

Social Inclusion

Open Access Journal | ISSN: 2183-2803

Volume 7, Issue 4 (2019)

Inclusion through Enacted Citizenship in Urban Spaces

Editors

Rachel Kurian and Helen Hintjens

Social Inclusion, 2019, Volume 7, Issue 4
Inclusion through Enacted Citizenship in Urban Spaces

Published by Cogitatio Press
Rua Fialho de Almeida 14, 2º Esq.,
1070-129 Lisbon
Portugal

Academic Editors

Rachel Kurian (International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands)
Helen Hintjens (International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands)

Available online at: www.cogitatiopress.com/socialinclusion

This issue is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).
Articles may be reproduced provided that credit is given to the original and *Social Inclusion* is
acknowledged as the original venue of publication.

Table of Contents

Enacting Citizenship and the Right to the City: Towards Inclusion through Deepening Democracy? Helen Hintjens and Rachel Kurian	71–78
Improvising “Nonexistent Rights”: Immigrants, Ethnic Restaurants, and Corporeal Citizenship in Suburban California Charles T. Lee	79–89
‘From Sanctuary to Welcoming Cities’: Negotiating the Social Inclusion of Undocumented Migrants in Liège, Belgium Sébastien Lambert and Thomas Swerts	90–99
Contested Health Care System in Berlin: Are Illegalized Migrants Becoming Urban Citizens? Holger Wilcke and Rosa Manoim	100–107
Enabling Social Inclusion and Urban Citizenship of Older Adults through eHealth: The iZi Project in the Hague Rachel Kurian, Nicole Menke, Surrendra Santokhi and Erwin Tak	108–118
Acts for Refugees’ Right to the City and Commoning Practices of Care-tizenship in Athens, Mytilene and Thessaloniki Charalampos Tsavdaroglou, Chrisa Giannopoulou, Chryssanthi Petropoulou and Ilias Pistikos	119–130
Spaces of Urban Citizenship: Two European Examples from Milan and Rotterdam Alba Angelucci	131–140
Hostile Immigration Policy and the Limits of Sanctuary as Resistance: Counter-Conduct as Constructive Critique Cathy A. Wilcock	141–151
Diasporic Civic Agency and Participation: Inclusive Policy-Making and Common Solutions in a Dutch Municipality Antony Otieno Ong’ayo	152–163

Editorial

Enacting Citizenship and the Right to the City: Towards Inclusion through Deepening Democracy?

Helen Hintjens * and Rachel Kurian

International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University Rotterdam, 2518 AX The Hague, The Netherlands;
E-Mails: hintjens@iss.nl (H.H.), kurian@iss.nl (R.K.)

* Corresponding author

Submitted: 20 November 2019 | Published: 28 November 2019

Abstract

In this introductory article, the main theoretical concerns guiding this thematic issue are briefly discussed, alongside an overview of relevant literature on rights and urban citizenship. We draw on the work of Engin on ‘enacted citizenship,’ and combine Hannah Arendt’s ‘right to have rights’ with Henri Lefebvre’s ‘right to the city,’ for inspiration. The hope is that these concepts or theoretical tools help our contributors explore the ‘grey areas’ of partial inclusion and exclusion, and to connect the informal with the formal, migrants with professionals, locals with those from elsewhere. Since the contributions in this issue come from practitioners as well as scholars, we are interested in very different forms of urban citizenship being enacted in a range of settings, in such a way as to overcome, or at least side-step, social, economic and political exclusion within specific urban settings. In this introduction we reflect on urban migrants organising and mobilising to enact their own citizenship rights within specific urban spaces, and present each of the eight published articles, briefly illustrating the range of approaches and urban citizenship issues covered in this thematic issue. The examples of urban enacted citizenship practices include efforts to construct economic livelihoods, gain access to health care, promote political participation, reweave the social fabric of poor neighbourhoods, and provide sanctuary. All of which, our contributors suggest, requires the engagement of the local urban authorities to allow room for the informal, and to accept the need for improved dialogue and improved access to public services.

Keywords

cities; European cities; enacted citizenship; health; local government; right to the city; sanctuary

Issue

This editorial is part of the issue “Inclusion through Enacted Citizenship in Urban Spaces” edited by Rachel Kurian (Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands) and Helen Hintjens (Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands)

© 2019 by the authors; licensee Cogitatio (Lisbon, Portugal). This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

1. Introduction

Citizenship is enacted through not only legal but also cultural, social, economic and symbolic rights, responsibilities and identifications. (Isin, 2013, p. 19)

Our premise is that urban citizenship extends ‘beyond law.’ Once it becomes widely accepted—if perhaps tacitly—by urban residents that all those who live in the city should possess, for example, the right to basic health care, or secure housing, formal rights no longer equate with entitlements (if they ever do). Political or-

ganising is fundamental to rights-claiming strategies in urban spaces, since, as Engin F. Isin points out, “people do not often mobilise and rise for abstract or universal ideals” (Isin, 2013, p. 22). Urban migrants and poorer residents are no exception. Legal rights do not define or delimit the contours of urban citizenship in practice. Particularly for those who are socially marginalized, they tend to organize to make very specific demands around the attributes and services connected with urban citizenship. Furthermore, “what all these actions come to mean collectively” can help inform all of us “about our own social and political lives” as urban residents (Isin, 2013,

p. 22), whether we are migrants or not, refugees or not, legally resident or not. Enacted citizenship moves 'beyond the law' to assert that all urban residents have the 'right to rights' (Arendt, 1973).

The articles here presented draw on examples of local citizenship practices from different cities and regions. The researchers brought together in this thematic issue explore the local-level tensions, harmonies, strategies and dissonances that arise when migrants excluded from specified citizenship rights mobilise alongside citizens to claim their rights. The cases bring together local inhabitants, professionals, municipal workers, legal migrants, undocumented people and refugees, within a range of urban settings, with the focus mainly on cities in Western and Southern Europe. The aim has been to elucidate how practices and measures that promote protection and enjoyment of certain basic rights for all, whether the right to a livelihood, to health, to an associational life or to mobility are selectively negotiated and organised.

What the city has to offer to its legal and its longer-term undocumented residents, to recent migrants and 'locals' alike, is not given, but is the outcome of citizenship, solidarity and self-organisational struggles and setbacks. Social inclusion is a process, therefore, from this perspective, that should enable individuals and groups to claim their basic rights in the cities in which they live. Arguably, mobilisation is needed for migrants even to conceive of their rights to the city in the first place. The next step will be how such claim to certain rights are framed and presented. This approach takes fully on board the interlocking social, economic, political and cultural forms of exclusion and inclusion. These, in turn, influence which citizenship rights different 'categories' of residents of a particular city, or set of cities, can or cannot enjoy. The idea of 'enacted citizenship' as elaborated by Isin, is of obvious relevance to the on-going need for mobilisation among different categories of disenfranchised people who live in cities, and yet do not benefit from economic, social and political inclusion. Accompanying this, we propose that in establishing rights to full urban citizenship, Henri Lefebvre's suggestive notion of 'the right to the city' can also open up analytical perspectives that may be of more general interest to those interested in the politics of urban social inclusion and exclusion (Kofman & Lebas, 1996, pp. 147–158).

The articles in this thematic issue seek to show that in practice more inclusive definitions of who should enjoy the right to the city are emerging, though not without their weaknesses and setbacks. In line with this, contributors to this thematic issue were asked to identify key institutions, agents, and interventions that sought to empower or facilitate social inclusion for migrants within the cities being researched. Our contributors include both scholars and practitioners, interested in exploring different forms of urban citizenship which have been enacted to overcome social exclusion in specific, and comparative, urban settings. The first priority for our contributors was to reflect on the way urban migrants organise and

mobilise to enact their own citizenship rights within specific urban spaces, through engaging with various forms of politics, urban governance and service provision. The initiatives considered are mainly in Western European cities, and to a lesser extent in North America. The aim is to generate debate about the possibilities of civic engagement to generate spaces for political participation, and ways and means to protect and claim basic rights. These include the right to health and well-being, to physical and existential security, to work and a decent living, for non-citizens and national migrants alike, young and old, men and women. Specific examples come from The Netherlands, where both co-editors work and live, Belgium, Germany, Italy, France, Greece, the UK and the US. Individual articles are briefly presented discussed in the last section of this editorial introduction, which first outlines some of the guiding concepts and themes.

2. Exclusion and Selective Citizenship

Inhabitants of urban spaces enjoy highly variable life conditions, and different degrees of protection and neglect from municipal and central government institutions and actors. This means it is important to understand enacted citizenship struggles as a lens through which we can interpret efforts, mainly 'from below,' to promote social inclusion, for example through collaborative encounters, dialogue, self-organising and even technology, all in ways that are rarely free of friction and conflict (Isin, 2013, p. 22). According to Isin (2013, p. 19), such processes of contestation and collaboration can generate "new affinities, identifications, loyalties, animosities and hostilities across borders" and within cities, which emerge as "new sites of struggle" as "citizenship is enacted through not only legal but also cultural, social, economic and symbolic rights, responsibilities and identifications." By focusing on 'enacted' citizenship struggles, we focus attention on how people and groups achieve, or fail to achieve, what they perceive as their legitimate claims for both recognition and resources. The notion of enacted citizenship is premised on the idea that "cities are shaped by people, but people are also shaped by cities" (van Niekerk, Hendriks, & Duyvendak, 2009, p. 16), so that individuals and groups need to mobilise and 'enact' their citizenship in urban spaces, and do so in a context where they too are the objects of urban policies of various kinds of selective 'screening in' and 'screening out' (Hintjens, 2013).

Social inclusion is viewed as desirable to the extent that it makes it more possible for individuals and groups to exercise their rights through enabling their 'enacted' citizenship practices. Social exclusion is here defined as "the dynamic processes of being shut out, partially or fully, from any or all of several systems which influence the economic and social integration of people into their society" (Commins, 2004, p. 68). In this sense, social exclusion needs to be actively challenged at different levels since, in the widest sense, it "constitutes a de-

nial of full citizenship—the collection of rights and responsibilities that one acquires as a member of society” (Connolly, 1999, as cited in Commins, 2004, p. 68). As the urban poor worldwide increasingly “inhabit a kind of no-man’s land, consistently...‘screened out’ from basic human rights such as the right to work, to education or to health” (Hintjens, 2013, p. 88), the situation in the ‘prosperous’ cities of the North is arguably not much better than in some global cities of the South. In a practice-oriented definition designed for DFID, Beall and Piron (2005) define social exclusion as both “a process and a state,” and stress that such processes and this state prevent individuals “from full participation in social, economic and political life and from asserting their rights”, highlighting that “exclusionary relationships” are “based on power” (Beall & Piron, 2005, p. 9).

In more recent years, the Council of Europe has noted a rise in extreme hostility towards migrants and minorities, as economic conditions across the EU have worsened and far-right populist parties have started to gain power, or a larger share of the vote (Council of Europe, 2012). Old as well as new EU member states are no strangers to a host of prejudices, including Islamophobia, anti-Gypsyism, racism and homophobia (Jovanovic, 2015). The impact of social exclusion is cumulative and multiple, with the excluded often suffering ‘persistent disadvantage’ in several areas of their lives, lacking not just adequate access to goods and services, which reinforces problems of poverty and the lack of satisfaction of their basic needs, but also very often a distinct “lack of security, lack of justice, lack of participation and representation” (Kurian & Bedi, 2004). As Galtung’s typology of violence suggests, social exclusion can even amount, over the longer term, to a form of structural violence where certain categories of “human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations” (Galtung, 1969, p. 168). Social exclusion is often gendered, with women and LGBTs experiencing extra disadvantages. Under these circumstances, it could be argued that the excluded experience what has been referred to as ‘hollow citizenship’, characterised by democratic deficits and inequality in relation to their rights and entitlements:

Democracy will mean little to ordinary citizens (hollow citizenship) if they do not enjoy equal rights and entitlements as citizens whether because constitutional and legal arrangements fail to guarantee these rights, or because they are effectively excluded from the public sphere as a result of gender, societal inequalities, lack of organisation, cultures of intolerance or intimidation and violence.” (Luckham, Kaldor, & Goetz, 2000, p. 22)

Historically, exclusion from the benefits of emerging political citizenship, and then later from full economic and social citizenship, have rendered minorities and other

vulnerable groups, such as the elderly and those physically, mentally and emotionally challenged, invisible to historians and policy-makers alike. The persecution of minorities is often by the state, including by state officials simply ‘doing their job,’ and indifference to suffering plays a part in the social exclusion process. Among undocumented migrants, for example, categories of people considered ‘undeserving’ are left out of full access to citizenship-related benefits and rights, something that can usefully be defined as ‘colonial’ (Zureik, 2011). Those considered more ‘deserving’ are given some support whilst they wait for a decision by the immigration authorities. Under the rule of law, open, sustained and deliberate social exclusion should not be possible. However, it seems that it is. Thus, people with irregular migration status have far fewer recognised basic rights—civil and political as well as economic and social—than other people, who have the right papers. The state of exception is for many minorities like a state of siege.

Indeed, often the best place to meet to discuss what government authorities are doing is across the widespread spatial segregation of disadvantaged. This makes it more difficult for them to access health care and other goods and services. Recourse to justice is one of the ways that minorities try to oblige the authorities to respect specific rights, including the right of non-discrimination. Recourse to legal action can also be part of enacting citizenship for excluded and vulnerable minorities, ending the structural violence of economic and social exclusion of minority people from accessing what they need to maintain themselves, body and soul, and their economic and social rights.

3. Urban Politics and the ‘Right to Have Rights’ in the City

As Hannah Arendt famously noted, the “right to have rights” prioritises being a member of a political community as intrinsic to citizenship. In contemporary societies, citizenship in a formal sense, is often associated with the possession of a legal document, such as a passport for a particular country. While such credentials are important, the concept of citizenship can be viewed as a dynamic engagement to access the full entitlements and rights as a member of society. In his classic article of 1950, T. H. Marshall identified what he viewed as three elements of citizenship. The civil element constituted the right of persons to individual freedoms such as liberty, freedom of speech and religion as well as justice. The political aspects related to the right to participate in government institutions. Marshall (1950) gave special significance to social citizenship which included “the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in the society.” These aspects of citizenship are neither automatic nor even widely recognised as citizenship rights. On the contrary realization of these rights often

requires negotiation and struggle, particularly in a context of competition for resources and increasing inequality in society.

As Arendt reminded us long ago there is a “discrepancy between the efforts of well-meaning idealists, who stubbornly insist on regarding as ‘inalienable’ those human rights which are enjoyed only by the citizens of the most prosperous...countries, and the situation of the rightless themselves” (Arendt, 1973, p. 279). Lefebvre expresses a similar notion when he explains that “the right to the city cannot be conceived of as a simple visiting right or as a return to traditional cities. It can only be formulated as a transformed and renewed *right to urban life*” (as cited in Kofman & Lebas, 1996, p. 158). In urban settings, where municipal authorities are often delegated by central government to provide basic services, human rights may have least chance of being fulfilled. For those who live without the ‘right to have rights,’ exclusion from basic service and benefit provisions can lead them to protest. Their imperative becomes to break out of the status of being rights-deprived, and to enact their own citizenship by demanding a basic level of rights as inhabitants of the city (Isin, 2013, pp. 29–30). Intersectional relations of support among various excluded minorities can be very powerful politically, building cross-cutting alliances that can at first seem surprising. Thus Kruma & Indans (2013) suggest that when gays and lesbians marched in a Pride parade through the city of Riga in Latvia, they too were enacting citizenship. In the process, they became political subjects and were able to express their own conception of their basic rights.

One increasingly relevant manner of dealing with exclusion and democratic deficits is through what John Gaventa (2006, p. 11) has referred to as the ‘deepening democratic’ approach: “a process through which citizens exercise ever deepening control over decisions which affect their lives, and as such it is also constantly under construction.” He identifies four sub-schools within deepening democracy literature: ‘civil society democracy,’ which is associated with good governance and civil society advocacy, ‘participatory democracy,’ which implies the involvement of citizens at a local and national government level, ‘deliberative democracy,’ which emphasises the “nature and quality of deliberation” by citizens, and ‘empowered participatory democracy,’ which gives priority to bottom-up participation of citizens in the policies that affect their lives (Gaventa, 2006). As the author argues:

If we understand democracy not as a set of institutional designs, but as a concept constantly under construction through contestation amongst actors in different settings, then to support the process of democracy building we must also find and support emerging visions and imaginations of what democracy might become. (Gaventa, 2006, p. 27)

To place the emphasis on what minority and socially excluded groups can do to claim their ‘rights to the city,’ the

term ‘enacting citizenship’ has proven especially useful, having been elaborated on by Isin (2013) among others. This concept suggests members of such minority groups should operate as if they were entitled to full inclusion in all the rights accorded to full citizens. Under such conditions, where law and politics, sociality and economy are all channels for claiming full citizenship rights, it is the very enacting of citizenship that produces particular rights-bearing subjectivities. Rather than assuming prior awareness of rights entitlements, as Isin notes:

The phrase ‘acts produce subjects’ indicates that events such as demonstrations, appeals, claims and so on create possibilities of acting in certain ways that otherwise would not be possible. This is different from assuming that subjects already exist before they act. The difference between bodies and subjects is important. (Isin, 2013, p. 23)

Struggles for full citizenship rarely come framed through the lenses of formal or specific human rights demands. Instead, they take the form of demands for practical access to services and procedural and historical justice. Through notions of enacted citizenship, it becomes apparent how such struggles go further than demanding citizenship rights, and actually start to enact new forms of citizenship, including in the urban setting. A number of the articles in this thematic issue illustrate how enacting citizenship can change the tenor of those making such demands and doing the enacting. In such cases “it is important to acknowledge that when people act, whatever differences may separate them in values, principles and priorities, they are enacting citizenship, even those who are not passport-carrying members of the state or the right state” (Isin, 2013, p. 22).

Whilst deterritorialised elites may be able to relocate themselves in times of trouble, “lower-tier city dwellers are ‘doomed to stay local,’” even if they have been highly mobile as forced migrants (Bauman, 2003, p. 98). This thematic issue refocuses our attention on how (forced) migrant citizenship is being enacted so as to challenge these frequent situations of rightlessness in which ‘lower-tier city dwellers’ find themselves as urban residents, often without formal rights. What is explored by various contributions in this thematic issue is how “the city [as]...the dumping ground for anxieties and apprehensions generated by globally induced uncertainty and insecurity” can also become a city which is “a prime training ground where the means to placate and disperse that uncertainty and insecurity can be experimented with, tried out and eventually learned and adopted” (Bauman, 2003, p. 117).

4. Comparative Reflections and Experiences

In “Improvising ‘Nonexistent Rights’: Immigrants, Ethnic Restaurants, and Corporeal Citizenship in Suburban California,” Lee (2019) suggests that:

There is an urgent need to continue exploring ways to facilitate and expand democratic rights and participation for the urban inhabitants in these neoliberal times. Yet the way to engage this exploration needs to be connected with the present realities of the urban residents' everyday experiences of city life on the ground. (Lee, 2019, p. 80)

Through the example of 'ethnic' restaurants in California, Lee concludes that: "for many ethnic restaurateurs and workers, the realization of corporeal citizenship...is not limited to...but also carries a deeper, intangible dimension of affective inclusion, psychosomatic wellbeing, and sociocultural belonging" (Lee, 2019, p. 85), which he connects with some aspects of a now-fading shared belief in the American Dream.

The US was the home of the idea of cities of sanctuary, an idea considered by two articles in this thematic issue, the first by Sébastien Lambert and Thomas Swerts. In "'From Sanctuary to Welcoming Cities': Negotiating the Social Inclusion of Undocumented Migrants in Liège, Belgium," Lambert and Swerts (2019) examine struggles for sanctuary status in Liege, Belgium, by an activist rights NGO and migrants in the city. The authors point to "both the potentialities and difficulties involved in turning radical political imaginaries into reality" (Lambert & Swerts, 2019, p. 97). In this case, the outcome was more modest than it was hoped, since Liege Council "made it clear that they would only adopt a motion [carried officially] if it [was highlighted that] efforts...were already being undertaken to welcome migrants in Liège" (Lambert & Swerts, 2019, p. 96). The result was that the Sanctuary city initiative, which would explicitly have protected 'sans-papiers,' was dropped and there resulted a more depoliticised and vague statement about Liege as a 'Welcoming city,' open to all newcomers.

In efforts to be more genuinely transformative, some promising initiatives have focused on extending health rights as a means to 'stretch' citizenship in the city. Such long-term, complex and nuanced struggles for health rights are widespread and exemplified in "Contested Health Care System in Berlin: Are Illegalized Migrants Becoming Urban Citizens?" by Wilcke and Manoim (2019).

As the authors explain, "the *Medibüro*...a grassroots initiative...has been fighting for equal access to medical care for all, for more than 20 years" (Wilcke & Manoim, 2019, p. 101). Through a very recent initiative (from 2019), the so-called Anonymized Health Certificates were finally issued after many years of pressure by the government of Berlin. This helped extend medical care for illegalised migrants, in part on public health grounds. The initiative derived its wider legitimacy from a shared "procedural understanding of citizenship" among parts of the Berlin populace: There was the presumption that "migrants as active political subjects" were entitled to public health care (Wilcke & Manoim, 2019, p. 101). Interestingly, Anonymized Health

Certificates were issued even though providing medical care for undocumented people remains illegal at federal and city level. Public health is not quite like other public services, since if governments or cities fail to ensure public health to the most vulnerable, including the undocumented, for instance by leaving communicable diseases undiagnosed and untreated, this increases health risks for everyone.

Reflecting on the processes of eHealth involved for one small set of elderly migrants in The Hague, Kurian, Menke, Santokhi, and Tak (2019) have combined academic and practitioner insights. Their article, "Enabling Social Inclusion and Urban Citizenship of Older Adults through eHealth: The iZi Project in the Hague," describes this pioneering, small-scale experiment for older adults, living in their own homes, and still in its early stages. This "three-year pilot was started in February 2016...in one street in the Escamp district" in the city, and "brought together a unique hub that connected residents, research institutions, governments, care and welfare organizations, and businesses in the field of health care innovation" (Kurian et al., 2019, pp. 111, 115). With home care budgets being slashed at the same time, the lofty aspirations of this e-health innovation were not met. However, by selecting and using smart technologies, elderly migrants were assisted to feel safer at home and perceived themselves as living in greater dignity, and in a stronger community (Benhabib, 2002, p. 464).

In "Acts for Refugees' Right to the City and Commoning Practices of Care-tizenship in Athens, Mytilene and Thessaloniki," Tsavdaroglou, Giannopoulou, Petropoulou, and Pistikos (2019) view citizenship as "an ongoing and contested battlefield" of claims and counter-claims (Tsavdaroglou et al., 2019, p. 120). Moreover, as the authors suggest, "there is little research on mutual care as a form of commoning and especially...refugees' self-care practices which offer the potentiality to reinvent both the right to the city and new forms of citizenship acts" (Tsavdaroglou et al., 2019, p. 122). This is a gap that the article seeks to address. Self-organised camps and safe spaces for refugees, backed by solidarity organisations, which range from anarchists to NGOs, are the main concern of this article, which focuses on two cities in Greece. The article reminds us, following Arendt (1970), that "it is the function...of all action...to interrupt what would otherwise have proceeded automatically, and therefore predictably" (Arendt, 1970, p. 31). However, the authors are anything but complacent about the possibilities for self-organising and solidarity politics in the wider context of Greece, with rising xenophobia (see also Swarts & Karakatsanis, 2013).

Travelling to the Netherlands, via Italy, Angelucci's (2019) "Spaces of Urban Citizenship: Two European Examples from Milan and Rotterdam" shows how initiatives by local supporters of refugees in each city produced distinct, yet very comparable, outcomes. Whereas, "in Milan, the main role [of reception] is played by gendered roles and practices which express

themselves in mothering and childminding activities...in Rotterdam the basic element is the contraposition to market-driven logics by the means of green and social activities" (Angelucci, 2019, pp. 138–139). Despite such differences in outcome, Angelucci suggests both sets of citizen initiatives for refugees and the undocumented, had in common their distance from the urban authorities who actually make policy and mediate between the global, the national and the local. On a realist note, she concludes that "being lived and perceived as a private dimension, these spaces do not have any public or political weight" (Angelucci, 2019, p. 139). Indeed, she concludes, "they are not...even [being] listened to at the political and administrative levels" of decision-makers in each city (Angelucci, 2019, p. 139).

This critical note is continued in the article by Wilcock (2019), "Hostile Immigration Policy and the Limits of Sanctuary as Resistance: Counter-Conduct as Constructive Critique." Focusing on the City of Sanctuary movement as the "most institutionalised form of resistance" to the hostile environment policy of the national UK government towards undocumented migrants, the author points out that, "the extent to which [the City of Sanctuary movement]...can resist the hostile environment has been seriously questioned," given the generally apolitical stance adopted by its adherents (Wilcock, 2019, p. 143; emphasis in original). Proposing the Foucauldian notion of counter-conduct, resistance to governmentality, she makes visible those who tend to be ignored in the City of Sanctuary framing of 'innocent' asylum seekers, including undocumented migrant workers and single men, in the context of a government which asks employers, landlords, academics, doctors and the general public to police the lines between 'good' and 'bad' migrants. Starting from a critical point of view, she employs Foucault to good effect and concludes that it is still "within the power of the [City of Sanctuary] movement...to resist *being* the judgemental citizen through enacting alternative non-judgemental political subjectivities and encouraging others to do the same" (Wilcock, 2019, p. 148; emphasis in original).

Finally, in "Diasporic Civic Agency and Participation: Inclusive Policy-Making and Common Solutions in a Dutch Municipality," Ong'ayo (2019) bases his findings on the African diaspora in The Hague and suggests that resistance to enacting citizenship rights for members of this diaspora, depends on their formal political participation in decision-making in the city, and especially in the affairs of the municipality. Reflecting on a number of initiatives by Sub-Saharan African diaspora organisations in The Hague and on how they "make use of political opportunity structures and policy windows to influence policy in different policy spaces," whether invited, claimed or self-organised, this article deals head-on with the issue of political and democratic participation of a dispersed, internally diverse diasporic grouping (Ong'ayo, 2019, p. 159). Unlike some other diasporic groups, the home states of most African migrants do not have special

provisions to ensure that they do not become stateless or lose their nationality (see, for example, for the Turkish case, Yanasmayan & Kaşlı, 2019). As Ong'ayo found, despite this, the diaspora found it relatively easy to reach agreement with The Hague municipality regarding everyday issues like Dutch language classes, training, health or sport (perhaps the easiest of all). On issues of citizenship, legal status and full 'belonging' to the city, however, there were major contestations in discussions between the African diasporic groups and the municipality. In other words, whilst leaders of Sub-Saharan African diaspora groups in the 'City of Peace and Justice' were recognised as bridge-builders and interlocutors for their communities, their concerns about those of their number without formal legal residency, could not be met. Besides some minor allocation of resources resulting from dialogue, it remained beyond the municipality's staff's comfort zone to recognize all those who compose the Sub-Saharan African diaspora in The Hague, including those who are undocumented, for example.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion it is to be hoped that this thematic issue as a whole helps illustrate and think through local urban practices of enacted citizenship citizenship. As Isin reminds us, this involves recognising "that to be a citizen is to make claims to justice: to call already defined orders, practices and statuses into question" (Isin, 2013, p. 43). As he puts it, this vision of "activist citizens opening the gates of the city and introducing rupture into the order of things by claiming justice" has both historical resonance and wider relevance to non-citizens as well (Isin, 2013, p. 43). The overall focus has been on some recent urban-based initiatives seeking improved protection, well-being and health for socially excluded and marginalised groups, especially for migrants with different forms of legal status under the law. Most of these experiments involve 'local' citizen initiatives, and many also involve self-organising by migrants themselves. Whether older or younger, women or men, citizens or undocumented, those involved in the quest for the 'right to the city,' often live without formal rights, and many cannot travel freely; some cannot even leave the city. Their daily experience of urban life is mostly one of being 'rooted to the spot,' as they find themselves imprisoned from within by "a borderless economy and a barricaded border" (Andreas, 2000, p. x), or even, less dramatically, by old age.

Unable to leave the local spaces, their imperatives are to enact citizenship within the urban setting, as much a strategy for survival as for rights as such. For some only full legal citizenship can help them escape the confines of the "fragmented, localised, and thus increasingly powerless" space of places, to taste some benefits of the "versatility of the space of flows" (Bauman, 2003, p. 101). They may do this by moving, living and working elsewhere, or through enjoying recognition, protection and a wider range of rights in the city where they already are.

Acknowledgments

We acknowledge the support of the International Institute of Social Studies for a panel we jointly organized at the conference of the Institute of Housing and Urban Development Studies (HIS) in collaboration with the Erasmus Vital Cities initiative, 'Empowering Cities & Citizens.' Held in Rotterdam on 6–7 November 2017, this event helped kick-start this thematic issue. We are grateful to anonymous reviewers for all their comments on the various contributions, and to the Editor of Social Inclusion for her dedication to seeing this through.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

References

- Andreas, P. (2000). *Border games: Policing the U.S.–Mexico divide*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Angelucci, A. (2019). Spaces of urban citizenship: Two European examples from Milan and Rotterdam. *Social Inclusion*, 7(4), 131–140.
- Arendt, H. (1970). *On violence*. London: Harcourt.
- Arendt, H. (1973). *Origins of totalitarianism*. New York, NY: Harcourt Brace.
- Bauman, Z. (2003). *Liquid love: On the frailty of human bonds*. Cambridge and Malden, MA: Polity.
- Beall, J., & Piron, L.-H. (2005). *DFID Social exclusion review*. London: LSE and the Overseas Development Institute (ODI). Retrieved from <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/2301.pdf>
- Benhabib, S. (2002). *The claims of culture: Equality and diversity in the global era*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Commins, P. (2004). Poverty and social exclusion in rural areas: Characteristics, processes and research issues. *Sociologica Ruralis*, 44(1), 60–75.
- Council of Europe. (2012). *Human rights of Roma and travellers in Europe*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. Retrieved from https://www.coe.int/t/commissioner/source/prems/prems79611_GBR_CouvHumanRightsOfRoma_WEB.pdf
- Galtung, J. (1969). Violence, peace and peace research. *Journal of Peace Research*, 6(3), 167–191.
- Gaventa, J. (2006). *Triumph, deficit or contestation? Deepening the 'deepening democracy' debate* (IDS Working Paper No. 264). Brighton: Institute of Development Studies.
- Hintjens, H. (2013). Screening in or out? Selective non-surveillance of unwanted humanity in EU cities. *Surveillance & Society*, 11(1/2), 87–105.
- Isin, E. (2013). Claiming European citizenship. In E. Isin & M. Saward (Eds.), *Enacting European citizenship* (pp. 19–46). Cambridge and New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Jovanovic, Z. (2015, September 21). Why Europe's 'Roma decade' didn't lead to inclusion. *Open Society Foundations*. Retrieved from <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/why-europe-s-roma-decade-didn-t-lead-inclusion>
- Kofman, E., & Lebas, E. (Eds.). (1996). *Writings on cities*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Kruma, K., & Indans, I. (2013). Negotiating otherness: Mozaika and sexual citizenship. In E. Isin & M. Saward (Eds.), *Enacting European citizenship* (pp. 84–110). Cambridge and New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Kurian, R., & Bedi, A. (2004). *Poverty, gender and social exclusion in Mauritius*. Unpublished report prepared for the African Development Bank.
- Kurian, R., Menke, N., Santokhi, S., & Tak, E. (2019). Enabling social inclusion and urban citizenship of older adults through eHealth: The iZi Project in The Hague. *Social Inclusion*, 7(4), 108–118.
- Lambert, S., & Swerts, T. (2019). 'From sanctuary to welcoming cities': Negotiating the social inclusion of undocumented migrants in Liège, Belgium. *Social Inclusion*, 7(4), 90–99.
- Lee, C. T. (2019). Improvising "nonexistent rights": Immigrants, ethnic restaurants, and corporeal citizenship in Suburban California. *Social Inclusion*, 7(4), 79–89.
- Luckham, R., Kaldor, M., & Goetz, A. M. (2000). *Democratic institutions and politics in contexts of inequality, poverty and conflict: A conceptual framework* (IDS Working Paper 104). Brighton: The Institute of Development Studies.
- Marshall, T. H. (1950). *Citizenship and social class and other essays*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ong'ayo, A. O. (2019). Diasporic civic agency and participation: Inclusive policy-making and common solutions in a Dutch municipality. *Social Inclusion*, 7(4), 152–163.
- Swarts, J., & Karakatsanis, N. M. (2013). Challenges to desecuritizing migration in Greece. *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, 15(1), 97–120.
- Tsavdaroglou, C., Giannopoulou, C., Petropoulou, C., & Pistikos, I. (2019). Acts for refugees' right to the city and commoning practices of care-tizenship in Athens, Mytilene and Thessaloniki. *Social Inclusion*, 7(4), 119–130.
- van Niekerk, M., Hendriks, F., & Duyvendak, J. W. (2009). *City in sight: Dutch dealings with urban change*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Wilcke, H., & Manoim, R. (2019). Contested health care system in Berlin: Are illegalized migrants becoming urban citizens? *Social Inclusion*, 7(4), 100–107.
- Wilcock, C. A. (2019). Hostile immigration policy and the limits of sanctuary as resistance: Counter-conduct as constructive critique. *Social Inclusion*, 7(4), 141–151.
- Yanasmayan, Z., & Kaşlı, Z. (2019). Reading diasporic engagements through the lens of citizenship: Turkey as a test case. *Political Geography*, 70, 24–33.

