New Geographies of Citizenship

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Introduction
This paper explores an emerging agenda of the geographies of citizenship. Citizenship studies has become an established multidisciplinary arena of academic study, and in part it has developed a number of themes that make use of a traditionally geographic vocabulary of space. At the same time geographers have engaged both explicitly and implicitly with notions of citizenship for nearly 20 years. However, the dialogue between geography and citizenship studies has not always had the volume of traffic it deserves.

In this paper we map out some of the emerging agenda in the geographies of citizenship. Traditionally citizenship in geography has been addressed through the concept of space. The notion of “spaces of citizenship” has provided a useful framework for geographical engagement with the theory and practice of citizenship, particularly through exploration of the spatially differentiated nature of de facto citizenship as experienced by “othered” groups who are subjected to social and spatial marginalisation. However, geographers have recently extended the scope of geographical enquiries into citizenship. The paper explores three ways in which this process has taken place, is continuing in current work, and may shape the geographies of citizenship in the future.

The first section looks at the expansion of the conceptual vocabulary used to analyse citizenship as geographers have sought to broaden the scope of the analytical tools that might be applied to the subject. Geographically inflected concepts such as scale, place and mobility have as much pertinence as space in understanding contemporary citizenship formations. Second, the paper looks at how space itself has been reconceptualised from an absolutist version to one which has theorised the relational and topological formation of place. Third, the paper examines geography’s methodological contribution to research on citizenship, emphasising how the discipline’s research agenda has led researchers to draw up on a wide range of qualitative and ethnographic techniques.

From Spaces of Citizenship to Geographies of Citizenship

Whilst “space” has been an important term in the development of a geography understanding of citizenship, enabling researchers to investigate the formation of spatially
differentiated rights, responsibilities and senses of belonging, it nevertheless represents only one cut into the complex geographies of citizenship. Citizenship is not only characterised by spatial patterns, but can also be examined through a range of other conceptual terms that have traditionally been developed within the discipline of geography. This section looks at the uses of terms such as “scale”, “landscape” and “mobility”, arguing that citizenship is formed through scalar configuration and engagement with place, is symbolised by particular landscapes and transgressed by mobile beings. Recent work by geographers on each of these themes has much to contribute to the study of citizenship.

Geographical enquiries into the “politics of scale” (Delaney & Leitner, 1997), for example, have a direct relevance for questions about the scales at which citizenship is constructed and performed. Working in the context of state restructuring, geographers have highlighted the constructed, contested and often ephemeral nature of “scale” in political organisation (Smith, 1992; Marston, 2000; McCann, 2003), as part of the strategic operation of the state (Jones, 1997; Brenner, 2001). One aspect of this process is that the state acts to reconfigure the scales at which citizenship is defined and expected to be practised. Thus, the “hollowing out”—and subsequent “filling in” (Jones et al., 2005)—of the state in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries can be identified with a weakening of the conventional association of citizenship with the nation-state (Kurtz & Hankins, 2005). This has involved a rescaling downwards of the performance of citizenship to more local contexts as part of the transition to a new mode of governmentality. Whereas the mode of “managed liberalism” that was dominant in most post-war advanced liberal democracies prioritised the “national citizen” in its emphasis on the security of social, political and economic rights at the national scale, the new mode of “governing through communities” shifts the emphasis to the practice of responsibilities by “active citizens” in sub-national communities (Rose, 1996; Dean, 1999). Operationalised across the canvass of state activity, such “active citizenship” includes the organisation of “neighbourhood watch” schemes to guard against crime, community initiatives to provide or support education, social housing and welfare provision outside the state sector, and the promotion of community-led action for economic regeneration (Kearns, 1992, 1995; Edwards, 1998; Herbert-Cheshire, 2000; Ghose, 2005; Hankins, 2005; Woods, 2005).

