


## Greek citizenship tradition in flux? Investigating contemporary tensions between ethnic and civic elements of nationality

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Although the Greek citizenship tradition has contained both ethnic and civic elements all along, up until recently, at least according to the existing literature, it has replicated the geographical logic of a European divide between the East (ethnic) and West (civic). Lately, this tradition has been in flux as it appears to be moving along and changing positions across a hypothetical citizenship axis running along the two constitutional poles of nationality: ethnic descent and civic community. This paper attempts to shed light on this tradition in transit by bringing to the fore contemporary tensions between ethnic and civic elements of citizenship. More specifically, these ongoing frictions have been mostly manifested in the ever-changing conditionality of the terms of acquisition of Greek citizenship by second- and “one-and-a-half” generation migrant children. Most importantly, these antagonisms between an ethnicized (ethnic) citizenship and a politicized (civic) nationality became discursively played out within the arena of migrant integration discourse. However, one question remains: What can the Greek case tell us about the broader politics of citizenship and belonging in Europe and beyond?

**Keywords:** citizenship; nationality; ethnic; civic; migrant integration; belonging

### A citizenship tradition in flux

For a long time, theories of nationalism have been preoccupied by trying to draw a distinction between ethnic and civic forms. Allegedly, ethnic nationalism has mostly to do with ancestry, language, religion, tradition, and customs as it refers to ethnic descent and cultural belonging (Ignatieff 1993; Brubaker 1999). It is linked to *jus sanguinis* (right of blood) elements of nationality law where citizenship is viewed as a matter of ancestral continuity. On the other hand, and while civic nationalism can take many different forms and manifestations, its most basic attribute is the voluntariness of individuals to come together and form a political community (the people) by adhering to a basic set of practices, values, and norms (Ignatieff 1993); it is mostly a “political claim” than an “ethnocultural fact” (Brubaker 2004a) and thus more inclusive to “outsiders” than ethnocultural forms of identification and belonging (Hjerm 1998). Civic nationalism is associated with *jus sanguinis*, but also, *jus soli* (right of the soil) elements as both ancestry and place of birth are taken into consideration.

Although civic nationalism can be inclusive to “outsiders” it can be assimilationist toward them, too (Brubaker 1990). Nevertheless, for ethnic nationalism the strict adherence

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to the rule of law and other political constructs and beliefs is not a sufficient condition for inclusion to national belonging as it is (more) exclusive to ethnic “outsiders.” From the above, it becomes apparent that ethnic and civic nationalism and their different logics on citizenship become translated into differentiated ideas about national membership and belonging; on who can be considered part of the nation. Generally speaking, this link between the nation, citizenship, and belonging is the most crucial dimension of nationalistic phenomena (Dumbrava 2014). In short, these are the separate, but also intertwined, logics of ethnic and civic nationalism, or simply put the ethnic and the civic. Nevertheless, we should always keep the “ambiguity” of this distinction in mind (Brubaker 1999).

This preoccupation with ethnic and civic forms of nationalism has entered into the field of citizenship<sup>1</sup> studies, too. As a result, a paradigm has emerged that talks about ethnic and civic traditions or models of citizenship (McCrone and Kiely 2000; Isin and Turner 2007; Diez and Squire 2008). This academic fixation with the “politics of citizenship” has intensified since Brubaker’s (1990, 1992) seminal work on the comparison between the German ethnocultural model and the civic paradigm of French Republicanism. Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that ethical evaluations of a supposed superiority of civic models over ethnic ones have been made since the end of World War II (Kohn 1945). Furthermore, it had been argued that civic models were to be found in Western Europe and North America while ethnic ones in Central and Eastern Europe. Later on, this discussion about a geographically specific ethnic–civic divide was reappraised after the end of the Cold War in relation to post-Communist Central and Eastern European countries (Baubock and Liebich 2010). Additionally, this discussion was extended to engulf Southern (for Italy, see Zincone and Basili 2013) and South-Eastern European countries (for Greece, see Triandafyllidou and Veikou 2002), with these latest entries allegedly following the ethnocultural tradition of citizenship. Nevertheless, in sharp contrast to these, there is an emerging literature that negates such a simplistic classification of citizenship traditions/models and their alleged geographical spread (Kuzio 2002; Shulman 2002; Janmaat 2006; Reeskens and Hooche 2010).

Lately, this supposed superiority of the western civic tradition as inclusive and encompassing has received significant blows through criticisms about the emergence of liberal “intolerance” tendencies within civic models, mostly manifested through illiberal policies toward migrants (Olsen and Lindekilde 2012; Kouki and Vidra 2014; Mouritsen and Jensen 2014). Most importantly, through successive policy shifts in a number of countries, former acute distinctions between ethnic and civic models have become blurred, as both elements appear to co-exist within formerly separate traditions. As a result, a number of analysts were quick to suggest a “political convergence” taking place among various European states (Joppke 2007a, 2007b), a change from strict citizenship traditions to more loose “trajectories” (Winter 2014), or different versions of a “civic turn” taking shape in different European countries (Mouritsen 2012).