Zureik, E. (2011). Colonialism, surveillance, and population control: Israel/Palestine. In E. Zureik, Lyon, D., & Abu-Laban, Y. (Eds.), *Surveillance and control in Is-*

rael/Palestine: Population, territory and power (pp. 3–44). Oxford and New York, NY: Routledge.

About the Authors



Helen Hintjens is Assistant Professor in Development and Social Justice at the Hague-based International Institute of Social Studies (ISS), of Erasmus University Rotterdam, Netherlands. For more than 30 years she has researched comparative asylum and migration policies of EU member states in the context of broader post-colonial relationships and ideas. Her particular interests are in pro-asylum advocacy networks, selective urban surveillance of undocumented rejected asylum seekers, networks of ‘cities of sanctuary,’ and organised resistance to deterrence-based destitution, detention and forced deportation. Her regional focus includes the African Great Lakes region, especially Rwanda and Eastern DRC, in relation to identity politics and post-genocide recovery. She used to work on small, non-sovereign islands of the Indian Ocean and Caribbean, long ago. She now increasingly works on peace-building through music and the arts, to tackle legacies of unfinished decolonisation both in Europe and in East Africa.



Rachel Kurian is an International Labour Economist at the International Institute of Social Studies of the Erasmus University Rotterdam. She holds degrees in Mathematics and Economics, and has studied at Madras University, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, University of Cambridge, UK, and the University of Amsterdam, where she completed her PhD in 1989. Her teaching, research, project and consultancy work have focused on trade unions, gender politics, women and child workers, social exclusion, human rights, poverty and labour in the context of economic restructuring. She has field experiences in Asia (Sri Lanka, India, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, South Korea), Latin America (Colombia, Peru, Chile, Ecuador), Caribbean (Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados) Africa (Mauritius, Tanzania, South Africa, Zimbabwe), Western Asia (Israel, Palestine) Europe (Netherlands, France) and Western Balkans.

Article

Improvising “Nonexistent Rights”: Immigrants, Ethnic Restaurants, and Corporeal Citizenship in Suburban California

Charles T. Lee

School of Social Transformation, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ 85287, USA; E-Mail: ctl@asu.edu

Submitted: 27 June 2019 | Accepted: 25 August 2019 | Published: 28 November 2019

Abstract

Building on Henri Lefebvre’s radical concept of “right to the city,” contemporary literatures on urban citizenship critically shift the locus of citizenship from its juridical-political foundation in the sovereign state to the spatial politics of the urban inhabitants. However, while the political discourse of right to the city presents a vital vision for urban democracy in the shadow of neoliberal restructuring, its exclusive focus on democratic agency and practices can become disconnected from the everyday experiences of city life on the ground. In fact, in cities that lack longstanding/viable urban citizenship mechanisms that can deliver meaningful political participation, excluded subjects may bypass formal democratic channels to improvise their own inclusion, belonging, and rights in an informal space that the sovereign power does not recognize. Drawing on my fieldwork in the Asian restaurant industry in several multiethnic suburbs in Southern California, this article investigates how immigrant restaurant entrepreneurs, workers, and consumers engender a set of “nonexistent rights” through their everyday production and consumption of ethnic food. I name this improvisational political ensemble *corporeal citizenship* to describe the material, affective, and bodily dimensions of inclusion, belonging, and “rights” that immigrants actualize through their everyday participation in this suburban ethnic culinary commerce. For many immigrants operating in the global circuits of neoliberal capitalism, citizenship no longer just means what Hannah Arendt (1951) once suggested as “the right to have rights,” or what Engin Isin and Peter Nyers (2014) reformulate as “the right to claim rights,” but also the right to *reinvent ways* of claiming rights. I suggest such improvisation of nonexistent rights has surprising political implications for unorthodox ways of advancing democratic transformation.

Keywords

corporeal citizenship; ethnic food; nonexistent rights; participation; right to the city; urban citizenship

Issue

This article is part of the issue “Inclusion through Enacted Citizenship in Urban Spaces” edited by Rachel Kurian (Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands) and Helen Hintjens (Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands)

© 2019 by the author; licensee Cogitatio (Lisbon, Portugal). This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

1. Introduction

Recent studies on urban citizenship have turned critical attention to the “city” as the central site in forging political resistance, expanding social inclusion, and imagining new rights against the onslaught of neoliberal capitalist power and its associated political disenfranchisement. Building on Henri Lefebvre’s radical concept of “right to the city,” these literatures critically shift the locus of citizenship from its juridical-political foundation in the sovereign state to the spatial politics of the urban inhabitants (Holston, 2009; Isin, 2000; Purcell, 2003). Arguing

that “it is those who live in the city—who contribute to the body of urban lived experience and lived space—who can legitimately claim the right to the city” (Purcell, 2002, p. 102), Lefebvre (1996) articulates two principal rights for urban inhabitants—the right to participation and the right to appropriation—to reconfigure the production of urban space and bring about a renewed transformation of urban life.

As Mark Purcell suggests, “Lefebvre’s right to the city is an argument for profoundly reworking both the social relations of capitalism and the current structure of liberal-democratic citizenship” (Purcell, 2002,

p. 101). Specifically, the right to participation alters the Westphalian framework that subordinates all forms of political loyalties to nation-state membership and filters “the voice of citizens...through the institutions of the state” (Purcell, 2002, p. 102); instead, it re-envision urban inhabitants “as the majority and hegemonic voice” who hold the collective decision-making power vis-à-vis capital and state elites over “all decisions that produce urban space” (Purcell, 2002, p. 103). In addition, the right to appropriation affirms “the right of inhabitants to physically access, occupy, and use urban space” in accordance with their own needs, thus elevating the use value and use-rights of urban residents over and against the exchange value interests and property rights of corporate firms that have long bolstered the hegemonic “foundation of capitalist class relations” (Purcell, 2002, p. 103). In the words of Engin Isin:

For Lefebvre the right to the city was the right to claim presence in the city, to wrest the use of the city from the privileged new masters and democratize its spaces. Lefebvre saw the rights to the city as an expression of urban citizenship, understood not as membership in a polity—let alone the nation-state—but as a practice of articulating, claiming and renewing group rights in and through the appropriation and creation of spaces in the city. (Isin, 2000, pp. 14–15)

From this vantage point, the conception of right to the city or urban citizenship embodies what Hannah Arendt (1951) once characterized as the struggle for “the right to have rights,” or what Engin Isin and Peter Nyers further advance as “the right to *claim* rights” (Isin & Nyers, 2014, p. 8; emphasis in the original).

Yet, while the political discourse of right to the city presents a vital vision for urban democracy in the shadow of neoliberal restructuring (Purcell, 2002), its normative focus on democratic agency and practices remains, in Don Mitchell’s words, “not yet well-grounded in the actual legal and social exigencies of city life” (Mitchell, 2005, p. 86). Thus, as Monica Varsanyi argues, urban citizenship is “not within easy grasp” because the sovereign power of the nation-state continues to present “very real daily challenges faced by undocumented residents” (Varsanyi, 2006, p. 240). Furthermore, given the all-encompassing reach of global capitalism, the dichotomous construct of urban inhabitants versus urban neoliberalism underestimates the degree to which the predominant urban residents’ daily work and life are already deep-seated in and interwoven with the latter such that their use value and use-rights of urban space cannot be so distinctly separated from—but are rather in many ways intertwined with, filtered by, and articulated through—the exchange value interests of the capitalist-consumerist circuits (Lee, 2014, p. 79). In fact, the continuing ascendancy of both sovereign power and capitalist power can often render any emerging democratic mechanisms of urban citizenship insubstantial or unviable in real cities.

All this is not to say that the democratic impetus and spirit of urban citizenship and right to the city require no critical preservation. To the contrary, there is an urgent need to continue exploring ways to facilitate and expand democratic rights and participation for the urban inhabitants in these neoliberal times. Yet the way to engage this exploration needs to be connected with the present realities of the urban residents’ everyday experiences of city life on the ground. As I suggest, instead of beginning our inquiry from a normative democratic angle, we may do better by first investigating how, in cities that lack long-standing/viable urban citizenship mechanisms, subordinate residents may engender their own (informal and unconventional) ways of claiming rights to the city that do not entail a democratic oppositional stance vis-à-vis the state and capital. From there, we can further examine what may be some unseen or imperceptible political implications of such existing practices on the ground in order to explore more creative and unorthodox paths of democratic transformation.

This article takes a modest first step in this direction. Borrowing from Jacques Rancière’s (1999) notion of “the staging of a nonexistent right,” it draws on my fieldwork in the Asian restaurant industry in several multiethnic suburbs in Southern California to investigate how immigrant restaurant entrepreneurs, workers, and consumers (both Asian and Latinx) engender a set of “nonexistent rights”—i.e., rights that are not (yet) existing or codified in law such as the rights to enterprise, work, consumption, residency, affective inclusion, biological wellbeing, and sociocultural belong—through their everyday production and consumption of ethnic food. I name this improvisational political ensemble *corporeal citizenship* to describe the material, affective, and bodily dimensions of inclusion, belonging, and “rights” that immigrants actualize through their everyday participation in this suburban ethnic culinary commerce, in an informal space that the sovereign power does not recognize. While proponents of urban citizenship vitally advocate for the inclusion of urban inhabitants by seeking to upend the forces of the state and capital (Purcell, 2003), I suggest that the fact that immigrants have been able to claim informal measures of rights in everyday commercial sites like ethnic restaurants also points to some extended, unorthodox strategic possibilities for the promotion of social inclusion that can help destabilize existing power structures and transform the current sociopolitical landscapes of rights.

2. Conceiving Corporeal Citizenship and Nonexistent Rights

Recognizing the structural exclusion and inequality that afflicts subordinate social groups in liberal capitalist societies (Young, 1989), recent literatures in the emerging field of critical citizenship studies have taken a further step to investigate citizenship as a contestatory practice and process whereby excluded subjects *enact* or

perform citizenship in claiming their rights to the polity, thereby turning their subordination and marginalization into an animated and open-ended political struggle. For instance, in their recent work Isin and Nyers (2014) redefine citizenship “as an ‘institution’ mediating rights between the subjects of politics and the polity to which these subjects belong” (Isin & Nyers, 2014, p. 1; emphasis in the original). As they explicate, by “institution” they do not simply mean an institutional organization but “a broader conception of processes through which something is enacted, created, and rendered relatively durable and stable but still contestable, surprising, and inventive” (Isin & Nyers, 2014, p. 1). Moreover, for them “polity” is not restricted to the state “as the sole source for recognizing and legislating rights” (Isin & Nyers, 2014, p. 1); rather, it encompasses “many overlapping and conflicting polities (city, region, state, international)...[wherein] struggles about authority in spaces and times that are autonomous, yet implicated, in the space of the dominant polity of the state” take place (Isin & Nyers, 2014, pp. 8–9). Lastly, they deliberately use “the subjects of politics” rather than “citizens” as the agents who enact or perform citizenship “because not all political subjects will have the designation of citizens” (Isin & Nyers, 2014, p. 1). As they conclude, “whether certain political subjects can make claims to being, or constitute themselves as, citizens is an important aspect of the politics of citizenship or politics for citizenship” (Isin & Nyers, 2014, p. 1; emphasis in the original). In other words, the very process by which excluded subjects contest or negotiate their inclusion and belonging transforms themselves into political claimants of rights as they enact the political subjectivity of citizenship. This dynamic underlines what Étienne Balibar calls the “permanent reinvention” of citizenship that reconfigures the boundaries/borders of inclusion and exclusion in democratic politics (Balibar, 2004, p. 10; Isin & Nyers, 2014, p. 6).

This critical perspective, which views political subjects’ reinvention of citizenship as proceeding through the democratic claiming of rights (Isin, 2017), finds a parallel in the literatures on urban democratic citizenship, perhaps most ostensibly shown in the works of James Holston who has examined how the urban poor in the global south “organize movements of insurgent citizenship to confront the entrenched regime of citizen inequality...as city regions become crowded with marginalized citizens and noncitizens who contest their exclusions” (Holston, 2009, pp. 245–246). As Holston writes, “the result is an entanglement of democracy with its counters, in which new kinds of urban citizens arise to expand democratic citizenships and new forms of urban violence and inequality erode them” (Holston, 2009, p. 246). In all, both Isin and Nyers’ critical citizenship studies approach and Holston’s urban citizenship framework address how excluded subjects bear democratic agency to stage citizenship and claim rights vis-à-vis different forms of polities, thus destabilizing the dominant political regime of citizenship.

Yet to the extent that this democratic articulation and documentation of insurgent citizenship is critically valuable and necessary, it also remains the case that sovereign power and capitalist power have combined to constrict the political possibilities and viable spaces of democratic insurgence in many polities, resulting in what Sheldon Wolin (1994) observes as the rare, episodic moments of “fugitive democracy” in a seemingly prevailing state of “neoliberal impasse” (Aslam, 2017). In this context, an exclusive focus on the contestatory formation of insurgent politics can miss how subjects lacking access, resources, and/or opportunities to enact urban democratic citizenship in their residing cities may resort to informal and surprising ways to reinvent spaces of inclusion and rights that do not involve direct political assertions of citizenship.

To illustrate one occurrence of such reinvention of urban citizenship, I examine how immigrant participants in the Asian restaurant industry in Southern California—who are afflicted by an ongoing socio-historical process of differential racialization that turns them into “perpetual foreigners” in the US democracy and who live in suburban regions that used to be white conservative strongholds—seek to fulfill their aspiration for inclusion and belonging through the everyday production and consumption of ethnic food. I name this improvisational practice corporeal citizenship to delineate both the material and psychosomatic dimensions of inclusion, belonging, and “rights” that immigrants actualize through their everyday participation in the suburban ethnic restaurants. As a term, corporeal citizenship underscores how these immigrants’ actualization of inclusion and belonging is intimately tied to their affective feelings, psychosomatic wellbeing, and material attainment. As such, unlike urban citizenship, corporeal citizenship does not resort to a frontal attack on the state/city but rather utilizes the existing circuits of global capitalism (i.e., entrepreneurship, labor, consumption) for its own realization and expansion.

Conceived in this way, corporeal citizenship can be understood as carrying instrumental qualities as it is situated and manifested in everyday life under global capitalism. Previously, Teena Gabrielson and Katelyn Parady have used the term of corporeal citizenship to advocate for a vision of environmental justice that is intrinsically and non-instrumentally attuned to the “co-constitutive interactions between human bodies and the nonhuman natural world” (Gabrielson & Parady, 2010, p. 383). While their ecological model offers valuable normative insights, they nonetheless render a notion of corporeal citizenship that is unaffected by the instrumental effects of global capitalism. I depart from this non-instrumental conception by situating corporeal citizenship in the historical-material context of global capitalism, suggesting that we cannot untangle the ways in which immigrant inclusion, belonging, and “rights” are filtered through and intertwined with elements of capitalist instrumentality in contemporary postindustrial suburbs. It is important to

note, however, that such an instrumental contamination “does not so much override the possibility of resistance as create a ‘strategic field’ that sets the possibilities and limits of a space of political calculations and determines the possible range of actions” for immigrant and minority empowerment in neoliberal times (Lee, 2019, p. 25). For many immigrant and ethnic subjects residing in suburban California, ethnic restaurants have emerged to be such a strategic field for their improvisation of “nonexistent rights.”

Here, the idea of nonexistent rights needs elaboration. Rancière has previously used the notion of “the staging of a nonexistent right” to characterize the ways in which subjects without formal status or political standing seek to claim rights in advance of sovereign recognition through democratic contestations (Rancière, 1999, pp. 24–25). While some may refer to the juridical structure of citizenship in arguing that rights must be institutionalized in order to have real meaning and efficacy, Rancière’s insight here is that “citizenship is [also] fundamentally about political subjectivity” (Nyers, 2010, p. 98). Bonnie Honig thus writes that “the practice of taking rights and privileges rather than waiting for them to be granted by a sovereign power is...a quintessentially democratic practice” (Honig, 2001, p. 99). When excluded people engage in such practice, “new rights and standing are taken and then recognized only later (if at all)” (Honig, 2001, p. 100). As Honig furthers:

We have here a story of illegitimate demands made by people with no standing to make them, a story of people so far outside the circle of who ‘counts’ that they cannot make claims within the existing frames of claim making. They make room for themselves by staging nonexistent rights, and by way of such stagings, sometimes, new rights, powers, and visions come into being. (Honig, 2001, p. 101)

From this vantage point, taking rights and liberties (before their codification in law) is an essential feature of democratic politics as excluded subjects enact the political subjectivity of citizenship to contest and redraw the boundaries of inclusion/exclusion and citizens/noncitizens.

Expanding on Rancière and Honig, I suggest that immigrant participants in the Asian restaurant industry can also be understood as drawing on their political subjectivity to acquire nonexistent rights; however, they do so not necessarily through public democratic contestations but rather through their ordinary involvement in the everyday activities/operations of ethnic restaurants. Through their culinary enterprise, labor production, and cultural consumption, immigrants improvise and actualize a series of nonexistent rights that are not yet existing or codified in law, such as the rights to enterprise, work, consumption, residency, affective inclusion, biological wellbeing, and sociocultural belong. While a citizen’s general right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness

can seemingly compass the nonexistent rights that I catalogue here (e.g., the right to liberty may include the right to work and consumption, and the right to the pursuit of happiness may well include the right to affective inclusion, biological wellbeing, and sociocultural belonging), these rights remain “nonexistent” in the sense that they are not constitutionally protected or guaranteed by the liberal state, whether for formal citizens or noncitizens (e.g., although citizens can work and reside in the United States, they cannot legally claim a right to work or right to residency that can be guaranteed should they become unemployed or homeless).

Some may thus question the efficacy of these nonexistent rights, arguing that they can at best furnish a sense of inclusion but cannot provide meaningful protection against sovereign power or capitalist power. However, I wish to note that insofar as these improvisations of nonexistent rights achieve similar results “without formal state codification of such rights,” they are not abstract or empty but can actually be understood as “a de facto actualization of...rights” in the concrete circumstances of these immigrants’ everyday life (Cheah, 2006, p. 248). More important, as I suggest in the final section, immigrants’ improvisation of nonexistent rights further points us to several political strategic possibilities to expand and transform the existing lexicon and distributive domain of rights for all citizens and residents alike. Given this, I do not limit my discussion to nonstatus immigrants, for my argument is that both documented and undocumented immigrants constitute the everyday spaces of ethnic restaurants where they perform for us how nonexistent rights are actualized by informal means, and how such appropriation has the potential to expand and transform the existing politics of rights.

3. Immigrants Improvising Nonexistent Rights in Suburban California’s Ethnic Restaurants

3.1. Contextualizing Multiethnic Suburbs in Southern California

As the state with the most foreign-born residents in the United States, California has long been an immigrant gateway, with Los Angeles County in Southern California being considered “one of the most ethnically diverse places” in the country (Li, 2009, p. 2). Focusing on the ethnic Chinese in Southern California, geographer Wei Li has documented the suburbanization process in which, since the 1960s, not only did “many upwardly mobile Chinese...[move] out of Chinatown and adjacent inner-city neighborhoods to the suburbs in search for better housing, neighborhoods, and schools,” but “a new trend began occurring during the same time period, which saw many new immigrants with higher educational attainment, professional occupations, and financial resources settling directly into the suburbs without ever experiencing life in the inner city” (Li, 2009, p. 2). This is certainly not a linear and homogeneous trajectory. Due to global

economic restructuring as well as changing geopolitics and national immigration policies, the immigrants who increasingly join this ethnic suburbanization in Southern California are “a heterogeneous, highly polarized population in terms of educational, occupational, and economic status” (Li, 2009, p. 2), with Asians and Latinxs hailing from different countries of origins being the two major non-White racial groups populating many residential, commercial and civic spaces of the region (Cheng, 2013).

I conducted my field research on the Asian restaurant industry in this highly heterogeneous and stratified region, with an investigative focus on the multiethnic suburbs that have changed (or are in the process of changing) the cultural-political landscape of what used to be a predominantly white suburban topography. My fieldwork sites cover numerous cities in Orange County (e.g., Anaheim, Costa Mesa, Fountain Valley, Fullerton, Garden Grove, Huntington Beach, Irvine, Tustin, Westminster, Yorba Linda) and Los Angeles County (e.g., Cerritos, Rowland Heights). Many are edge cities with a high growth and concentration of business, shopping and entertainment centers in the midst of residential communities. More prominently, these suburban sites in varying degrees constitute what Li (2009) famously coins as *ethnoburbs*, which refers to suburban residential areas and commercial districts with significant clusters of ethnic minority populations. Ethnoburban residents tend to be more affluent and heterogeneous in terms of race, ethnicity, and class compared to more traditional types of ethnic communities such as ghettos and enclaves. One of the most notable signs of ethnoburbs is the vibrant concentration of ethnic restaurants that cater to the immigrant and ethnic minority residents in the suburban communities. In fact, Southern California is particularly reputable among Asian Americans and immigrants for its vibrant Asian restaurant scene that offers a wide spectrum of “authentic” (that is, non-Americanized) Asian cuisines.

For the present study, forty participants, both Asian and Latinx, were recruited for qualitative interviews between 2015 and 2017 (the names of the interviewees are altered for the purpose of privacy/anonymity; the restaurants identified remain original in their names). As I used to reside in Southern California and have acquaintances who used to or are currently working in the ethnic restaurant industry, I used snowball method to approach the subjects of my study. I also visited different ethnic restaurants in the area and inquired people about their interest in participating in the study; along with this on-site approach, flyers were posted in certain commercial/shopping plazas where the restaurants were located for further recruitment. Interviews usually lasted between forty-five to ninety minutes and were conducted primarily in English, but Chinese and Spanish were also used depending on the linguistic backgrounds of the participants. As I am natively fluent in Mandarin Chinese, it facilitated my interviews with some immigrant participants from China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong who lacked fluency in speaking English or who simply preferred to

converse in their native language. Sometimes a mixture of English and Chinese were used to allow the participants to best express themselves. I also hired a Spanish-speaking graduate assistant who helped me conduct and translate interviews with a number of non-English speaking Latinx immigrants who work in the Asian restaurants. While I did ask the participants to share information on their citizenship status, I did not ask them to specify their migration status as a way to further protect their anonymity and avoid causing any potential fear or discomfort (this was especially relevant for a number of Latinx kitchen workers who had reservation about participating in the study, which I suspect had to do with their tight work schedule and their concern about the intent of the interview in the context of immigration raids). However, some participants did reveal information on their migration status during the course of the interviews as they narrated their own life experiences.

Importantly, many of the cities in my fieldwork, especially those in Orange County, have long been conservative bastions in California with a Republican base that is heavily white (e.g., Yorba Linda has long been known as the birthplace of Richard M. Nixon). While the demographics are changing in the region with the influx of Asian and Latinx immigrants, these ethnic subjects continue to occupy racialized positions within the process of global economic restructuring that underpins the development of multiethnic suburbs in Southern California. As Wendy Cheng observes in her study in the San Gabriel Valley (SGV), a well-known principal valley in the region that harbors a number of booming ethnoburbs:

Asian and Latina/o immigrants are directly implicated in this latest round of global capitalist restructuring, which seeks a “two-prong” solution via technological innovation and cheap labor: Asian immigrants participate in both parts of the solution, furnishing highly educated professionals in technical fields as well as joining their Latina/o immigrant counterparts in low-wage jobs. This is true in the SGV, in which Latina/o immigrants work alongside Chinese and other Asian immigrants in the kitchens of ethnic-Chinese-owned restaurants, garment factories, and manufacturing firms. (Cheng, 2013, p. 6)

Furthermore, their economic positioning in this neoliberal restructuring is accompanied by their racialization as (different kinds of) “foreigners” that indexes their intricate social, cultural and political inclusion/exclusion vis-à-vis US citizenship. As Cheng furthers:

With regard to Asian Americans and Latinas/os, one must also pay attention to differential racialization vis-à-vis Asian American model minority discourse and the ambiguously white status of Mexican Americans (referring to both day-to-day experiences of “passing” and historical and legal factors). These differentiated statuses of relative valorization coexist with a

“forever foreign” racialization of Asian Americans—stemming from a long history of exclusion from citizenship, civic participation, and even the nation itself—and a combined “foreign” and devalored class stigma for Mexican Americans, whose position in the racial hierarchy shifted over the course of the last century to reflect many Mexican immigrants’ niche in the American economy as cheap labor. All these discourses paper over the tremendous ethnic, class, political, generational, and racial (in the case of Latinas/os) heterogeneity of US Asians and Latinas/os—yet all “Asians” and “Latinas/os” must contend with the effects of the most salient racialized meanings. (Cheng, 2013, p. 15)

This daily “struggle for racial inclusion and belonging, or racial citizenship” (Tsuda, 2016, p. 135) for the Asian and Latinx populations given their racially marked status as “foreigners” is specifically manifested in the development of ethnoburbs, which has led to pushback from white residents “as large numbers of nonwhite immigrants ‘intruded’ into the traditional turf of white Americans—the suburb—and developed their own suburban residential neighborhoods and business districts” (Li, 2009, p. 93). As Li observes, “public discourse concerning cultural and political concerns, economic development, and even religious issues became tinged with racial rhetoric and nativist sentiment,” and immigrant/minority residents, businesses, “political candidates, and religious institutions became the racialized targets of resentment” (Li, 2009, p. 93).

3.2. Immigrants Enacting Corporeal Citizenship in Ethnic Restaurants

So how do nonwhite immigrants claim rights and inclusion in the context of conservative cities that may value the economic benefits that they bring (i.e., capital investment, professional-technological expertise, rising property values, low-wage labor) but do not welcome their “intrusive” racial presence that threatens the existing social, cultural and political landscape of white suburbia? To be sure, public protests continue to be an important democratic political channel for immigrants living and working in suburban California to create “spaces of insurgent citizenship...to avoid, resist, and subvert the dominant discourses of the state and capital” (McCann, 2002, p. 78). Two recent events that took place in Orange County in late 2018—the rally by the Vietnamese community in Westminster’s Little Saigon to protest the Trump administration’s attempt to deport Vietnamese refugees and the picket protests staged by immigrant hotel workers represented by Unite Here Local 11 to demand higher wages in the Anaheim Resort—can be considered such examples of (sub)urban democratic citizenship vis-à-vis the state and capital, respectively. But while we need to continue preserving and expanding such democratic spaces, it is also the case that the hap-

penings of such political insurgences currently remain irregular and sporadic, and it opens up a question as to whether the mass immigrant populations in multiethnic suburbs (including those who have gone on strikes or participated in protests) enact citizenship strictly in this collectively insurgent way. As I suggest, in their everyday life, many immigrant participants in the Asian restaurant industry already seek to improvise and enact what I discussed earlier as corporeal citizenship to fulfill their material, affective, and bodily inclusion and belonging through the production and consumption of ethnic food. In doing so, they can be considered as renarrating the right to the city by recreating their own rights to participation and appropriation.

At the most basic level, corporeal citizenship in Asian restaurants is enacted through the fulfillment of material needs encapsulated by the realization of the “American dream.” Driven by capitalist ideology, the idea of the American dream captures how a citizen or resident is able to realize and optimize the liberal right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness which, in the most concrete terms, bespeaks the actualization of the (non-existent) rights to enterprise, work, consumption, and residency that all citizens and residents need to engage/access in one way or another to survive and live in capitalist democracy. Indeed, many immigrant restaurateurs express how opening a restaurant allows them to enterprise and build an economic foundation in their newly adopted homeland. For instance, Debra Chou, a Taiwanese restaurateur who lived in Japan for a number of years before immigrating to the United States, used the Chinese phrase *zhagen*, meaning “establishing roots,” to describe how opening an Asian restaurant has enabled her to have stable earnings in helping her and her family realize their American dream.

Jackie Hwang, the owner of a well-known Asian bakery chain store in Southern California that has branches across several multiethnic suburbs in the SGV and Orange County, used the Chinese idiom *min yi shi wei tian* (meaning literally “food is the God of the people”) to point to the longstanding Chinese cultural sentiment, “the top priority for human beings is to feed themselves” (Li, 2009, p. 108), as her motivation in entering the Asian restaurant industry. In using this phrase, Jackie drew on the traditional Chinese longing for gourmet food as a cultural gateway to envision and establish an ethnic consumer market for the food products/services that she provides (on her estimate, about 90% of her customers are Asian, and 10% are non-Asian). Having a steady stream of Asian patrons who frequent her ethnic eateries enables Jackie to actualize her right to enterprise as an immigrant. In fact, Jackie expressed that as an immigrant restaurateur, not only is she able to financially support herself and her family, but she also helps increase the tax revenues for the state and offers job opportunities for those who work in her establishments. In other words, Jackie sees her ethnic culinary enterprise as allowing her to help many other citizens and residents realize

their American dream and, by implication, their nonexistent rights to work, consumption, and residency.

Patrick Nguyen, co-owner of the family-owned Vietnamese restaurant, Pho Saigon, further offered his perspectives as a refugee:

Our family came here as refugee like many other Vietnamese where the father was either working or joining South Vietnam government or army. After the Vietnam War ended in April 1975, the communist sent who had worked or was in the army of South Vietnam to jail. So my father escaped by boat and sponsored the family to the United States. It was tough for us at the beginning as English is not our original language. I believe all other immigrants or refugees have the same difficulty. But the United States is the country that has a lot of opportunity for who has talent or is willing to work hard to succeed.

He continued:

Doing business is one of my dreams since I was a teenager. I entered the restaurant business because my relatives who just came from Vietnam had owned the restaurant there. When I see them working for other restaurant owners, I felt like why we do not do it for our own? And then we decided to open it. It was my first time to do business, so I had to learn many things. I believe restaurant business is one of the hardest industries and long hours work, but earn less. I did not believe this before, but after entering it, I now understand that feeling.

Here, Patrick's narratives underscore how, while ethnic restaurateurs can realize the rights to enterprise, work, consumption, and residency in "the land of the free," one has to earn them through hard work and labor, and even then, in their eyes, the material benefits they obtain can be disproportional to the amount of efforts they put in.

For restaurant workers who engage in even more intensive levels of bodily labor, the theme about working hard to fulfill their economic and material needs is even more apparent, but their narratives can also exude a sense of pride in their ability to chase the American dream and earn the nonexistent rights to work, consumption, and residency. Thus, when asked how life has been for him in the United States, Camilo, a Mexican immigrant who worked as a dishwasher and busboy at a Korean BBQ restaurant in Fullerton, responded:

Good, somewhat good. I've learned to take opportunity. I've worked. I've given it my all for what I've wanted. What I've wanted I get. I've liked being here...I have my expenses, but I try to save and send back to Mexico...to all of my family.

When asked if he thought he was realizing the American dream, Camilo stated: "I think so. Working, everything is

possible. In Mexico I never imagined I was going to buy a car, a house. I think so." He also acknowledged Asian restaurants for playing a role in helping him chase and achieve this American dream: "Like, how they help you find a job. They pay for your work. If you didn't have the work, you wouldn't do it."

Similarly, Caesar, a Mexican cook and food preparation worker who has had experiences working at a number of different Asian restaurants (including Korean, Vietnamese, Japanese, and Chinese), also noted how working in these establishments has enabled him to earn a living, raise a family with four children, own a car, and rent an apartment. Caesar, in fact, harbors an aspiration of co-opening a Japanese restaurant with his father and brother someday by pulling together everything they have learned from their prior experiences of working as cooks and sushi men at a Japanese restaurant in Tustin. This entrepreneurial aspiration, if accomplished, can further optimize his realization of the American dream.