Although the strategy of “governing through communities” need not necessarily refer to place-based communities, the territorial mentality of the state has meant that in practice it is through place-based communities that active citizenship is mobilised, focusing renewed importance on the engagement of citizenship and place. Historically, citizenship was a mark of belonging and commitment to a specific place (a city-state or borough), and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship were performed in this civic context (Isin, 2002; Woods, 2005). The place-rootedness of citizenship was diluted by the assertion of the nation-state and of national citizenship from the late eighteenth century onwards, but the recent transition in governmentality has arguably remade the connection: active citizens act for and within place-based communities and they are defined by place-based community. This in turn has spatially fragmented the practice of citizenship in at least three ways. First, the principle of universal entitlement in national citizenship has been replaced by territorially limited initiatives of active citizenship—Kearns (1995), for example, noting that neighbourhood watch schemes may feel responsible only for those areas with significant participation rates. Second, the capacity of a community to act according to normative models of active citizenship and community action is shaped
by the characteristics of the place, including its institutional infrastructure, historical and geographical context, social and economic composition and so on, such that uneven geographies of local citizen action result (Hankins, 2005; Woods et al., forthcoming). Third, active citizens are judged to have succeeded or failed as citizens as a place-based community, with repercussions for the further treatment of that locality by the state (Herbert-Cheshire, 2000; Woods, 2005).

At the same time, citizenship is also being rescaled upwards above the nation-state. This is most notable in Europe, where the European Union has proactively sought to foster a sense of European citizenship (Meehan, 1993; Eder & Giesen, 2001). Yet, it is not only state actors that are involved in rescaling citizenship. In an increasingly cosmopolitan and globalised world, new transnational citizenships are emerging based on ethnic, cultural or religious identities and promoted by diasporic communities or faith groups (Baubock, 1994; Ball & Piper, 2002; Carruthers, 2002; Isin, 2002; Sassen, 2002). Furthermore, a notion of “global citizenship” has been nurtured within civil society, particularly by aid agencies and environmental and human rights groups seeking both to extend “global rights” and to engender a sense of collective global responsibility (Jelin, 2000; Muetzelfeldt & Smith, 2002; Roche, 2002; Desforges, 2004). The development of such awareness has been assisted by the instantaneous interconnectivity of global telecommunications as well as by the increased mobility of individuals (at least from the global “north”) in travelling the world for work and leisure, both of which have been attributed as factors in the response to the Indian Ocean tsunami in December 2004 (see also Germann Molz, this volume).

The evolution of new scales of citizenship has not, however, necessarily diminished the significance or potency of national citizenship. In the same way that work on the political construction of scale has revealed the contingency and fluidity of scales of governance, so it may be observed that the scales of citizenship are dynamic and pliable. Members of diasporic communities, for example, frequently adhere to ideas of both national and transnational citizenship (see, for instance, Nagel & Staeheli, this volume). As such, Yuval Davis (1999, 2000) and Painter (2002) have developed notions of “multi-layered” or “multi-level” citizenship in which citizenship is defined and articulated by engagement with different scales of political authority and with a range of other social identities. Alongside this, it may be argued, are multi-scalar responsibilities of citizenship, expressed both through the different responsibilities felt by individuals towards the different contexts in which their citizenship is defined (nation, locality, faith and so on), and through the ways in which citizens are exhorted to act out the responsibilities of citizenship at different scales—for example, through connecting household practices with global environmental problems in the model of the sustainable citizen (see Bullen & Whitehead, this volume).

Counterpoised to these dynamic geographies of citizenship are the formal, fixed landscapes of citizenship that continue to primarily represent and commemorate national citizenship. Such landscapes of citizenship operate like other “landscapes of power” (Jones et al., 2004) to communicate discourses of political power and ideology through the built environment, in this case citizen power and the ideology of citizenship. Thus, they include places of importance to constitutional history (such as Independence Hall in Philadelphia) and sites of citizen uprising (for example, Wencelas Square in Prague) and as such are differentiated from landscapes of national identity and power which may also mark the power and domination of an elite. Landscapes of citizenship, however, also include the more everyday locales through which citizenship is practised: parliament
buildings, courthouses, town halls and polling stations (see, for example, Low, 2004). Border defences and crossing points, customs posts and immigration stations, meanwhile, form landscapes that demarcate the territorial limits of national citizenship. In this way, landscapes of national citizenship have tended to reproduce a model of citizenship as a singular identity awarded and controlled by the state. Passage through an immigration station such as Ellis Island in New York, for example, symbolised a passage from one citizenship status to another (alien citizen to legal immigrant with the prospect of a new citizenship) (Desforges & Maddern, 2004). Yet, as described above, the primacy of national citizenship has been challenged by the rescaling of citizenship. The new expressions of citizenship that have emerged are creating their own landscapes, but at present these remain less visible than those constructed by the state, which in turn have become sites of contestation and transgression.