In close relevance to the above, this paper puts emphasis on the Greek citizenship tradition, which lately appears to be in a state of transition. More to the point, this transition has been characterized by the emergence of new tensions between ethnic and civic elements of nationality, or even at points, a legislative oscillation between the two constitutive poles of citizenship: the ethnic and the civic. Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that citizenship is a “policy tool” characterized by continuity and change (Maas 2009, 265). Most importantly, these contemporary frictions between ethnic and civic elements of citizenship have been mostly manifested in the shifting conditionality of the terms of acquisition of Greek citizenship by migrant children born or schooled in the country. Furthermore, as the Greek case exemplifies, such contemporary tensions between ethnic and civic elements

of nationality, correspond to a division of politics between center-right (and far-right) to center-left (and radical-left) (Triandafyllidou 2015, 57). Finally, these ongoing tensions within the Greek tradition of nationality, are not new at all, as “Greek national identity includes both ethnic and civic features, which are dynamically organized and interact with the changing international context and internal needs of society” (Triandafyllidou and Veikou 2002, 195).

### **On methodology: a discursive analysis of citizenship and migrant integration**

Methodologically speaking, this paper investigates ongoing tensions between ethnic and civic elements of Greek nationality by simultaneously examining discourses of citizenship and migrant integration (on discourse analysis, see Foucault 1991; McHoul and Grace 1993; Kendall and Wickham 1999). More to the point, this paper is based on a discourse analysis of the aforementioned fields through the examination of a constructed archive that it is constituted by a number of legal texts, explanatory reports, parliamentary hearings, and court rulings. This archive, although not exhaustive, is sufficient enough for the examination of the emergence of discursive linkages between citizenship and migrant integration. However, this discourse analysis does not characterize all sections of the paper as the one that follows is mostly descriptive of the foundations of the Greek citizenship tradition and sets the context for the analysis that follows. Last but not least, this paper argues that by analyzing contemporary discourses of citizenship and migrant integration, more light can be shed on the trajectory of the Greek citizenship model in transition. As it will hopefully become evident, discourses about the character of Greek citizenship transmute and change through the insertion of migrant integration discourses; they become reconstituted through different meanings attached to migrant integration and the rationale behind the acquisition of citizenship.<sup>2</sup>

It has to be acknowledged that a lot of ink has already been spent on the polemics between ethnic and civic elements of Greek citizenship and how these tensions have been played out in the legislative arena (Anagnostou 2011; Christopoulos 2013a; Triandafyllidou 2014a, 2015). Accordingly, it should be made clear that this paper does not examine local voting rights of third country nationals or naturalization policies (Gropas and Triandafyllidou 2011; Christopoulos 2013b; Triandafyllidou 2015). Instead, it strictly focuses on the acquisition of citizenship by second- and “one-and-a-half”<sup>3</sup> generation migrant children (Christopoulos 2013a; Triandafyllidou 2014a, 2014b, 2015). As a result of a long-standing ethnocultural tradition of Greek citizenship, the road to naturalization for adult migrants has been narrow and difficult. If the path to naturalization was more accessible, then the acquisition of citizenship by migrant children would be less important as they could automatically acquire it through their parents. Nevertheless, as such a path has been clearly restricted, the acquisition of citizenship by second- and “one-and-a-half” generation migrant children becomes paramount as the main way to inclusion and privileges that such a legal bond with the state brings along.

In what follows, we set the foundations of this paper’s discursive analysis by quickly summarizing the recent trajectory of the Greek citizenship tradition. More specifically, the period between 1990 and early 2000s is descriptively examined. This period culminated in law 2910/2001 and the reform of the Greek Nationality Code in 2004 (Law 3284/2004), which continued along the long-standing ethnocultural path by providing a preferential pathway to citizenship for ethnic Greek migrants (returnees). Second, we discursively examine the logic of Law 3838/2010, which introduced elements of *jus soli* into Greek

legislation. What was particularly interesting about this piece of legislation was the way that the acquisition of Greek citizenship became justified as beneficial to migrant children's prospective integration into Greek society and the Greek nation. Third, in February 2013 the Council of State decided that the acquisition of Greek citizenship by migrant children was unconstitutional and not in the interest of either the state or the nation. As it will be argued, such a decision rested on a re-ethnicized concept of citizenship and the necessity of a "genuine bond" between the foreigner and the state to be proved as a manifestation of "substantial evidence of integration." Fourth, as the country went to elections and a Syriza (radical-left/center-left)-led coalition government was formed with the help of ANEL (right-wing) a new draft law was brought to parliament that partly re-politicized citizenship. Last but not least, this legal initiative argued that the criteria of substantial evidence of integration could be proven through the *animus* (intention/disposition) of the family to integrate into society.

### Continuing along the path of a long-standing ethnocultural tradition

Although it is probably the case that citizenship models contain both ethnic and civic elements, historically each separate national tradition appears to be mostly linked with one of the two constituent poles of nationality (Brubaker 1990, 1992). For the biggest part of the existing literature, the Greek citizenship tradition has been lining more to the ethnocultural logic of nationality based on the idea of the Greek nation as a community of descent (Vogli 2007). As it will hopefully become evident, this long history of Greece as a community of descent has clearly influenced the fate of migrant children born and schooled in the country toward their acquisition of Greek citizenship. In a way, second- and "one-and-a-half" migrant children have been "hostages" to this long-established ethnocultural tradition manifested through its exclusionary emphasis on *jus sanguinis* elements of Greek nationality law.