It is notable, however, that for many ethnic restaurateurs and workers, the realization of corporeal citizenship in Asian restaurants is not limited to the actualization of tangible material benefits but also carries a deeper, intangible dimension of affective inclusion, psychosomatic wellbeing, and sociocultural belonging. For instance, Richard, the 60-year-old chef-owner of Chef Chen in Irvine, started his culinary career as a restaurant apprentice in Taiwan when he was fourteen and has been in the restaurant business in the United States since he came here in 1979. He indicated that his culinary philosophy is to provide his Chinese/Taiwanese customers with the "warmth" of *jiaxiang wei*, meaning "home-town taste," and to allow his non-Chinese customers to enjoy "real" Chinese food (which he contrasted with Americanized Chinese food such as Kung Pao Chicken or Broccoli Beef, even though his restaurant also offers these dishes as a way to appeal to customers with different tastes). He derives special meaning from his personal mission to passing on the culinary heritage of Chinese food that was taught to him when he was an apprentice in Taiwan, and feels honored when his customers recognize and affirm the quality and value of his cultural dishes. In fact, he feels proud "when everyone knows they need to come to Chef Chen if they want real Chinese food." His wife, Vivian, who co-operates the restaurant, added that their venue has been featured in the local mainstream magazine and newspaper such as Orange County Business Journal and Orange County Register. Such recognition and affirmation from his customers and local media bolster Richard's sense of affective inclusion and belonging in America. For Richard, food is not "just food"; rather, food is important in creating an affective atmosphere imbued with feelings of warmth, comfort, and delight that intimately contributes to his immigrant customers' psychosomatic wellbeing. By fulfilling immigrants' nostalgic longing, Richard said, "ethnic food can do the work of drawing crowds and keeping immigrants in the area," which is good for the community and busi-

ness. He takes pride in his culinary skills and enterprise in helping provide a dining environment where his immigrant customers can acquire a sense of sociocultural belonging, which in turn contributes to his own sense of sociocultural belonging as an immigrant entrepreneur.

Patrick, the co-owner of Pho Saigon mentioned earlier, echoes Richard on the psychosomatic and socio-cultural benefits provided by ethnic restaurants. When asked whether ethnic food is important for immigrants, Patrick stated:

I think it is important to have a variety of ethnic food as the immigrants get used to their countries' food and it is hard to change that habits or tastes. Besides that, I believe for other immigrants who live in the same region should also like the ethnic food as they have or use similar ingredients....American food is too simple and I would say not really healthy and tasty to me....For me, I love to eat Asian food, especially Vietnamese food, so I mentally love to see Asian restaurant wherever I go, and I believe many others also have the same thought as I do. It makes America a more interesting place to live, especially for immigrants. We have a chance to taste different foods without traveling across the world to do so.

Some immigrant workers also accentuate the affective aspect of their labor and work environment that contributes to their own sense of inclusion and belonging in the community. For instance, Phoebe, who works as a server at a Japanese restaurant in Fountain Valley, commented that ethnic food is very important in helping immigrants gradually integrate into their newly adopted homeland. As a worker in an Asian restaurant, she is glad to play the role of delivering the kind of familiar comfort food that can “help soothe immigrants’ fears in a new place and provide spiritual nourishment as they move into an unfamiliar environment.” For her, many Asian restaurants in the community also serve as meeting places and informational platforms for immigrants to share and exchange resources, information, and referrals as they go about their daily life in the cities, which further generates a sense of community and belonging for all parties involved—whether for the customers, workers, or restaurateurs. By immersing herself in such an environment, it activates Phoebe’s own sense of affective inclusion and sociocultural belonging.

For other workers like Antonio who works around the oven as a group leader of the bread department at the Taiwan-originated 85C Bakery Café in Irvine, being in a work environment that has personnel from multiethnic and multilingual backgrounds can further generate an affective sense of cross-cultural inclusion and belonging. In Antonio’s words, “I think this [experience of working at an ethnic restaurant] is actually one of the most few ways to try to interact as a culture. I think this is definitely something that can break down the boundaries and the stereotypes that people assume about a cul-

ture.” When asked if he has encountered any specific experiences that broke down the barriers and stereotypes, Antonio responded:

I actually see it everyday, you know. I see people like, from my culture (Mexican), interacting with people from like, Vietnamese. Something you wouldn’t normally see it everyday, like they like to talk to each other, they get along. Something like people would say, oh, you know like, you don’t see it out on the street, but you see it here. I see it personally, like, they (Vietnamese workers) take the time to learn our language as Mexicans, and we take the time to try to learn a little bit about their language...so they won’t just be talking among themselves, you know. They try to learn it so they can interact with others.

What is significant in Antonio’s narratives is how his multiethnic coworkers generate their own community of (and rights to) affective inclusion and sociocultural belonging at the workplace as a way to realize corporeal citizenship.

In addition to restaurant owners and workers, immigrant consumers best exemplify how exercising their nonexistent right to cultural consumption can be a way to generate and actualize their psychosomatic wellbeing in American suburbs. This is best illustrated by how, when asked to rate how unbearable they would feel if they were to live in a place without any Asian restaurants on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the most unbearable, many immigrant customers gave a rating of 1 or 2, with comments such as:

It’d be really unbearable because it’s the kind of food I have been accustomed to since childhood; if I don’t have access to it I’d be in anguish. (Interview with Chia Ling)

I don’t have high tolerance of American food, so if there is no Asian restaurant near me, I would not be able to stand it and I can’t imagine what it’d be like. (Interview with Ru Yu)

Asian food is more diverse and complex and there are many dishes that you can’t cook yourself, so it’d be much more convenient to dine out at Asian restaurants if you’d like to eat Asian food that is authentic and of good quality. (Interview with Katie)

Yumi, a senior immigrant living in Huntington Beach, remarked that she often dines out at Asian restaurants for family and social gatherings, and one thing she insists on as a customer is that the food dishes provided by the selected restaurants need to be authentic and “taste right”—meaning that they need to be consistent with the hometown tastes as much as possible—something she and her immigrant relatives/friends highly value at an affective, bodily, and sociocultural level.

4. Why Does Corporeal Citizenship Matter? The Resistant and Political Implications of Nonexistent Rights

Recalling that the Lefebvrian vision of the right to the city operates through the urban residents' rights to participation and appropriation in an oppositional stance vis-à-vis the state and capital, my above analysis shows how immigrant residents in suburban California can be understood as renarrating this democratic framework of urban citizenship by using the global circuits of neoliberal capitalism (i.e., entrepreneurship, labor, and consumption) to improvise and engender their own material, affective, and bodily inclusion, belonging, and "rights" in their everyday life. These immigrants perform citizenship in their own ways not by avowedly "making rights claims" (Isin, 2017, p. 501), but by co-creating an ethnic culinary economy that allows them to "feel like citizens" in their community space where they can work, cook, consume, eat, chat, and associate with others without feeling like racialized foreigners. This actualization of corporeal citizenship through ethnic restaurants suggests that for many immigrant and ethnic subjects living in multiethnic suburbs, their ways to withstand racialized exclusion and to survive, contribute and participate as "citizens" in an existential sense are often channeled through the existing urban structures of entrepreneurial and consumerist capitalism. This bespeaks the limitation of corporeal citizenship but also its elastic political potential, because for many immigrants operating in the global circuits of neoliberal capitalism, citizenship no longer just means "the right to have rights" (pace Arendt, 1951) or even "the right to claim rights" (pace Isin & Nyers, 2014), but also the right to *reinvent ways* of claiming rights.

To be sure, this is by no means a rosy picture. As Li observes: "The contemporary integrated ethnic economy comes closer to observing the typical capitalist norms of minimizing costs and maximizing profits, and as a consequence there are overlapping racial and class tensions and conflicts within, as well as between, ethnic groups" (Li, 2009, p. 24). Indeed, narratives of interethnic and interclass conflicts as well as entrepreneurial challenges, labor disputes and consumer complaints abound in my own field interviews. There is also the critical question of *differential* realization of corporeal citizenship among immigrant participants given the internal class-ethnic-occupational hierarchy within the industry (e.g., a restaurateur is likely to realize more bundles of nonexistent rights and to a greater degree compared to a kitchen worker). Moreover, one should not lose sight of the structural white/Western hegemony that all immigrants still operate in and the racializing pushback against the Asian and Latinx "invasion" from the white nativist community.

But perhaps the most critical question here is whether these immigrants are simply reproducing a compliant notion of the neoliberal citizen without engaging in any democratic contestation and political demands vis-à-vis the sovereign state. To put it another way, why

does corporeal citizenship matter if it does not appear to be challenging the existing power structures? As I suggest here, given that immigrants' corporeal citizenship does not emanate from an oppositional stance against the state and capital, its resistant and political implications can easily appear unseen or imperceptible. It requires us to shed the usual straight lens of seeing resistance as *immediately* or *directly* oppositional to take on a more panoramic—that is, *broader, long-term, nonlinear, and open-ended*—horizon in appreciating both the milieu and myriad of the resistant and political implications of nonexistent rights. In the remaining space below, I argue that the formation of immigrants' corporeal citizenship in ethnic restaurants actually signals three directions/paths to destabilize existing power structures and further democratic transformation over the long run.

First, the most "immediate" but largely imperceptible political effect of corporeal citizenship is its cumulative, cross-generational accrual of empowerment for immigrants and their descendants vis-à-vis the conservative bloc of US democracy. By seeing resistant signs only in the most visible and direct political actions, we lose sight of and fail to appreciate the kind of ongoing and enduring work immigrants are doing in their everyday practices to sustain, nourish and enrich both of their own and their descendants' corporeal life in the meantime so that they can exert resistant and political impacts in the long run. The closest example takes place precisely in suburban California with the surprise victory of the Democratic Party in the 2018 congressional midterm elections in Orange County, where it won four Republican-held congressional seats in this long-standing conservative fortress. This reflects not only "a nearly 40-year rise in the number of immigrants, non-white residents and college graduates that has transformed this iconic American suburb into a Democratic outpost" (Nagourney & Gebeloff, 2018), but it also signals at a deeper level how the changing sociocultural landscape of the region, such as the immigrant-run auto body shops, tax preparation services, banks, real estate firms, doctors' offices, hair salons, gift shops, supermarkets, and restaurants, furnishes a durable stronghold of corporeal citizenship that empowers ethnic/immigrant subjects materially, affectively and psychosomatically to hang on and live on in their residing cities so that they can build on their everyday acquirement of nonexistent rights to further exert their wider social, cultural and political influences through succeeding generations.

In fact, while I noted earlier that immigrants have been able to actualize their inclusion and rights in an informal space that the sovereign power does not recognize, the recent anti-immigration rampage pursued by the Trump administration from the travel ban, family separation policies, to the construction of the border wall may well have signaled what is not said: the sovereign power's implicit awareness of and growing alarm over the long-term (political) threat posed by undocumented immigrants' improvisation and appropriation of nonex-

istent rights as they go about their daily life by way of working, eating, consuming, residing, and building a life here (even without their taking on visible political actions) that deeply confounds the boundaries between citizens and noncitizens and destabilizes the hegemony of white America. It is also important to add that the source of this cumulative “threat” of immigrant-minority empowerment comes not only from undocumented immigrants but also from those with legal status, for they together build the cultural-material environment of everyday places like ethnic restaurants that socializes the immigrant participants to acquire nonexistent rights through the daily practices of entrepreneurship, labor, and consumption. The cumulative, cross-generational accrual of immigrant-minority empowerment that evokes the backlash from the conservative bloc of the state and civil society is reason enough to continue expanding such everyday spaces to keep on sustaining and reviving immigrants’ corporeal citizenship.

Second, while immigrants’ improvisation of nonexistent rights does not directly make demands on the state, the fact that they can be understood as trying to actualize them in forms of the rights to enterprise, work, consumption, residency, affective inclusion, biological well-being, and sociocultural belong nonetheless signals a political direction for us to rethink the very meaning of rights not as abstract juridical construct but as something that can be concretely and meaningfully lived and realized on the ground. For instance, what does the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness mean if the people do not have the *actual* rights to work, consumption, residency, affective inclusion, biological well-being, and sociocultural belonging that are constitutionally protected in a democracy (such that some need to improvise/actualize them in their own informal ways)? Though indirectly, immigrants’ improvisation of nonexistent rights both reminds and performs for us what kinds of rights actually matter to people that we may want to protect and make realizable in lived reality. This would entail democratic actions on our part to demand the state to both expand and concretize the existing lexicon of rights and explore ways to enable and assist people (whether citizens or residents) to *actually* realize these rights. In fact, if we want these rights to be meaningful, we may consider, for instance, whether the right to work ought to entail the right to work in a diverse, inclusive and healthy environment, and whether the right to consumption may well entail the right to culturally rich and environmentally sustainable consumption. In other words, our open discussion about nonexistent rights can serve as a first step for us to engage in popular discourse and democratic dialogue on why we need to—and how we can—turn many not-yet-existing rights into existing, actualizable, and meaningful rights through the state.

Lastly, while we want to continue pressing the state through democratic politics, the fact that immigrants’ improvisation of nonexistent rights takes place at commercial sites such as ethnic restaurants signals yet another

strategic possibility for us. Specifically, we may also consider going *around* the state to reach out to the innumerable everyday commercial and civic entities located at the intersections of market and civil society and reposition them as alternative sites of “governance” that can function as institutional distributors/dispensers of an even more expanded list of nonexistent rights that allow immigrants, minorities, and other subordinate subjects to actualize inclusion, belonging, and justice. Ethnic restaurant is certainly such a site, and we can also consider places such as the university that can take on the role of sanctuary campus to shield undocumented members of the campus community from deportation and provide financial aid and scholarship to undocumented students in helping them acquire/actualize their “right to education.” This is not to replace the sovereign role of the state to distribute rights, but to enlist the support of other institutional entities besides the state that can empower excluded subjects in *de facto* ways through institutionally authorized or dispensed rights.

In all, immigrants’ seemingly apolitical corporeal citizenship in (sub)urban spaces has surprising and far-reaching political implications if we open ourselves up to a broader, nonlinear, and panoramic view of social contestation and resistance. The three pathways indicated here can be pursued simultaneously for us to maximize their long-term effects in actualizing democratic inclusion and transformation.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to the Institute for Humanities Research at Arizona State University for providing me with a seed grant that supported the fieldwork for this project. I thank the respondents for sharing their experiences and perspectives in the study and Martín Jacinto for his assistance with fieldwork interview and translation. I also thank the three anonymous reviewers and the editors of the thematic issue for their insightful comments and suggestions.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

References

- Arendt, H. (1951). *The origins of totalitarianism*. New York, NY: Harcourt Brace.
- Aslam, A. (2017). *Ordinary democracy: Sovereignty and citizenship beyond the neoliberal impasse*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Balibar, É. (2004). *We, the people of Europe? Reflections on transnational citizenship*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Cheah, P. (2006). *Inhuman conditions: On cosmopolitanism and human rights*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- Cheng, W. (2013). *The Changs next door to the Díazes: Remapping race in suburban California*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Gabrielson, T., & Parady, K. (2010). Corporeal citizenship: Rethinking green citizenship through the body. *Environmental Politics*, 19(3), 374–391.
- Holston, J. (2009). Insurgent citizenship in an era of global urban peripheries. *City & Society*, 21(2), 245–267.
- Honig, B. (2001). *Democracy and the foreigner*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Isin, E. F. (2000). Introduction: Democracy, citizenship and the city. In E. F. Isin (Ed.), *Democracy, citizenship and the global city* (pp. 1–21). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Isin, E. F. (2017). Performative citizenship. In A. Shachar, R. Bauböck, I. Bloemraad, & M. Vink (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of citizenship* (pp. 500–523). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Isin, E. F., & Nyers, P. (2014). Introduction: Globalizing citizenship studies. In E. F. Isin & P. Nyers (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of global citizenship studies* (pp. 1–11). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Lee, C. T. (2014). Decolonizing global citizenship. In E. F. Isin & P. Nyers (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of global citizenship studies* (pp. 75–85). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Lee, C. T. (2019). Citizenship. In J. M. Ryan (Ed.), *Core concepts in sociology* (pp. 23–26). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Lefebvre, H. (1996). *Wring on cities*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Li, W. (2009). *Ethnoburb: The new ethnic community in urban America*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press.
- McCann, E. (2002). Space, citizenship, and the right to the city: A brief overview. *GeoJournal*, 58, 77–79.
- Mitchell, D. (2005). The S.U.V. model of citizenship: Floating bubbles, buffer zones, and the rise of the ‘purely atomic’ individual. *Political Geography*, 24, 77–100.
- Nagourney, A., & Gebeloff, R. (2018, December 31). In Orange County, a Republican fortress turns Democratic. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/31/us/orange-county-republicans-democrats-demographics.html>
- Nyers, P. (2010). Missing citizenship. *International Political Sociology*, 4(1), 95–98.
- Purcell, M. (2002). Excavating Lefebvre: The right to the city and its urban politics of the inhabitant. *GeoJournal*, 58, 99–108.
- Purcell, M. (2003). Citizenship and the right to the global city: Reimagining the capitalist world order. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 27, 564–590.
- Rancière, J. (1999). *Dis-agreement: Politics and philosophy*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Tsuda, T. (2016). *Japanese American ethnicity: In search of heritage and homeland across generations*. New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Varsanyi, M. W. (2006). Interrogating “urban citizenship” vis-à-vis undocumented migration. *Citizenship Studies*, 10, 229–249.
- Wolin, S. (1994). Fugitive democracy. *Constellations*, 1(1), 11–25.
- Young, I. M. (1989). Polity and group difference: A critique of the ideal of universal citizenship. *Ethics*, 99, 250–274.

About the Author



Charles T. Lee is Associate Professor at the School of Social Transformation, Arizona State University. He works at the intersections of political theory, cultural theory, and critical citizenship studies. Using a transdisciplinary approach, his work is broadly concerned with innovative formations of agency and resistance in the global circuits of neoliberal capitalism. He is the author of *Ingenious Citizenship: Recrafting Democracy for Social Change* (Duke University Press, 2016).

Article

‘From Sanctuary to Welcoming Cities’: Negotiating the Social Inclusion of Undocumented Migrants in Liège, Belgium

Sébastien Lambert¹ and Thomas Swerts^{2,*}¹ Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Liège, B-4000 Liège, Belgium; E-Mail: sebastien.lambert@alumni.uliege.be² Department of Public Administration and Sociology, Erasmus School of Social and Behavioural Sciences, Erasmus University Rotterdam, 3062 PA Rotterdam, The Netherlands; E-Mail: swerts@essb.eur.nl

* Corresponding author

Submitted: 30 June 2019 | Accepted: 17 September 2019 | Published: 28 November 2019

Abstract

Cities have become important sites of sanctuary for migrants with a precarious legal status. While many national governments in Europe have adopted restrictive immigration policies, urban governments have undertaken measures to safeguard undocumented residents’ rights. Existing scholarship on sanctuary cities has mostly focused on how cities’ stance against federal immigration policies can be interpreted as urban citizenship. What is largely missing in these debates, however, is a better insight into the role that local civil society actors play in pushing for sanctuary and negotiating the terms of social in- and exclusion. In this article, we rely on a qualitative study of the 2017 Sanctuary City campaign in Liège, Belgium, to argue that power relations between (and among) civil society actors and city officials help to explain why the meaning and inclusiveness of ‘sanctuary’ shifted over time. Initially, radical activists were able to politicize the issue by demanding the social inclusion of the ‘sans-papiers’ through grassroots mobilization. However, the cooptation of the campaign by immigrant rights organizations led to the adoption of a motion wherein the local government depicted the city as a ‘welcoming’ instead of a ‘sanctuary’ city. By showing how immigrant rights professionals sidelined radical activists during the campaign, we highlight the risk of depoliticization when civil society actors decide to cooperate with local governments to extend immigrant rights. We also underline the potential representational gap that emerges when those who are directly implicated, namely undocumented migrants, are not actively involved in campaigns that aim to improve their inclusion.

Keywords

civil society; depoliticization; politicization; right to the city; sanctuary cities; undocumented migration; urban citizenship

Issue

This article is part of the issue “Inclusion through Enacted Citizenship in Urban Spaces” edited by Rachel Kurian (Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands) and Helen Hintjens (Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands)

© 2019 by the authors; licensee Cogitatio (Lisbon, Portugal). This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

1. Introduction

On Thursday, September 14, 2017, a coordinated action by the Belgian NGO Centre National de Coopération au Développement (henceforth CNCD-11.11.11) simultaneously gathered citizen supporters in 51 municipalities across Wallonia and Brussels to demand more welcoming and inclusive municipal policies towards migrants. The campaign had been launched amidst growing concerns over the ‘hostile public opinion’ and repressive migration policies in Belgium. By chanting slo-

gans and holding up signs saying “Make Our Town Hospitable,” citizens tried to pressure their city councils “to undertake action to improve the information for and the reception of migrants, *regardless of their status*” (Commune Hospitalière, 2019; emphasis in original). Over the course of the next months, citizen groups, activists and civil society organizations joined forces to negotiate a draft ‘motion’ with amenable elected officials. On 27 November 2017, the City of Liège became the first major *commune hospitalière*. Nine Brusselian municipalities, the Wallonia–Brussels Federation and the Province

of Luxembourg would follow suit. Towards the end of 2018, State Secretary Theo Francken (N–VA, a Flemish nationalist party) justified the introduction of a daily limit to asylum applications by stating that “we have shown a lot of hospitality over the last years, but of course this needs to stop at some point” (Het Laatste Nieuws, 2018). In direct opposition, the message “for a different migration policy based on hospitality, respect for human rights and solidarity” spread by 66 ‘welcoming’ municipalities and 90 citizen appeals resounded loud and clear (Commune Hospitalière, 2019).

The recent rise of ‘welcoming’ cities in Belgium can be situated in a broader international struggle for the social inclusion of undocumented migrants at the local level. The CNCD-11.11.11 campaigners were in part inspired by the historical precedent set by the ‘Sanctuary Cities’ and ‘No One Is Illegal’ campaigns that had unfolded in the US and Canada since the mid-1980s. Notorious sanctuary cities like New York, Los Angeles and Chicago recently entered the international spotlight when President Trump threatened to cut federal funding if they continued to accommodate undocumented migrants (Savage, 2017). But also in Europe, cities have become important sites of sanctuary for migrants with a precarious legal status. The term ‘sanctuary cities’ generally refers to “policies and practices [that] serve the purpose of accommodating illegalized migrants and refugees in urban communities” (Bauder, 2017, p. 174). It signals the counterweight that urban governments and citizen actors aim to give to the restrictive immigration policies and exclusionary border practices that many national governments in Europe—and elsewhere—have adopted over the last few decades. A notable example from the United Kingdom includes the City of Sanctuary movement that emerged in 2005 in Sheffield, which resulted in the city officially becoming a ‘sanctuary city’ two years later (Squire & Darling, 2013). The Cities of Sanctuary Network now boasts 17 cities and municipalities and local initiatives in more than 70 cities in the UK.

Not surprisingly, researchers in various disciplines have studied the rise of sanctuary cities from different angles. Based on an international comparison, Bauder (2017, p. 180) suggests that existing scholarship largely revolves around legal, discursive, identity-formative, and scalar themes. The legal component of sanctuary focuses on how municipal governments strategically make use of legal and juridical instruments to safeguard the rights of undocumented migrants. The theme of legality is closely related to that of scale, in which scholars explore how cities’ stance against federal immigration policies can be interpreted as urban citizenship (see Varsanyi, 2008). Looking beyond formal interpretations of sanctuary, other authors stress the more informal ways in which sanctuary is symbolically constructed through governmental discourses (see Darling, 2010). Furthermore, urban scholars interpret claims to sanctuary as expressions of undocumented migrants’ struggles over citizenship and the ‘right to the city’ (see Purcell, 2003; Sassen,

1996). Whereas scholarship on formal modes of sanctuary tends to be focused on outcomes like the adoption of local legislation, scholarship on informal modes of sanctuary tends to concentrate on mobilization by advocacy groups and immigrant communities. What is largely missing in this debate, however, is a better insight into the role that local civil society actors play in negotiating sanctuary policies. In particular, we argue that more attention needs to be paid to dynamics of social inclusion and exclusion that characterize the negotiation process.

The remainder of this article is structured as follows. First, we situate our contribution within the emerging literature on sanctuary cities and immigrant rights movements. Second, we briefly situate the 2017 Sanctuary City campaign in Liège that serves as our case. Third, we explain how the meaning of sanctuary shifted due to the dual processes of politicization and depoliticization that unfolded during the Liège campaign. Finally, we argue that the lessons learned from this case study entail broader lessons that can be applied to urban struggles for social inclusion in different contexts.

2. Theorizing Urban Citizenship and Immigrant Rights Movements

2.1. Sanctuary Cities and Urban Citizenship

Cities have become important arenas for the enactment of urban citizenship through the social inclusion of non-citizens like the undocumented (see Bagelman, 2016; Bauder, 2014; Czajka, 2013; Sassen, 1996; Squire & Bagelman, 2012; Varsanyi, 2008). Sanctuary policies are regularly interpreted as expressions of urban citizenship because they safeguard immigrant rights at the city level and often implicate a certain degree of protection against the risk of arrest and deportation. Furthermore, such policies tend to circumscribe the extent to which undocumented city residents can make use of local initiatives in domains like welfare, work, education, culture, transportation and community participation, despite their illegalized status. Scholarship that explores such formal modes of sanctuary tends to underscore its importance by highlighting the shift in power relations that takes place between nation states and (global) cities. While demarcating the terms of belonging and non-belonging used to be the undisputed terrain of the nation-state, cities have increasingly become assertive actors that define citizenship in terms that deviate from national standards (see Ávila, 2014). Since globalization tends to exacerbate the tensions between national and local governments, “local citizenship for undocumented immigrants will continue to be defined, contested, and advocated for within the local sphere” (Villazor, 2010, p. 598). The rise of sanctuary cities thus signals the ability of cities to contest the exclusionary nature of national citizenship and redefine citizenship in a more inclusive manner.

The urban citizenship that sanctuary policies install is enacted legally through the local extension of rights

and discursively by publicly adopting and propagating a welcoming climate towards migrants with a precarious legal status. On the one hand, legal expressions of urban citizenship refer to the ways in which cities strategically use local laws to offer pathways to social inclusion for undocumented migrants (see Varsanyi, 2006; Villazor, 2010). Such laws can range from driver licenses for undocumented migrants, scholarships for college-goers, and the prevention from sharing police databanks with immigration officers to 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' policies (see, e.g., de Graauw, 2016). Whereas the legality of such laws is regularly disputed by federal governments, the law hereby becomes an instrument of cities' emerging activism. On the other hand, sanctuary policies tend to involve discursive expressions of urban citizenship as well. By openly welcoming and acknowledging their rightful presence in the city, cities try to create a climate of refuge, support and relative protection for non-citizens and supporting organizations. In a climate of growing criminalization of immigrants in the public debate, such symbolic declarations can set in motion discursive changes and explicate an alternative vision regarding political membership and belonging (Darling, 2010; Ridgley, 2008).

Yet, sanctuary cities have also been subject of stringent critique. Most notably, federal governments argue that the non-cooperation of local governments severely hampers the roll-out of migration policies. From the other side of the spectrum, activists and civil society actors have criticized existing policies for being nothing more than an 'empty shell.' Bagelman (2013, 2016), for example, argues that sanctuary cities render permanent the waiting that asylum seekers face while trying to remedy their legal situation by indefinitely deferring (and even extending) this waiting. From such a critical perspective, sanctuary cities contribute to rather than contest repressive migration regimes. A proper analysis of whether or not sanctuary fundamentally questions or challenges the dominant logics that underpin national citizenship, is beyond the scope of this article. However, disputes over the political impact of sanctuary signal the need to understand how the 'meaning' of sanctuary is negotiated between actors (see Darling, 2010). We argue that analyzing the inclusionary intentions of sanctuary laws and discourses is insufficient, since negotiating sanctuary often involves the transformation of initially politicizing, egalitarian demands into depoliticized compromises. Furthermore, the important, yet ambiguous role that civil society actors play in negotiating sanctuary policies is all too often overlooked.

2.2. *Immigrant Rights Movements and the Right to the City*

Urban citizenship does not only get enacted formally through local policies, but also informally through the actions undertaken by civil society organizations and immigrant communities. The claims to social inclusion made

by undocumented immigrants and other excluded populations are often interpreted as expressing a 'right to the city' (see Dikeç & Gilbert, 2008; Lefebvre, 1996; Purcell, 2002, 2003). In this respect, Purcell (2002, 2003) argues that while globalization has fundamentally undermined the centrality of the nation state, the structures of political membership have not evolved accordingly. This discrepancy has made cities the primary loci for the materialization of new citizenship claims that raise the question "whose city is it?" (Sassen, 1996, p. 206). These claims are said to communicate what Lefebvre (1996, p. 158) has called the right to the city, referring to "a cry and a demand" that "can only be formulated as a transformed and renewed right to urban life" which "gathers the interests...of the whole society and first of all those who inhabit." The right to the city and its emphasis on inhabitation as a new criterion for political membership resides in its demand for an "urban-hegemonic vision of political membership" that is opposed to the current national hegemony (Purcell, 2002). The struggles of immigrants over citizenship are thereby deemed to express their right to fully participate in urban life and make use of the city.

The 'right to the city' literature adequately points out that the social inclusion of undocumented immigrants is a contested terrain. Scholarship on immigrant rights movements, however, has argued that we should be looking at 'rights through the city,' rather than to the city, since immigrant mobilizations are regularly used to make national claims as well (Nicholls & Vermeulen, 2012). The literature on immigrant rights politics stresses that advocating for the rights of undocumented migrants through sanctuary in hostile environments depends on protracted episodes of mobilization and negotiation (see Pallares & Flores-Gonzales, 2010; Swerts, 2014b). Marginalized actors like the undocumented rely on coalition formation and network expansion in order to pressure local governments into taking action. Cities provide environments that can ease the process of meeting, collaboration and mobilization between immigrant rights activists from various groups leading to the emergence of social movement networks (Miller & Nicholls, 2013; Nicholls, 2008). Elsewhere, Swerts (2017) has argued that undocumented activists make strategic use of the city as a 'backstage' and 'frontstage' for the assertion of citizenship claims. Backstage processes include the negotiating of political strategies and discourses within movement networks that set the terms of social inclusion. Even within movements that aim to advance immigrant rights, power inequalities exist that hamper the ability of the undocumented to raise their voice (see Nicholls, 2013; Swerts, 2014a). Squire (2011), for example, demonstrates that citizen residents tend to overpower undocumented migrants in sanctuary city campaigns. This signals the risks pertaining to representational cleavages and the exclusion of more vulnerable movement constituents while negotiating sanctuary.

3. Methods

This study adopts a case study design to study how processes of politicization and depoliticization in urban sanctuary campaigns affect dynamics of social inclusion and exclusion of undocumented migrants at the local level. More specifically, we focus on the case of the ‘Liège, Commune Hospitalière’ campaign advanced by the CNCD-11.11.11 between September 2017 and June 2018. We relied on qualitative methods, including participant observation, in-depth interviewing and content analysis to get better insight into the run-up, execution and aftermath of the campaign. Firstly, the lead author of this article was involved in the campaign as a member of an affiliated organization from the start. In this capacity, he had regular access to reports and other information. He performed six months of intense fieldwork when he joined the campaign in early 2018. His intentions as a researcher were communicated openly and transparently in order to stimulate trust and facilitate access. He actively participated in and contributed to the campaign’s subcommittee on mobilization during fieldwork. This allowed him to engage in informal conversations, direct observations and group discussions. Observations were also done during public events and demonstrations in front of Liège city hall. Secondly, fifteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with representatives of member organizations, the campaign coordinators and local elected officials. All interviews were transcribed and analyzed with Nvivo. Thirdly, campaign materials, internal documents and press releases from the welcoming cities campaign’s website (Commune Hospitalière, 2019) and social media pages were analyzed in detail.

4. Exploring the Tension between Politicization and Depoliticization

In this article, we build upon the insights from the literatures on sanctuary cities and immigrant rights move-

ments to explore why and how the meaning and inclusiveness of ‘sanctuary’ shifts over time in interactions and negotiations between urban actors. We introduce a relational model (see Table 1) that shows how the dual processes of politicization and depoliticization coincide with specific (uneven) power relations and constellations within movement networks and between movement and governmental representatives. Drawing on the work of Swyngedouw (2014, 2018) and Uitermark and Nicholls (2014), we respectively understand politicization to be the process whereby previously unheard claims to equality are put forward, whereas depoliticization refers to the effective neutralization of the transformative potential of such claims through cooptation. Politicization voices “the demand by those ‘that do not count’ to be counted, named, and recognized” that appears, for example “when undocumented workers shout, ‘we are here, therefore we are from here,’ and demand their place within the socio-political edifice” (Swyngedouw, 2014, p. 129). Such egalitarian demands for the social inclusion of undocumented migrants have the potential to transform the status quo since they call into question the exclusionary premises upon which citizenship is built. In this view, politics should be conceived of as space of dissensus where difference can be enunciated, and conflict can be negotiated (Swyngedouw, 2014, p. 130). Depoliticization, then, refers to the effective foreclosing of such spaces by relying on expert knowledge and administration. Dissensus thereby gets replaced by consensual, techno-managerial forms of governance that reduce politics to institutionalized social management (see Swyngedouw, 2018, pp. 32–37). While the literature on post-democratization helps us to theorize the tension between politicization and depoliticization, it tends to portray both processes as radically opposed political logics that structure how politics works for different actors. However, through this case study, we argue that the occurrence of politicization and depoliticization is often much subtler than that, with initially politicizing de-

Table 1. The dual process of politicization and depoliticization in sanctuary campaigns.