One common thread through the various geographies of citizenship—from the spaces and places of citizenship, to the scales of citizenship, to the landscapes of citizenship—is the significance of mobility as a factor that has both a causal and a reactive presence. Understood geographically, mobility is movement across space—caused and shaped by geographical phenomena, but also creating and disrupting geographies (see Cresswell & Verstraete, 2003). It is the disruptive potential of mobility that connects it to citizenship. Traditionally, citizenship has functioned as a means by which the state has sought to control mobilities—freedom of movement within the territory of a state has been a key right of citizenship in liberal democracies; whilst citizenship status is used to control movement between states (Kraxberger, 2005). The ordering process that this creates, however, is transgressed by the mobility of unauthorised migrants who, lacking the requisite citizenship status, illegally cross nation-state borders, often at great personal cost and risk. In the heightened security of the post-9/11 world, the meanings and entitlements of citizenship are being redefined as states seek to tighten their control on international mobility—moving and rebuilding boundaries that may be virtual as well as physical—and to increase surveillance and the regulation of mobility within their own territories. This latter process has implications not only for those unauthorised non-citizens whose presence within a state’s territory is characterised by a geography of avoidance of state apparatus, but also by citizens whose mobility conflicts with the expectations of the national citizen by not residing in a fixed abode and not identifying with a place-based community—travellers, tramps, rough sleepers—who in turn are subjected to discrimination that compromises their de jure citizenship rights (Halfacree, 1996; Cresswell, 2001).

The creative possibility of mobility, meanwhile, is demonstrated in the construction of transnational citizenships and global citizenship, as noted earlier. As time–space compression has facilitated increased volumes of international migration and international tourism, the effect has not been to undermine the notion of citizenship per se but rather to change the ways in which people think about their sense of citizenship, their sense of belonging and their sense of responsibility. In these ways geography is intrinsic to the practical reworking of citizenship, and geographical concepts and analysis have much to contribute to the development of citizenship theory and citizenship studies.

From Absolute to Relational Spaces of Citizenship?

At the same time as geography has expanded its conceptual vocabulary to further its exploration of citizenship, it also has the potential to be transformed through its recent
attempts to articulate new conceptions of space. Recent work in human geography has sought to elaborate on a different relational and topological way of conceptualising space within the social sciences. We believe that this alternative way of thinking about space has the possibility to introduce equally innovative and perceptive ways of thinking about the spaces of citizenship. Although we outline some problems with this approach, we believe that it has the potential to invigorate studies of the human geographies of citizenship over the coming years.

Relational and topological accounts of space start from the premise that just as mobility has challenged notions of citizenship, so too it has challenged notions of space. The world has always been characterised by numerous and intricate connections between people and places, ones that undermine bounded and territorial conceptions of space. Although this global interconnectedness has always existed to some extent, it has experienced a fundamental increase in its significance over recent years. Amin et al. (2003, p. 6), for instance, argue that “an era of increasingly geographically extended spatial flows” and “an intellectual context where space is frequently being imagined as a product of networks and relations” is, increasingly, challenging “an older topography in which territoriality was dominant”. Massey (1994) has further challenged the boundedness of places by examining the connections that help to constitute places in the contemporary world. Places such as Kilburn in north London and the Cambridgeshire Fens, according to Massey, are as much shaped by their global connections as they are to any local qualities inherent in those places.

As argued above, the increasing prevalence of global connections of all kinds in the contemporary world leads us to think through the new forms of politics that have been opened by these global connections, not least in the context of the development of new social movements and forms of citizenship operating at a global scale (see Desforges, 2004). In addition, a focus on the way in which global connections help to constitute place, as illustrated by Massey, immediately “combat[s] localist or nationalist claims to place based on eternal essentialist, and in consequence exclusive, characteristics of belonging” (Massey, 2004, p. 6). Highlighting the way in which places at all scales are constituted through their connections to other places, in other words, undermines versions of citizenship that are based on any sense of exclusivity or parochialism.