As argued above, this ethnocultural character of Greek nationality is evident in the way that the concept of citizenship is communicated in the Greek language through the term of *ithageneia* (Christopoulos 2013a). *Ithageneia*, which is the preferred term in legislation, in everyday usage means citizenship. On the other hand, there is also the term *ypikootita* that can be translated as "being the subject of:" the subject of the Greek state. Etymologically, the term *ithageneia* goes back in time and refers to the Christian Orthodox *genos*. During late Ottoman rule, a system of self-governance was imposed to all religious communities (Muslim, Christian, and Jewish) that became known as *millet*. Within the imperial system of *millet*, religion functioned in a similar way to nationality (Mazower 2002). What is particularly interesting about the term *ithageneia* is that it can be translated as "straight from the *genos*." As Christopoulos (2013a) has argued, "Ithageneia is a term reflecting par excellence the ethnic connotations of Greek nationality" (Christopoulos 2013a, 1).

Greek citizenship legislation historically included a double distinction between natives and foreigners and foreigners in themselves (Triandafyllidou and Veikou 2002; Christopoulos 2013a). As a result, foreigners to the Greek ethnic community are named as *allogeneis* (other to the *genos*) while foreigners of ethnic Greek origin are termed as *homogeneis* (same to the *genos*). Furthermore, this distinction between ethnic Greek and non-ethnic Greek migrants is based on two separate criteria: ethnic descent and the existence (or not) of Greek national consciousness (Anagnostou 2011; Christopoulos 2012). In policy thinking and making, the criterion of ethnic descent has clearly dominated with national consciousness playing a supporting, yet secondary role.

To continue, policies of migrant integration and naturalization have been particularly in favor of those deemed as ethnic Greek migrants (Christopoulos 2013b). Following such lines, Anagnostou (2011) has argued that a re-ethnicization of nationality has been “manifested in the strengthening of the advantageous treatment of ethnic Greek migrants in the 1990s” (Anagnostou 2011, 2). Nevertheless, within this period of analysis, there is still not a discursive interdependence between citizenship and migrant integration. Instead, the Greek state assumed that specific groups of ethnic Greek migrants should be assisted toward their integration into society. However, a differential treatment between groups of ethnic Greek migrants took place. On the one hand, an advantageous treatment for Pontic Greeks from former Soviet Republics, whom their settlement was directed toward specific regions with high levels of Muslim minority populations in rural Thrace (Voutira 1991; Diamanti-Karanou 2003; Mylonas 2013). This settlement of ethnic Greeks from former Soviet republics, who in most cases had neither themselves nor their ancestors ever resided in Greece, was termed “repatriation” by state authorities, and their return was considered an asset to the country (Pratsinakis 2013, 2014). However, the Greek state’s settlement plan was not exactly successful as for a number of reasons many of these settlers voluntarily relocated to major urban centers (Pratsinakis 2014). In sharp contrast to this, ethnic Greek migrants from southern Albania did not receive any targeted integration assistance and subsequently became dispersed to big cities and to a lesser extent to rural areas, too (Christopoulos and Tsitselikis 2003; Anagnostou 2011). However, ethnic Greeks from Albania were granted a special status that privileged them over third country nationals, including fellow Albanians. Finally, these targeted integration policies for Pontic Greeks were socio-economic, as well as cultural; the Greek state organized Greek language courses since most of them could not speak the motherland’s langue (Vogli and Mylonas 2009).

By all accounts, this differential treatment between different groups of ethnic Greek migrants did not stop there. Triandafyllidou and Veikou (2002) have argued about the existence of politics of a “hierarchy of Greekness,” which put national interest and security above ethnic Greek migrants’ well-being. Accordingly, Pontic Greeks acquired citizenship upon arrival. On the other hand, Albanians of Greek descent were perceived through the lens of Greek foreign policy and geostrategic thinking, as subjects not worthy of the acquisition of Greek nationality as it was feared that it could probably lead to the loss of Albanian citizenship and thus the subsequent loss of a “valuable” Greek minority in the always unstable Balkans. Nevertheless, these politics of differential treatment were also influenced by political patronage as Pontic Greeks, because of their higher levels of spatial concentration, were perceived as more manageable in relation to their “recruitment and organization as an electorate clientele” (Anagnostou 2011,17). This is the point where the politics of citizenship appear to meet with electorate politics.

Nevertheless, in 2006 the Greek government changed its view and Albanian citizens of Greek descent became recipients of Greek citizenship. More than one reason can be

Table 1. Number of naturalized people of ethnic Greek and foreign descent.

	2011	2012	2013	2104
Naturalized ethnic Greeks	12,616	13,495	22,574	15,791
Naturalized foreigners	930	1,149	1,866	2,019

Source: Ministry of Interior, <http://www.ypes.gr/UserFiles/f0ff9297-f516-40ff-a70e-eca84e2ec9b9/StatsCategory2011-2014-20032015.pdf>

probably cited for this change of heart. Certainly, the recognition of dual citizenship from the part of neighboring Albania played a significant role. As Table 1 shows, during the period 2011–2014 the number of naturalized ethnic Greek migrants was almost eightfold to foreigners. This time, these high numbers of naturalization mainly referred to Albanian nationals of ethnic Greek descent. As Christopoulos has stated: “naturalization essentially concerns specific groups of the foreign national population and particularly those defined as homogeneous” (Christopoulos 2013b, 5).