	<i>Dominant actors within movement</i>	<i>Movement strategy</i>	<i>Goal</i>	<i>Relations with local government</i>	<i>Relations movement network</i>	<i>Dynamics of social inclusion and exclusion</i>
Politicization	activists, ‘sans-papiers’ > immigrant rights professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> grassroots networking citizen mobilization putting issue on agenda 	pressure local government to acknowledge ‘right to the city’ of the ‘sans-papiers’	radical and conflictual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> coalition formation cooperation between civil society actors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sanctuary city discourse undocumented migrants included and represented
Depoliticization	immigrant rights professionals > activists, ‘sans-papiers’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> top-down campaigning cooperation with local authorities expert mediation 	pressure local government to adopt the ‘welcoming cities’ motion	moderate and collaborative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> emergence of conflicts disintegration and demobilization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> welcoming city discourse undocumented migrants no longer referenced nor represented

mands eroding and subjects being sidelined as time goes by. Hence, our relational model pays attention to how both dynamics can gradually emerge within sanctuary cities campaigns that aim to make egalitarian demands.

In the empirical section below, we argue that power relations between (and among) civil society actors and city officials help to explain why the meaning and inclusiveness of ‘sanctuary’ shifted over time. Initially, ‘radicals’ activists were able to politicize the issue by demanding the social inclusion of the ‘sans-papiers’ through grassroots mobilization. However, the cooptation of the campaign by professionalized organizations led to the adoption of a motion wherein the local government depicted the city as a ‘welcoming’ instead of a ‘sanctuary’ city. By showing how immigrant rights professionals sidelined radical activists during the campaign, we highlight the risk of depoliticization when civil society actors decide to cooperate with local governments to extend immigrant rights. We also underline the potential representational gap that emerges when those who are directly implicated, namely undocumented migrants, are not actively involved in campaigns that aim to improve their inclusion.

4.1. Situating the ‘Hospitable Municipalities’ Campaign

As the local elections approached in October 2018, nearly 70 local authorities had officially declared themselves ‘welcoming’ cities through the adoption of a legally non-binding motion. This shift in the social inclusion of undocumented migrants and refugees was less the result of party politics than the outcome of coordinated efforts by civil society actors. In order to explain this outcome, we need to trace back the origins of and situate the ‘Hospitable Municipalities’ campaign within the broader political climate. In September 2017, the CNCD-11.11.11, a coalition organization of more than 80 German-speaking and French-speaking NGOs, tried to capitalize on the citizen solidarity initiatives that had sprung up in the aftermath of the European ‘migration crisis.’ As they announced in a statement introducing their campaign for migration justice: “From the makeshift Maximilian Park camp in Brussels to American sanctuary cities, citizens are mobilizing for a humane welcome. The CNCD-11.11.11 is part of this movement” (CNCD-11.11.11, 2019). They thereby situated themselves as part of an international sanctuary movement that was gaining momentum. The welcoming cities’ campaign was officially launched by way of a citizens’ conference on migration in six cities, including Liège. More than 2,000 people took part in workshops aimed at countering exclusionary anti-migrant policies and debating possible alternatives.

Following this kick-off, CNCD-11.11.11 installed a top-down campaign model whereby resources like the definition of a welcoming city, press articles, local actions map, and a virtual toolbox were made available to citizen groups. Most importantly, a ‘citizen’s guide’ was pub-

lished that suggested a standardized *modus operandi*. First, citizens were encouraged to meet with local elected officials in order to find allies to introduce a motion to the city council. Next, citizens had to reach out to immigrant rights organizations in their city and raise local awareness. Finally, citizens should submit a request for a citizen appeal in their local council. Throughout this process, the CNCD-11.11.11 campaigners were available to support local campaigns with their expertise. From early 2017 until the October 2018 elections, the national campaign unfolded unevenly at the local level. Citizen groups aiming to put pressure on local authorities formed in a majority of cities that ended up passing the motion. A minority of cities adopted the motion at the initiative of political parties or the mayor himself. However, the content of the motions differed sharply from one city to another. A cursory reading of the outcomes suggests that municipalities with citizen groups tended to adopt ‘stronger’ motions.

Since organizers aimed to set a national example with a ‘strong motion’ in a major city, the Liège campaign was of strategic importance. A CNCD-11.11.11 organizer explained that if Liège would become a sanctuary city, then other cities and towns would be more likely to do so as well:

It’s a local dynamic but I believe in the snowball effect....What is going on in Liège helped me for the dynamics in Huy, Waremme, Herstal, in lots of other municipalities....The situation in Liège sets a precedent in a way. Then there is the snowball effect when a big city like Liège engages itself and that’s why it was fundamental for us to have a strong motion in Liège. (Interview 1, CNCD-11.11.11 coordinator)

In order to understand the unfolding of the campaign in Liège, we need to properly situate it within the urban context. Liège is the fourth most populated city in Belgium with a population of nearly 200,000 inhabitants, of which approximately 29% are immigrants (Lafleur & Marfouk, 2017, p. 30). As a former industrial city that heavily relied on labor migration, Liège historically adopted a welcoming stance vis-à-vis migrant population. The city has been run by the Socialist Party (social democrats) for 45 consecutive years. Immigrant rights had traditionally been defended by labor unions representing the numerous economic migrants. When the Belgian federal government started to adopt repressive policy measures targeting immigrant communities in response to the rise of far-right parties in the 1990s, local immigrant rights activism emerged. The 1999 opening of the closed detention center for undocumented immigrants in Vottem motivated the formation of the Collective of Resistance against Centers for Immigrants (CRACPE). In addition, the ‘sans-papiers’ rose to the scene as a local political actor by organizing occupations throughout the city and demanding the regularization of their status. A substantial support network of citizen allies and organizations, of which the collective ‘La Voix des ‘sans-papiers’” (hence-

forth VSP) is the latest incarnation, has put the issue of the social inclusion of undocumented migrants on the local political agenda (see Laureys, 2013).

Both the immigrant-friendly political climate and pre-existing activist networks provided fertile ground for the adoption of a ‘strong motion’ aimed at advancing the cause of undocumented migrants’ social inclusion in Liège. In the next section, we examine how local citizen groups and organizations succeeded in politicizing the issue by pushing for a motion.

4.2. *Politicization in the ‘Sanctuary City’*

In Liège, the CNCD-11.11.11 campaign did not start from square one. The welcoming city campaign benefited from an already existing campaign initiated by two radical left-wing organizations. In April 2017, these organizations held a conference to discuss the launch of a local campaign explicitly aimed at “making Liège, along the lines of Montreal or Barcelona, a city of refuge for undocumented migrants” (JOC Liège, 2017). The rationale behind the initiative was explained by one of the activists involved as follows:

Incredible pressure is being put on migrants. The government is effectively allowing migrants to be hunted upon, and I believe that we must respond to this....American cities have declared themselves ‘sanctuary cities’ since Trump came to power in the USA. These cities exclaimed that they will not adopt anti-immigrant policies that Trump wants to implement....Honestly, I think we should do that in Liège too. (Interview 2 activist)

As we explained above, undocumented activism in Liège historically revolved around their right to be present on the urban territory. VSP, which was occupying an abandoned school site in Burenville at the time, was facing eviction. Given this precarious situation, activists invited speakers with expertise around working with undocumented migrants in the city, including a social worker from a social assistance association, a union member for the undocumented workers’ committee and an undocumented immigrant woman. Since activist organizers had been informed about the existence of the ‘welcoming cities’ campaign before the event was publicized, a CNCD-11.11.11 coordinator was also invited to participate. By the end of the conference, the participants were urged to concretize their commitment by taking part in a demonstration in support of undocumented migrants a few days later in front of the Liège City Hall. The explicit inclusion of undocumented migrants as speakers at the conference and the open call to join the protest clearly demonstrate the ‘radical’ and ‘activist’ spirit of the organizers. Nevertheless, recognizing the potential benefits of a full-blown national campaign, they decided to join the CNCD-11.11.11’s efforts “in order to avoid isolating ourselves in a sectarian way” (Interview 2 activist).

Radical activists became involved in the Collectif Liège Hospitalière (Welcoming Liège Collective), alongside other actors like the socialist trade union, CRACPE and grassroots associations focused on helping migrants. As described in the introduction, the Collective organized its first ‘citizen mobilization’ event 14 September 2017 in front of City Hall as part of the CNCD-11.11.11 coordinated national action day. Two weeks later, a citizen appeal was scheduled at the Liège city council session, where a lawyer presented herself as “speaking on behalf of a collective of associations supported by more than fifty organizations” (Interview 3 professional). While the lawyer handed over a text stressing the need to adopt a ‘strong’ motion aimed at immigrant rights, radical activists were handing out leaflets outside. As the following quote illustrates, they regarded it strategically imperative to frame the issue of hospitality more broadly around ‘the right to the city’ (see also Lefebvre, 1996):

Migrants must receive access to housing, but all Liège residents have an interest in the city...applying the law on the requisition of unoccupied housing. Similarly, asking the local police not to make any arrests for the sans-papiers on the territory makes no sense if, at the same time, the homeless and beggars are criminalized. To link the demands, to unify the struggles, is thus to weave bonds of solidarity and to increase the mobilization which will allow us to prevail. (Parti Socialiste de Lutte, 2017)

The interpellation led to a mayoral decision to create a working group around the issue. From then onwards, immigrant rights professionals came to play a dominant role in drafting the motion and meeting with local authorities. Radical activists’ call to foreground the rights of the ‘sans-papiers’ and to use the motion as an instrument to claim a broader ‘right to the city’ were increasingly ignored. Respondents referred to both legal and professional expertise as reasons why immigrant rights professionals should take a seat at the negotiation table:

The campaign’s expertization does not worry me because, obviously, I can see its effectiveness. I love it when it’s effective by speaking directly on the basis of the texts. With the police, we have made very concrete progress. Nobody feels attacked because we base ourselves on texts—and this is the strength of lawyers, we refer to texts that we push to respect. It’s very simple. So I think it can piss off some people who aren’t represented in the texts, but that doesn’t stop them from keeping up the pressure. (Interview 3 professional)

Potential issues around political representation or depoliticization were downplayed by emphasizing the effectiveness of expert knowledge (see Swerts, 2014a). In the end, the negotiations led to the successful adoption of a ‘strong’ motion by the Liège city council on November 27,

2017. However, as we will argue in the next section, the downgrading of the ‘sanctuary’ city to a ‘welcoming’ city amounted to a depoliticization of the issue.

4.3. Depoliticization in the ‘Welcoming City’

The motion that was adopted unanimously by the local authorities of Liège is entitled ‘Liège: A Hospitable, Responsible, Welcoming and Open City.’ It is an eight-page non-binding document in which the City of Liège commits itself to “further improve the reception and stay of migrants while respecting human rights” and to “raise awareness among the population on migration and reception,” while police forces subscribe to “adopting a humane and respectful approach to the enforcement of laws and regulations” (Ville de Liège, 2017). What started off as a campaign spearheaded by radical activists around the social inclusion of undocumented migrants, quickly watered down once the Collective started negotiating with the municipal authorities. During the negotiations, the municipal authorities made it clear that they would only adopt a motion if it would highlight the efforts that were already being undertaken to welcome migrants in Liège. This stance forced the Collective to ‘make concessions’ that eventually resulted in the shift from a ‘sanctuary’ to a ‘welcoming’ city:

A constant obstacle in the negotiation was the mayor’s fear that the campaign aimed to hide the work already accomplished by the City...The other concern was that some commitments were difficult to put in black and white, election-wise....So we made concessions. The authorities therefore really played on two tables: ‘let us value what we already do,’ but at the same time ‘let us not say too loudly what we already do so that it does not put us in difficulty’—clearly in relation to undocumented migrants. (Interview local coordinator)

The social inclusion of undocumented migrants was thereby brushed aside as an ‘obstacle’ to collaboration.

The unanimity with which the motion had been adopted by local authorities, stands in stark contrast with the contradictory analyses that emerged within the Collective itself. Immigrant rights professionals welcomed the broadening of the motion’s scope as reflected by the title:

I think [the name change] is a good idea because if you focus too much on migrants, you forget the others....I think that this also...explains why it was adopted in the municipal council. If we had only targeted migrants, as we formulated our objectives at first, we probably would not have had a consensus like that. (Interview 4 professional)

From this perspective, the main objective of the campaign was achieved since the approved motion repre-

sented a recognition of the hard work done by civil society in the field as well as a reaffirmation of the productive collaboration with local authorities. As one of the respondents put it “with this motion, we are not in opposition....Rather than always saying ‘we are in opposition,’ let us be in a constructive alliance with universal values” (Interview 5 professional). Collaboration thus set in motion a process of cooptation and depoliticization that was considered ‘productive’ by professionals.

For radical activists, however, the motion ended up being an ‘empty shell.’ They initially intended to capitalize on the campaign’s dynamic to put a broader claim to the ‘right to the city’ on the political agenda. Yet, the concessions made by immigrant rights professionals during the negotiations led to a depoliticization of the motion. Broader claims such as the right to affordable housing and access to healthcare that had been put forward by activists, were dropped along the way. Furthermore, the explicit inclusion of the ‘sans-papiers’ as those most concerned in both the policy negotiation process and the motion itself was abandoned. Subsequently, several radicals disengaged themselves from the campaign, voicing their outrage about the fact that the motion remained completely silent concerning the situation of the ‘sans-papiers’ in Liège:

We tried to include transformative claims in this motion. I think we kind of failed....For the sake of cooperation and immediate results...we prevented ourselves from asking for things that could have a real usefulness....A classic but crucial demand is however absent from the motion: a regularization of undocumented migrants, which would allow them to work legally, under employment contracts, and which would prevent a kind of social dumping from employers who hire undocumented migrants in undeclared jobs at the expense of legal workers. (Interview 6 activist)

The notable absence of any mentioning of those most concerned in the motion signals the representational deficit that had emerged ever since professional organizers took over the campaign. While VSP had been asked by activists to help launch their campaign, undocumented migrants did not become structurally integrated into the Collective:

Where are the migrants? Where do they have the floor? I think that’s a little problematic....We want to stimulate a dynamic of grassroots mobilization that is already somewhat present in theory but not really in practice. (Interview 6 activist)

Since they do not master the professional codes of conduct and discourses that typify the legalistic approach adopted with the motion, their absence was never really questioned among professionals. However, as the following interview excerpt from a VSP member illustrates, the ‘sans-papiers’ themselves hardly considered

the passing of the ‘welcoming cities’ motion a ‘solution’ to their problems:

In our opinion, we are still a long way from great improvements. Yes, there are, little by little, some changes....We are tolerated by the city, but it is mainly because we are supported in our struggle....With this campaign, everything moves or gives the illusion of moving, but concrete changes are still a long way off. (Interview 7 ‘sans-papiers’)

The disillusion regarding the motion is well illustrated by VSP’s intervention in June 2019 at the municipal council regarding their precarious housing situation, where the ‘sans-papiers’ reminded the authorities that they were still living in fear for deportation. Despite the earlier promises made, the Mayor responded that they were in favor of a durable solution, which “necessarily involves a regularization, which is a federal competence” (Bechet, 2019).

5. Conclusion

Across the world, a growing number of cities have declared themselves ‘sanctuaries’ as they pursue a policy of protecting undocumented immigrants in opposition to federal laws (see Bauder, 2017). In this article, we explored the recent emergence of sanctuary cities in Belgium through an in-depth analysis of a CNCD-11.11.11 initiated campaign. By zooming in on the city of Liège, we argued that local power relations and elements of political culture structure the playing field wherein sanctuary is negotiated. More in particular, this case study showed that the ability of immigrant rights professionals to comply with the local government’s rules of the game (cooperation, compromise and dialogue) enabled them to overtake the initiative from activists. Furthermore, the socialist governing tradition, which takes pride in its capacity to integrate immigrants in local institutional structures and favors consensus over conflict, helped to set in motion the depoliticization of the campaign. These insights thus confirm the findings of recent scholarship on immigrant rights movements that stress the importance of the urban context (Darling, 2010; Miller & Nicholls, 2013; Nicholls, 2008). Liège’s large and well-organized migrant population, its industrial past and pre-existing activist networks are all factors that contributed to the emergence and rise of the Collectif Liège Hospitalière. Over the course of a few months, the pressure exerted by this coalition led to the adoption by local authorities of a ‘strong’ motion according to CNCD-11.11.11 standards. These findings are in line with scholarship that highlights the important role that civil society actors play in defining the social inclusion of undocumented immigrants at the local level (see de Graauw, 2016).

In contrast to de Graauw (2016), however, our findings issue warning signs about the effectiveness of local

governments and civil society collaborating to make immigrant rights ‘real.’ Building on the work of Uitermark and Nicholls (2014), Swyngedouw (2014, 2018) and Swerts (2017), we argued that processes of politicization and depoliticization caused shifts in the meaning of ‘sanctuary’ that radically altered the terms of social inclusion and exclusion of undocumented migrants. On the one hand, radical activists aimed to politicize the campaign by integrating claims to equality like the regularization of all undocumented migrants into a broader discourse around the ‘right to the city’ (see Lefebvre, 1996) for the entire population of Liège (e.g., in terms of affordable housing). On the other hand, immigrant rights professionals contributed to depoliticizing these demands through negotiations with local authorities whereby the idea of the ‘sanctuary city’ was downgraded to a ‘welcoming city’ in the interest of ‘productive collaboration.’ The resulting motion finally depoliticized the issue by highlighting the practices already put in place by the city and avoiding any explicit mentioning of the ‘sans-papiers.’ While undocumented migrants became part of the grassroots campaign alongside radicals, the CNCD-11.11.11 campaign’s legalistic approach prevented them from taking up an active role. This finding resonates with scholarship which argues that representational cleavages within immigrant rights movements accentuate existing dynamics of social exclusion (see Nicholls, 2013; Swerts, 2014a). Furthermore, we show that dynamics of politicization and depoliticization can gradually emerge within a movement network over time.

On a broader scale, we argue that the sanctuary cities literature’s emphasis on analyzing outcomes like sanctuary laws and discourses obscures that the need to reach a consensus about the terms of inclusion can generate new forms of exclusion and foreclose space for dissensus. By focusing on how episodes of politicization and depoliticization are triggered by changes in relational power configurations between civil society and governmental actors, the model advanced in this article is well equipped to trace what is won and what gets lost in the negotiation process. Our findings equally speak to debates around the ‘right to the city’ and urban citizenship (see Purcell, 2002, 2003) by demonstrating both the potentialities and difficulties involved in turning radical political imaginaries into reality. While the power of the ‘right to the city’ to mobilize citizens around a common struggle and question the terms of urban inclusion and exclusion should not be underestimated, its politicizing potential can be undermined when established actors continue to set the tone. Although we showed how the meaning of ‘sanctuary’ changed throughout the negotiation process, further research could explore if and how sanctuary cities impact the social inclusion of undocumented migrants in practice. Furthermore, linkages between immigrant rights struggles and broader struggles over the ‘right to the city’ need to be empirically investigated, rather than assumed beforehand. Because sanctuary cities not only protect and safeguard undocu-

mented migrants, but also exemplify the ‘right to the city’ of us all.

Acknowledgments

We would like to acknowledge the Centre for Ethnic and Migration Studies at the University of Liège as well as the Department of Public Administration and Sociology at the Erasmus University Rotterdam for offering the institutional support that allowed us to carry out this research. More in particular, we would like to thank Hassan Bousetta, Elsa Mescoli and, last but not least, the members of Collectif Liège Hospitalière.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

References

- Ávila, P. V. S. (2014). Los avances en la discusión de la reforma migratoria integral en una ciudad santuario de los inmigrantes de Estados Unidos [Advances in the discussion of comprehensive immigration reform in a sanctuary city for immigrants from the United States]. *Ra-Ximhai*, 10(1), 257–289.
- Bagelman, J. (2013). Sanctuary: A politics of ease? *Alternatives*, 38(1), 49–62.
- Bagelman, J. (2016). *Sanctuary city: A suspended state*. London: Palgrave Pivot.
- Bauder, H. (2014). Domicile citizenship, human mobility and territoriality. *Progress in Human Geography*, 38(1), 91–106.
- Bauder, H. (2017). Sanctuary cities: Policies and practices in international perspective. *International Migration*, 55(2), 174–187.
- Bechet, M. (2019, June 24). Les sans-papiers de Burenville vivent dans la peur d’une expulsion...ils étaient au conseil de Liège ce lundi! [Burenville’s undocumented migrants are living in fear of being evicted...they were on the Liège council on Monday!]. *La Dernière Heure*. Retrieved from <https://www.dhnet.be/regions/liege/les-sans-papiers-de-burenville-vivent-dans-la-peur-d-une-expulsion-ils-etaient-au-conseil-de-liege-ce-lundi-5d11047f7b50a67e2e404b8a>
- CNCD-11.11.11. (2019). Pour la justice migratoire [For migratory justice]. *CNCD-11.11.11*. Retrieved from <https://www.cncd.be/-campagne-justice-migratoire>
- Commune Hospitalière. (2019). Commune Hospitalière? [Hospitable Municipality?]. *Commune Hospitalière*. Retrieved from <https://www.communehospitaliere.be/-site-commune-hospitaliere-kesako>
- Czajka, A. (2013). The potential of sanctuary: Act of sanctuary through the lens of camp. In R. K. Lippert & S. Rehaag (Eds.), *Sanctuary practices in international perspectives: Migration, citizenship and social movements* (pp. 43–56). Abingdon: Routledge.
- Darling, J. (2010). A city of sanctuary: The relational re-imagining of Sheffield’s asylum politics. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 35(1), 125–140. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-5661.2009.00371.x>
- de Graauw, E. (2016). *Making immigrant rights real: Non-profits and the politics of integration in San Francisco*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University.
- Dikeç, M., & Gilbert, L. (2008). Right to the city and politics of citizenship. In K. Goonewardena, S. Kipfer, R. Milgrom, & C. Schmid (Eds.), *Space, difference, everyday life: Henri Lefebvre and radical politics* (pp. 250–263). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Het Laatste Nieuws. (2018, November 29). Francken schroeft aantal asielaanvragen per dag nog terug naar 50: “Gastvrijheid moet ergens stoppen” [Francken reduces the number of asylum applications per day to 50: “Hospitality must stop somewhere”]. *Het Laatste Nieuws*. Retrieved from <https://www.hln.be/nieuws/binnenland/francken-schroeft-aantal-asielaanvragen-per-dag-nog-terug-naar-50-gastvrijheid-moet-ergens-stoppen~ab0d141e>
- JOC Liège. (2017). Liège, ville refuge [Liège, sanctuary city]. *Cafétéria Collective Kali*. Retrieved from <http://cckali.be/event/liege-ville-refuge>
- Lafleur, J.-M., & Marfouk, A. (2017). *Pourquoi l’immigration? 21 questions que se posent les Belges sur les migrations internationales au XXIe siècle* [Why immigration? 21 questions facing Belgians on international migration in the 21st century]. Louvain-la-Neuve: Academia-L’Harmattan.
- Laureys, D. (2013). *Solidarité avec les sans-papiers: Plus de vingt ans de mobilisation à Liège* [Solidarity with undocumented migrants: More than twenty years of mobilization in Liège]. Seraing: IHOES.
- Lefebvre, H. (1996). *Writings on cities*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.
- Miller, B., & Nicholls, W. (2013). Social movements in urban society: The city as a space of politicization. *Urban Geography*, 34(4), 452–473.
- Nicholls, W. (2008). The urban question revisited: The importance of cities for social movements. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 32(4), 841–859. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2008.00820.x>
- Nicholls, W. (2013). *The DREAMers: How the undocumented youth movement transformed the immigrant rights debate*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Nicholls, W., & Vermeulen, F. (2012). Rights through the city: The urban basis of immigrant rights struggles in Amsterdam and Paris. In M. P. Smith & M. McQuarrie (Eds.), *Remaking urban citizenship: Organizations, institutions, and the right to the city* (pp. 79–96). New Brunswick: Transactions Publishers.
- Pallares, A., & Flores-Gonzales, N. (2010). *Marcha! Latino Chicago and the immigrant rights movement*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois.

- Parti Socialiste de Lutte. (2017, November 12). Des communes hospitalières contre le racisme d'État? [Hospitable municipalities against state racism?]. *Parti Socialiste de Lutte*. Retrieved from <https://fr.socialisme.be/49734/des-communes-hospitalieres-contre-le-racisme-detat>
- Purcell, M. (2002). Excavating Lefebvre: The right to the city and its urban politics of the inhabitant. *GeoJournal*, 58(1/2), 99–108.
- Purcell, M. (2003). Citizenship and the right to the global city: Reimagining the capitalist world order. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 27(3), 564–590.
- Ridgley, J. (2008). Cities of refuge: Immigration enforcement, police, and the insurgent genealogies of citizenship in U.S. sanctuary cities. *Urban Geography*, 29(1), 53–77. <https://doi.org/10.2747/0272-3638.29.1.53>
- Sassen, S. (1996). Whose city is it? Globalization and the formation of new claims. *Public Culture*, 8(2), 205–223.
- Savage, C. (2017, April 21). Sanctuary cities face aid cuts as justice dept. tightens screws. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/21/us/politics/sanctuary-city-justice-department.html>
- Squire, V. (2011). From community cohesion to mobile solidarities: The city of sanctuary network and the strangers into citizens campaign. *Political Studies*, 59(2), 29. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9248.2010.00865>
- Squire, V., & Bagelman, J. (2012). Taking not waiting: Space, temporality and politics in the city of sanctuary movement. In P. Nyers & K. Rygiel (Eds.), *Citizenship, migrant activism and the politics of movement* (pp. 146–164). Abingdon: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203125113>
- Squire, V., & Darling, J. (2013). The “minor” politics of rightful presence: Justice and relationality in city of sanctuary. *International Political Sociology*, 7(1), 59–74.
- Swerts, T. (2014a). *Non-citizen citizenship: A comparative ethnography of undocumented activism in Chicago and Brussels* (Unpublished Doctoral dissertation). The University of Chicago, Chicago, USA.
- Swerts, T. (2014b). Non-citizen citizenship in Canada and the United States. In E. Isin & P. Nyers (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of global citizenship studies* (pp. 295–303). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Swerts, T. (2017). Creating space for citizenship: The liminal politics of undocumented activism. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 41, 379–395. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12480>
- Swyngedouw, E. (2014). Where is the political? Insurgent mobilisations and the incipient “return of the political.” *Space and Polity*, 18(2), 122–136. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562576.2013.879774>
- Swyngedouw, E. (2018). *Promises of the political: Insurgent cities in a post-political environment*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Uitermark, J., & Nicholls, W. (2014). From politicization to policing: The rise and decline of new social movements in Amsterdam and Paris. *Antipode*, 46, 970–991. <https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12025>
- Varsanyi, M. W. (2006). Interrogating “urban citizenship” vis-à-vis undocumented migration. *Citizenship Studies*, 10(2), 229–249. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13621020600633168>
- Varsanyi, M. W. (2008). Immigration policing through the backdoor: City ordinances, the “right to the city,” and the exclusion of undocumented day laborers. *Urban Geography*, 29(1), 29–52. <https://doi.org/10.2747/0272-3638.29.1.29>
- Villazor, R. C. (2010). Sanctuary cities and local citizenship. *Fordham Urban Law Journal*, 37(573), 573–598.
- Ville de Liège. (2017). Liège se déclare Ville Hospitalière, responsable, accueillante et ouverte [Liège declares itself a hospitable, responsible, welcoming and open city]. *Ville de Liège*. Retrieved from <https://www.liege.be/fr/vie-communale/ville-engagee/liege-se-declare-ville-hospitaliere-responsable-accueillante-et-ouverte>

About the Authors



Sébastien Lambert is a Social Worker in the Immigration Field in Liège. He previously received his Master’s degree in Social and Political Sciences at the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Liège in September 2018. For his thesis, he conducted a study to investigate the role of the local associative and militant fabric in pushing for urban sanctuary policies in Liège.



Thomas Swerts is an Assistant Professor in Sociology at the Department of Public Administration and Sociology of the Erasmus University Rotterdam. He previously received his PhD in Sociology from the University of Chicago. For his dissertation research, he performed an ethnographic study of undocumented activism in the US and Europe. His research focuses on the nexus between irregular migration, political sociology and urban studies. He has contributed to edited volumes on citizenship studies, immigrant rights mobilization and relational poverty politics.

Article

Contested Health Care System in Berlin: Are Illegalized Migrants Becoming Urban Citizens?

Holger Wilcke ^{1,*} and Rosa Manoim ²

¹ Berlin Institute of Migration and Integration Research, Humboldt University of Berlin, 10099 Berlin, Germany;
E-Mail: holger.wilcke@hu-berlin.de

² Department of Social Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand, 2000 Johannesburg, South Africa;
E-Mail: rosa.manoim@students.wits.ac.za

* Corresponding author

Submitted: 30 June 2019 | Accepted: 10 November 2019 | Published: 28 November 2019

Abstract

This article argues for an urban citizenship perspective which explores the struggle for rights and the everyday practices of illegalized migrants. Analyzing the concept of Anonymized Health Certificates as a result of such a struggle allows for examination of urban citizenship in this context. The implementation of the Anonymized Health Certificates program would facilitate access to medical care for people who live in the city of Berlin but are excluded from this right due to their lack of residency status. However, such a perspective also makes it possible to examine the limitation of the Anonymized Health Certificates, which would allow illegalized migrants in Berlin to circumvent access barriers, while at the same time the exclusion mechanisms of these barriers would remain uncontested at the national level. Whilst Anonymize Health Certificates will greatly improve access to medical care, illegalized migrants have by no means been passive subjects and have been actively rejecting their exclusion from health care: Practices include sharing health insurance cards with friends, visiting doctors who help for free as a form of solidarity, and sharing information about these doctors within their social networks. Even if they do not contest the social order visibly, they refuse to passively accept their social exclusion. Illegalized migrants perform such practices of urban citizenship in their everyday life as they actively take ownership of their rights to participate in urban life, even whilst being formally denied these rights.

Keywords

Anonymized Health Certificates; illegalized migration; medical care; urban citizenship

Issue

This article is part of the issue “Inclusion through Enacted Citizenship in Urban Spaces” edited by Rachel Kurian (Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands) and Helen Hintjens (Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands).

© 2019 by the authors; licensee Cogitatio (Lisbon, Portugal). This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

1. Introduction

Up until summer 2019, undocumented migrants in Germany were de facto excluded from accessing medical care. Without documents, it was virtually impossible to join the public health insurance system which is required in order to receive medical care. Moreover, Social Welfare Offices (*Sozialämter*), which would have to cover the costs of certain treatments for illegalized migrants, failed to be a viable option as they were obliged to report to the Foreigners Registration Office

(*Ausländerbehörde*) which could result in deportation. In Berlin, this dilemma is now resolved. Through the implementation of Anonymized Health Certificates, the access to medical care for people who have no formal access due to their lack of official residency is fundamentally simplified. This certificate allows them to access medical care without disclosing their residency status and thus risking deportation.

In this article, we will discuss the processes that led to the enactment of the Anonymized Health Certificate. We will argue that the *Medibüro* was a key player in

this. The *Medibüro* is a grassroots initiative which has been fighting for equal access to medical care for all, for more than 20 years now. We will analyze their struggles and campaigns as solidarity forms of urban citizenship which led to the implementation of the Anonymized Health Certificate by the current government of Berlin. Furthermore, we will focus on the everyday practices of illegalized migrants who are living under complicated conditions of disenfranchisement. Even before the Anonymized Health Certificate was implemented, illegalized migrants developed strategies to get access to medical care and to participate in social life. We will emphasize the performative dimension of citizenship and argue that even without access to fundamental rights, illegalized migrants are active subjects who refuse to passively accept social exclusion.

Methodologically, this article was based on participatory observations, document analyses, and, most importantly, on interviews conducted with illegalized migrants and urban actors between 2014–2019. To ensure anonymity, the names of these participants have been altered in this article. In the following section we will shortly discuss the currently debated concepts of (urban) citizenship before we describe the effects of exclusionist mechanisms in the field of medical care in Berlin. Then we will focus on the transformative processes that led to the implementation of the Anonymized Health Certificates. Finally, we look at the strategies with which illegalized migrants find ways to resist their exclusion and disenfranchisement.

2. Urban Citizenship

Urban citizenship is a counter-concept to the idea of citizenship as formal membership to a nation state with a set of obligations and rights that come with it (McNevin, 2013, p. 198; Schilliger, 2018, p. 17). Citizenship as formal membership attributes access to social rights and possibilities of participation in society according to status. In contrast, a critical perspective on citizenship challenges such purely legal conceptions and emphasizes the contingency of formal citizenship by focusing on the claims for rights and the conflicting social disputes over participation (Hess & Lebuhn, 2014, p. 20). Egin Isin (2009) demonstrates how the understanding of citizenship has been subject to constant reconfigurations since the times of the polis due to the claims of those who have been denied equal rights. Therefore, it is less a question of “who is a citizen” than one of “what makes the citizen” (Isin, 2009, p. 383).

