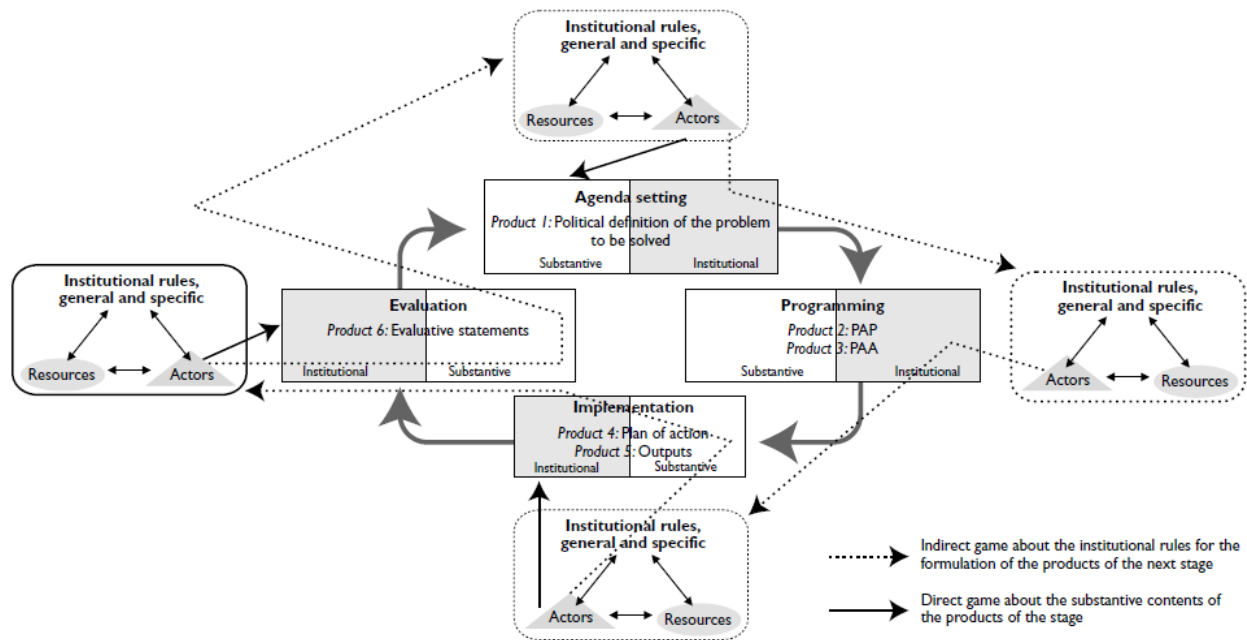


Figure 2. Direct and indirect game. Source: Knopfel et al 2007: 120

Stability in policy-making is backed by a state of equilibrium, which is volatile, since political preferences can be shifted easily by raising various agendas in public debate (Cobb, Elder 1972). This change can be triggered by events or narratives which exemplify either positive or negative policy feedback. For political contestation, advocacy coalitions are built to change the existing hegemony in various ways, or resist change and at times certain points of bifurcation appear that open a window for a substantial change (e.g. Kingdon 1984).

This builds also the backbone for analysing the policy making and politics of citizenship. Some actor or coalition is in power with some kind of dominant policy agenda and there are the opposing actors who seek to develop a sufficiently convincing different line of argument and build a discursive coalition around it. Sometimes there is drastic change but usually hegemonic discourses and coalitions evolve. Both drastic and evolutionary change likely lead to changes in regulation on citizenship or policy documents or administrative practice related to it. Thus it is possible to empirically develop an understanding of a dominant position and coalition and look for its likely opponents.

However, we should keep in mind that the political power inevitably has a top down aspect, also in democracies. Politics is the possibility to act as a sovereign, to decide and impose, to make use of state apparatus and create consequences you cannot change back, at least easily (e.g. Baurmann, Zintl 2006). Policy is not just a direct or indirect game but also imposition of power. Also, the state authorities are not just reflections of societal forces or a group among the others, they have a relative autonomy and are able to govern or at least metagovern (e.g. Jessop 2016, Bell, Hindmoor 2009), including the imposition of rules, direct action based on them and punishing deviants.

While there are various meanings in politics (e.g. Hay 2007:61-70) and everything human can be considered as having a political potency, there is also the core politics that is oriented at realising ones aims by getting and utilising state power and that usually outweighs the other aspects of politics by far.

Also, it is possible that the political forces in power can for significant periods of time make policies that are countering the broad centuries-long or at least decades-long social and economic trends.