Finally, this privileged access of ethnic Greek migrants to the acquisition of Greek citizenship became ingrained in law 2910/2001, which continued along the strict *jus sanguinis* path. According to the law, only adult migrants could apply for naturalization by having lived in Greece for 10 out of the last 12 years and possessing sufficient knowledge of the Greek language, history, and culture. Furthermore, the law did not include any provisions for the “easier” acquisition of citizenship by migrant children born in the country as they were treated the same as other migrant categories. In 2004, a modification of the Greek Citizenship Code took place with law 3284/2004, which replicated the same mentality. Apart from the preferential access of ethnic Greek migrants to citizenship, the new code left the lengthy and thorny naturalization process for migrants intact, while migrant children born in the country had again to turn 18 to apply for naturalization. As a result, the *jus sanguinis* elements of nationality law were forcefully preserved except for cases of stateless children born in the country.

### **Civic elements come at center stage**

From the 1990s onwards, Greece was transformed into a migrant receiving country (King, Lazaridis, and Tsardanidi 2000; King 2001), with the phenomenon of mass migration fundamentally changing it in more than one way (Hatziprokopiou 2006; Cholezas and Tsakoglou 2009). This status of Greece as a migrant receiving country along with its gradual emergence as a significant transit country for mixed migration flows of economic migrants and asylum seekers alike would continue in changing forms up to this day (Kasimis 2012; Triantafyllidou and Maroukis 2012). As a result of all these migrations, Greece’s resident population would change and become much more ethnically diverse than before.

Because of such demographic sea-changes, migration policy started to become more reflective of the situation. As early as the parliamentary discussion of law 3284/2004, some center-left voices were heard asking for a long-term view on migration, the reduction of the required residency period for naturalization, and even the opening of Greek citizenship to non-ethnic Greek migrants (Anagnostou 2011, 22). More substantially, law 3386/2005 introduced for the first time the concept of migrant socio-economic integration into legislation and policy thinking. Furthermore, this rise of a multi-ethnic resident population was accompanied by the emergence of the second- and “one-and-a-half” generation migrant children, which according to some recent estimates, between 150,000 and 200,000 migrant children mostly of Albanian origin have been born and/or schooled in the country (*To Vima*, May 18, 2005). Trying to “conservatively” deal with such phenomena, law 3731/2008 provided access to European long-term resident permits to second-generation migrant children born in the country, sparing them the obligation to take language or history tests. This provision never materialized in reality, mostly because of the pathogenically bureaucratic public administrative system, as a fraction of second-generation migrant children managed to acquire European resident long-term permits.

More radically, in March 2010 the then PASOK government (center-left) proceeded with a major change to the acquisition of Greek citizenship by migrant children, who

were either born or schooled in the country for at least six years. This change was supplemented by the provision of the right to vote and be elected in local elections for migrant holders of the European long-term resident permit. At the same time, significant alterations were introduced that required competent authorities to justify naturalization decisions whilst reducing arbitrariness and discretionary decision-making and setting strict deadlines on decisions to be reached. These legislative developments provoked a major political backlash with the far-right LAOS party collecting signatures for a referendum that would let the Greek people decide on such an ethnically “ultra-significant” matter. Along the same lines, the leader of the opposition New Democracy party (center-right) and the next prime minister, Antonis Samaras, announced that once in government his party would immediately withdraw the “controversial” law.

Retrospectively, this piece of legislation would be characterized as “historically unfortunate” (Christopoulos 2013b, 1) as it passed through parliament only a couple of months before Greece signed a memorandum of understanding with its international lenders and subsequently entered its most severe socio-economic crisis in its modern history. More to the point, this crisis would gradually evolve into the most severe recession ever experienced by any established liberal democracy in postwar Europe (Balourdos and Spyropoulou 2012; Eurostat 2013).

A number of writers have analyzed the context of the political backlash that erupted as a result of Law 3838/2010 (Gropas and Triandafyllidou 2011; Christopoulos 2013a; Triandafyllidou 2015). Alternatively, what this paper tries to do is to examine discourses of citizenship and migrant integration as they became expressed within the rationale of the Explanatory Report of Law 3838/2010 and the ways that the early acquisition of citizenship by migrant children could supposedly promote their integration into Greek society and through schooling into national culture and belonging, too. However, this does not mean that this was the sole discourse on migrant integration during the parliamentary hearings of law 3838/2010. Instead, many “stories” of integration were told even within the lines of the same political parties.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, discursive primacy is given to the Explanatory Report of law 3838/2010 as it solidly exposed the government’s logic behind this legislative proposal.