But in addition to introducing new ways of describing or thinking about the spaces of political practice that exist in the contemporary world, Massey’s work begins to draw our attention to ways in which relational accounts of space can be utilised in order to advocate new, normative and potentially liberating spaces of political practice. Massey (2004, p. 6) and Amin (2004) have elaborated on such themes more recently in calling for a revised interpretation of the importance of space in shaping identities and, we would argue, citizenships. They do so in two ways, which echo the initial points made above. At one level, we need to think about a new “politics [and citizenship] of propinquity” (Amin, 2004, p. 38). Instead of thinking about the crucial importance of bounded spaces for shaping uniform and universal forms of political identity, Massey (2004) describes a form of spatially bounded citizenship that is based on continual, sometimes conflictual, negotiation. Such forms of political identity and citizenship, according to Massey, would aid Gibson-Graham’s plea for an “active politics of place in the context of globalisation” (p. 7). Amin (2004, pp. 38–40), in much the same way, maintains that a new “politics of propinquity” would involve a focus on how diversity exists within particular places. In particular, the politics of propinquity is something that is “shaped by the issues thrown
up by living with diversity and sharing a common territorial space” (p. 39). Translating this broad take on the politics of propinquity into an understanding of the narrower concept of citizenship makes us appreciate the variegated character of local political communities and of the multiplicity of peoples and groups that contribute to, and take succour from, it.

And yet, at the same time, a “relational imagination” would also help to engender new geographies of social and political responsibility beyond bounded spaces—a “new politics of connectivity” (Amin, 2004, p. 40). The key issue, in this respect, would be the connections that should exist with the “stranger without”. As Massey shows in her discussion of the work of Gatens and Lloyd (1999), and as is illustrated by Bullen and Whitehead in this theme issue, the stranger without can exist in other times. In other words, notions of political and social responsibility in the present are intimately tied to past and future responsibilities. But for geographers, it is the connections to strangers without—living, working and dying—in other places that form some of the most important, and potentially liberating, new geographies of citizenship in the contemporary world. New geographies of citizenship would be based on the “varied geographies of relational connectivity and transitivity that make up public life and the local political realm” (Amin, 2004, p. 40). Specifically, these new translocal forms of citizenship should be based on “relationally constituted communities of attachment and resistance” (p. 41).

In this way, both local and extralocal interested and affected actors should be able to contribute to particular political programmes and visions of citizenship. Allen (2004) believes that this would help contribute to an alternative politics in which power, in its various guises, could be challenged and resisted. In this kind of “topology of political practice . . . a process of collective mobilization is sustained through networked interaction at points distant in space and time” (p. 29). But these global connections do not come about in any blanket manner. The exact configuration of the new forms of political practice and citizenship, for these authors, is grounded in contingent and topological connections between a range of different individuals, spaces and times, drawn together as a result of their common “visions of the good life” or, in effect, a relational consensus regarding the forms of citizenships into which citizens wish to buy. In partaking of these new relational spaces of citizenship, citizens are freed, according to Amin (2004, p. 41), from the “tyranny of belonging to a ‘local community’ with shared interests”.

These new connections, based around networked and stretched forms of political practice, we believe, speak of a new space of citizenship that subsumes the local, the national and the global. These are some of the key spaces of citizenship that need to be uncovered by human geographers, and other social scientists, over coming years. But if relational and topological accounts of space can open up new avenues of research, as well as new descriptive and normative ways of thinking about citizenship, we should also strike a note of warning concerning the potential pitfalls associated with this type of approach. In a recent paper that discusses the contested processes of regionalisation in the UK, Jones and MacLeod (2004, p. 48) have maintained that much of contemporary politics “is [still] being practised and performed through an avowedly territorial narrative and scalar ontology”. Building on this point, they argue that “mobility and fluidity should not be seen as standing in opposition to territories” (p. 48, original emphases). Although relational networks have been formed between regional activists in various parts of the UK, Jones and MacLeod show how these selfsame activists work within a regional framework that is territorial and bounded in character. In the same way, the alternative vision of regionalisation that they favour is based on equally territorial and bounded regions.
In other words, MacLeod and Jones argue that although new forms of transnational relational networks have become increasingly important in recent years, we should not underestimate the significance of territorially bounded places, regions and states in constituting the realities of contemporary political economy and culture. Furthermore, these bounded units—at a variety of different scales—play a crucial role in shaping the actual topologies of different relational networks.