Here the city plays a central role and the debates on urban citizenship focus on the rescaling of citizenship and belonging from a nation-state to an urban scale (Darling, 2017; Hess & Lebuhn, 2014; Nicholls, 2016). In fact, the city governments can act as a counterpart to national border policies and exclusion mechanisms. The ‘Don’t Ask Don’t Tell’ policy in Toronto or the implementation of the Municipal ID Card in New York are two examples of

this. Both policies follow the idea of making the legal status less relevant for the access to rights and participation in urban life (Rygiel, Ataç, Köster-Eiserfunke, & Schwiertz, 2015, p. 9).

The Anonymized Health Certificate can be regarded as an urban policy that opposes the exclusionary mechanisms of national border and migration policies. But just like the campaigns of New York’s ‘Make the Road’ network and the Sanctuary City movement in Toronto, the Anonymized Health Certificate did not come out of nowhere. To understand citizenship as a process means shifting the focus away from legal regulations and beginning instead to scrutinize the underlying processes of negotiation and conflict. The concept of urban citizenship consequently invites us “to focus on the actual sites where citizenship is negotiated in day-to-day life, and where forms of solidarity are exercised within urban communities” (Schilliger, 2019, p. 36). In the following two sections we will discuss the extent to which the campaigns of the *Medibüro* can be seen as “acts in solidarity with those who have undertaken an act of unauthorised migration” (Squire, 2017, p. 267).

Such a procedural understanding of citizenship also directs attention towards migrants as active political subjects. Illegalized migrants have their own strategies to deal with exclusions and find ways in their everyday lives to gain access to medical care, regardless of the existence of Anonymized Health Certificates. These everyday practices entail moments of political subjectivation, in which citizenship from below “is seized (not bestowed) and transformed (not replicated) in performative acts...which rupture prevailing assumptions about what citizenship is, where it applies, how it has come to be constituted and who does the work that citizens do” (McNevin, 2013, p. 198). However, we will discuss to which extent such “acts of citizenship” (Isin, 2008, p. 18) encompass visibility or whether political subjectivity also manifests in imperceptible performances of illegalized migrants.

3. The Excluding Mechanisms of the Health Care System

Don’t get sick. That’s the first rule. If you get sick, you have to get back on your feet quickly. (Interview, Noah)

Illegalized persons are not allowed to register for public health insurance without official papers. Without health insurance, seeing a doctor becomes nearly impossible. As said before, the insurance companies would have to inform the Foreigners Registration Office of the applicant’s illegalized status, which would increase the risk of deportation. The Foreigners Registration Office issues residence permits, extends temporary residence documents, issues exit requests, and orders deportations. Noah describes that becoming ill as an illegalized person is not an option, because illness is connected to fears and uncertainties. Any sickness may lead to the loss of

a job. Any injury may result in high costs. For a person without official documents there is no legal right to social welfare benefits. Without health insurance, there is the very likely risk of being obliged to cover the cost of treatment yourself. Accordingly, illegalized migrants try as best as they can to avoid pregnancies, injuries, or illnesses as best as they possibly can (cf. Wilcke, 2018, p. 193–194). This is already an expression of the precarious situation in which undocumented migrants find themselves. The uncertainties in illegality, which also affect other areas of life such as living or working, increase an individual's psychosocial stress and thus also the probability of becoming ill. If illegalized migrants do fall ill or get injured, illnesses and injuries are often ignored or go untreated. Besides, self-treatment and self-medication is a widespread practice among illegalized migrants (Huschke, 2013, p. 249). For many illegalized people, visiting a doctor is out of question, which has to do with the de facto exclusion from public health care.

According to the Welfare Law for Asylum Seekers (*Asylbewerberleistungsgesetz*), illegalized persons are formally allowed to receive emergency treatment. But the unclear information about their legal rights, combined with the general fear of potential deportations when contacting official institutions, produce significant barriers for illegalized migrants (cf. Wilcke, 2018, p. 199). In any case, access to regular medical care is completely obstructed. Before getting a doctor appointment or medical treatment, the illegalized migrant would have to apply at the Social Welfare Office which is obliged to report to the Foreigners Registration Office (Bartholome, Groß, & Misbach, 2010, p. 22). The uncertainties and fears of illegalized migrants, which often lead to the avoidance of medical treatment, are tied precisely to this obligation of public authorities to report the person's residence status. This fear, that their lack of legal status will be revealed to the authorities and the threat of deportation that this results in, can be described as deportability (de Genova, 2002, p. 438). In this way, illegalized migrants are excluded from medical care.

As the exclusion of people from medical care stands in moral conflict with the value system of the Federal Republic of Germany, the policy came under scrutiny in 2005. On the basis of the coalition agreement between the Christian Democrats (Christian Democratic Union [CDU]/Christian Social Union [CSU]) and Social Democrats (Social Democratic Party of Germany [SPD]), the Federal Ministry of the Interior discussed the removal of the obligation for state institutions to report to the Foreigners Registration Office—as established in the §87 of the Residence law—in 2005. In its concluding report, the ministry states that the obligation should be maintained unchanged as this legislation provides the state with a means of migration control that helps to enforce the right of residence. Furthermore, they make it clear that a deterrent effect for migrants planning to come to Germany without regular papers is intended (Bundesministerium des Innern, 2007, pp. 40–41). Since

then, the legislation has not been called into question by any Federal Government. Here, the function of formal citizenship manifests itself through its uneven assignment of rights to people, thus categorizing them and fragmenting their possibilities of participation (Schilliger, 2018, pp. 19–20). This statement shows that the borders of the European migration regime do not only run along the Schengen external border and consist of fences, thermal imaging cameras, and border guards. Rather, the borders are dispersed within the states to sites such as the train station, the Federal employment agency, the school, or, in this case, the hospital (Balibar, 2004; Nyers, 2008; Squire, 2011). They are also inscribed in legislation in a variety of ways and often run through European metropolises and are extremely effective. As a result, state institutions such as the Social Welfare Office become border guards, whose exclusionary practices can be seen as an everyday act of bordering which differentiates between those who have access to certain rights and those who do not (Yuval-Davis, Wemyss, & Cassidy, 2018). Thus, the health system has a bordering effect in two ways. For illegalized migrants who already live here, the availability of medical care is restricted. And for those who want to come to Germany but have no legal ways to enter, there is an intention to convey the message that there are effective internal borders and mechanisms of exclusion, even for those who manage to cross the external borders.

Nevertheless, the §87 obligation and its bordering effects are not uncontested. While a change is not foreseeable at the federal level, the concept of the Anonymized Health Certificates is being tested in the City of Berlin.

4. Anonymized Health Certificates

In 2016, a new government was formed in Berlin by the Social Democrats (SPD), the Green Party (Bündnis90/Die Grünen) and The Left Party (Die Linke), which included the creation of the Anonymized Health Certificates in their coalition agreement. This alliance of three parties represents a more open and inclusive approach to migration politics than the previous state government of Berlin or the federal government, which were both formed by a coalition of SPD and Christian Democrats (CDU). 2018 saw the implementation of a 'clearing office for uninsured people' which received €1,5M in funding in 2018 and 2019. One of the aims of this institution is reintegrating people without health insurance into standard care. In the case of illegalized migrants who are—as described previously—excluded from public insurance and health care, the clearing office issues Anonymized Health Certificates. It provides illegalized migrants with the medical care which they are legally entitled to under the Asylum Seekers Benefits Act without having to fear the transmission of their data to the Foreigners Registration Office. For this reason, the responsibility was transferred from the Social Welfare Office to a medically managed health care center which is bound to con-

fidentiality and not obliged to report to other authorities. Here, it becomes apparent that borders are not set in stone but represent contested and malleable constructions (cf. Lebuhn, 2014, p. 229). The introduction of Anonymized Health Certificates exemplifies how urban governments have the capacity to challenge exclusionary national policies of citizenship by circumventing them a local level (Rygiel et al., 2015, p. 9; Schilliger, 2019, p. 36). Moreover, the clearing office considers itself a contact point for all residents of Berlin. This demonstrates a new conception of citizenship which does not define belonging to a city through ethnicizing-culturalist categorizations of official documents but through local residence and participation in the city (Gilbert & Dikeç, 2008).

To follow the theoretical perspective of citizenship as a process, we have to consider another actor, which—we argue—was central for the implementation of Anonymized Health Certificates in Berlin in 2019. The *Medibüro* is an antiracist grassroots initiative, which was founded in Berlin in 1996. It has continuously provided illegalized migrants with access to medical care. In this way, the *Medibüro* gives people access to fundamental rights that they are actually excluded from and thus enables their participation in urban life, which already can be understood as a solidarity-based practice of urban citizenship (Nyers & Rygiel, 2012, p. 10; Squire, 2017, p. 267). In the 90s, the work was organized clandestinely, resulting in conditions which were even more precarious than they are today. Even the act of supporting illegalized migrants purely with medical care was criminalized by both state and city authorities. Doctors or intermediaries could be prosecuted for the crime of aiding and abetting an illegal stay (Dickel & Schröder, 2013, p. 9). Since its founding, the work of *Medibüro* includes more than just the practical support of illegalized migrants. It regards itself as a political actor that stands in solidarity with illegalized migrants and campaigns “to counter the racist exclusion of migrants from social legislation and regular health care” (Groß, 2005, p. 20). Now, however, to the government of Berlin, the *Medibüro* is a legitimate political initiative. Public authorities turn to the *Medibüro* for advice and assistance and have praised it for its excellent voluntary work (Dickel & Schröder, 2013, p. 9). Beyond that, the senate administration has invited the *Medibüro* to participate in talks on how to facilitate the access to medical care for illegalized migrants. In this context, the senate administration has offered to support the practical work of the *Medibüro* with funding. However, this would have resulted in the stabilization of parallel structures of medical care contradicting the political premise of equal access to medical care for all regardless of residency status. In consequence, the *Medibüro* declined the offer and began to advocate for the introduction of Anonymized Health Certificates, which they had developed into a concrete program (Huschke, 2013, p. 188). In the wake of these developments, the senate administration founded a working group which was tasked to examine the imple-

mentability of this program (Groß, 2009, p. 25). This necessitated an involvement of the Senate Department of Labour and Social Affairs as well as Interior. Throughout further talks, the Senate Department of Interior blocked the implementation of Anonymized Health Certificates program both under SPD/CDU as well as SPD/Die Linke led governments in Berlin. The idea of providing public funding for social benefits without disclosing individual identity was rejected by the Senate Department of Interior (Medibüro, 2016, p. 49).

Nevertheless, the *Medibüro* continued to fight for the right to health and the introduction of the Anonymized Health Certificates program. They collaborated with the senate and contributed their practical experiences. Without these efforts, the program would not have been featured in the coalition agreement of the current state government. We argue that the very moment in which the concept of the Anonymized Health Certificates was put on the political agenda was an act of solidarity with those who had been claiming their rights to stay and participate in society by simply living their lives (Ataç, Rygiel, & Stierl, 2016, p. 530; Squire, 2017, p. 267). By initiating the idea of the Anonymized Health Certificates and campaigning for its implementation, the *Medibüro* raised awareness regarding the disenfranchisement of certain migrant groups for whom it is risky to become visible. In this way it questioned the given script of denied rights and denied participation possibilities (Rygiel et al., 2015, p. 9). The *Medibüro* strategically used the possibilities of the urban (Bauder, 2016) to claim rights to the city by proposing a concrete concept that enhances the idea of urban citizenship in which all residents of the city have the same rights, regardless of their formal citizenship, their nationality, or their residency status (Nyers & Rygiel, 2012, p. 10; Rygiel et al., 2015, p. 9).

Many conflicts remain unresolved. Jointly with Solidarity City Berlin, The *Medibüro* criticizes the implementation of the program by the current government due to apparent weaknesses such as the insufficient funding (Medibüro, 2019). And other dilemmas arise: On the one hand, the Anonymized Health Certificates will have the pragmatic effect of providing people with access to medical care. On the other hand, the existing exclusion mechanisms stay uncontested. The §87 of the Residence Law, the very reason for the need for Anonymized Health Certificates, remains untouched. In addition, the Anonymized Health Certificates only entitle its holders to a limited set of medical services according to the Asylum Seekers Benefits Act. This law established a two-class medical system with reduced access to treatment for asylum seekers and illegal migrants when it was enacted in 1993. It thus produces different national categories of membership and hence exclusion through the deprivation of rights. It becomes clear that the possibilities of inclusive urban policies are limited; they are “integrated into a global power structure and the nation-state remains an important

terrain for political struggles” (Schilliger, 2019, p. 36). However, some authors point out the danger in that this could leave these actual exclusion mechanisms unquestioned and might even stabilize them (Blokland, Hentschel, Holm, Lebuhn, & Margalit, 2015, p. 663; Hess & Lebuhn, 2014, p. 19). The *Medibüro* is aware of this fact. It reminds us that both legislations serve as racist control instruments and that the contradictions between such exclusion mechanisms and practical solutions like the Anonymized Health Certificates need to be included in a critical analysis. They highlighted this contradiction when they campaigned for the implementation of the Anonymized Health Certificate program and at the same time for the abolition the Asylum Seekers Benefits Act (Medibüro, 2014). Accordingly, for the *Medibüro*, the implementation of Anonymized Health Certificate is only one step in the struggle for a health care system which provides the same medical care for everyone.

5. Migratory Strategies and Everyday Performances of Urban Citizenship

For illegalized migrants, the implementation of the Anonymized Health Certificate will definitely make a difference, as access to medical care in Berlin will become easier. Yet even without the Anonymized Health Certificate, illegalized migrants have developed different strategies in order to access the rights that they have been denied. While most studies on illegalized migrants living in Germany portrayed them as victims and highlighted the strenuous conditions and social exclusion (see, for example, Alt, 2003; Pater, 2005; Wilmes, 2011), we, in contrast, understand illegalized migrants as political subjects rather than victims (McNevin, 2013, p. 185; Squire, 2017, p. 255). Thus, in the following section we will focus on their strategies and argue that illegalized migrants become political subjects who perform urban citizenship in their everyday life. This does not mean that illegalized migrants have an easy life. On the contrary; pain, anxiety, and desperation are often part of their daily experience. As mentioned above, the non-treatment of diseases and injuries are part of the strategies they rely on. This can have serious consequences, as can be illustrated in the case of Kweku, who went to the doctor too late, both because he was afraid that his missing papers would be detected, and because he would have had to pay for the treatment himself:

I had an eye disease when I was in Germany. When I noticed it, I first thought it would go away on its own. But it didn't. It got worse so I decided to go to a doctor. She examined my eyes. It was not that bad, but they told me I needed a surgical procedure straightway. So I considered whether to get the operation or to keep my money and my job and wait watchfully. I took the second option, which was the wrong one. (Interview, Kweku)

The initial disease was relatively easy to treat. But the non-treatment led to an aggravated situation, so that a complete recovery of the affected eye was no longer possible. Today, Kweku is nearly blind in one eye (Interview, Kweku). This demonstrates the brutal consequences for illegalized migrants of the exclusion mechanisms in the health care system described above. Yet there are also other strategies than non-treatment. Social networks are an important factor for access to medical care. One strategy is to borrow a health insurance card, ideally from a person with similar key data, such as the same gender and a comparable age:

I shared the insurance card with a friend. It was his card. He had official papers....I always went to the same doctor. I already became familiar to him. He knew my name, which was the name of my friend....My friend went to another doctor. We had to be cautious with the card. Because if anybody had gotten scent of it, we both would have been in big trouble. (Interview, David)

All in all, this is a strategy that represents relatively low-risk access to medical care. Since the introduction of the new insurance card with a photograph, a certain similarity must also be taken into account:

You can do the same with the new cards with the photo on it. Just the same hairstyle, otherwise I'm just a Black person for them. Nobody will recognize a difference. Besides, they never really look at it. (Interview, Laure)

For example, it is important to keep in mind that treatment methods are consistent with the health profile of the person who lends the card, because this could cause problems afterwards (cf. Anderson, 2003, p. 35). Care must also be taken to ensure that treatment patterns are not contradictory and thus refer to different medical histories, for example if an appendix has to be removed for the second time. In such cases, the attending doctors can become suspicious or the health insurance companies may check whether it is an insurance fraud, which may uncover the lack of official residency (Stobbe, 2004, p. 121).

In addition to the lending of health insurance cards, the social networks also ensure access to medical care in other ways. Vida and Mary both state that among their acquaintances there are doctors or medical professionals:

My friend's wife has a medical practice. I can go there. She examines you and gives you medication....There you don't have to be afraid that she will inform the authorities or call the police. (Interview, Vida)

My uncle worked in the pharmacy and studied medicine [in his country of origin]. He's doing some-

thing different in Germany now, but if we get sick or have complaints, we can go to him and he'll help us. (Interview, Mary)

Mary's uncle has a legal residence status in Germany, yet his educational qualifications were not acknowledged, which is why he does not work in the medical field. However, according to Mary, he helps diagnose many people without papers and without health insurance. He also has some contacts with licensed doctors to whom he refers those he helps in "worse cases" (Interview, Mary). Vida's remarks illustrate the fear of deportation which is part of the everyday life of illegalized migrants. Therefore, it is essential to know doctors you can trust. The social networks are a key factor for this. Even if there aren't any trusted doctors in the community, there is often knowledge within the social networks about solidarity medical practices and hospitals that do not ask unpleasant questions:

I always go to a doctor after the office hours. She was recommended to me by my roommate, who said that many people go there and she is very friendly. (Interview, Josephine)

Through social networks, the information about the *Medibüro* as well as the organization known as the *Malteser Migranten Medizin*, is shared. Both are non-governmental initiatives that connect illegalized migrants to solidarity doctors. Both are financed by donations, which means they have a limited budget. Not all medically necessary treatments can be carried out. Especially in the case of cost-intensive treatments, which require expensive equipment and medicine, long-term drug therapy, or inpatient treatment. The financial resources are quickly overstretched, so that the initiatives cannot provide sufficient prevention, diagnostics, and therapy (Groß, 2005, p. 24). Nevertheless, both organizations help to make health care accessible for those who are excluded from it, as Laure's statements demonstrate:

During pregnancy I had a midwife. She often came to my home and helped me a lot....Although we never spoke directly about papers, she knew about it. She then told me about the Malteser, which was a real relief for me. (Interview, Laure)

The *Malteser Migranten Medizin* organized the delivery in a Berlin hospital, as well as post-natal care and early childhood medical care for the baby (according to Laure). Nevertheless, not all illegalized migrants know about these two institutions.

However, we want to emphasize that there is a "situated knowledge" (Haraway, 1995) about trustworthy doctors, solidarity medical facilities, and initiatives like the *Medibüro* and the *Malteser Migranten Medizin* within the social networks. It is generated by experiences and the subsequent exchange and sharing of these experi-

ences with others. As a "mobile common," this knowledge offers basic resources for living (and surviving) and everyday participation in society (Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2013, p. 190). These mobile commons circulate within social networks and are thereby continually updated and expanded upon. They are invisible goods that belong to no one and which cannot be controlled by anyone. Accordingly, this knowledge is not only a product of reoccurring experiences of migrant life, but also the prerequisite for everyday practices that allow (and produce) alternative forms of life (Bojadžijev, 2012, p. 147; Trimikliniotis, Parsanoglou, & Tsianos, 2015, p. 1040). In this sense, mobile commons facilitate access to health care and are therefore practices of urban citizenship from below. Similarly, the practice of sharing insurance cards is another form of lived urban citizenship (Lister, 2007). We argue that illegalized migrants as resistance strategies simply 'take' their rights—rights which are not formally granted to them, but which should be their basic rights—yet still do not perform "acts of citizenship" as Isin (2008, p. 18) defines them. For him, those acts rupture prevailing perceptions of formal citizenship. Consequently, those people staging acts of citizenship "transform themselves (and others) from subjects into citizens as claimants of rights" (Isin, 2009, p. 368). This results in one becoming an activist citizen constituted through representation and visibility. But the previously mentioned strategies and practices of illegalized migrants do not rely on visibility. On the contrary, strategies of disembodiment and invisibility are part of their everyday struggles "to remain outside of the reaches of state authorities" (Rygiel, 2011, p. 157). To remain underground and to dis-identify with the existing categories of border regimes is an immanent act of resistance (Papadopoulos, Stephenson, & Tsianos, 2008, pp. 217–218). They refuse their categorization as deportable and illegal subjects and thus become urban citizens, who participate in urban society without the formal rights to do so. Even if there are no visible and audible claims made, the strategies of exchanging specific knowledge and sharing insurance cards can be interpreted as everyday performances of urban citizenship, because at the end of the day they ensure societal participation and access to fundamental rights.

6. Conclusion

In summer 2019, the first Anonymous Health Certificates were issued to illegalized migrants in Berlin. The struggles and campaigns that have pushed the state government to work on the implementation are already a form of urban citizenship. As demonstrated, the *Medibüro* was a central actor in this process. It not only helps migrants to gain the most access possible through personal consultations and connecting them with solidarity medical institutions, but also uses these experiences to fight for political solutions. Their political work helps to sustain the imperceptible everyday practices of illegalized migrants.

It both uncovers and challenges exclusionary practices in the public health system. Hence, it gives rise to a broader public discussion of what it means to have access to rights. Moreover, transformation processes towards a city that provides possibilities for participation for all its inhabitants regardless of their formal residency becomes conceivable. An urban citizenship perspective that scrutinizes the struggles for and processes of social change enables a nuanced analysis of the Anonymized Health Certificate. In this way, the actual possibility of providing people with concrete access to health care becomes tangible, without ignoring the exclusion mechanisms that are being circumvented in Berlin but are not contested at national level where they remain effective. Besides the struggles about the implementation of the Anonymized Health Certificate, the illegalized migrants themselves have ensured that they gain access to health care. Using the insurance cards of friends, going to solidarity doctors—who treat them for free—and spreading the word about them within their social networks are practices of urban citizenship. Even if they do not contest the social order visibly, they simply ‘take’ their rights to participate in society, imperceptibly, through those strategies and thus perform practices of urban citizenship in their everyday life.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

References

- Alt, J. (2003). *Leben in der Schattenwelt* [Living in the shadow world]. Karlsruhe: Loeper.
- Anderson, P. (2003). ‘Dass Sie uns nicht vergessen...’: *Menschen in der Illegalität in München* [‘That they don’t forget us...’: People in illegality in Munich]. Munich: Landeshauptstadt München Sozialreferat.
- Ataç, I., Rygiel, K., & Stierl, M. (2016). Introduction. The contentious politics of refugee and migrant protest and solidarity movements: Remaking citizenship from the margins. *Citizenship Studies*, 20(5), 527–544.
- Balibar, È. (2004). *We the people of Europe? Reflections on transnational citizenship*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Bartholome, B., Groß, J., & Misbach, E. (2010). Neue Perspektiven in Berlin? [New perspectives in Berlin?]. *Berliner Ärzte*, 1, 22.
- Bauder, H. (2016). Possibilities of urban belonging. *Antipode*, 48(2), 252–271.
- Blokland, T., Hentschel, C., Holm, A., Lebuhn, H., & Margalit, T. (2015). Urban citizenship and the right to the city: Fragmentations of claims. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 39(4), 655–665.
- Bundesministerium des Innern. (2007). *Illegal aufhältige Migranten in Deutschland: Datenlage, Rechtslage, Handlungsoptionen* [Illegal migrants in Germany: State of data, legal situation, options for action]. Berlin: Bundesministerium des Innern. Retrieved from https://www.einwanderer.net/fileadmin/downloads/berichte/illegalitaet_-_bmi.pdf
- Bojadžijev, M. (2012). *Die windige Internationale. Rassismus und Kämpfe der Migration* [The windy international: Racism and struggles of migration]. Münster: Westfälisches Dampfboot.
- Darling, J. (2017). Forced migration and the city: Irregularity, informality and the politics of presence. *Progress in Human Geography*, 4(2), 178–198.
- de Genova, N. (2002). Migrant ‘illegality’ and deportability in everyday life. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 31, 419–447.
- Dickel, P., & Schröder, M. (2013). *Vom Medibüro zur Poliklinik* [From Medibüro to polyclinic: Health needs politics]. *Zeitschrift für eine soziale Medizin*, 1, 8–10.
- Gilbert, L., & Dikeç, M. (2008). Right to the city: Politics of citizenship. In K. Goonewardena, S. Kipfer, R. Milgrom, & C. Schmid (Eds.), *Space, difference, everyday life: Reading Henri Lefebvre* (pp. 250–263). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Groß, J. (2005). *Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der medizinischen Versorgung von Patienten und Patientinnen ohne legalen Aufenthaltsstatus* [Possibilities and limitations of medical care for patients without legal residence status]. Berlin: Flüchtlingsrat Berlin.
- Groß, J. (2009). *Patienten ohne Papiere—Es bewegt sich etwas* [Patients without papers—Something is moving]. *Berliner Ärzte*, 2, 24–25.
- Haraway, D. (1995). *Die Neuerfindung der Natur. Primaten, Cyborgs und Frauen* [Simians, cyborgs and women: The reinvention of nature]. Frankfurt am Main and New York, NY: Campus.
- Hess, S., & Lebuhn, H. (2014). Politiken der Bürgerschaft [Politics of citizenship]. *Suburban*, 3(2), 11–34.
- Huschke, S. (2013). *Kranksein in der Illegalität* [Illness in illegality]. Bielefeld: Transcript.
- Isin, E. (2008). Theorizing acts of citizenship. In E. Isin & G. Nielsen (Eds.), *Acts of citizenship* (pp. 15–43). London: Palgrave.
- Isin, E. (2009). Citizenship in flux: The figure of the activist citizen. *Subjectivity*, 29(1), 367–388.
- Lebuhn, H. (2014). *Illegalisierung: Lokale Konflikte um Kontrollen, Rechte und Ressourcen* [Illegalization: Local conflicts over checks, rights and resources]. In B. Belina, M. Naumann, & A. Strüver (Eds.), *Handbuch kritische Stadtgeographie* [Handbook critical urban geography] (pp. 228–233). Münster: Westfälisches Dampfboot.
- Lister, R. (2007). Inclusive citizenship: Realizing the potential. *Citizenship Studies*, 11(2), 49–61.
- McNevin, A. (2013). Ambivalence and citizenship: Theorising the political claims of irregular migrants. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 41(2), 182–200.
- Medibüro. (2014). *Gesundheit für alle: Asylbewerberleistungsgesetz abschaffen* [Health for all: Abolish the

- welfare law for asylum seekers]. Berlin: Medibüro. Retrieved from http://stopasylblg.de/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/2014_kampagne_gesundheit-und-asylblg-2.pdf
- Medibüro. (2016). *20 Jahre Medibüro* [20 years Medibüro]. Berlin: Medibüro. Retrieved from https://medibuero.de/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2016/03/20_Jahre_Medibuero_Berlin_WEB.pdf
- Medibüro. (2019). Aufruf zum Warnstreik: Gesundheit für alle! Anonymisierter Krankenschein jetzt! [Call for a warning strike: Health for all! Anonymous Health Certificate now!]. *Medibüro*. Retrieved from <https://medibuero.de/gesundheit-fuer-alle-anonymisierter-krankenschein-jetzt>
- Nicholls, W. (2016). Politicizing undocumented immigrants one corner at a time: How day laborers became a politically contentious group. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 40(2), 299–320.
- Nyers, P. (2008). No one is illegal: Between city and nation. In E. Isin & G. Nielsen (Eds.), *Acts of citizenship* (pp. 160–182). London and New York, NY: Zed Books.
- Nyers, P., & Rygiel, K. (Eds.). (2012). *Citizenship, migrant activism, and the politics of movement*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Papadopoulos, D., Stephenson, N., & Tsianos, V. (2008). *Escape routes*. London: Pluto Press.
- Papadopoulos, D., & Tsianos, V. (2013). After citizenship: Autonomy of migration, organisational ontology and mobile commons. *Citizenship Studies*, 17(2), 178–196.
- Pater, S. (2005). *Menschen ohne Papiere* [People without papers]. Düsseldorf: Retap.
- Rygiel, K. (2011). Governing borderzones of mobility through e-borders: The politics of embodied mobility. In V. Squire (Ed.), *The contested politics of mobility: Borderzones and irregularity* (pp. 143–168). London: Routledge.
- Rygiel, K., Ataç, I., Köster-Eiserfunke, A., & Schwiertz, H. (2015). Governing through citizenship and citizenship from below: An interview with Kim Rygiel. *Movements—Journal for Critical Migration and Border Regime Studies*, 1(2). Retrieved from <http://movements-journal.org/issues/02.kaempfe/02.rygiel,atac,koster-eiserfunke,schwiertz-v-governing-citizenship-from-below.html>
- Schilliger, S. (2018). Urban Citizenship: Teilhabe für alle—Da, wo wir leben [Urban citizenship: Participation for all—Where we live]. In H. Aigner & S. Kumnig (Eds.), *Stadt für alle! Analysen und Aneignungen* [City for all! Analyses and appropriations] (pp. 14–35). Vienna: Mandelbaum Verlag.
- Schilliger, S. (2019). Undoing borders in solidarity cities. *Global Dialogue—Magazine of the International Sociological Association*, 3, 35–36.
- Squire, V. (Ed.). (2011). *The contested politics of mobility: Borderzones and irregularity*. London: Routledge.
- Squire, V. (2017). Unauthorised migration beyond structure/agency? Acts, interventions, effects. *Politics*, 37(3), 253–272.
- Stobbe, H. (2004). *Undokumentierte Migration in Deutschland und den Vereinigten Staaten* [Undocumented migration in Germany and the United States]. Göttingen: Universitätsverlag Göttingen.
- Trimikliniotis, N., Parsanoglou, D., & Tsianos, V. (2015). Mobile commons and/in precarious spaces: Mapping migrant struggles and social resistance. *Critical Sociology*, 42(7), 1035–1049.
- Wilcke, H. (2018). *Illegal und unsichtbar? Papierlose Migrant*innen als politische Subjekte* [Illegal and invisible? Migrants without papers as political subjects]. Bielefeld: Transcript.
- Wilmes, M. (2011). Irregular migration and foggy organisational structures. In M. Bommers & G. Sciortino (Eds.), *Foggy social structures: Irregular migration, European labour markets and the welfare state* (pp. 117–140). Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Yuval-Davis, N., Wemyss, G., & Cassidy, K. (2018). Everyday bordering, belonging and the reorientation of British immigration legislation. *Sociology*, 52(2), 228–224.

About the Authors



Holger Wilcke holds a PhD in Geography from the Humboldt University of Berlin. He is a Research Associate with the Berlin Institute for Integration and Migration Research (BIM) at Humboldt University of Berlin. His work focuses on migration and social movements as well as the politics of migratory struggles.



Rosa Manoim completed her MA in Migration and Displacement at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa, before moving to Berlin to begin research for a PhD. Her work focuses on bureaucratic violence, citizenship, and uncertainty.

Article

Enabling Social Inclusion and Urban Citizenship of Older Adults through eHealth: The iZi Project in the Hague

Rachel Kurian ^{1,*}, Nicole Menke ², Surrendra Santokhi ² and Erwin Tak ²

¹ International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University Rotterdam, 2518 AX The Hague, The Netherlands;
E-Mail: kurian@iss.nl

² Department of Education, Culture and Wellbeing, Municipality of the Hague, 2500DJ The Hague, The Netherlands;
E-Mails: nicole.menke@denhaag.nl (N.M.), surrendra.santokhi@denhaag.nl (S.S.), erwintak2@gmail.com (E.T.)

* Corresponding author

Submitted: 4 July 2019 | Accepted: 27 September 2019 | Published: 28 November 2019

Abstract

While the elderly constitute a significant proportion of urban population, they are often not included in the decision-making processes concerning their health requirements. These exclusionary practices could be viewed as reflecting deficits in urban citizenship as well as a denial of what the French sociologist Henri Lefebvre defined in 1968 as the ‘right to the city’ (Lefebvre, 1968). This article is concerned with promoting the social inclusion of the elderly in urban spaces. It focuses on the potential of eHealth to facilitate their independent living in their own homes, an expressed priority of the elderly. It discusses a pilot project pioneered by the Municipality of The Hague where attention and space was given for the elderly to express their physical and emotional needs in different fora with relevant stakeholders, and reflect on ways in which eHealth could be of help to them. These ideas were important in creating the iZi Experience Home project, which also served as an important tool for creating awareness, enthusiasm and information about the possibilities of technology. The article examines the different processes involved in the development of eHealth applications, including the nature of the deliberations, the devices evolved and tried out in the homes of the elderly. Such methods also raised understanding regarding the challenges of using eHealth, such as the barriers faced by service providers, the costs associated with the gadgets and the resistance of caregivers to these techniques. The project demonstrated that traditional eHealth applications were indeed important in supporting the elderly through increased mobility, security and ability to remain in their homes. But these need to be complemented by community generation, spaces for sharing experiences and physical face-to-face interactions to bring about more comprehensive well-being and happiness. There is therefore the need to broaden the concept of eHealth to move beyond technical solutions only but to include the ideas of the patients, in this case the elderly, in policies, discussions with stakeholders, innovations and practices. In these ways, the elderly are supported to claim their rights to the city. The discussion contributes to understanding the challenges of exercising urban enacted citizenship amongst the elderly, and the need to include inclusion and democratic participation as rights and norms of ‘age-friendly’ cities.