As argued above, law 3838/2010 opened the legal “door” to migrant children born or schooled in the country to acquire Greek citizenship. The specific way which justified such a legislative transgression was founded upon a conceptualization of Greek citizenship as fundamentally a form of civic/political community. To put it differently, the long-standing ethnocultural tradition of Greek citizenship became undermined by a new politicized (civic) version of it; from now on, the nation will have to be extended to correspond with the demos. As Brubaker (1990) has argued within the (French/Republican) civic tradition “political unity is understood as constitutive” (Brubaker 1990, 42). Following similar lines, within the Explanatory Report of law 3838/2010 it is stated that:

Instead of belonging to a community of blood [descent], the new legislative proposal, puts at the center of Greek citizenship, the animus of its holder; the common political consciousness of belonging to the Greek political community and being responsible for its historical development. That means that Greek citizens are not only those who are born from a Greek parent, but also, those that adopt a specific political identity based on the polity’s character and the history of the country. (translated from Greek, Ministry of Interior 2010, 2)

It is interesting that this concept of animus, which describes the intention (disposition) of the beholder, would emerge again in another proposal and will be linked to elements of migrant integration discourse. However, this discursive attempt of a political/civic version

of Greek nationality should be seen as an inclusion to citizenship not only of ethnic Greek migrants, but also, of adult non-ethnic Greek migrants, through a more transparent naturalization process, and second- and “one-and-a-half” generation migrant children that have been either born or schooled in the country. This is the point that discourses of citizenship and migrant integration touch upon each other; this is the first instance of a discursive linkage between citizenship and migrant integration. Accordingly, within this “liberal conceptualization of Greek citizenship” (Ministry of Interior 2010, 3), a twofold rationale of migrant integration emerges: firstly, the acquisition of citizenship by naturalization for first-generation adult migrants is conceived as their final reward for their “civic” integration (Joppke 2007a, 2007b) into the social, economic, and political life of the country. Accordingly, this form of integration does not really require adult migrants to ethnoculturally assimilate, but instead, to integrate into the political, economic, and social structures of the host country. Second, the early acquisition of citizenship by migrant children born or schooled in the country through a declaration from their parents, who they themselves are subjects of conditionality (five years’ continuous legal stay), is envisioned as an instrument that can support their prospective integration into society. Accordingly, the acquisition of citizenship is considered as a valuable policy tool that promotes migrant children’s integration as they grow up into society. However, what kind of integration is this? Is it still mostly “civic” or alternatively an ethnoculturally assimilative strategy? This is an interesting point where discourses of citizenship and migrant integration get further intertwined through the workings of an educational system, which reproduces ethnocentric conceptions and understandings of the nation, national identity, and belonging. This is the discursive point where the political strives to become cultural as political inclusion becomes translated into ethnocultural homogenization through schooling:

The specific provisions of this legislative act give the right of the acquisition of citizenship before second generation migrant children reach adulthood. This is important because if we want to educate tomorrow’s free and responsible Greek citizens . . . we should not raise them apart, under scrutiny and through the social disability of the “stranger” until they become 18, but instead, we should raise them as Greek children along with our own children and totally undifferentiated from them, but also, *educate them from birth as Greeks, educate them early* so that the classmate is an equal Greek citizen. In this way, it is not only the aims of social cohesion that are promoted, but also, of national cohesion within the framework of a contemporary democratic and open society like Greece. (translated from Greek, my emphasis, Ministry of Interior 2010, 4)

In the above quote, the need to raise second-generation migrant children “as Greek children and along with our children” and “educate them from birth as Greeks” becomes presented as a paramount integrationist strategy for the aims of national cohesion. As Brubaker (1990) has argued the (French/Republican) civic tradition of citizenship has been based on a rigid “confidence in the assimilatory workings of school, army and centralized administration” (Brubaker 1990, 16). However, such assimilation tendencies within republican/civic models are usually more political than cultural (Favell 1998). In the case of law 3838/2010, this newly found belief in the expansive logic of Greek civic citizenship rests not on the political workings of school, but on its ethnocultural mechanisms, to reproduce ethnocentric understandings of the nation and self. We should never forget that the Greek educational system has remained persistently mono-cultural (Gropas and Triandafyllidou 2011). Accordingly, the introduction of *jus soli* elements into Greek legislation does not only seem to promote the goals of social cohesion, but also through schooling, of national cohesion, too.



### When courts rule: the ethnic strikes back

In March 2011, after a claim by a Greek citizen, the fourth Chamber of the Council of State ruled that the acquisition of citizenship by migrant children, born or schooled in the country, and the right of migrants to vote and be elected in local elections (law 3838/2010) were both unconstitutional. During this period, phenomena of migration toward the country had already been heavily politicized and many political actors and mass media were voicing concerns about the volume of mixed migrations reaching the country (Frontex 2011). These were the years that the Golden Dawn party, notorious for its racism and strict lines on national purity, from a marginalized group that in 2010 gained a few seats in the Athens municipal council, developed into a political phenomenon that acquired 7% of the vote in the 2012 national elections. More than anything, its rise was accompanied by extreme forms of violence. Such irrational acts interrupted the everyday life of migrants and introduced fear and insecurity into their lives (Triandafyllidou and Kouki 2013; Baldwin-Edwards 2014). On a policy level, this migrant backlash was further accelerated after July 2012 and the forming of the coalition government of New Democracy, PASOK, and DIM.AR (center-left party that left the coalition in June 2013). This government extensively used detention policies for clandestine migrants and asylum seekers alike while legislative and policy hostile responses to migration became justified as a necessary step to restrain Golden Dawn's expansion to mainstream voters, which was supposedly feeding from uncontrollable migration and its effects on such a crisis-prone society.