Adapting such sentiments to studies of the spaces of citizenship makes us think of the continuing role of bounded spaces in shaping modes and forms of citizenship. The state, for instance, despite the challenges of globalisation, still plays an important role in shaping political identities and ideologies of all kinds (Jones et al., 2004). Similarly, localism, parochialism and a related sense of exclusiveness are still prevalent in people’s understanding of political life and of their place as citizens within it. Bounded spaces, such as nation-states, also distort the relational spaces of topological connections in important ways. The new relational forms of global citizenship, based on resistance to the US-led coalition’s invasion of Iraq, for instance, was influenced in no small part by the dominant attitude towards the invasion evinced by various states. Key here is how national and bounded forms of citizenship interact with relational ones in multiple and complex ways. We would suggest that geographers and other social scientists would do well to examine this synergy between bounded and relational spaces—and citizenships—in future.

Yet despite its insights into the flaws inherent in relational accounts of the realities of contemporary politics, Jones and MacLeod’s (2004) paper fails to appreciate the more normative thread that unites the various writers who have promoted relational explanations of spatial forms and processes. As noted above, an important element within these writings is the emphasis on the potentially liberating aspect of these new ways of thinking about space. In escaping the “tyranny of the local”, citizens, activists and the ordinary person in the street can engage in new transnational networks of empowerment. We accept the potential for a certain degree of liberation within these new spaces of citizenship but would caution against ascribing a necessary link between relational thinking and political empowerment and liberation. Certain less powerful groups may well be disempowered as a result of engaging more fully with the topological connections of a global world. In this way, the potential or otherwise for more emancipatory forms of topological citizenship is, of necessity, an empirical question. Geographers, as we argue further below—with their focus on the experiences of citizenship by specific people in particular places—are well placed to chart the potential impact of these new spaces of citizenship.

Researching the Geographies of Citizenship

Whilst theoretical developments contribute a major part of geography’s input into understanding citizenship, theory is not the only area in which the discipline has the potential to expand the remit of citizenship studies. The development of geographical work on citizenship has been recursively linked with a willingness to use research methodologies that have been largely marginal within citizenship studies. Geographers have drawn upon both their quantitative and qualitative traditions to investigate the formation of citizenship “out there”. This section exemplifies the methodological approaches taken by geographers, before exploring why such approaches have appealed to the discipline, and the difference they make in terms of our understandings of citizenship.
The social processes at work in citizenship have been enumerated and measured in a quantitative fashion in a number of arenas. For example, Johnstone and Pattie’s (2004) review of electoral geography looks at voting data, large scale social surveys and the research undertaken by political parties as sources of information surrounding the translation of political identities and concerns into state representatives legitimated through an “agreed” democratic process. Drawing on a largely positivistic outlook, such authors are able to model the variety of variables that impact upon the geography of votes, from class-based political blocks to the spatial grouping of the electorate into constituencies. At a global scale, O’Loughlin (2004) makes use of statistical indices of democracy produced by institutions such as Freedom House or Amnesty International to trace the apparently expanding geographical scope of these and other liberal democratic practices (not only representative democracy but legal rights) in order to map out the oft-cited process of global democratisation. Such quantitative approaches are not limited to the study of citizenship within the context of the nation-state: Kearns (1995), for example, builds a picture of the socially differentiated trajectory of voluntary activity in a UK context by making use of work undertaken under the auspices of the National Survey of Voluntary Activity.

This focus on the social processes at work in citizenship is also developed through the use of qualitative methodologies. At its simplest, this involves undertaking interviews with key actors in the formation of citizenship. For example, Desforges’ (2004) research on the role of international development NGOs in the formation of global citizenship draws on the thoughts of those working in public relations for international charities, whilst Edwards and Woods (2004) interview those involved in community governance about their conceptualisation of local civic engagement. This approach has been successfully combined with a more ethnographic approach by authors such as Mohan (2002), who not only interviewed leading members of civil society organisations in Ghana in his research on “capacity building”, democracy and development, but also took part in project workshops and evaluations in order to explore the social dynamics at play. McNamara and Morse (2004) use a technique they label “institutional ethnography” to explore similar processes in Nigeria. A more anthropological version of ethnography is used by Routledge (1997), who lived with anti-roads protestors in Glasgow, Scotland, in order to build a picture of protest and resistance amongst environmental activists. Brown (1997) adopted a similar level of involvement with AIDS activists in Vancouver in his oral histories of citizenship. A further intriguing approach is used by Burgess, Harrison and Filius (1998), whose in-depth group work with citizens debating the environmental policies of their local state enlarges on the idea “citizen juries”.

