



Challenging Ethnic Citizenship:

German and Israeli Perspectives on Immigration

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This book brings together a group of leading scholars on matters of German and Israeli immigration. It addresses a comprehensive array of central themes that are related to three dimensions of citizenship: sovereignty and control; the allocation of social and political rights; and questions of national identity. Given the interdisciplinary range of the authors' research projects these topics are approached from a variety of perspectives involving: historical developments, demographic changes, sociological problems, anthropological insights and political implications.

The topic of immigration is at the forefront of the current research agenda in the social sciences. For the most part this literature has focused on the incorporation of people who are formally not part of the nation into which they immigrate. This book examines the issue of immigration by focusing on additional groups, namely immigrants who are formally part of the nation. Both Germany and Israel have descent based conceptions of nationhood and have granted members of their nation (ethnic Germans and Jews) who wish to immigrate automatic access to their respective citizenship privileges. As such, Germany and Israel offer a formidable comparison for problematizing the integration of immigrant groups, who are formally part of the collective 'self' but increasingly transformed into 'others' in recent years. We examine the integration of these 'privileged' immigrants and compare it with the experiences of other minority groups (e.g. labor migrants, Palestinians).

An explicit comparison of these two cases allows us to elucidate the distinctive traits of each incorporation regime. At the same time it points to similarities that owe as much to nation-specific characteristics as to evolving global migration developments. Of particular importance are the relationship of the homeland and its diaspora, and the increasing significance of transnational migration patterns. Germany and Israel are paradigmatic cases for these developments. By bringing them together into a multi-disciplinary framework we seek to provide new empirical and theoretical perspectives for the study of immigration.

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