In sum, the arguments for supporting or opposing a policy line are not developed in the realm of pure formal logic or moral philosophy. They are embedded in particular contexts and seek to convince and dominate in these contexts. While a citizenship scholar may analytically differentiate various aspects and normatives of citizenship the political actors use these as discursive resources to develop their contextual approach to citizenship and develop a discursive coalition around it appealing to various societal actors but also using power to enact their agenda if possible. Judging them does not help in understanding and explaining. There is no need to see them as distant regulators but also no ground to see them as usual societal actors. They are balancing the bottom up struggles and coalition building on one side and top down regulation and implementation on the other.

Politics and citizenship

There are vastly more angles to politics than policy (e.g. Hay 2007). So we need to treat the issue area in a more generalised manner. As we already know politics can be characterised as contestation, this is competition and collaboration, discussions, clashes, and compromises between different political actors, such as government offices, political parties, interest organizations, social movements, and citizen groups, all of whom seek to influence how public values and goals are defined, produced, and allocated – but also power: influence, positions, income etc.

In order for this process to be meaningful it needs to be competitive and adversarial (e.g. Mouffe 1993, 2005, 2010). There is a need for several plausible positions that compete with each other. Total dominance of one, even of a deliberative and technocratic compromise is the death of politics. But at the same time both in democracy and beyond also the adversarial positions need to be debated based on arguments (Landwehr 2017) and enabling the participants and wider audience to make sense of these and prefer some in certain time points in political decisions.

On one hand the substance here is close to what was discussed as persuading and building discursive and practical coalitions under policy and citizenship. But there is also the question of the asymmetries of power. Power can be used directly, e.g. in voting, implementing, steering and commanding, but also indirectly, e.g. blocking an issue from political decision agenda, discrediting or discriminating political opponents, training them towards conformity etc. (e.g. Gaventa 1980). Thus the positions of a dominant actor and its opponents are rather different and unequal even in democratic politics. And while the dominant actor could be an Aristotelian wise statesman it could also be a Machiavellian opportunist aimed at power (see e.g. Hay 2007).

As an illustration, one crucial aspect here is defining the range of these who can decide. For example, as it was decided to restore Estonia and Latvia as states, not to establish new ones in 1991, it meant that only the citizens of the interwar republics and their decendants originally took part in the democratic process and the rather numerous Soviet time immigrants could obtain that right through naturalisation. While legal this had also some clear political implications. Who has the right to decide what is an important aspect of politics. Citizenship debates in social and political fields represent struggle over belonging and the privilege to define 'to whom the right to have rights is due' (Arendt).

But there are also subtler ways of sovereign power such as securitisation and authoritarian liberalism (Dean 2007), technocratic neoliberalism (Clarke, Newman 1997, Newman, Clarke 2009, Hay 2007, Crouch 2011, Davies 2014) or data politics (Bigo et al 2019). Also citizens can be intimidated, securitised, governed by fear, neurosis and therapy etc. (e.g. Isin 2004, Nyers 2009, Guillaume, Huysmans 2013). The question of societal limits for whoever holds power is ever relevant. There is of course various bottom up counterstrategies (e.g. Isin 2002, Isin, Nielsen 2008). In the terms of Jessop (e.g. 1990, 2013, 2016) there is a constant struggle or competition of various state and society projects resulting in a contingent contextual outcome in every time point.

Continuing from the distinction of the direct and indirect policy game we can speak of politics as taking place in two types of political fields. One is the issue oriented field of citizenship politics and its indirect game that could expand and contract in a broadly Bourdieusian (1984, 2003) manner. The other is the field of general political power or domination in a polity where citizenship could be an aspect or not. The fields are an instrument of reducing complexity without simplifying the political out of analysis. The dominant position in a field is rather clear while the opposition could be either consolidated or dispersed and the thematic discussions on citizenship can take plenty of shapes and perspectives. The general structure of a political field is presented below.

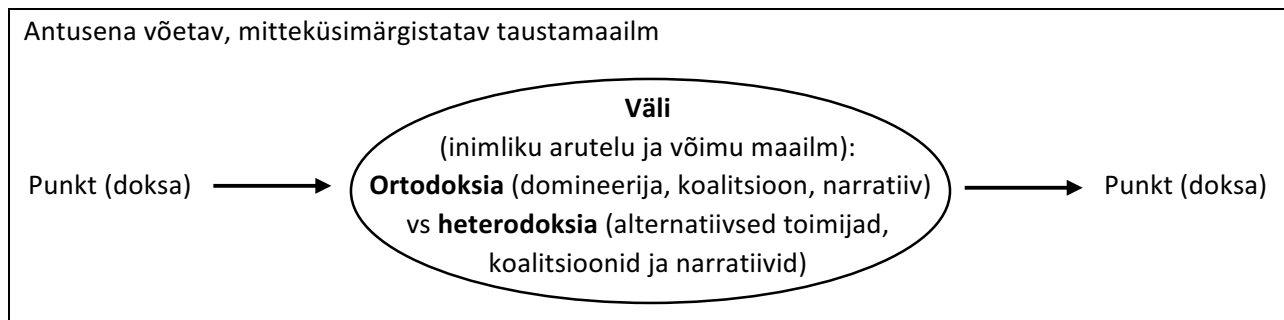


Figure 3. The structure of a political field. Source: author (broadly based on Bourdieu)