Textually based methodologies have also provided a rich source of material for geographers. Some geographers have followed a methodological route similar to that adopted within citizenship studies more widely and have used a variety of media and other secondary material as sources for case study material. For example, legal documentation is used in McEwan’s (2000) account of gendered citizenship in South Africa which refers to the post-apartheid constitution, or Kofman’s (1995) citation of the UK Race Relations Act in her work on citizenship and immigration. Government documents are also a rich area for analysis, as shown by Fyfe’s (1995) analysis of the local citizenships produced by “Neighbourhood Watch” schemes in the UK, or Bell’s (1995) use of court proceedings in his exploration of sexual citizenship following the arrest and trial of a number of adults in the UK for practising sadomasochism (a police initiative known as “Operation Spanner”).
A number of these authors also use material produced by voluntary and political groups involved in their case studies. Bell (1995) draws upon material produced by the pressure group “Countdown to Spanner”, whilst McEwan (2000) makes use of South African feminist literature. Pile (1995) analyses resistance to economic development boards imposed on the Docklands area of London, making use of visual analytical methodologies to explore a community video made during the campaign against the Canary Wharf development.

Of course, these methodological approaches are not always straightforward to operationalise. The difficulties in articulating the everyday world of citizenship are illustrated by Brown’s anecdote in which he approaches a potential interviewee for his research project on AIDS activists in Vancouver: “‘Citizenship?’ she cocked her head and looked beyond me, ‘You mean like standing around on July 1 waving flags and saying “Yay Canada”’” (Rasmusen & Brown, 2002, p. 175). The difficulties involved in articulating ideas about citizenship are further problematised by the positionality of the researcher. For example, Mohan (2002) describes some of the issues involved in his ethnographic research in which he involved himself in development project evaluation meetings in Ghana, where his institutional affiliation, race and language abilities all affected the research material he was able to generate. Quantitative material on citizenship also faces methodological issues, such as the “ecological fallacy” discussed by Johnston and Pattie (2004) in their review of the use of large scale electoral data sets.

To summarise, geography’s engagement with citizenship has been marked by a number of features: the desire to produce research material based on relationships with non-academics; a spatial imagination in which this relationship is based “out there”, in a place traditionally referred to as “the field”; and a more-or-less self-conscious decision to use particular methodologies, strategies and techniques in order to produce research material. We would argue that there are some interesting contrasts embodied in this approach to research on citizenship. First, there is a contrast with a more philosophical tradition that is often normative in its aims. For example, Linklater (2002) deals with the idea of cosmopolitan citizenships through reference to political theory with the explicit aim of supporting a normative citizenship project based on philosophical reflection. In this approach, the impetus to thought emerges largely from an engagement with academic texts that render methodology a marginal issue. Second, there is a contrast with work which draws on knowledge of events in the world, such as Jelin’s (2000) account of environmental citizenship, from the basis of a “hidden methodology” in which understandings based on secondary sources such as the media are utilised without reference to the sources or analytical strategies in play. Whilst some geographical work (such as Kofman, 1995) exemplifies this approach, it might be considered the default approach of citizenship studies more widely.

Why have geographers often taken an alternative approach to research on citizenship? There is no intrinsic reason why geography should not take a philosophical-normative approach and, indeed, Barnett and Low (2004) have recently argued that there is a large element of geography that is theoreticist in its outlook, meaning that it has a strong imperative to judge political contexts according to a theoretically informed political framework. However, in the context of research on citizenship, the decision to undertake empirically informed work is largely due to the research agenda envisioned by the discipline. In particular many geographers highlight a desire to understand citizenship as it unfolds “on the ground”. For example, Ley (2004) argues that cosmopolitan citizenship
needs to be understood as a series of “vernacular cosmopolitanisms” which are constructed from specific locations, such that we can map the difference between the cosmopolitanism of a Chinese businessman based in Canada and the cosmopolitanism of Australian inner cities.