Keywords

eHealth; elderly; home experience; positive health; rights to the city; The Hague; urban citizenship; urban participation

Issue

This article is part of the issue “Inclusion through Enacted Citizenship in Urban Spaces” edited by Rachel Kurian (Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands) and Helen Hintjens (Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands)

© 2019 by the authors; licensee Cogitatio (Lisbon, Portugal). This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

1. Introduction

Ageing and urbanisation have been identified as the “two inexorable and intersecting demographic trends” in the 21st century (Global Coalition on Aging & McGraw Hill

Financial Global Institute, 2016, p. 2). The proportion of people of 60 years and older has been increasing in the global population, rising from 382, million in 1980 to 962 million in 2017, a number predicted to increase to about 2.1 billion in 2050 (United Nations, 2017, p. 2).

Urbanisation has also increased at a remarkable pace. In 2018, 55% of the global population resided in urban areas, this figure rising from 30% in 1950 and predicted to increase to 68% by 2050 (United Nations, 2018). Older adults also increasingly contribute to the urban population; while their proportion of the urban population in the OECD countries was 7.7% in 1950, this figure rose to 17.8% in 2010 and is predicted to increase 25.1% in 2050, with 43% of all the people over 65 residing currently in cities (OECD, 2015). The OECD has therefore encouraged local governments to increase public health expenditure on health and social care, redesign infrastructure to suit the elderly, as well as foster improvements in social networks, access to services and affordable housing (OECD, 2015).

Older adults, however, experience social exclusion and other disadvantages notably with regard to “inequities in choice and control, resources and relationships, and power and rights in key domains of neighbourhood and community; services, amenities and mobility; material and financial resources; social relations; socio-cultural aspects of society; and civic participation” (Walsh, Scharf, & Keeting, 2017, p. 93). This exclusion can be viewed as both “a process and a state,” which bars them “from full participation in social, economic and political life and from asserting their rights” (Beall & Piron, 2005, p. 9). Social isolation and social exclusion of older people can also have a deteriorating effect on their health, wellbeing and quality of life (Nicholson, 2012). All these aspects pose serious challenges for government and other stakeholders involved in the wellbeing of older adults.

In the early 2000s, in the wake of growing demand and costs of healthcare, as well as the healthcare reforms and downsizing of hospital care, the Dutch government was keen to find ways of encouraging people to live independently at home for as long as possible and to give them more responsibility in health decisions that affect their lives (Council for Health and Care, 2002, p. 162). The potential of eHealth to improve efficiency and lower costs of care was viewed as an important option as more persons were familiar with and used the internet and other forms of information and communication technology (Kummervold et al., 2008). The concept of eHealth appeared initially in scientific literature in 1999 and associated with the possibility of patients, informal caregivers, healthy consumers, and healthcare providers using ‘smart’ technology, to improve their health and treatments (Eysenbach, 2001; Pagliari et al., 2005). The first eHealth monitor was presented to the Dutch government by the health expert centre Nictiz in 2013. It outlined the state of the art of eHealth, and included several options to improve eHealth services, such as creating greater awareness of options available, stimulating electronic exchange of data, and allowing patients to electronically review their medical records. Interested to understand the potential of such interventions for cost-effective and supportive interventions, the government

encouraged institutions and local municipalities to experiment with and develop eHealth facilities.

The Municipality of The Hague pioneered one such experiment in 2016 as part of its programme on ICT and care. The project was called “iZi—Living a Long and Healthy Life at Home” (*Gezond Lang Thuis*) and was concerned with supporting older adults to live as long as possible in their own homes by strengthening community development and developing appropriate technology (Gemeente Den Haag, 2015, 2016). An integral part of this experiment was to develop and check the value of eHealth and digital solutions for older adults with their involvement in the whole process. The emphasis on participation and discussion can be seen in the name iZi, which does not mean anything specific but the logo symbolises two persons (the Is) communicating with each other. These intentions were in line with research indicating that older adults preferred to live in their own homes as long as possible with adequate care givers or home services, but lacking these, adapt their own homes to their needs or move to another adapted dwelling (Roy, Dubé, Després, Freitas, & Légaré, 2018). The experiment incorporated the use of necessary and relatively uncomplicated equipment that the older adults would want or need to live in their own home as long as possible. Attention was to equipment that could be made available or adjusted with support of local welfare services. The aim was to enable residents to use the technology for a longer period of time by focusing on usability, satisfaction and integration on a daily basis. In addition, there was space given and encouragement to try out new, innovative technology or develop new solutions (Rijksoverheid, 2015).

As we have noted previously, eHealth is typically associated with the development of new information and communications technology that can improve the efficiency and quality of medical services. A guiding question of this article is if and how can such scientific innovations that focus on dealing with physical illness can also empower and improve the wellbeing of older adults. This article focuses on how eHealth facilities were implemented and developed in iZi and how the different processes influenced the social inclusion and urban citizenship of older adults. It shows that their roles in the deliberations and the decision-making processes enabled their individual and collective empowerment and social inclusion at the local level and with the Municipality. The article argues that it promoted a ‘deliberative democracy,’ enhancing, as Gaventa has observed, the “nature and quality of deliberation” and the promotion of a “democratic imagination” (Gaventa, 2006, pp. 13, 27). In many ways such developments can be viewed as promoting a form of “citizenship through enactments” (Isin, 2013, p. 43). The residents were able to negotiate for their ‘right to the city,’ a concept developed by Lefebvre to prioritise allowing access of all marginalised groups to the benefits of urban life (Lefebvre, 1996, p. 187). As he noted in 1991:

The right to the city, complemented by the right to difference and the right to information, should modify, concretize and make more practical the rights of the citizen as an urban dweller (*citadin*) and user of multiple services. It would affirm...the right of users to make known their ideas on the space and time of their activities in the urban area. (As cited in Lefebvre, 2000, p. 34)

Developing Lefebvre's concept, Harvey argues that the right to the city goes beyond the liberty of an individual to access its resources; it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city "involving the exercise of a collective power to reshape the processes of urbanization" (Harvey, 2008, p. 23).

This article deals with how residents of iZi through their involvement in eHealth interventions, made efforts to construct a more supportive and deliberative community, and to challenge their own social exclusion and isolation. This argument is developed in the following sections, where we first consider the characteristics of eHealth and its potential and challenges for supporting older adults. We then outline the philosophy and perspectives that guided the iZi experiment in particular, the processes of deliberation involved, some early outcomes and the key challenges in generating new ideas and eHealth facilities that could better support the older residents to remain in their own homes. Integrating their involvement, and providing the space and the means for older people to play a role in policies affecting their lives, we suggest that an essential outcome of the project was supposed to be more 'enacted' (i.e., active) forms of citizenship for older adults, including the sick. In contrast with the lack of voice experienced by many older urban residents in other contexts (Walsh et al., 2017), this study suggests that the eHealth iZi experiment was able to promote improved inclusion and civic participation of older urban residents in policies that affected them. As a result they experience improvements in their perceived health, safety and security. Many challenges and hurdles remain, but we are convinced this experiment has some important lessons for how to embed urban citizenship in practice, and how to promote the 'right to the city' for older adults in similar interventions in future.

2. Challenges: Can eHealth Meet the Needs of Older Adults?

In 2015, the Dutch Council for Public Health and Society defined eHealth as the "use of new information and communications technologies, and in particular internet technologies among others, to support or improve health and healthcare" (Council for Public Health and Society, 2015, p. 13). In 2019, the eHealth expert centre Nictiz broadened the notion of eHealth to include "the application of both digital information and health communication support and / or improve healthcare" (van Lettow, Wouters, & Sinnige, 2019, p. 6). The effective-

ness of eHealth is also highly dependent on the quality of the cooperation between the different stakeholders, the most significant of these being the patient, practitioner and the provider (Ganesh, 2004, p. 43).

These aspects framed the promotion of eHealth in the Netherlands. Such ideas are linked to the general literature on the characteristics eHealth applications. Eysenbach (2001, pp. 1–2) identified the "10 Es" that characterize eHealth. These were: (1) efficiency of healthcare; (2) enhancing quality of care; (3) evidence-based interventions; (4) empowerment of consumers and patients; (5) encouragement of a new relationship between the patient and health professional; (6) education of physicians through online sources; (7) enabling information exchange and communication in a standardized way between healthcare establishments; (8) extending the scope of healthcare beyond its conventional boundaries; (9) ethics associated with online professional practice, informed consent, privacy and equity; and (10) equity to make healthcare more equitable. While these different aspects were considered in the iZi project, this article focuses more directly on aspects relating to residents' empowerment and how this could promote Martin Seligman's (2008, 2012) notion of 'positive health' for older adults.

A review of the above characteristics of eHealth show that it assumes that people using such facilities have familiarity and skills with computer technology. Inadequate levels of literacy, often found among older adults, could result in the latter finding eHealth interventions too difficult to understand which could in turn lead to lack of motivation to even experiment with such tools. Studies have also shown that non-Western migrants often experienced a combination of age, language and computer barriers in using eHealth facilities, stressing the need for user-friendly eHealth applications (van Leuven, & van Dijk, 2017, p. 21). In her inaugural speech as professor of eHealth applications at the Open University in the Netherlands in January 2019, "eHealth Applications for Vulnerable Groups: A Challenge," Catherine Bolman warned that increasing resort to eHealth could lead to inequalities in healthcare (Bolman, 2019, p. 12). This process was associated with less likelihood that these applications would be used by weaker sections in society, including particularly older adults as the language and the content were often too difficult (Bolman, 2019, p. 13). She noted that 48% of the Dutch population struggled to manage their own healthcare, and lack adequate knowledge, motivation and self-confidence, which combined with low literacy and income did not offer many prospects for eHealth applications (Bolman, 2019, p. 13). According to her the increased resort to eHealth in healthcare could result in these persons "increasingly fall[ing] outside the boat" (Bolman, 2019, p. 14). She argues therefore for greater involvement of such groups in the "co-creation" of eHealth applications and strategies (Bolman, 2019, p. 21).

In addition, traditional practices of eHealth have also limits in overcoming some of the more structural, social

and emotional needs of older adults. It is well-known that one of the most common experiences of this group is isolation and loneliness. These issues can be helped and tackled by using computer and smart technology to link up with friends, relatives, carers and other providers. Feelings of insecurity could also be ameliorated through surveillance systems, while alarms and other voice reminders could help in ensuring that medicines are taken on time, as well as the need for rest and leisure. In addition, electronically controlled systems could also help in physical work which is difficult such as cooking, cleaning, opening windows and blinds, while other gadgets could help the elderly in the kitchen, bathrooms and other rooms. But at the same time, these tools do not necessarily deal with the root cause of isolation or exclusion, as most older adults who experience these problems do not have persons to interact with. Promoting community development could play an important role in overcoming these problem as shown in the case of iZi.

3. Philosophy of iZi: Inclusive and Age-Friendly Cities

Research has shown that older adults experience multiple forms of exclusion spatial, social and economic disparities in urban areas (World Bank, 2015). Furthermore, this group was also often overlooked in decision-making processes that affected their physical and emotional needs, even they have the right, as urban citizens, to participate and enjoy equitable benefits in urban society (Jehoel-Gijsbers & Vrooman, 2008). A priority in iZi was to counter these exclusions and to respect the views of this group.

Studies have shown older adults would prefer to live in their own homes as long as possible with adequate care or home services, but lacking these, adapt their own homes to their needs or move to another adapted dwelling (Roy et al., 2018). Després and Lord (2005, as cited in Roy et al., 2018) identified several psychological, social and economic reasons for this preference in addition to the home being an anchor, a space of safety and centre of daily life. These considerations have influenced the iZi pilot project. It focused on technologies that could support older adults live independently in their own homes with good quality and efficient healthcare services, as well as in a safe, secure and pleasant environment.

The philosophy of inclusion adopted by iZi was also in line with commitments of key international organisations as well as researchers. Their right to social inclusion is embedded in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which states that no one should be left behind, and all should be provided opportunities to fulfil their potential in dignity and equality. In its approach to inclusive cities the World Bank has also argued that that interventions involving just one dimension of inclusion, such as architectural designs, will not be enough, since the “spatial dimension of inclusion cannot be separated from economic and social dimensions since it is usually socially and economically marginalized groups that inhabit phys-

ically deprived spaces” (World Bank, 2015, p. 10). The social dimension of inclusion was viewed as promoting “fundamental principles of rights, dignity, equity and security” with the most important factor being to recognize the role of the marginalized and work together with them in order to achieve inclusion (World Bank, 2015, p. 11). It has also paid particular attention on the participation and involvement of older adults in the decisions that concern their health and welfare. These principles were viewed as relevant in the development of iZi.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has also called for age-friendly cities that promote active ageing, optimising “opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age” (WHO, 2007, p. 1). It recognises the “valuable capacities and resources of the older persons” which need to be considered when responding to their needs and preferences, while at the same time respecting their decisions on matters relating to their lives (WHO, 2007, p. 5). It highlights the need to promote their “inclusion in and contribution to all areas of community life” (WHO, 2007, p. 5).

Among the priorities identified by the WHO to promote healthy ageing was the establishment of a platform for innovation and change and a regular global forum on healthy ageing to share and “showcase innovative practice, successful pilots and scaled actions” like the iZi project in the Hague (WHO, 2017, p. 4).

Unlike a focus on cutting costs of care, however, the iZi experiment was more informed by the philosophy of ‘positive health’ for older adults. The concept was pioneered by Seligman who described it as more than the absence of illness but involved enhancing the “subjective, biological, and functional assets that could lead to more positive health outcomes” (Seligman, 2008, 2012). The project iZi assumed the standpoint that that the health needs of older adults needed to go beyond medical and welfare concerns of government, and that, their positive health wellbeing was positively influenced by being involved in deliberations, having connections and bonds with neighbours and in the local community, in addition to being able to access medical and health service providers. These features were different from governments viewing this group just as a recipient of welfare.

To this extent, it consciously integrated the active participation of older adults, or residents as they preferred to be called, in experimenting with, implementing eHealth and generating innovations and solutions. It provided opportunities for the residents to express needs and worries that went beyond the narrow understanding of medical health, including problems concerning finance, housing, loss of partners, loneliness and social exclusion. These processes will be discussed in the subsequent sections.

4. The Processes in iZi

A three-year pilot was started in February 2016 at the Steenhouwersgaarde, which was one street in the

Escamp district in The Hague. Out of the 260 households involved, 250 resided in social houses, owned by the housing corporation reflecting the relatively low income levels of the residents who are eligible for subsidized housing. A survey was undertaken with 92 residents, whose ages ranged between 50 years to over 90 years, the majority were between 70 and 89 years (50% were between 70 to 79 years of age, and 22% were between 80 to 89 years of age). As reflecting demographic patterns, women made out 60% of the participants, while 67% of the group lived alone. All the residents were invited to participate in the development and implementation of the project and it was up to the residents to decide if and how they could appropriately use their capabilities and skills (Leefwereldonderzoek, 2016). It is interesting to note that although the average age of this group was 76 years, the group was, on the whole, positive about their health, with 36% of them giving themselves a health score of 7 (on a scale of 1 to 10), 30% a score of 8 and 4% a score of 9. At the same time, the majority (over 60%) expected the quality of their health to change in the future, with issues such as mobility, less energy and other physical problems being of concern (Leefwereldonderzoek, 2016).

Shortly thereafter in May 2016 residents, were invited to participate selecting technology for user pilots and to be included in the iZi Experience Home. The aim was to discuss and identify (technological) solutions together. They were active during the deliberations to select the technology and provided important input for understanding and future use and development of products. As a result the iZi Experience Home project opened on 16 November 2016 where the residents were able to see and experience for themselves the potential of technological innovations for their health and wellbeing. This gave them insights into some 90 technological and non-technological solutions that were selected and sometimes installed by the residents themselves. These were for the different spaces used by persons such as the living room, kitchen, hall, toilet and bathroom, and the bedroom. Some of the items were a fire-repellent door, a robot companion pet cat, mobile alarms, vacuum cleaning robots, smartphones for seniors, remote controlled lighting, a Dementia App, facilities in the kitchen such as suitable lighting for cupboards, smoke detectors, suit-

able trolleys as well as ergonomically shaped appliances such as openers, cutlery. In addition, there were video intercoms for the front doors of apartments, night sensors in the halls, suitable locks and special beds. At the same time, project leader Erwin Tak emphasised that the focus was on what was necessary to have and technology that matched the needs of the older adults (Gemeente Den Haag, 2015, 2016; Leefwereldonderzoek, 2016).

In the process, the residents became more active volunteers and involved in the project. Some of them became ‘Ambassadors’ motivating others to join the discussions and spreading relevant information to interested persons, including visitors. By 2019 there were 15 iZi Ambassadors who shared and disseminated information on the project, and also welcomed visitors and guide them around the iZi Experience Home. Two of the Ambassadors were from a migrant background and were important in involving and supporting members of their own communities to engage in the activities of iZi. The visitors to the iZi experience home included Queen Maxima of the Netherlands and the Mayor of the Hague, Pauline Krikke, both of whom showed interest and support for the work. In addition, government and other institutions involved in care and social wellbeing, firms and marketing groups, research institutions as well as press groups visited the place. Among the remarks noted by the visitors in the logbooks of the experience home was the positive ambiance of the place, innovative approach of displaying convenient technologies that could be used by persons in a supporting environment. In addition several noted the enthusiasm and competence of the Ambassadors in providing information and encouraging persons to experiment with technologies.

The Ambassadors themselves commented that during the process, they had gained confidence in their ability to demonstrate the products and found their role during such events both enjoyable and rewarding. According to them they felt a sense of empowerment through the training and coaching they received as part of the project, and felt more able to experiment with digital technology and transfer these experiences to the other residents. They learnt new skills during the process, and gained knowledge on technology, which also gave them a sense of achievement, responsibility and purpose and in their own words “enjoyed a new career.” The Ambassadors

Table 1. Background of visitors to the iZi Experience Home. Source: Registration Book provided by the project leader at iZi Community (December 2016–April 2019).

Type of (group) visitors	Number of visits at iZi Experience Home (February 2016–April 2019) in %
Groups of residents	5
Government and institutions for care and social wellbeing	19
Suppliers and companies	53
Knowledge Institutions	19
Press	4
Total (N = 203)	100

also visited other smart home projects, like iZi, have attended conferences relating to urban living and eHealth and have demonstrated the technology implemented in the iZi Experience Home project to a broader audience. They also communicate directly with the other residents during the weekly open hour visits.

In January 2017, the residents of the Hague were able to experience and test the new technological innovations in what could be viewed as a 'Living Lab,' the latter being supported by research and knowledge institutions such as University of Applied Sciences at the Hague to foster and exchange expertise on this issue. In March 2017, 102 residents were recruited to try out various technological solutions in their own homes for one year. This started with a visit to the Experience Home with the community builders, and subsequent interviews to match the individual needs to the available technology. For this purpose an interview tool was designed and tested to optimize the match (Haufe, Peek, & Ger Luijkx, 2019). Next, residents were allowed to use the matched technology for a maximum of 12 months during which the use and their experiences were monitored. The effects on outcomes (e.g., quality of life, participation, self-reliance, health-care usage) were measured independently by the Leiden University Medical Centre. Use cases per product were written up to provide feedback and suggestions for improvement to suppliers. The monitoring and outcome effects showed that there was need to increase awareness on technology, use personal context when matching technology (i.e., housing situation, digital literacy, personal network, attitudes toward technology), design technology for improved usability (especially digital interfaces) and providing (technical) support with installation and use is vital. To support implementation and use of technology a helpdesk and digital support group was installed, both with active involvement of Ambassadors who helped their peers.

In November 2018, the Hague Municipality won the World Smart City Award in the category "Inclusive & Sharing Cities." In this category where competing, among others, the cities of New York and Moscow (Newsbreezer, 2018). The award was presented at the Smart City Expo World Congress in Barcelona, the leading event for the called 'smart cities of tomorrow' (The Hague Online, 2018).

5. Deliberative Processes and Inclusion: Reflections

The participation and inclusion of the views of the residents were inherent to the development and decision-making processes involved in the experiment. At the start a series of workshops were organised, so called 'ateliers' to offer an informal and easy nature of discussion. In order to facilitate this key aspects of this approach included to encourage reciprocal behaviour (providing and receiving incentives), providing consistency, commitment (stepwise creating a relationship), sympathy (showing interest and empathy), authority (demonstrating ex-

pertise) and scarcity (exclusivity, wanting to be part of it): 62 residents volunteered to take part in the ateliers, of which 40 showed up during one of 3 meetings. The ateliers were designed as co-creative group sessions in which 'thinking together' is enhanced by creating a dialogue in which participants challenge each other to come up with solutions. During the first session the focus was on the future: what does it look like and what would help me, including technology. For the second session participants were invited to bring along family, friends or neighbours to take part in and enhance the process. A third session introduced examples and demonstrations of technology. No minutes were taken and there was no chairperson in these meetings but the project team were present to keep the discussions on track to the relevant themes. Their priorities also resulted in the inclusion of non-digital items such as effective handle bars, stools, toothpaste dispensers, beds for seniors, as these were specifically expressed by residents during the discussions. In this way, the requirements were initiated by the residents themselves and incorporated in the project.

The project was guided by the Quadruple Helix (QH) Stakeholder framework which is a "an innovation co-operation model or innovation environment in which users, companies, universities and public authorities co-operate in order to produce innovations" (Arnkil, Järvensivu, Koski, & Piirainen, 2010, p. 52). While there are different 'models' of QH, iZi reflected most the citizens-centred QH where the "the focus is on the development of innovations relevant for the citizens" and where "citizens are on the driver's seat and the innovations produced can be based on the knowledge of the citizens, firms, universities and/or public authorities" (Arnkil et al., 2010, p. 56). It meant that government, businesses, research parties and users/residents' organizations were encouraged to express their views and concerns, with the outcome reflecting joint commitment and potential for continuity.

Some suppliers were invited to demonstrate their eHealth tools, without any commitment. The residents were asked to be very honest and indicate which tools worked and which were ineffective for them. In the latter case, the technology was not included in the project. Other criteria for selection of technology included whether it was: (1) Feasible, meaning practical, affordable; (2) safe, including privacy; (3) scalable, as easily and widely usable and relatively inexpensive; and (4) innovative/original. At the same time, an inventory was done of potential suppliers and available technology. Collaboration with other parties in the neighbourhood that provide care and welfare to residents was sought and formalized. Based on these deliberations the relevant eHealth technology was selected for use in the iZi Experience Home. Subsequently, group meetings (cooperative workshops and design tables) specifically looked at which technology or support could play a role in fulfilling specific needs expressed by residents, such as on mobility, care, sustainability.

As a result the project developed in an iterative way, with new information and experiences influencing the implementation of the technologies. While this involved intensive efforts on the part of the project team and the residents themselves, it also promoted trust, alignment, excellent knowledge management and a clear decision framework, while paying attention to and respecting the interests and objectives of others. Based on these deliberations a variety of eHealth tools (no-tech, low-tech and high-tech) were evaluated in several meetings/workshops. Among the items considered in this process were smart televisions with internet connections, digital facilities (laptop, tablets, smartphones, etc.), the use of connectivity sites such as Facebook, sensor operated lights, the use of safety door cameras connected to tablet or phone via internet, and sensor operated lifestyle monitoring systems. In addition smart walkers, ergonomically designed kitchen appliances and other appliances in the bathroom were also experimented with.

Taking part in the is process, being an Ambassador or experimenting with social technology (tablets, smart phones and robots) played a role in countering social isolation of the residents and promoting social cohesion through increased involvement in existing and new social activities. Communication between residents was also enhanced by new communication channels such as the digital newspaper, and helpdesk. There was also the *Digital Wall* newspaper created by the iZi team that provided relevant information on the activities of the different groups and committees in iZi, news reports, and possibilities for participation in different community activities. There were also weekly gatherings every Friday for discussion, the digital walk-in to discuss and share knowledge about technology every Thursday, iZi newsletter (by email and paper)—a specific Internet site, creative social media options, as well as the more simple but still important communication through letters, phone, mail, WhatsApp, and SMS:

All these enhanced the process of social inclusion and social cohesion, as noted by the coordinator of the iZi Ambassadors Leroy van den Hoonard (Personal communication 2019):

I think that the digital newspaper and digital walk-ins are contributing to new skills, and feelings of inclusiveness and appreciation. The digital newspaper provides essential information. Often the social activities are organized by the iZi Ambassadors and the residents committee. These activities have a social purpose: undertaking community activities. These activities connect and empower the majority of the community. I think our strength lies in the combination of all our communication channels and activities, allowing for more outreaching activities and ultimately also to more social cohesion among the residents. While we have several modern smart communication channels, such as WhatsApp and SMS, our residents and iZi Ambassadors appreciate the personal, warm contact

as best. This underlines that bringing warm and smart care is essential for residential participation.

Currently the digital support group is operated entirely by residents. They feel that they contribute to others by helping them and learn new skills themselves.

At the same time, most residents live alone and therefore sometime feel anxious that if something might go wrong there is no one they can call. Technology can help to alleviate these feelings and provide a sense of security, as explained by Wim Baanen (84), iZi Ambassador and resident:

In my home lifestyle sensors are installed. In all rooms there are small wireless sensors that record what I do or do not do all day. At what time I wake up for example, whether I have my breakfast or how much I move. In bed are sensors to measure my heart rate, among other things. All data is organized together on an app. At night, you can see what you've done all day. My daughter is watching [me] with it. For example, if I'm still lying in bed at twelve o'clock, my daughter can see that on the app. First of all, the system has recorded my common life pattern for two weeks. If I now show behaviour that differs greatly from the normal pattern, then there will be a warning. If you get incipient dementia or you have difficulties to use your legs, it can be useful.

6. Managing Challenges

The intention in the project was to include all the residents residing in the neighbourhood in the different activities. However, especially residents who originated from other ethnic or cultural background (i.e., Indonesian, Suriname, Turkish or Moroccan background) were less keen to participate initially. Even with intensified attempts (i.e., using interpreters, team members with a migrant background) and local contacts it proved difficult to reach and include them. Separate meetings were then set up with these persons, during which they could speak in their mother tongue (i.e., Turkish and Arabic). This approach was more successful as some participants were willing to take part in the technology pilots.

In addition, there was the problem of e-literacy, as previously discussed (Pharos, 2017). During the one-on-one interviews and group sessions it became clear that residents had different levels of digital experience, which in some cases hindered the use of technology. Support was provided in several meetings to guide residents who wanted to start with digital tools. Both professional as well as peers helped those who needed digital support. Most residents found it more comfortable to interact in a peer group as they felt more free to ask any question they liked, bring their own devices and take part on their own instigation. One female resident, aged 64, described this process as follows:

At first I was a little nervous to start using a smartphone as I thought it would be difficult and too complicated to use and. But I took the opportunity to test it out, without any conditions, during the iZi pilot project. I am very glad I did, as this allows me to keep in touch with my family and friends through WhatsApp groups. I feel more socially included with the group. Now I even have started instructing others who are starters during the iZi digital walk in sessions.

While the elderly were actively involved in the deliberations, they had to also deal with the fact that some stakeholders—using Ganesh’s triangle—were not cooperative or committed for different reasons. The healthcare organizations demonstrated limited commitment, mainly because most did not—as yet—use eHealth applications on a large scale, and also had to comply with competing rules and laws (Luiten, 2018). As a result, their flexibility to meet the needs of the elderly was restricted by rigid procedures that sometimes unintentionally imposed unnecessary restrictions. Healthcare organizations also used few data-driven solutions regarding the care needs of older adults. As a result, new technological options were often viewed as the responsibility of the individual. An example of this problem is the case of the active alarm system that one resident selected and wanted to test at home. As it did not comply with the system that was used by the healthcare provider’s organization, the resident was instructed to change to the organization’s preferred system.

While the needs and possible solutions were deliberated and selected, there were also several examples of bad (user) design, supply driven development and mismatches that are illustrative of the need to include prioritise the context of the residents. For example, the robot walker which was designed to support mobility and provide other support (communication, exercising, stability, etc.) did not fit the users home and daily routines. Most homes were too small or crowded which forced the walker to auto stop as it was guided by sensors, while the additional functionalities were not relevant for older users.

Caregivers were often required for the use of technology and this created some challenges and sometimes even resistance. For instance, the alarm systems usually called a caregiver in case of emergency. If there were no caregivers present or they refused to participate with the new technological applications, it could not be used. New products and services that had the potential to make life easier for the residents were sometimes resisted by family or caregivers as they did not fully understand the relevance of these devices, or even felt threatened in their role as primary care giver. But most of these challenges were taken up in the various meetings, and negotiated with the different groups involved. It became increasing clear however that the involvement of the residents in the discussions on these different matters did generate more relevant innovations and as such played a vital role

in the implementation and development of eHealth for older adults.

Finally, the lack of adequate financial resources limited the use of technology. For instance, most digital solutions required internet connections which meant extra (unforeseeable) costs which made some residents decide not to use an application. Furthermore, while the residents were on the whole satisfied with their material situations (a score of 8.1 was given, out of 10) there were also financial concerns, with nearly a half of them expecting life to become more expensive particularly with the reduction in (state)pension, less welfare, higher healthcare costs. They indicated however that they lived relatively sober were price conscious. These discussions also underscored the need to provide financing options for low income residents in order to make the promises of eHealth accessible to all who need them.

7. Conclusion: eHealth, Social Inclusion and Urban Citizenship?

The project and the iZi Experience Home project were able to generate a great deal of energy, enthusiasm and participation, and brought together a unique hub that connected residents, research institutions, governments, care and welfare organizations, and businesses in the field of healthcare innovation. On the whole the residents and the other stakeholders who participated in the project were positive about this approach. A strong community was created in the process providing the necessary room to deliberate the needs and rights of the elderly and to finding ways of dealing with their challenges. The active involvement of the residents in these processes and incorporating their ideas and experiences at an early stage reflects the principles of urban and enacted citizenship. The manner of participation and deliberations in iZi did promote the individual and collective empowerment and social inclusion of the residents. They were encouraged to become involved in the process, and room and time was provided for discussion on their needs, priorities and opinions. As a result, residents became open to modern technology, even if they were not experienced with it. The Alderman for Care, Youth and Public Health, Kavita Parbhudayal noted that a major lesson from this project was how discussions and active engagement could play a vital role in matching senior citizens with relevant technology (ICT and Health, 2019, p. 19).

The experience of the iZi Experience Home project demonstrated that eHealth applications were indeed important in supporting older adults through increased mobility, security and ability to remain in their homes. But such technologies need to be complemented by involvement them in the decision-making processes, as well as the creation of a deliberative community to share experiences and have physical face-to-face interactions to foster social inclusion, urban citizenship and empowerment. There is therefore the need for municipalities and

other relevant groups to broaden the concept of eHealth to move beyond technical solutions. The participation of older adults, in this case the residents, in the spaces and discussions were significant in several ways; they were able experiment and decide for themselves the feasibility of equipment, they were to provide vital feedback to the suppliers for improvement, they were able to create a caring community where persons could share their physical and emotional worries and problems.

All these promoted their social inclusion and their claim to their Rights to the City. In this project, enacted citizenship went beyond formal obligations and entitlements, and embraced what can be seen as the “practices through which individuals and groups formulate and claim new rights or struggle to expand or maintain existing rights” (Siemiatycki & Isin, 1997, p. 73), one right being involved in the decisions that affect their lives (Purcell, 2003). And while older adults continue to face challenges in enacting their urban citizenship and their right to the city, iZi has clearly shown that democratic participation and social inclusion can become norms and rights of age-friendly cities, and promote their social inclusion and empowerment.

Acknowledgments

We acknowledge with appreciation the efforts and knowledge provided by the iZi-Ambassadors and other participants and in particular, the community coordinators, Leroy van den Hoonaard, Loes Hulsebosch and Christiane Wustkamp, who shared their experiences on the project. A special note of thanks is for Damiët Groen, manager care and innovation, for her comments on the manuscript and Helen Hintjens for the final editing of the article.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

References

Arnkil, R., Järvensivu, A., Koski, P., & Piirainen, T. (2010). *Exploring the quadruple helix: Outlining user-oriented innovation models* (Työraportteja Working Paper 85/2010). Tampere: University of Tampere.