To conceptualise these fields in a systematic manner we can utilise field relationalism that provides us a structural perspective of the analysis. In this meta-theoretical context, the ontology of political processes in citizenship issues represents, along Bourdieusian lines, an asymmetric field constituted by a number of different subject positions. In broad terms, these can be divided along the axes of dominant/dominated subject positions (Dsp/dsp) and radical/moderate subject positions (rsp/msp) within Dsp/dsp into four main groups. Social causality behind policy-making processes, from the field relationalist perspective, is based on the Bourdieusian concept of 'distinction', which is the basis of positioning of actors in an asymmetric policy-making field. These meta-theoretical presumptions of field relationalism are fundamentally different from those of substantialism and processualism often characteristic of process-centred perspectives.

The field relationalism theoretical language on political processes, in contrast, is based on the concepts of strategies and technologies of citizenship (Isin 2002: 33-36), in terms of positioning in asymmetric policy-making field. Such language introduces field-theoretical perspective in understanding various resources used in constructing citizenship issues in policy-making processes by different subject positions in the field. While Isin discusses these in rather broad terms, the field relationalism can develop the notion of positioning strategies toward a more practical application to link various legal and other instruments, official communication, public debate, dominants emerging from everyday practices

etc. as different kinds of strategies and technologies of citizenship. These outcomes can be generalised as citizenship outcomes/effects from citizenship policy projects similar to Jessop (1990, 2013, 2016) society/state projects and effects.

An important contextual aspect in conceptualizing citizenship policy processes in terms of positioning in the field of policy-making is that domination and opposition strategies and technologies can take qualitatively different forms (see e.g. Isin 2002: 33-34). When dominant and opposing positions are strong and cohesive we see struggle/competition in the field. However, when opposition is dispersed, cooperation instead of conflict between the subject positions can evolve. If so, it is often the case the negative 'other' is projected to the outside actors, e.g. treating all the internal subject positions as 'own'. Thus, distinction between 'hot and cold situations' found in literature based on relational meta-theory helps to explain the dynamics of classification struggles in policy-making fields. It is not abstract but thoroughly contextual theoretical language, which offers an important added value when analysing citizenship politics and policy making.

Field relationalism and the main existing approaches to citizenship

Field relationalism needs to be related to the dominant substantivist and radical (group relationalist) positions in citizenship studies. This can be done concisely by examining and criticizing the approach of Joe Turner (2017).

Turner argues that the normative commitment of the idea of modern citizenship is inclusion to the political community, based on meeting of certain criteria. However, the criteria used to define different types of modern citizenship automatically introduce social hierarchies and marginalize those associated with the 'others' in these hierarchies. In this context, a question arises as to the effectiveness of the resistance by the dominated subject position, and Turner assumes that it can be done in two different ways. One is to legitimize one's belonging to the community within the interpretation framework based on the dichotomy inclusion versus exclusion, posited by the dominant subject position. It can be done by highlighting the principle of inclusion as a democratic norm and criticizing exclusion as a departure from it. However, the problem with such a strategy is that the interpretation framework presupposes the agency only for the dominant subject position, since it is an active subject in that framework, while the dominated subject position remains passive, being either excluded or included by the dominant subject position.

Consequently, Turner rather points to another form of resistance by the dominated subject, which is the presentation of a new interpretation framework, the terms of which support the field interest of its own subject position. Thus, one can argue that the political positioning related to framing citizenship takes place not only within one pre-given framework, i.e. as a dispute over the inclusion or exclusion of a dominated subject position, but also over the establishment of interpretative frameworks themselves. The latter is defined by Turner as a radical questioning of what it is to belong to. Thus, he distinguishes between active versus reactive contestation on behalf of the dominated subject position, signifying by the notion of 'political' not a contestation with the interpretative framework privileged by the dominant subject position, but the frame itself, as this is used to problematize the belonging of the dominated subject position to a political community.