This project of mapping out citizenships on the ground is not alien to citizenship studies. Parker’s (2002) investigation of the formation of citizenship in the British countryside cites Isin and Wood’s argument that “the focus of early citizenship was the specificity of particular rights and freedoms, which were to reside in the individual. The actual practice and process of those rights were only ever conceived in the abstract. Moreover they were not conceived with any recognition of the relevance of space” (1999, p. viii). The practices of citizenship as they are enacted in everyday life in a variety of contexts (from the heart of government to the domestic kitchen) are central to the theorisation of citizenship. Indeed, borrowing Mamdani’s notion of “actually existing civil society” (cited in Mohan 2002, p. 126), we might argue that geography’s methodological strategies are about the need to understand “actually existing citizenship”.

The methodological ability to carry forward work on “actually existing citizenship” is an important contribution for geography to make. First, it enables geography to fulfil its agenda of understanding the spatialised construction of citizenship, most obviously through in-depth work on the spatial differentiation of citizenship exemplified through the geographical range of work in geography (one has only to note the diversity of countries mentioned in the above review), but also in understanding other more complex geographical agendas on the construction of citizenship, such as the issues of scale, place, landscape and mobility within which citizenship is articulated. Second, they enable geography to make a valuable contribution to current agenda in citizenship studies. The increasing focus of citizenship studies on extra-legal forms of citizenship that operate beyond the nation-state demands attention to issues of belonging and identity, and the ways in which citizenship is articulated through social practice. This has long been recognised in geography (see Painter & Philo, 1995), but what is increasingly clear is that understanding the operation of citizenship requires access to knowledge that is additional to political theory. It is important to recognise the contribution that empirical material can make to our theorisations of citizenship and to continue to develop the methodologies set out above.

Conclusion

Human geography and the interdisciplinary field of citizenship studies have for some time shared a common interest in questions about the relationships between the state and the individual, about territoriality and identity, and about the matrices of inclusion and exclusion that are created as the practical implications of citizenship are rolled out across space. The conceptual and methodological approaches adopted in these inquiries have differed reflecting disciplinary traditions, helping to establish two distinct bodies of literature, yet in recent years there has developed an increasing synergy between the two research trajectories. The “geography of citizenship” has gained recognition as an important and distinctive sub-field within human geography and ideas from citizenship theory are being employed across a wide range of geographical research. However, as we hope to have demonstrated in this paper, the flow of ideas should not be in one direction only. Geography itself has much to offer to citizenship studies, both conceptually through
the elucidation of concepts such as space, place, scale, landscape and mobility that are central to the structures and experiences of citizenship, and methodologically.

The papers in this volume have been selected to further illustrate this potential. Rasmussen and Brown apply a sensitivity to spatial and corporeal dimensions in the reading of political strategy in examining the ways that private bodies and private spaces are publicly reconfigured unapologetically through American conservative politics in the name of freedom and autonomy. Bullen and Whitehead, meanwhile, reflect both the scaling-up and scaling-down of citizenship from the nation-state, as well as connecting citizenship and the core geographical concern with sustainable development, through an investigation into the concept of “sustainable citizenship”.

The remaining papers all address, in different ways, the geographical concern with mobility and its implications for citizenship. Nagel and Staeheli critically examine pressures of assimilation and differentiation in the Arab community of the United States, exploring the dynamics that result from the blending of both national and transnational identities. Kofman, meanwhile, focuses on the strategies that European states have adopted to attempt to manage migration pressures and the internal geographies that are created by increasingly complex systems of civic stratification with differential access to civil, economic and social rights depending on mode of entry, residence and employment. Finally, Germann Molz explores the global mobility of round-the-world travellers and ways in which a cosmopolitan citizenship is reproduced and circulated through the narratives that travellers publish online.

Through these samplers of contemporary geographical research we hope that this volume will contribute to building a dialogue between geography and citizenship studies and to promoting greater engagement with geographical concepts within interdisciplinary work on citizenship.

References

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