Citizenship by citizens: First generation nationals with Turkish ancestry on lived citizenship in Paris and Stockholm.

The main aim of this thesis is to study how citizens with an immigrant ancestry approach citizenship. The academically popular re-formulations that decouple citizenship from the state, such as “postnational” and “denationalised” perspectives, call for a reconfiguration of the understanding and practices of citizenship. As most of this work has been developed within a legal and institutional framework, it has become separated from the experiences and understandings of citizens. The present study pays specific attention to citizens, and especially a group that has not hitherto been central in discussions about citizenship, namely immigrants’ descendants, or so-called second-generation immigrants. According to the theory, being a descendant of immigrants presupposes a different experience of citizenship. This study focuses on experienced citizenship by embracing the concept of ‘lived citizenship’, i.e. the meaning that people attribute to citizenship. Lived citizenship is inspired by citizens’ cultural and ethnic backgrounds, life conditions and other contextual and personal factors. In this work, lived citizenship is approached from the perspective of young adults with and without Turkish ancestry in two European cities: Stockholm and Paris. These cities are located in countries with different histories and conceptions of citizenship. The analysis is based on three dimensions of citizenship: a civic, a subjective and a substantial dimension. These dimensions are problematized with the help of survey data and qualitative interviews. The results indicate that, when turning to individual perceptions, it is the daily struggles that define the experience of citizenship and not the possibility of crossing borders. The study suggests that, when studying people as citizens, their ancestry is less relevant than the practical aspects of the context in which citizenship is experienced. Moreover, citizenship is presented as a complex phenomenon when approached empirically. The definition of citizenship is influenced by the models that are offered by the national context. In contrast, lived citizenship is influenced by everyday life and the personal characteristics of the citizens. People try to include certain elements of their Turkish ancestry because this is considered as richness, rather than as a source of second class citizenship. Finally, people with Turkish ancestry cannot be classified as another kind of citizens, because this depends on the dimension of citizenship being analysed.