Field relationalism takes a step in the opposite direction to Turner, proposing the coalition of the moderate subject positions located within both the dominated as well as the dominant subject positions of the political system, as a political strategy, as opposed to radicalization of the political struggle. These are two fundamentally different theoretical approaches to interpreting the 'political'. Turner's project is to reject participating in the debate over inclusion versus exclusion within the frame proposed by the dominant subject position, and to ask a radical question about what membership in a community means at all (i.e. the choice of a framework for distinguishing between types of membership) - and to answer the question by providing a framework for interpretation based on the field interest of dominated subject position.

From the field relationalist perspective, the limitation of such an approach is that the radical question of the dominated subject positions is based only on its own field interest, which automatically makes the interpretative framework based on the field interest of the dominant subject position erroneous. Thus, the radical interpretation of citizenship based on the field interest of dominated subject position is simply a mirror image of the interpretive framework based on dominant subject position. Viewed from the holistic perspective, one cannot be considered either better or worse than the other. Here the field relationalism introduces an alternative approach which, contrary to the radical interpretation, privileges the idea of a coalition of mutual subject positions of both sides, as a political mechanism for solving citizenship-related problems arising in the context of the current radicalization in the world. This is based on the assumption that one radicalism cannot be treated with another.

Conclusions

The political perspective on citizenship is shaped by actors and coalitions, the relative autonomy of the state (institutions and power), the legitimation and imposition of the dominant rules and discourse (subject position) and the attempts of opponents to shake and substitute it, leading to evolutionary or revolutionary change. In any point of time citizenship political process can be characterised through the dynamics of actors, coalitions and discourses/arguments. Every citizenship discourse, policy and measure can be contested and changes in time but the question is how quickly as there also exists the institutional inertia and the competition of various strategies.

From a political perspective, state authorities are not just legally mandated and sovereign top-down imposers evoking compliance. State institutions are seen as embedded in interactive and mutually constitutive relationships with citizenry, civic associations, companies and other societal but also inter- and transnational actors. This provides the basis for the autonomy and agency of citizens being practically acknowledged by the state authorities. Without embeddedness and evolution, there were no bottom-up mechanism for citizens for mutual motivation and empowerment, as well as a meaningful but peaceful test of their power as holders of significant autonomy. This enables political evolution (instead of only revolution) as the activities of the state institutions are not fixed but evolving in interaction with citizens.

Citizenship regime and policies are (potentially) open ended (flexible) and embedded in political and societal struggles in a polity, albeit to an extent shadowed by the actor(s) in dominant position. This leads to more practical and integrated orientation in citizenship discussions: it is not necessary just oppression or emancipation but also much subtler relationships. The direct and indirect game in

citizenship are related. Issues are important and dominance/power is important and the two are interrelated. Thus a politically informed analysis should usually pay attention to both.

The contribution of a relational approach to citizenship as a political phenomenon is in enabling to summarize (and thus simplify) the political fields in a different way as compared with a standardizing (e.g. variable-based) strategy. The simplification works in a way that does not write away the political character of the process: the contestation of various actors to define the policy problems, solutions and legitimacy, and this way seek hegemony in a field. The political process is always potentially unique and unstandardised but one can nevertheless analyse it by employing a core perspective of the field relationalism based on structural domination and opposition and then enrich this by adding the key contextual aspects for the analysis.

The constellations and dynamics of the actors, relations and intersubjective meaning-making (including regulation) are observed in a dynamic context that is structured (and simplified) by the premises of the approach. The premises of a Bourdieu-inspired relationalism (field, orthodoxy, heterodoxy) enable to simplify it to a level where different fields could be related in a sufficiently concise manner to build up arguments beyond one case but without losing the political dimension from the explanations.

In the functioning states, there is always a dominant, legislated, legitimated and imposed political position and discourse of citizenship (i.e. orthodoxy) that has its own line of argument and support and that some others try to oppose. But whether there is one heterodoxy or several depends on the case and context. Some positions/fields etc. are actualised while the others are only potential ones. Some oppositions may have a relatively strong advocacy coalition and be a good counterforce to the so-called dominant subject position, in other cases these are not politically effective, sufficiently organized nor argumentatively comprehensive.

This can be further analyzed, for example, through advocacy coalitions, the possibilities of political change in addition to political flows, but one shouldn't forget the elite circulation: some members of the ruling coalition or the entire coalition may change. Changes can be more evolutionary and internal or more abrupt and change the hegemonic coalition.

The relational approach also enables to discuss the asymmetry of the fields – be these within one country (e.g. government vs. opposition) or across-countries (e.g. different governments vs. migrants vs. international organisations perspectives and strategies etc.). But most importantly, it allows a perspective that is not underlined by the immediate political preferences of the researcher.

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