Beall, J., & Piron, L. H. (2005). DFID social exclusion review. *GSDRC Applied Knowledge Services*. Retrieved from <https://gsdrc.org/document-library/dfid-social-exclusion-review>

Bolman, C. (2019). *eHealth bij kwetsbare groepen een uitdaging* [eHealth for vulnerable groups a challenge]. Heerlen: Open University. Retrieved from https://www.ou.nl/documents/40554/724769/Oratieboekje_Catherine_Bolman_DEF_15012019.pdf/48046c78-622a-400f-213d-46995a221b46

Council for Health and Care. (2002). Inzicht in ehealth [Insight into ehealth]. *The Council for Health and*

Society. Retrieved from <https://www.raadrvs.nl/documenten/publicaties/2002/04/25/inzicht-in-e-health>

Council for Public Health and Society. (2015). *Consumer eHealth*. Advise presented to the Minister of Public Health, Welfare and Sport. The Hague: Council for Public Health and Society. Retrieved from <https://www.raadrvs.nl/documenten/publicaties/2015/04/21/consumenten-ehealth>

Eysenbach, G. (2001). What is e-health? *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 3(2). <http://dx.doi.org/10.2196/jmir.3.2.e20>

Ganesh, J. (2004). E-health—Drivers, application, challenges ahead and strategies: A conceptual framework. *Indian Journal of Medical Informatics*, 1(1), 39–48.

Gaventa, J. (2006). *Triumph, deficit or contestation? Deepening the ‘deepening democracy’ debate* (IDS Working Paper 264). Brighton: Institute of Development Studies.

Gemeente Den Haag. (2015). *Business case ICT en Zorg Gezond Lang Thuis* [Business case ICT and healthy and long-term staying at home]. The Hague: Department of Education, Culture and Wellbeing, Municipality of The Hague.

Gemeente Den Haag. (2016). *Voortgangsrapportage Programma ICT en Zorg 2015–2016* [Progress report for the ICT and Care Program 2015–2016]. The Hague: Department of Education, Culture and Wellbeing, Municipality of The Hague.

Global Coalition on Aging, & McGraw Hill Financial Global Institute. (2006). *Aging and urbanization: Principles for creating sustainable, growth-oriented and age-friendly cities*. New York, NY: Global Coalition on Aging and McGraw Hill Financial Global Institute. Retrieved from https://globalcoalitiononaging.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/AgingUrbanization_115.pdf

Harvey, D. (2008). The right to the city. *New Left Review*, 53, 23–40.

Haufe, M., & Peek, S. T. M., & Ger Luijckx, K. (2019). Matching gerontechnologies to independent-living seniors’ individual needs: Development of the GTM tool. *BMC Health Services Research*, 19(26). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-018-3848-5>

ICT and Health. (2019). Digitale innovatie is voor Den Haag tweesnijdend zwaard [For The Hague, digital innovation is a double-edged sword]. *Wij en iZi*. Retrieved from https://wijenizi.nl/w/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/18-19-ICTHealth_nr2.pdf

Isin, E. (2013). Claiming European citizenship. In E. Isin & M. Saward (Eds.), *Enacting European citizenship* (pp. 19–46). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jehoel-Gijsbers, G., & Vrooman, J. (2008). *Social exclusion of the elderly: A comparative study of EU member states* (ENEPRI Research Report No. 57). <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2027886>

Kummervold, P. E., Chronaki, C. E., Lausen, B., Prokosch,

- H. U., Rasmussen, J., Santana, S., . . . Wangberg, S. C. (2008). eHealth trends in Europe 2005–2007: A population-based survey. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 10(4). <http://doi.org/10.2196/jmir.1023>
- Leefwereldonderzoek. (2016). *Gezond Lang Thuis* [Healthy and long-term staying at home] (iZi Final Report). The Hague: Municipality of the Hague. Retrieved from <https://www.kcwz.nl/doc/Gezond-lang-thuis-iZi.pdf>
- Lefebvre, H. (1968). *Le droit à la ville* [Right to the city]. Paris: Anthropos.
- Lefebvre, H. (2000). *Writing on Cities. Selected, translated and introduced by Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas*. Oxford: Blackwell. Retrieved from <https://chisineu.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/lefebvre-henri-writings-on-cities.pdf>
- Luiten, R. (2018, December 12). Zorginnovatie maakt ‘gezond lang thuis’ in Den Haag mogelijk [Care innovation make ‘healthy and long-term staying at home’ in The Hague possible]. *ICT & Health*. Retrieved from <https://www.icthealth.nl/online-magazine/editie-06-2018/zorginnovatie-maakt-gezond-lang-thuis-in-den-haag-mogelijk>
- Nicholson, N. R. (2012). A review of social isolation: An important but underassessed condition in older adults. *Journal of Primary Prevention*, 33, 137–152. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10935-012-0271-2>
- Newsbreezer, (2018, November 16). Hague project wins international smart-city award. *Newsbreezer*. Retrieved from <https://newsbreezer.com/netherlandseng/hague-project-wins-international-smart-city-award>
- OECD. (2015). *Ageing in cities: Policy highlights*. Paris: OECD Publishing. Retrieved from <https://www.oecd.org/cfe/regional-policy/Policy-Brief-Ageing-in-Cities.pdf>
- Pagliari, C., Sloan, D., Gregor, P., Sullivan, F., Detmer, D., Kahan, J. P., . . . MacGillivray, S. (2005). What is eHealth (4): A scoping exercise to map the field. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 7(1). <http://doi.org/10.2196/jmir.7.1.e9>
- Pharos. (2017). eHealth voor iedereen [eHealth for all]. *Pharos*. Retrieved from <https://www.pharos.nl/kennisbank/eHealth-voor-iedereen>
- Purcell, M. (2003). Citizenship and the right to the global city: Reimagining the capitalist world order. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 27(3), 564–590.
- Rijksoverheid. (2015). Letter to Parliament: eHealth progress report and care improvement. Retrieved from <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2015/10/08/kamerbrief-voortgangsrapportage-ehealth-en-zorgverbetering>
- Roy, N., Dubé, R., Després, C., Freitas, A., & Légaré, F. (2018). Choosing between staying at home or moving: A systematic review of factors influencing housing decisions among frail older adults. *PLoS One*, 13(1). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0189266>
- Seligman, M. E. P. (2008). Positive health. *Applied Psychology*, 57(s1), 3–18. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.2008.00351.x>
- Seligman, M. E. P. (2012). *Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and well-being*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Siemiatycki, M., & Isin, E. F. (1997). Immigration, diversity and urban citizenship in Toronto. *Canadian Journal of Regional Science*, 20(1/2), 73–102.
- The Hague Online. (2018, November 27). Hague project wins international Smart City Award. *The Hague Online*. Retrieved from <https://www.thehagueonline.com/news/2018/11/27/hague-project-wins-international-smart-city-award>
- United Nations. (2017). *World population ageing 2017—Highlights* (Report ST/ESA/SER.A/397). New York, NY: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. Retrieved from https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/ageing/WPA2017_Highlights.pdf
- United Nations. (2018). *World urbanization prospects: The 2018 revision. Key facts*. New York, NY: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs.
- van Lettow, B., Wouters, M., & Sinnige, J. (2019). *E-Health, what is that?* The Hague: Nictiz. Retrieved from <https://www.nictiz.nl/wp-content/uploads/E-health-Wat-is-dat.pdf>
- van Leuven, D., & van Dijk, A. (2017). E-health: Vaardigheden en gezondheidsverschillen [E-health: Skills and health differences]. *Epidemiologisch Bulletin*, 52(2), 15–25.
- Wagnild, G. (2001). Chapter 4 Growing old at home. *Journal of Housing for the Elderly*, 14(1/2), 71–84. https://doi.org/10.1300/J081v14n01_04
- Walsh, K., Scharf, T., & Keating, N. (2017). Social exclusion of older persons: A scoping review and conceptual framework. *European Journal of Ageing*, 14(1), 81–98. Retrieved from <https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007%2Fs10433-016-0398-8.pdf>
- World Bank. (2015). *World—Inclusive cities approach paper*. Washington, DC: World Bank Group. Retrieved from <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/402451468169453117/World-Inclusive-cities-approach-paper>
- World Health Organisation. (2007). *Global age-friendly cities: A guide*. Geneva: World Health Organisation. Retrieved from https://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Global_age_friendly_cities_Guide_English.pdf
- World Health Organisation. (2017). *10 Priorities: Towards a decade of healthy ageing*. Geneva: World Health Organisation. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/ageing/WHO-ALC-10-priorities.pdf>

About the Authors



Rachel Kurian is International Labour Economist at the International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University Rotterdam, the Netherlands. She holds degrees in Mathematics and Economics, and has studied at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, at the University of Cambridge, and the University of Amsterdam, where she completed her PhD in 1989. Her teaching, research project and consultancy work have focused on plantation labour, trade unions, women and child workers, poverty and social exclusion, urbanisation and ageing and human/labour rights.



Nicole Menke studied Public Administration at the University of Leiden and currently works as Senior Associate and Programme Manager at the Municipality of the Hague. She is experienced in policy regarding the elderly, challenged persons and the local care act. The last years, she specialized in policy matters on eHealth for citizens who are in need of support, to live independently and healthy at home.



Surrendra Santokhi studied Economic and Social History at Utrecht University (1988) and completed his Master of Business Administration at Business School Nederland (1996). He holds a PhD degree in social science from the University of Amsterdam (2010). Currently, he is Strategic Policy Advisor at the Municipality of the Hague on the issue of care and innovation. He is affiliated as Research Associate with the International Institute of Social Studies at Erasmus University Rotterdam.



Erwin Tak (PhD) works as a Researcher and Project Leader in the field of ageing, care and innovation. He was trained as a Health Psychologist, worked at the several research institutes and international projects on innovations in healthy ageing. Currently he works as an Independent Advisor and Project Leader on innovation in care and welfare, mostly for municipalities.

Article

Acts for Refugees' Right to the City and Commoning Practices of Care-tizenship in Athens, Mytilene and Thessaloniki

Charalampos Tsavdaroglou¹, Chrisa Giannopoulou^{2,*}, Chryssanthi Petropoulou² and Ilias Pistikos²

¹ Department of Planning and Regional Development, University of Thessaly, 38334 Volos, Greece; E-Mail: tsavdaroglou.ch@gmail.com

² Department of Geography, University of the Aegean, 81100 Mytilene, Greece; E-Mails: ch.giannopoulou@gmail.com (C.G.), christy.p@geo.aegean.gr (C.P.), i.pistik@gmail.com (I.P.)

* Corresponding author

Submitted: 30 June 2019 | Accepted: 24 September 2019 | Published: 28 November 2019

Abstract

During the recent refugee crisis, numerous solidarity initiatives emerged in Greece and especially in Mytilene, Athens and Thessaloniki. Mytilene is the capital of Lesbos Island and the main entry point in the East Aegean Sea, Athens is the main refugee transit city and Thessaloniki is the biggest city close to the northern borders. After the EU–Turkey Common Statement, the Balkan countries sealed their borders and thousands of refugees found themselves stranded in Greece. The State accommodation policy provides the majority of the refugee population with residency in inappropriate camps which are mainly located in isolated old military bases and abandoned factories. The article contrasts the State-run services to the solidarity acts of “care-tizenship” and commoning practices such as self-organised refugee housing projects, which claim the right to the city and to spatial justice. Specifically, the article is inspired by the Lefebvrian “right to the city,” which embraces the right to housing, education, work, health and challenges the concept of citizen. Echoing Lefebvrian analysis, citizenship is not demarcated by membership in a nation-state, rather, it concerns all the residents of the city. The article discusses the academic literature on critical citizenship studies and especially the so-called “care-tizenship,” meaning the grassroots commoning practices that are based on caring relationships and mutual help for social rights. Following participatory ethnographic research, the main findings highlight that the acts of care-tizenship have opened up new possibilities to challenge State migration policies while reinventing a culture of togetherness and negotiating locals’ and refugees’ multiple class, gender, and religious identities.

Keywords

care-tizenship; commoning; refugees; right to the city; solidarity

Issue

This article is part of the issue “Inclusion through Enacted Citizenship in Urban Spaces” edited by Rachel Kurian (Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands) and Helen Hintjens (Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands)

© 2019 by the authors; licensee Cogitatio (Lisbon, Portugal). This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

1. Introduction

Over the past four years, Greece has been at the epicentre of the so-called “refugee crisis.” More than one million refugees (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2019a) have crossed the country in their effort to reach Northern Europe. However, after the EU–Turkey Common Statement on 18 March 2016 (European Council, 2016), the goal of which is ‘to end the

irregular migration from Turkey to the EU’ and the sealing of the borders of the so-called Balkan route, some 76,000 refugees have found themselves stranded in Greek territory (UNHCR, 2019b). Most of them are housed in inappropriate State-run camps on the outskirts of Athens, Thessaloniki, Aegean islands bordering Turkey and other cities in the mainland. Only one-third of refugees are accommodated in NGO-rented apartments in city centres (funded through UNHCR); however, refugees that

received their status two years ago and until recently have been losing the right to accommodation and financial support (Greek Ministry of Migration Policy, 2019). During this period and in contrast to the State immigration policies of exclusion and marginalisation, a multitude of refugee solidarity initiatives emerged. Many of these initiatives occupied abandoned buildings in city centres, developed forms of mutual help and care and claimed the refugees' right to the city. Thus, a crucial question is raised: Do refugees have a right to the city and to access the particular rights that compose the status of citizenship?

At this point, it must be stressed that last years' migrant solidarity movements highlight various repertoires of protest, networking and political opportunities in the times of late neoliberalism which 'brought about a decline in citizenship rights' (della Porta, 2018, p. 3) and contributed to the emergence of several 'actors, actions and possibilities' (Darling & Bauder, 2019, p. 2) that explore and challenge 'migration, rights and citizenship...beyond the limits and demands of the nation-state system' (Darling & Bauder, 2019, p. 2). Specifically, in the case of Greece, over the past 15 years, there has been remarkable political awareness on migrants' and refugees' issues and several political mobilisations have taken place. Worth mentioning are the No Border Camps, co-organised by local and international solidarity groups, which took place in Xanthi–Komotini in 2005, in Patra in 2008 and in Mytilene–Lesvos in 2009. Moreover, in 2011 a successfully organised solidarity campaign for 300 migrant workers took place, initiating a hunger strike that claimed migrants' legalisation and equal political and social rights to Greek workers (Pistikos, 2016). Finally, during the long refugee summer of 2015, a wide social solidarity movement with multiple acts of hospitality surfaced (Lafazani, 2018a) resulting in several building squats that operated as refugee housing projects in Athens, Thessaloniki, and Mytilene (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019; Raimondi, 2019; Squire, 2018). Finally, in the summer of 2016, after the evacuation of the makeshift refugee settlement in Idomeni, on the border with North Macedonia, locals, refugees and international activists organised a transnational No Border Camp in Thessaloniki (Tsavdaroglou, 2019).

For the purpose of the article, we focus on critical citizenship approaches and especially on the notion of "care-tizenship," which according to Casas-Cortés (2019, p. 21) 'ties in the critique of a precarity/migration nexus.' Following the call of Nyers and Rygiel (2012, p. 1), we research on 'how the practice and experience of mobility—even when restricted—is itself productive of new forms of citizenship and of being political.' Fortunately, there is a significant amount of literature engaging with the binaries of non-citizen/citizen (McNevin, 2011), legal/illegal population (Nyers, 2003), regular/irregular (Squire, 2011) and 'less than full' citizenship (Golding, Berinstein, & Bernhard, 2009). Citizenship rights are usually recognised through 'membership within a particular

political community, defined predominantly through the bounded territorial space of the nation-state' (Nyers & Rygiel, 2012, p. 4). Adding to that, Isin's (2009, p. 376) comment that 'the substance of citizenship is "rights" is of high importance. But rights are not substances. Rights are...relations....Rights of citizenship are relationships that reflect dominant sites and actors of citizenship.' Thus, it becomes obvious that citizenship is not only a legal status, but also an ongoing and contested battlefield that is 'increasingly defined as practices of becoming claim-making subjects in and through various sites and scales' (Isin, 2008, p. 16). In this perspective, it is worth mentioning that over the last decades numerous 'new forms and practices of citizenship have proliferated' (Purcell, 2003, p. 564) such as "cosmopolitan citizenship," "multicultural citizenship," "flexible citizenship," "multi-layered citizenship," "transgendered citizenship," and "ecological citizenship" (Ong, 1999; Stierl, 2016; Yuval-Davis, 1999).

This article seeks to problematise and research the formal concept of citizenship by focusing on a) refugees' lack of access to the city and b) the potentialities of self-organised practices and acts of caring, commoning and struggle. For this reason, we analyse both the top-down immigration policies and the non-institutionalised forms of citizenship. Our standpoint is far from the (NGOs)-built "abject victimage" of the refugee figure which 'silenced their voice and emptied their subjectivity of agency' (Nyers & Rygiel, 2012, p. 8). We are particularly interested in refugees' agency and political acts of solidarity, care and struggle that claim the right to the city, spatial justice and visibility. Our findings are based on the ways that such social, political and care practices offer the potential of transforming and modifying the cityscape by producing transnational and solidary common spaces.

The article employs a spatial analysis, ethnographic research and participant observation in State accommodation camps and in self-managed refugee housing projects. The fieldwork research took place between August 2018 and June 2019 in Athens, Thessaloniki, and Mytilene. In particular, our participation in collective actions, assemblies and meetings in the state-run camps and in self-organised refugee housing projects fostered observation and ground research. We also collected published material texts, both printed and from internet websites concerning the refugee housing squats and reports from a local and international humanitarian organisation regarding the refugees' living conditions in the state-run camps. Furthermore, forty semi-structured in-depth interviews with adult refugees—both male and female—from Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Morocco, Pakistan, and Syria were conducted. All participants were fully informed about the research, and their involvement discussed in detail before research commenced. The interviews took place in English, Greek, Urdu, Farsi and Arabic (mediated by relevant interpreters) and lasted one to three hours. Regarding the protection of the research participants' personal data, we

have changed their names and other recognisable characteristics when needed.

The article contains four sections. The purpose of the next section is to review the literature on the Lefebvrian right to the city, the approaches on commoning practices and the critical citizenship studies. The following two sections present the Greek State refugee housing policies and compare them with the solidarity and care practices in self-organised housing projects in Athens, Thessaloniki and Mytilene. The article closes with some concluding remarks on the importance of care-tizenship common spaces for the refugees' right to the city.

2. Theoretical Approach: Refugees' Right to the City, Commoning Practices and Acts of Care-Tizenship

In order to examine the refugees' right to the city we draw from the Lefebvrian analysis, the approaches on commons and the literature on acts of citizenship.

Our starting point is the famous work *The Right to the City*, written by the French philosopher Henri Lefebvre in the turbulent year of 1968. That was the period when numerous social and political groups claimed their rights to labour, housing, free time, freedom of speech, culture, green spaces, sexuality and education. At the same time, urban protests across the globe made it clear that the struggle for rights has a significant spatial and urban character. Lefebvre, in his socio-spatial analysis, highlights that the city is composed of a plethora of social groups which could potentially constitute "urban society." In his words, 'we have here...projected separately on the ground, groups, ethnic groups, ages and sexes, activities, tasks and functions, knowledge. Here is all that is necessary to create a world, an urban society' (Lefebvre, 1968/1996, p. 143). However, he acknowledges that most of these groups are 'the non-participants, the non-integrated...who survive among the fragments of a possible society...excluded from the city' (Lefebvre, 1968/1996, p. 144). Thus, for Lefebvre, the right to the city includes, combines and transcends 'the rights of ages and sexes (the woman, the child and the elderly), the rights of conditions (the proletarian, the peasant), the rights to training and education, to work, to culture, to rest, to health, to housing' (Lefebvre, 1968/1996, p. 157). Furthermore, in a later work, he emphasised that the right to the city should be 'complemented by the right to difference and the right to information' (Lefebvre, 1991). This is extremely crucial in the case of refugees, in order to have both their distinct social, cultural, psychological and vulnerable characteristics recognised by the local citizens, as well as their right to accessing information in the places of arrival/residence. According to Lefebvre, these three dimensions, the right to the city, the right to difference and the right to information constitute 'the rights of the citizen' (Lefebvre, 1991).

Following Lefebvre, several scholars emphasise and expand the critical features of the right to the city. Purcell (2013, p. 142) suggests that the right to the

city 'is the everyday experience of inhabiting the city that entitles one to a right to the city, rather than one's nation-state citizenship.' Plyushteva (2009, p. 81) agrees with Purcell and claims that urban citizenship could be seen as 'a possible contemporary alternative to long-established notions of citizenship, those built on the pillars of rights, duties, and belonging to a political entity, typically a nation-state.' Furthermore, according to Chiodelli's (2013, pp. 490–491) interpretation of Lefebvre, urban citizenship 'has a specifically spatial component: it can be attained only through action over the space....The right to urban citizenship can be gained only through collective and self-organised action; it is inherently active.' Finally, for Petropoulou (2014, p. 570), the right to the city 'is not the right to the impersonal urban space but the right to the polis. In these new movements, the right to the *polis* is exercised in everyday life by many different actors and through different ways of action.'

In order to focus more on active urban citizenship, we particularly draw attention to critical citizenship studies, which highlight the 'practices of making citizenship social, political, cultural and symbolic' (Isin, 2008, p. 17) rather than the juridical dimension of citizenship. The discussion on acts of citizenship is highly examined by Isin (2008, pp. 18–19), who asks 'How do subjects become claimants of rights, entitlements and responsibilities?' and 'How do subjects such as citizens and others such as strangers...break away from these positions?' Following these questions, he reflects and sets three principles of theorising the acts of citizenship. Firstly, 'acts produce actors that become answerable to justice against injustice' (Isin, 2008, p. 39); secondly, 'acts of citizenship do not need to be founded in law or enacted in the name of the law' (Isin, 2008, p. 39); and thirdly, 'subjects becoming activist citizens through scenes created' (Isin, 2008, p. 39). The last principle is quite provocative as Isin (2009) tries to go beyond the term "active citizen," which is associated with more traditional citizenship duties such as voting and paying taxes, and he proposes the notion of "activist citizenship." In his words, 'while activist citizens engage in writing scripts and creating the scene, active citizens follow scripts and participate in scenes that have already been created. While activist citizens are creative, active citizens are not' (Isin, 2008, p. 39). Additionally, other scholars, such as Nyers (2015) and Holston (2009), expand the discussion on citizenship further. Nyers focuses on the struggles for freedom of movement, actions against detention, deportation, and other border controls, and he suggests the "migrant citizenships from below," which 'make claims on the state for rights and recognition while at the same time they are capable of evading legal capture and, indeed, transform the legal regimes and institutions of state citizenship' (Nyers, 2015, p. 25). Holston examines the struggles of poor people over housing, property rights, urban infrastructure, justice, even motherhood in the Global South and he refers to spaces of "insurgent citizenship" that 'begins with the struggle for the right to have a

daily life in the city worthy of a citizen's dignity' (Holston, 2009, p. 246).

At this point, it is important to mention Casas-Cortes (2019), who proposes the term "care-tizenship" in order to explain the demands and care practices of precarity and migrants' social movements as 'a creative "erasure" and "democratic re-iteration" of the conventional notion of citizenship' (Casas-Cortes, 2019, p. 21). The term "care-tizenship" has its origins in the Spanish anti-austerity movements when grassroots feminist precarity groups proposed the neologism "care-tizenship" ("cuida/danía" in Spanish). According to the collective Precarias a la Deriva (2010):

The word "ciudadania" means citizenship, as well as having resonances with the word for city, "ciudad." The word for care, "cuidado," is spelt very similarly. The authors of the text use these similarities to craft the neologism "ciudadania," referring to proposed rights to care, analogous to the citizenship rights demanded by some sectors of the European precarity and immigrant/asylum seeker movements.

Casas-Cortes (2019, p. 21) comments that 'such linguistic innovations and conceptual productions are worth considering further...the different interpretations of precarity by grassroots efforts...have been able to re-signify and re-politicise conventional understandings and practices of citizenship in creative ways.' Moreover, the collective Precarias a la Deriva (2010) emphasised that 'the ciudadania appears to us as suddenly as a concrete and situated bond created between singularities through common care (and care for the common). Thus, "care-tizenship" provides a useful concept to enrich the discussion on refugees' acts of citizenship and for the right to the city, and to connect it with the discussion on commons.

Usually, the discussion on commons refers to the so-called "tragedy of commons" (Hardin, 1968) and the state (Ehrenfeld, 1972; Ophuls, 1973) or private (Smith, 1981; Welch, 1983) management of common-pool resources. Ostrom (1990) examined the possibility of sharing a common-pool resource and the self-managed practices of the producers-commoners. Beyond the economic debate of private or state management, a new generation of autonomous Marxists scholars emphasised the verbal form of commons, the so-called commoning. Chatterton, Featherstone, and Routledge (2013, p. 610) argue that the notion of common 'refers to the social process of being-in-common, a social relationship of the commoners who build, defend, and reproduce the commons.' Moreover, de Angelis (2010, p. 955) insightfully comments that 'there are no commons without incessant activities of commoning,' it is across the social relations of (re)production in common that 'communities...decide for themselves the norms, values and measures of things.' Finally, Linebaugh (2008, p. 45) clarifies and claims that commoning is 'independent of the

state, is independent also of the temporality of the law and state.' However, there is little research on mutual care as a form of commoning and especially the refugees' self-care practices which offer the potentiality to reinvent both the right to the city and new forms of citizenship acts. Consequently, we propose the connection of these three notions, namely the right to the city, care-tizenship and common spaces. Under this prism, the social and spatial contrast between the ghetto-like State-run camps and the self-organised refugee housing projects in Greece becomes an interesting case study, in order to highlight the importance of acts of commoning and care-tizenship in the perspective of a renewed meaning of the refugees' right to the city.

3. State Refugee Policies in Athens, Thessaloniki and Mytilene

The refugees' right to the city and to adequate housing has been recognised by several international agreements, treaties and organisations as an essential feature for the integration of newcomers. For example, the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1991, p. 2) emphasises that the refugees' right to the city and to housing 'should not be interpreted in a narrow or restrictive sense,' but it has to be connected with 'the right to adequate food, shelter, health and education, as well as livelihood opportunities.' (UNHCR, 2009, p. 4) Furthermore, the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (2007) highlights that the refugees' accommodation centres 'should be integrated into already existing residential areas, mainstreaming the availability and the delivery of social services...to asylum seekers, refugees, migrants.' Thus, following the aforementioned statements, the refugees' right to adequate housing should have the following crucial features: security of tenure; availability of services; affordability; habitability; accessibility; and cultural adequacy (UNHCR, 2014). Finally, in this respect, it is underlined that 'housing is not adequate if it is cut off from employment opportunities, health-care services, schools, childcare centres and other social facilities, or if located in polluted or dangerous areas' (UNHCR, 2014, p. 4).

However, against the abovementioned accommodation principals, over the last three years, most of the refugees in Greece have been forced to live in inappropriate State-run camps on the perimeter of Athens, Thessaloniki and Mytilene (see Figure 1). Most of the camps are former industrial buildings and military bases that have been transformed into accommodation centres for thousands of refugees. The camps are located in environmentally degraded areas, inside industrial and hazardous zones, with poor transport connection with the city centres and far away from residential areas, hospitals, schools, and urban social life.

According to Salma, an Afghan single woman who lived with her two children in the State-run camp of Elliniko, an abandoned airport in the perimeter of Athens:

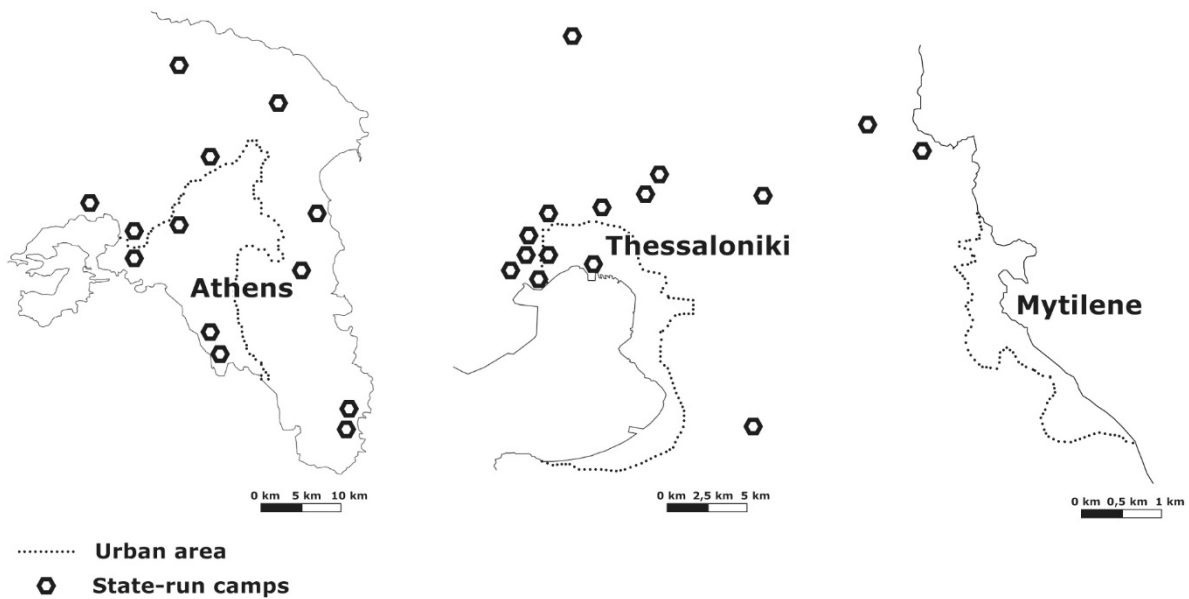


Figure 1. State-run refugee camps in Athens, Thessaloniki, and Mytilene, 2016–2017. Source: Authors.

In that camp, there were about 2,500 refugees. It was horrible. There was no sense of safety. I stayed there with my children for about three months. We stayed inside the building and although it may seem better than staying out in a tent, there were no walls inside the building; thus, there was no privacy. Actually, I did not sleep for those three months because I was afraid that someone might come and steal my things or even steal my children. Health conditions were also horrible, everywhere was dirty. There was also no hot food. Not to mention that there were no translators or cultural mediators. Also, most of the children were sick because they did not eat good quality food, so they were all weak, not even the water was clean. So the children had diarrhoea and fever. (Personal interview, September 20, 2018).

The State-run accommodation structures irrefutably do not follow the international standards and a number of reports (Amnesty International, 2016; UNHCR, 2018) criticise the housing conditions. For example, the last report of Refugee Support Aegean (2019) highlights that the refugee camps in Athens and Thessaloniki are ‘overcrowded while substandard reception conditions have a detrimental impact upon the physical and mental health of their residents’ and:

Camps that have ceased to operate in 2017...reopened their gates in spring 2018. Tents are being set up in the camps and then dismantled depending on the needs...without seemingly any plan for what comes next...until today only three out of the 28 camps operating in the mainland have the required legal basis. (Refugee Support Aegean, 2019)

Especially in Moria camp in Mytilene, several NGOs (ActionAid et al., 2017) have sent a common complaint letter to the Greek Government’s Prime Minister in which they express their opposition to the policy of trapping asylum seekers on the islands in the aftermath of the EU–Turkey Common Statement. In this letter, it is described that:

More than 5,400 people live in overcrowded tents and containers, with little access to proper shelter, food, water, sanitation, health care, or protection....Summer camping tents, designed to accommodate not more than two people are now holding families of up to seven....Single women in the hotspots report harassment by some of the men....These conditions have a devastating impact on the long-term well-being of people trapped there. (ActionAid et al., 2017)

According to Petropoulou (2019), the Moria hotspot has been transformed into a post-modern complex panoptic space where irregularity is legalised within a complex system of controls and personal relationships.

Moving on to the European Emergency Support to Integration and Accommodation program, it should be noted that it provides accommodation for 22,650 refugees (about 29% of the total population) in rented apartments within the urban fabric (UNHCR, 2019b). However, according to a decision of the Greek Ministry of Migration Policy (2019), as of 1 April, 2019, refugees who have entered the country two years ago, i.e., 2017 and have been granted refugee status, gradually lose their right to accommodation either in the camps or in apartments. This decision directly concerned 1,700 people at the time of its implementation, which will increase to 4,500 by the end of 2019 and, thus, the

number of homeless refugees will continue to increase (Campfire Innovation, 2019). The aforementioned developments have been criticised by a large number of NGOs and social movements (FEANTSA, 2019; Greek Union of NGO Workers, 2019; Refugee Movement for Rights and Justice, 2019).

At the same time, the Greek police evicted more than ten refugee housing squats in Athens, Thessaloniki, and Mytilene. As a result, hundreds of refugees became homeless. Fatima, a Syrian refugee mother of three minors and resident of Clandestina squat in Athens remembered the moment of the eviction and she said:

I was sleeping with my children when I suddenly woke up with guns being held in front of my eyes. There was police everywhere. I tried to collect our most important belongings. The police were shouting: “Fast, fast!” Two of my kids have heart problems. One of them has asthma....It is six months I am trying to call the asylum service from Skype without success. (Infomobile, 2019).