The preliminary decision of the fourth Chamber of the Council of State (2011) was a clear discursive attempt to re-ethnicize citizenship and to define it, once more, as a community of descent. The case was subsequently taken to the Council of State's Plenary Session for a final decision to be reached. The main ruling (as in the preliminary decision too) was based on the argument that the criteria that law 3838/2010 established for the early acquisition of citizenship by second- and "one-and-a-half" generation migrant children, but also, adult migrants between the ages of 18–21 who had been schooled in Greece, were of a formal nature and they "were not combined with characteristics that could provide substantial evidence of integration into Greek society" (translated from Greek, Council of State 2013, 1). Supposedly, these criteria were not manifestations of a

genuine bond of the foreigner to the Greek State and society, which are not *spineless organisms* or ephemeral constructions, but instead, they represent a historical unity *with certain cultural background*, a community with more or less stable ways and traditions, a common language with a long history, characteristics that pass through generations with the help of small social units (families) and organized state units (education). (translated from Greek, my emphasis, Council of State 2013, 3)

Most importantly, a linkage between discourses of citizenship and migrant integration emerged within the ruling. This discursive interdependence mainly developed around the concept of "substantial evidence of integration" (Council of State 2013, 1). Accordingly, the acquisition of citizenship by migrant children was no longer conceived as a policy tool which could promote their prospective integration into society and national community, but instead, a "genuine bond" between the foreigner and the Greek society/state had to be proven in order for citizenship to be acquired. Subsequently, the right of the acquisition of citizenship had to be decided upon the existence (or not) of adequate levels of "substantial evidence of integration" and not on any formal criteria. More concretely, the Council of State argued that in the case of migrant children born in the country, proof of substantial integration could not really be found in them, as they were too young to have already formed such a "genuine bond." Instead, it should be looked upon their parents.

Following such lines, the five years of continuous legal stay for both parents became conceived as a formal criterion and could not be accepted as a clear manifestation of substantial evidence of integration (Council of state 2013, 9). In the case of the “one-and-a-half” generation migrant children, who have been schooled in Greece for at least six years, this period of schooling was not considered sufficient for the forming of such a “genuine bond:”

attending Greek school, and only for six years, is not a guarantee of sought after integration, considering that the law does not require (proof) of substantial relations of the parents to the country, parents who they themselves decide for the acquisition or not of Greek citizenship by their minor child. At the same time, this required period of schooling is less than the obligatory period of nine years that is required from Greek children, who already have a comparative advantage because of their prior knowledge of the language and familiarization with the social environment ... a manifestation of an adequate level of integration would be the successful completion of secondary education. (translated from Greek, Council of State 2013, 9)

To sum up, the court’s interpretation was based on the historically dominant understanding of the Greek nation-state as a community of descent with clear ethnocultural characteristics, which become transmitted through family (small social units) and education (organized state units). Furthermore, discourses of citizenship and migrant integration became intertwined through the concept of “substantial evidence of integration.” In retrospect, one could argue that what the court ruling was against was the early acquisition of citizenship by migrant children. In short, the concept of a “genuine bond” with the state as the only proof of “substantial evidence of integration,” became the dominant discursive precondition over the acquisition (or not) of citizenship. As a result, all applications got stranded and the window of opportunity to citizenship for second- and “one-and-a-half” generation migrant children was once more firmly closed.

### **A new draft law comes to parliament**

After the annulment of the controversial articles, the right of residence for second- and “one-and-a-half” generation migrant children became guaranteed through specific provisions of the New Code on Immigration and Social Integration, law 4251/2014 (article 108). However, the new law only dealt with migrant permits and did not include any reference to the acquisition of Greek citizenship by migrant children born or schooled in the country. Accordingly, migrant children who had been born in the country or had gone through the educational system for at least six years could only apply as adults for a five-year long “second-generation permit.”

In May 2015, the Syriza-ANEL coalition government brought for consultation a new draft law (Christopoulos 2015). By all accounts, law 4332/2015 should not be seen in itself as an independent legal text, but only, in relation to the Council of State’s former ruling. Within this delicate attempt of compromise, the nation is again substituted by the “people.” In the Explanatory Report of law 4332/2015 (Changes to Provisions of the Greek Citizenship Code) it is argued that:

the reason for this proposed legislative reform is the necessity to guarantee the development and smooth integration into the Greek society of foreign children, who were born or raised in Greece. The ethical and political foundation of which is the efficient enlargement of democracy ... the definition of “who we are.” This question is at the very center of *popular sovereignty*, the subject of which is the *Greek people*, ... accordingly, the Greek nation is a community of descent ... However, it is also a nation of choice and consciousness. It creates solidarity links between its members on the criterion of common will of belonging to it, regardless of people’s descent. (translation from Greek, my emphasis, Ministry of Interior 2015, 6)

According to this new draft law, migrant children born or raised in Greece could apply for citizenship through their parents' declaration at the time of enrollment in primary school. However, both parents had to legally reside in the country and one of them for more than five continuous years before the child's birth (or be a holder of various others long-term permits). For the "one-and-a-half" generation, nine years of schooling in total or the successful completion of secondary education became prerequisites for the acquisition of citizenship (same as the Council of State's proposal).

This new civic take on citizenship became also intertwined with elements of migrant integration discourse. First of all, the scheme replicated the logic of law 3838/2010, which argued that the acquisition of citizenship by migrant children at an early age provided a valuable tool for their integration into society:

the new scheme does not provide the Greek citizenship to the foreign child at birth, but because of birth, at the crucial point that the child enters the Greek school ... in order to acquire the Greek citizenship early, in the first years of primary education, at the point where the child starts to feel the need of inclusion within the ranks of Greek people ... It is *at this particular moment of early socialization that the child is in need of Greek citizenship*. (translated from Greek, Ministry of Interior 2015, 3)

In order to be in line with the Council of State's ruling, the new draft law argued that its conditionality, its specific criteria in place were indicative of "substantial evidence of integration." First, the retrospective criterion that the parents of the child were both legal residents and one of them for a long-period of time was allegedly a substantial form of manifestation of their integration. Second, the prospective criterion of the child's enrollment in primary school was additionally a clear manifestation of the family's intention/disposition that the child would receive Greek education and that the family unit would continue to live in Greece. Again, this is a state logic that in a way attempts to reproduce the nation through schooling; this is a philosophy of the civic becoming cultural through the workings of an educational system, which promotes ethnocultural understandings of the nation and self.

According to the new draft law, these two preconditions together constituted evidence of the "animus" of both parents and the child to integrate into society. As argued before, the animus, is a term that stands for the intention/disposition that the family has made about its future plans:

the emblematic fact that in conjunction with the accumulative period of stay (of the parents) provides the foundation of the right to the acquisition of citizenship, is the enrollment in primary school, a *definite indication* that the family has inescapably related its well-being and future to Greece and that the parents have agreed that the child will get Greek education ... All these, guarantee in all circumstances, *the animus of the parents and the child to integrate*, as they form elements able to provide evidence to the fact that the parents have chosen the country as their permanent place of residence. (translation from Greek, Ministry of Interior 2015, 4)

It is interesting, how proofs of "substantial evidence of integration" become modified to a "definite indication" of the family's animus to integrate into society. This is a delicate discursive slippage that allows the new draft law to not openly contradict the prior Council of State's ruling.

In July 2015, in the midst of the Grexit drama, the new citizenship legislation was voted in parliament. The legislation passed as most center-left and radical-left parties (Syriza, Potami, PASOK) voted for it while all center-right to far-right ones clearly opposed it (New Democracy, ANEL, Golden Dawn). It was interesting that because of this specific legislative scheme a small friction between the government of SYRIZA and ANEL

erupted, as the politics of citizenship appeared to cut through this newly formed coalition. To sum up, this paper attempted to shed light on the recent trajectory of the Greek citizenship tradition by examining the ways that discourses about the character of Greek nationality transmute and change through the insertion of elements of migrant integration discourse. As it should be evident by now, the acquisition of citizenship by second- and “one-and-a-half” generation migrant children evolved into a symbolic terrain, where ethnic and civic elements of Greek citizenship openly antagonized each other. Most importantly, these antagonisms became constructed and communicated through various meanings attached to migrant integration and different rationales behind the acquisition of citizenship by migrant children at birth, at an early age, or alternatively at adulthood. For the time being, these antagonisms between the ethnic and the civic character of Greek nationality have been delicately put to “sleep” through this concept of the “animus” of the family to integrate. Basically, this new concept manages a discursive leap forward from the retrospective criterion of a genuine bond between the foreigner and the Greek state manifested through “substantial evidence of integration,” to a prospective more open one, which talks about a “definite indication” of the family to tie its future to Greece. Nevertheless, time will show if this attempted discursive symbiosis will hold or if it will weather away. In the case of the latter, the tradition will start moving again, changing positions along a hypothetical citizenship axis running across the two constituent poles of nationality: the ethnic and the civic.

### **From the Greek case to the broader politics of citizenship and belonging in Europe and beyond**

In a strange sense, the “politics of citizenship” that Brubaker (1990, 17) initially talked about a few decades ago, as being played between different national traditions, are now probably taking place within them. The Greek case of citizenship reform clearly constitutes a perplexed example of such developments. However, one significant question arises: What can the Greek case tell us in relation to the broader politics of citizenship and belonging? What can it teach us that might be of some value in a European or even broader international context? What can we learn out of it about the character of citizenship and associated forms of belonging?

First, according to some analysts, the Greek citizenship tradition before it became reformed constituted the most extreme example of exclusion of non-ethnic Greek migrants from the acquisition of nationality in all EU member-states (King and Lulle 2016, 16). Nevertheless, its “thorny” reform reveals that contemporary politics of citizenship unfolding within national traditions are probably unstoppable. However, as the 2000 German case of citizenship reform reveals, reforms do not come without resistance (Howard 2008). In Germany, the resistance came from a grass-root petition based on xenophobia. However, in the Greek case it emerged through the rulings of the country’s highest court. As Triandafyllidou (2015) has argued: “the Greek case demonstrates that courts are not simply forces of liberalizing change. In the Greek case, they have been the key to the success of anti-reform actors” (Triandafyllidou 2015, 59). As it appears, citizenship traditions in Europe die hard and not without a fight in different fronts.

Second, it has been argued that migration changes the whole dynamics of citizenship by producing ethnic, racial, cultural, religious, etc. heterogeneity and subsequently perplexes national understandings (Brubaker 2001, 2004b, 2010; Baubock 2002); migration “disturbs” our straightforward thinking about the nation-state. As a result of migration, apart from the aforementioned politics of citizenship, another related politics emerges: the

politics of belonging (or not) to the nation-state (Brubaker 2010). Following on from these, another set of questions arise: Who in spite of being an outsider is fit to belong to the nation? What should a migrant do to be included in this national and/or political community? What are the various paths through which states can integrate migrants? This is the point where the politics of belonging are turning into politics and policies of migrant integration; a normative thinking about belonging (or not) to these “imaginary” territorial communities that are called nation-states.

Some years after Brubaker’s work on the politics of citizenship, Adrian Favell (1998) wrote the book *Philosophies of Integration: Immigration and the Idea of Citizenship in France and Britain*. In his book, he examined the different integration logics of these two “archetypal case studies” that have been central to the evolution of the European liberal-democratic tradition (Favell 1998, 8). According to his line of thinking, the French Republican/civic model constituted the example par excellence of the political assimilation of migrants as the nation was primarily perceived as a political community formed on individual willingness to be part of it (voluntary adherence). On the other hand, the British model is supposedly “concerned with . . . the idea of multiculturalism as the best means of accommodating Britain’s distinct ethnic minorities [and migrants]” (Favell 1998, 8). In this sense, while the French Republican/civic model demanded political assimilation as a prerequisite to national membership, the British model has traditionally given room to migrants and minorities to create a cultural space for themselves within an allegedly multicultural nation. Of course, many changes have taken place since Favell attempted to describe these archetypal integration philosophies.

For instance, recently, a lot of ink has been spent in Europe on migrant integration policy and thinking. After the burst of the European “integration crisis” (Loch 2014, 624), an almost dominant position has emerged that argues for the dominance of a Western European civic integration paradigm, the famous civic integration “turn” (Joppke 2007a, 2007b) that in many cases feels similar to the “old” political assimilation thesis of the Republican/civic model this time presented through the concepts of civility, social cohesion, fundamental/core societal values, civic identity, etc. However, the “civic turn” in integration does not really produce a “people” like civic nationalism does, but instead, it makes sure that societies “stick” together and become cohesive through an adherence to the values of liberalism; an almost illiberal liberalism (Triadafilopoulos 2011). On the other hand, some analysts still advocate the (simultaneous) existence of national models based on different national traditions of citizenship and/or related philosophies of integration (Mouritsen 2012; Entzinger 2014; Loch 2014). To cut a long story short: What does the Greek citizenship reform tell us in relation to contemporary politics of belonging and migrant integration? Does it appear to be based on a “civic” (new political assimilation) turn, a multicultural understanding or alternatively an ethnocultural assimilationist twist?

All successive legislations, in different extents and maybe for different reasons, through their particular discursive linkages between citizenship and migrant integration, perceived nationality as an ethnocultural quality that can be transmitted upon the willing to be Greek subjects through educational ethnocentric understandings of national identity and belonging. Accordingly, law 3838/2010 argued, among others, that the acquisition of citizenship by migrant children at an early age can prospectively promote through schooling not only social, but also, national cohesion. The Council of State talked about a mythical “genuine bond” with the nation-state that can only be formed through sufficient years of attendance at the national educational system. The last citizenship legislation considered the enrollment of the child to primary school and its future effects on this newly forming subject emblematic. As a result, all discursive takes on citizenship, maintain a sense of nationality as


ethnicized culture that should be transcribed upon these new, willing to be Greek, subjects through ethnocentric schooling. Such a take on citizenship does not leave much space for multicultural or transnational belonging (see e.g. Baubock 2002) and goes further than the new prerogatives of the civic integrationist turn.

Broadly speaking, this ethnocultural logic of citizenship can be probably indicative of other European states' imageries at times of complex ethnoscapings (Appadurai 1990), changing processes of globalized migrations, but also, problematic European demographics. However, in the Greek case, it is not the "return" of political assimilation as in other Western European and Western countries (Brubaker 2001) through an integrationist "turn" based on abstract liberal values and/or euphemistic concepts such as societal core values and civility. In the Greek case, what you probably have is (the continuation) a form of ethnocultural assimilation of migrant children facilitated through the ethnocentric and culturally specific workings of the Greek school. In a way, ethnocultural assimilation through schooling might have now appeared as the only plausible way that a civic take on citizenship can be discursively tolerated within such a "strong" ethnic tradition of nationality.

## Notes

1. In this paper the words citizenship and nationality are used interchangeably, connoting the legal bond between an individual and the state as found in law. In this way, EUDO's research terminology is followed (<http://eudo-citizenship.eu/databases/citizenship-glossary/glossary>).
2. For an informed discussion on the actual impact of access to citizenship to migrant integration, see Baubock and Liebich (2010).
3. The term "one-and-a-half" generation migrant children refers to children of migrant descent that although they have been born in the country of origin of their parents, they came early as young children and successively attended the host society's educational system.
4. For instance, during the parliamentary hearings of Law 3838/2010, the Deputy Minister for Home Affairs, Theodora Tzakri, provided a different conceptualization of the need of migrant children to acquire citizenship at an early stage: "we give them the chance to experience citizenship from a very early age and to integrate into Greek society while at the same time enriching it through their diversity" (Parliamentary Hearings of Law 3838/2010, 11 March 2010, 4886). This integration discourse is more multicultural or diversity based than the Explanatory Report of law 3838/2010.

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