To us, it is clear that the Greek State immigration policies result in the exclusion and marginalisation of refugees from social and urban life, the criminalisation of self-managed housing projects and set up crucial spatial and social obstacles for the refugees’ right to the city, to housing and to citizenship.

4. We Learn to Walk Together: Acts of Refugees’ Commoning Care-Tizenship in Athens, Mytilene, and Thessaloniki

The aforementioned State immigration policies do not stand unchallenged and uncontested. During the past three years, numerous refugee solidarity initiatives have emerged, especially in Mytilene, Athens, and

Thessaloniki. In many cases, refugees and local solidarity groups have occupied several abandoned buildings in the city centre, transformed them to common spaces, experimented with acts of care-tizenship and subsequently claimed the right to the city and more specifically the right to the centre of the city. In contrast to the isolated State-run camps that are located at a significant distance from the centre of Athens, Thessaloniki, and Mytilene, most of the solidarity and occupied refugees’ housing projects are in the very centre of the cities (see Figure 2). The centrality of the refugee squats is particularly important for the sociability and the participation of the refugees in the urban social life. The proximity of the squats to public schools, local markets, health services, and employment opportunities is crucial for the refugees’ livelihoods. Moreover, the squats’ central location enforces refugees’ visibility and facilitates the organisation of gatherings, protests and demonstrations for their political and social rights.

Here, it should be stressed that the self-organised refugee squats were created with the support of local and international leftist and anarchist groups. For example, in Thessaloniki, the housing squat for immigrants Orfanotrofio (2016) explains in a statement that the squat ‘was embraced by people of the broader radical movement (communists, anarchists, autonomists) and operated in a self-organised and anti-hierarchical way.’ Moreover, in Mytilene, the occupied Tsamakia beach camp was run by the refugees with the support of the international No Border Kitchen collective which defined itself as ‘a non-hierarchical/horizontal self-organised group of cooking activists from all over the world that share the aim of supporting people on their journey to Europe’ (No Border Kitchen Lesvos, 2016). Furthermore, in Athens, the Refugee Accommodation and Solidarity Space City Plaza was initiated by the Economic and Political Refugee Solidarity Initiative, to-

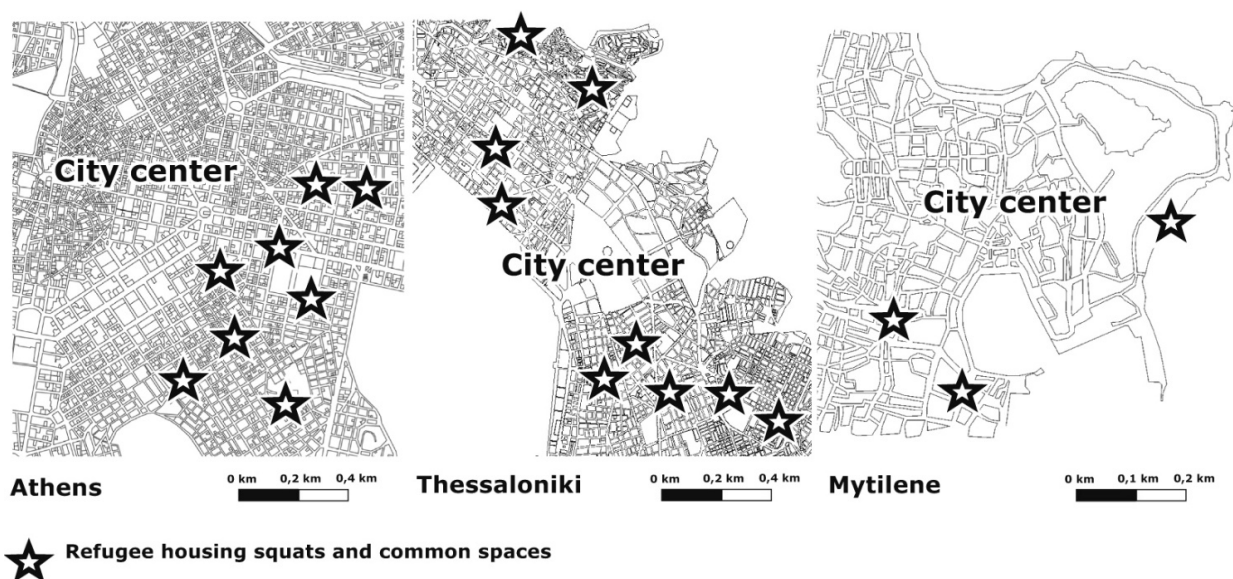


Figure 2. Refugee housing squats and common spaces in Athens, Thessaloniki, and Mytilene, 2016–2017. Source: Authors.

gether with 250 refugees, and, as they highlighted, 'thanks to the generosity of thousands of people from Greece and abroad, we proved that self-organised co-operation can not only be productive, but it can also be more effective than hierarchical commercialised procedures' (Refugee Accommodation and Solidarity Space City Plaza, 2017) Also, Spirou Trikoupi 17 (2019) emphasised that 'the residents and solidarians working in ST17 organise themselves through assemblies based on the principles of equality, solidarity and horizontality.' Thus, the features of direct-democracy and self-organisation combined with the non-hierarchical and non-commercial way of function constitute the basic principles of the squatted refugees' housing projects.

Noteworthy are the words of Mohamed, a Syrian refugee member of the housing squat for immigrants Orfanotrofio in Thessaloniki:

I like very much the self-organised and direct-democratic way of operating the squat. I can say in a phrase that at the Orfanotrofio "we learn to walk together." This learning is based on mutual care that begins with the simple daily functions of the building, such as the involvement of everyone in cooking and cleaning, and extends to the political processes and self-organised decision-making for political actions such as marches, direct actions and public events. No one is trying to push the other to do something, all decisions and activities are based on dialogue, respect for the other, and consensus. So we all learn together to be active and to care about each other and act as a team. This team is both a care group and a political struggle, we claim on the one hand the equality between us and on the other, we raise our voices in the centre of the city through demonstrations and actions. (Personal interview, October 29, 2018)

In the aforementioned narrative, the three basic features of the Lefebvrian "rights of the citizen" become clear: the right to the city, the right to difference, and the right to information. The collective participation in the daily processes, the consensus-based decision-making process and co-habitation, constitute a learning and caring exercise of the right to the city, which is interlinked with the active political demands in public spaces for the right to difference and the right to information.

Focusing more on the self-organised practices of commoning, togetherness, and caring, beyond the NGOs humanitarianism and the state authorities' control, worth mentioning are the words of Afaf, a woman from Afghanistan who lives in the Refugee Accommodation and Solidarity Space City Plaza in Athens, and she describes her experience on selforganised care practices as follows:

I had never had a similar experience as the City Plaza. In fact, I have never felt this sense of solidarity and care that I am feeling here. In my family and in my

country there is no solidarity and care. Here there is solidarity and care for everything, for study, for food, and above all I can say "thought." Solidarity and caring are mainly a way of thinking. Here we are discussing everything all together, what needs we have, what problems we face. I can say in a sentence, we think together and we fight together against every oppression. (Personal interview, November 10, 2018)

According to Ali, an Afghan refugee who lived in the Tsamakia beach, a self-organised, occupied camp near the centre of Mytilene:

Here I am involved with No Border group and I stay in the self-organised camp in Tsamakia beach because I believe that refugees should be self-organised without the NGOs involvement. We have an assembly twice a week which is mostly to find out how we will organise the necessary works. Our aim is not only to cover the daily needs but also to deepen political discussions, which require time and clear mind (cited in Tsavdaroglou, Giannopoulou, Lafazani, Pistikos, & Petropoulou, 2018, p. 15).

Furthermore, according to a statement from the housing squat for refugees and immigrants (Tsirmpas, 2016, p. 2), in Athens 'this project doesn't stand for philanthropy, state or private, but rather for a self-organised solidarity project, wherein locals and refugees-immigrants decide together. The decisive body is the squat's open assembly where everyone is welcome to participate with no exclusions.'

In the aforementioned narratives, and according to several scholars (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019; Alexiou, Tsavdaroglou, & Petropoulou, 2016; Lafazani, 2018b; Tsavdaroglou, 2018), the self-organised refugee housing projects can be recognised as transnational commons. They are commons where locals and newcomers recognise and respect each other's culture, customs and ethics, develop forms of togetherness and co-existence and make decisions in direct-democratic assemblies. Moreover, the most important feature is perhaps that the self-organised housing projects are based on mutual and common care gestures and practices which produce spatialities of egalitarian and solidary communities.

In Mytilene, Ahmet from Afghanistan describes the difference between care-quotidian practices in solidarity camps and cultural centres and the official camp of Moria: 'In Moria refugee camp I am a number, in Mosaik, Mytilene I am a member of a family, I am in the home. Outside this door I do not exist' (Personal interview, October 10, 2018).

In Mytilene, Maria from Syria says:

In Moria camp, we were as if we were sheep for slaughter. They put us in a row to have a meal that in the end was spoiled by the heat. Our children were in constant danger. Here [in PIKPA Lesvos solidarity

camp] we are humans, we can cook at home and decide for our lives, and most importantly, to feel safe. (Personal interview, September 5, 2018)

Also, in the words of Soraya, a Pakistani transgender refugee who participates in the Kontrosol self-organised LGBTQI space in Thessaloniki:

I want to stress that in contrast to life in the camps, it is the first time that I feel safe in this space, because the people who set it know our needs, the people in the group are like me, transgender, and we have become friends, we talk to each other, we share thoughts. The refugees in the group are coming from different countries, like Syria, Iraq, Pakistan and Maghreb. This is the first experience in my life that I have as many friends like me, homosexuals and transsexuals. The most important thing is that they care about me and I care about them. It is like a dream if one can feel what I am feeling now. Although I am so far from my home in Pakistan, I feel that this is much more of my home here (cited in Tsavdaroglou et al., 2018, p. 15).

In fact, the commoning and caring practices constitute the collective base for the sustainability of the housing projects as well as for the social and political struggle for the refugees' right to the city. Thus, the "activist acts of citizenship" (Isin, 2008) is a collective action based on commoning and caring relationships, a crucial difference from the individualistic practice of the typical citizenship rights or obligations to the State and law. Additionally, Nyers and Rygiel (2012, p. 9) mention that 'acts of citizenship are acts where notions of belonging and entitlement to rights' are 'founded on criteria of residence, participation in community, and social relations developed in space and in relation to "the commons," contrasting thus the current liberal measure for citizenship and entitlement grounded in "legal status.'" Indeed, in the discussed cases of refugees' housing commons, the clandestine commoners exercise their right to the city through practices of collective care, active participation and cohabitation.

Moreover, Papadopoulos and Tsianos (2007, p. 166) argue that in many cases migrants develop strategies of "de-identification" such as 'burning their documents' in order 'to avoid being returned to their country of origin' and that this 'strategy of de-identification is a voluntary "dehumanisation," in the sense that it breaks the relationship between one's name and one's body.' In the case of self-organised housing projects, it could be supported that refugees regain their dignity, their voices, their visibility, and through the practices of caring and commoning, a process of "re-humanisation"—contrary to the official State and NGO policy—takes place. It is very common that refugees residing in squats regret the formal accommodation services, and they refuse to be part of the normalisation and marginalisation of State-run camps or the NGO apartments and prefer to produce their own common spaces.

As Shamina, a woman from Iran who lives in the Refugee Accommodation and Solidarity Space City Plaza in Athens says:

If I had the opportunity to stay in the NGO or UNHCR flats, my answer would have been "no." I want to continue living in the City Plaza. The social, personal and psychological safety and care that I feel here is much more important than isolation in a formal apartment. Also, my children are happy here, they have company, there are many kids here who play and have activities. Also, women here are active, we have organised our women's magazines and of course I have made too many friends here. (Personal interview, August 22, 2018)

5. Conclusion: Care-Tizenship Commons Spaces for the Right to the City

In this article, we aimed to analyse and reconceptualise the refugees' right to the city through the lenses of commoning practices and acts of care-tizenship. We have reflected on the refugees' condition in Athens, Thessaloniki, and Mytilene and we suggest four main points that open up new perspectives on acts of citizenship and refugees' right to the city.

Firstly, the refugee care-tizenship commons spaces have the ability and potential to destabilise, transform and modify the city in a creative, collective and egalitarian way. Following the slogan of *Precarias a la Deriva* (2010), 'common care and care for the commons' is essential in the refugee housing projects. Co-belonging, co-existence and togetherness have emerged as practices of commoning, mutual respect and care relations that territorialise new transnational common spaces.

Secondly, practices of commoning and care-tizenship between refugees and locals could upset the dichotomies of citizen/non-citizen, legal/illegal and regular/irregular and help new collective bodies to emerge that are not based on legal identities but on the multiplicity of subjects' differences. Moreover, acts of care-tizenship open up a perspective to go beyond legal taxonomies, produce spatial justice and visibility, and materialise the refugees' right to the city.

Thirdly, the article offers a forceful critique of State migration policies. Our argument is that restriction, exclusion and marginalisation of refugees are constitutional components of the Greek State policies. In contrast, the self-managed refugee housing projects go beyond State exclusion and criminalisation by combining the three Lefebvrian dimensions of "the right of the citizen." The right to the city, the right to difference, and the right to information constitute basic principles of the self-organised refugee housing structures.

Fourthly, we propose a new vision for citizenship that goes beyond the legal and State norms and it is based on activist, political and social relations that highlight the collective agency. Following Isin's (2008) principles

on acts of citizenship, the cases of housing squats prove that it is possible for refugee actors to write the “scripts” and set the “scene” for a transnational right to the city through commoning and care-tizenship practices.

Acknowledgments

This research was carried out/funded in the context of the project “The Refugees’ Right to the City: States’ Hospitality Spaces and Housing Commons. A Case Study Research in Athens, Thessaloniki and Mytilene” (MIS 5004268) under the call for proposals “Supporting researchers with an emphasis on new researchers” (EDULLL 34). The project is co-financed by Greece and the European Union (European Social Fund) through the Operational Programme Human Resources Development, Education and Lifelong Learning 2014–2020.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

References

- ActionAid, Advocates Abroad, Aitima, Amnesty International, Care, Danish Refugee Council, & . . . Solidarity Now. (2017). Joint letter to the Greek Prime Minister, Mr. Alexis Tsipras. *Solidarity Now*. Retrieved from http://www.solidaritynow.org/en/prime_minister_letter
- Agustín, Ó. G., & Jørgensen, M. B. (2019). Autonomous solidarity: Hotel City Plaza. In Ó. G. Agustín & M. B. Jørgensen (Eds.), *Solidarity and the ‘refugee crisis’ in Europe* (pp. 49–72). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Alexiou, X., Tsavdaroglou, C., & Petropoulou, C. (2016). Urban social movements and refugees in Greece: A new relation? Emerging common spaces in Mytilene and Idomeni. In *Proceedings of the International Conference ‘From Contested Cities to Global Urban Justice’* (pp. 1–13). Madrid: Autonomous University of Madrid.
- Amnesty International. (2016). Trapped in Greece: Refugees stranded in dire conditions as Europe drags its heels. *Amnesty*. Retrieved from www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/07/trapped-in-greece-48000-stranded-in-dire-conditions
- Campfire Innovation. (2019). What the ESTIA evictions mean for dignified humanitarian aid. *Campfire Innovation*. Retrieved from <https://www.campfireinnovation.org/campfire-blog/greece-phasing-out-housing-for-recognized-refugees>
- Casas-Cortes, M. (2019). Care-tizenship: Precarity, social movements, and the deleting/re-writing of citizenship. *Citizenship Studies*, 23(1), 19–42.
- Chatterton, P., Featherstone, D., & Routledge, P. (2013). Articulating climate justice in Copenhagen: Antagonism, the commons, and solidarity. *Antipode*, 45(3), 602–620.
- Chioldelli, F. (2013). Planning and urban citizenship: Suggestions from the thoughts of Henri Lefebvre. *Planning Perspectives*, 28(3), 487–494.
- Darling, J., & Bauder, H. (Eds.). (2019). *Sanctuary cities and urban struggles: Rescaling migration, citizenship, and rights*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- de Angelis, M. (2010). The production of commons and the “explosion” of the middle class. *Antipode*, 42(4), 954–977.
- della Porta, D. (Ed.). (2018). *Solidarity mobilizations in the ‘refugee crisis’ contentious moves*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ehrenfeld, D. (1972). *Conserving life on earth*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- European Council. (2016). EU–Turkey statement, 18 March 2016. *European Council*. Retrieved from <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18/eu-turkey-statement>
- European Council on Refugees and Exiles. (2007). *Policy briefing on housing for refugees and migrants in Europe*. Brussels: European Council on Refugees and Exiles. Retrieved from http://www.epim.info/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/ECRE-Policy-Briefing_Housing.pdf
- FEANTSA. (2019). *A home for refugees: The need for housing throughout asylum procedures and beyond*. Brussels: FEANTSA. Retrieved from <https://www.feantsa.org/download/feantsa-joint-declaration-012019-31217046609951423028.pdf>
- Golding, L., Berinstein, C., & Bernhard, J. (2009). Institutionalizing precarious immigration status in Canada. *Citizenship Studies*, 13(3), 239–265.
- Greek Ministry of Migration Policy. (2019, March 12). Ministerial decision No. 6382/19: Determination of framework materializing the programme providing financial assistance and shelter “ESTIA.” *Official Gazette*, 853. Retrieved from www.nomotelia.gr/photos/File/853B-19.pdf
- Greek Union of NGO Workers. (2019, April 2). Call for NGO employees to resist refugee eviction policy. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/1547172078872930/posts/2366148823641914>
- Hardin, G. (1968). The tragedy of the commons. *Science*, 162(3859), 1243–1248.
- Holston, J. (2009). Insurgent citizenship in an era of global urban peripheries. *City & Society*, 21(2), 245–267.
- Infomobile. (2019). For the right to a safe home: Four refugee squats evicted in Athens. *Infomobile*. Retrieved from <http://infomobile.w2eu.net/2019/04/19/four-refugee-squats-evicted-in-athens/?fbclid=IwAR3eOIGspqY2zlvblmsHQiFMWkVG7ZOBDEdv9k1h0nvT3wCqe0-Wbjn4Dc4>
- Isin, E. F. (2008). Theorising acts of citizenship. In E. F. Isin & G. M. Nielsen (Eds.), *Acts of citizenship* (pp. 15–43). London and New York, NY: Zed Books.

- Isin, E. F. (2009). Citizenship in flux: The figure of the activist citizen. *Subjectivity*, 29(1), 367–388.
- Lafazani, O. (2018a). Κρίση and μετανάστευση in Greece: From illegal migrants to refugees. *Sociology*, 52(3), 619–625.
- Lafazani, O. (2018b). Homeplace plaza: Challenging the border between host and hosted. *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 117(4), 896–904.
- Lefebvre, H. (1991). Les illusions de la modernité. Manière de voir 13 [The illusions of modernity. Way to see 13]. *Le Monde Diplomatique*, pp. 14–17. Retrieved from <https://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/mav/13>
- Lefebvre, H. (1996). *Writings on cities*. Oxford: Blackwell. (Original work published 1968)
- Linebaugh, P. (2008). *The Magna Carta manifesto: Liberties and commons for all*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- McNevin, A. (2011). *Contesting citizenship: Irregular migrants and new frontiers of the political*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- No Border Kitchen Lesvos. (2016). No Border Kitchen Lesvos (Greece) under threat of police rate and eviction. *Indymedia*. Retrieved from <https://www.indymedia.nl/node/32747>
- Nyers, P. (2003). Abject cosmopolitanism: The politics of protection in the anti-deportation movement. *Third World Quarterly*, 24(6), 1069–1093.
- Nyers, P. (2015). Migrant citizenships and autonomous mobilities. *Migration, Mobility, & Displacement*, 1(1), 23–39.
- Nyers, P., & Rygiel, K. (2012). Introduction. In P. Nyers & K. Rygiel (Eds.), *Citizenship, migrant activism and the politics of movement* (pp. 1–19). London and New York, NY: Routledge.
- Ong, A. (1999). *Flexible citizenship: The cultural logics of transnationality*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Ophuls, W. (1973). *Ecology and the politics of scarcity*. San Francisco, CA: Freeman.
- Orfanotrofio. (2016, May 23). We occupy the abandoned building of Orfanotrofio [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/katalipsistegismetanastonorfanotrofeio>
- Ostrom, E. (1990). *Governing the commons: The evolution of institutions for collective action*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Papadopoulou, D., & Tsianos, V. (2007). How to do sovereignty without people? The subjectless condition of postliberal power. *Boundary 2: International Journal of Literature and Culture*, 34(1), 135–172.
- Petropoulou, C. (2014). Crisis, right to the city movements and the question of spontaneity: Athens and Mexico City. *City*, 18(4/5), 563–572.
- Petropoulou, C. (2019). Can the poetic of commons change the habitus? Reflexions from Lesvos with a Latin American perspective of urban-regional social movements. In D. Gouviás, C. Petropoulou, & C. Tsavdaroglou (Eds.), *Contested borderscapes: Transnational geographies vis-à-vis fortress Europe* (pp. 125–138). Thessaloniki and Mytilene: Invisible Cities.
- Pistikos, I. (2016). *300 migrants' hunger strike from the perspective of complexity theory: Emergent assemblages and actualization of virtual worlds* (Unpublished Doctoral dissertation). Mytilene School of Social Science, Mytilene, Greece.
- Plyushteva, A. (2009). The right to the city and struggles over urban citizenship: Exploring the links. *Amsterdam Social Science*, 1(3), 81–97.
- Precarias a la Deriva. (2010). Precarious lexicon. *Caring Labor*. Retrieved from <https://caringlabor.wordpress.com/2010/12/14/precarias-a-la-deriva-precarious-lexicon>
- Purcell, M. (2003). Citizenship and the right to the global city: Reimagining the capitalist world order. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 27(3), 564–590.
- Purcell, M. (2013). Possible worlds: Henri Lefebvre and the right to the city. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 36(1), 141–154.
- Raimondi, V. (2019). For 'common struggles of migrants and locals': Migrant activism and squatting in Athens. *Citizenship Studies*, 23(6), 559–576.
- Refugee Accommodation and Solidarity Space City Plaza. (2017). One year at City Plaza: One year of solidarity and struggle. *City Plaza*. Retrieved from <http://solidarity2refugees.gr/one-year-city-plaza-one-year-solidarity-struggle>
- Refugee Movement for Rights and Justice. (2019, March 1). Important statement to all refugees in Greece. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/RefugeesMovementforRightsandJustice/posts/630931960700445?_rdc=2&_rdr
- Refugee Support Aegean. (2019). Reception crisis in Northern Greece: Three years of emergency solutions. *Refugee Support Aegean*. Retrieved from https://rsaegean.org/en/reception-crisis-in-northern-greece-three-years-of-emergency-solutions/?fbclid=IwAR2ZNakGfsyqYpGlibrZOdUjUg18VcjMoHYxUKmhC68_vbHrXx7K46eKv8
- Smith, R. J. (1981). Resolving the tragedy of the commons by creating private property rights in wildlife. *CATO Journal*, 1(2), 439–468.
- Spirou Trikoupi 17. (2019). Solidarity people. *Spirou Trikoupi 17*. Retrieved from <https://trikoupi17blog.wordpress.com>
- Squire, V. (2011). *The exclusionary politics of asylum: Migration, minorities, citizenship*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Squire, V. (2018). Mobile solidarities and precariousness at City Plaza: Beyond vulnerable and disposable lives. *Studies in Social Justice*, 12(1), 111–132.
- Stierl, M. (2016). A sea of struggle: Activist border interventions in the Mediterranean Sea. *Citizenship Studies*, 20(5), 561–578.

- Tsavdaroglou, C. (2018). The newcomers' right to the common space: The case of Athens during the migrant crisis. *ACME*, 17(2), 376–401.
- Tsavdaroglou, C. (2019). Reimagining a transnational right to the city: No Border actions and commoning practices in Thessaloniki. *Social Inclusion*, 7(2), 219–229.
- Tsavdaroglou, C., Giannopoulou, C., Lafazani, O., Pistikos, I., & Petropoulou, C. (2018). De(constructing) the refugees' right to the city: State-run camps versus commoning practices in Athens, Thessaloniki and Mytilene. In *Proceedings of the refugees and forced immigration: III International Interdisciplinary Conference on Refugee and Forced Immigration Studies* (pp. 5–20). Istanbul: Eastern Mediterranean Academic Research Center.
- Tsirmpas, E. (2016). Notara 26: The compass of self-organization will make the refugee's Odyssey of survival, a journey of humanity towards freedom! *Utopia 500*. Retrieved from <https://www.utopia500.net/single-post/2016/03/04/Notara-26-The-compass-of-selforganization-will-make-the-refugee%E2%80%99s-Odyssey-of-survival-a-journey-of-humanity-towards-freedom>
- United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. (1991). *CESCR General Comment No. 4: The right to adequate housing (Art. 11 (1) of the Covenant)*. Geneva: United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Retrieved from <http://www.refworld.org/docid/47a7079a1.html>
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2009). *UNHCR policy on refugee protection and solutions in urban areas*. Geneva: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/4ab356ab6.pdf>
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2014). *The right to adequate housing* (Fact sheet No. 21—Rev. 1). Geneva: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Retrieved from https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/FS21_rev_1_Housing_en.pdf
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2018). Refugee women and children face heightened risk of sexual violence amid tensions and overcrowding at reception facilities on Greek islands. *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing/2018/2/5a7d67c4b/refugee-women-children-face-heightened-risk-sexual-violence-amid-tensions.html>
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2019a). Greece. *Operation Portal*. Retrieved from <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5179>
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2019b). Greece. Geneva: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/69017.pdf>
- Welch, W. P. (1983). The political feasibility of full ownership property rights: The case of pollution fisheries. *Policy Sciences*, 16(2), 165–180.
- Yuval-Davis, N. (1999). “The multi-layered citizen”: Citizenship at the age of “glocalization.” *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 1(1), 119–136.

About the Authors



Charalampos Tsavdaroglou is a Postdoctoral Researcher in the Department of Planning and Regional Development at the University of Thessaly, Greece. He holds a PhD in Urban and Regional Planning, School of Architecture, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece. His research interests include land grabbing, the right to the city, common space and urban social movements on which he has published several journal articles and book chapters in English and Greek.



Chrisa Giannopoulou is a Postdoctoral Researcher in the Department of Geography at the University of the Aegean. She received her PhD from the Department of Balkan, Slavic and Oriental Studies in the University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki, Greece. Her thesis focuses on the survival strategies of separated asylum-seeking children in Greek reception centres. Her work, research experience and publications also include victims of trafficking and regular migrants in Greece.



Chryssanthi Petropoulou is Assistant Professor of Urban Geography, Director of Urban Geography and Planning Laboratory in Department of Geography, University of the Aegean, Greece and Dr. of ULP Strasbourg I, France. She has participated in research in Greece, France, Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Argentine and Bolivia on anticolonial critical geography, socio-spatial segregations and urban eco-landscapes, urban-regional social movements and poetics of new worlds, migrations, right to the city. She has published books and articles in English, French, Spanish, and Greek.



Ilias Pistikos is a Postdoctoral Researcher in the Department of Geography at the University of the Aegean, Greece. He holds a PhD in political sociology, Department of Sociology, University of the Aegean, Greece. His PhD thesis focused on the hunger strike of 300 migrants in Greece in 2011. His research interests include assemblages, abstract machines, migration studies, cultural studies, political struggles, etc.

Article

Spaces of Urban Citizenship: Two European Examples from Milan and Rotterdam

Alba Angelucci

DESP—Department of Economics, Society, and Politics, University of Urbino Carlo Bo, 61029 Urbino, Italy;
E-Mail: alba.angelucci@uniurb.it

Submitted: 7 July 2019 | Accepted: 8 August 2019 | Published: 28 November 2019

Abstract

This article aims to highlight the emergence of urban citizenship spaces in two European cities—Milan, Italy, and Rotterdam, the Netherlands—where marginality and social exclusion are faced and coped with through social participation, appropriation of space, and the construction of a peculiar place-based sense of belonging. To do so, the article will present the results of comparative research conducted in Milan and Rotterdam by means of 60 semi-structured interviews (30 in each city) with inhabitants of peculiar neighbourhoods in the two cities. The analysis will adopt an intersectional perspective (Crenshaw, 1989), paying attention to the intersection between personal characteristics and spatial features to highlight the processes occurring at the crossroads between the social and spatial categories. In particular, this work will present two examples, one from each city involved in the research, in which urban citizenship practices are enacted and create a Lefebvrian space of representation where dominant discourses and narratives are overcome and overturned by people otherwise excluded from dominant spaces and mainstream forms of urban citizenship. A comparison of the fieldwork from the two cities shows how in both cases, subaltern and/or marginalised groups (women, the poor, and migrants in particular) manage to appropriate interstitial spaces within the city where they can find room for expression and well-being and for the performance of urban citizenship practices. At the same time, though, external (political and economic) factors can transform those spaces of representation into self-constraining places which can expose these marginal groups to further vulnerability.

Keywords

intersectionality; representation; right to the city; urban citizenship; urban spaces

Issue

This article is part of the issue “Inclusion through Enacted Citizenship in Urban Spaces” edited by Rachel Kurian (Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands) and Helen Hintjens (Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands)

© 2019 by the author; licensee Cogitatio (Lisbon, Portugal). This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

1. Introduction: A Spatialized Urban Citizenship and the Right to the City

The analysis presented in this article relies on a specific understanding of *urban citizenship* which connects it to the Lefebvrian concept of the *right to the city* (Lefebvre, 1968) and to Lefebvre’s spatial theory (Harvey, 2008; Purcell, 2003).

At the basis of Lefebvrian spatial theory is the assumption that space is a social product made of power relations lying on the productive system. These express themselves through a spatial triad comprised of the *spatial practice*, the *representation of space*, and the *space of representation* (Lefebvre, 1974). The first dimension

constitutes the context of social relations, and it can be assimilated with the actual space that people meet in their daily life. The second dimension constitutes the conceptual framework which imposes itself mostly through the work of intellectuals and artists who sustain dominant and prevalent narratives and conceptions about society. The third dimension, the space of representation, is the space of everyday life and is linked to the marginal segments of society. This is the space of people who struggle for the (re)appropriation of the city against the dominant intellectuals’ conceptions of space.

For its part, the right to the city is linked to the active use that citizens make of urban space. In Lefebvrian terms, it is the possibility for all of the people to perform

practices of *participation* in and *appropriation* of urban space, engendering a *sense of belonging*. Connecting this notion to the production of space allows one to argue that the performance of the right to the city takes place within the space of representation through citizens' spatial practice, and proposing a different (opposite, conflictual) representation of space, a new conception of it.

Lefebvre never talks explicitly about citizenship. Nonetheless, numerous scholars (Chiodelli, 2009; Purcell, 2002) have pointed out that the possibility to act and produce urban space can be assimilated with a new concept of citizenship that may be defined as urban. In this perspective, disconnecting citizenship from the nation-state level is possible, tying the fruition of rights to participation and a sense of belonging to a *city* rather than to a national group (Glick Schiller & Çağlar, 2015; Lepofsky & Fraser, 2003; Painter, 2005).

Scholars have provided different definitions of urban citizenship, always highlighting different aspects of it: its insurgent character (Holston, 2008), its political nature (Beauregard & Bounds, 2000), and its performative dimension (Pine, 2010), to give some examples. The link to the Lefebvrian concept of the right to the city enables the present work to consider and include all of these aspects while going a step forward towards a spatialised description of it.

Indeed, urban citizenship and the right to the city share some important assumptions.

First, both of them are at the same time producers and products of urban space. Furthermore, they do not deal with the juridical and official rights conceded by an institution to people, but instead they focus on people's performances and on their ability to both symbolically and materially appropriate a city's spaces, paying attention to the everyday and subjective as constitutive elements of citizenship rights. In this sense, migrants can also significantly contribute to the redefinition of urban spaces through their urban practices, notwithstanding their juridical status (Glick Schiller & Çağlar, 2010).

Therefore, in both conceptualizations, citizenship rights and duties are inflected on the spatial level and on an urban scale, and they are played and negotiated through the elements of participation, appropriation, and sense of belonging.

That the right to the city is one of the constitutive elements of urban citizenship (Plyushteva, 2009) is arguable, then, because it is the ability to appropriate and shape one's own environment.

Therefore, inhabitants and users can conduct, under certain conditions, slow and micro urban transformations by means of different uses of and narratives about space. This work will investigate if and how peculiar places become actual spaces of representation which can host the expression of alternative forms of urban citizenship.

As other scholars have noticed (Fenster, 2005), the Lefebvrian definition of the right to city is missing the gendered dimension of society's structure of power. In

this work, this dimension will be retrieved to consider all of the aspects playing a role in processes of inclusion and exclusion as well as participation and marginalisation occurring within (and through) urban spaces.

In this work, the adoption of the analytical frame of urban citizenship is motivated by both scientific and political stakes. On the scientific side, the urban and spatialised understanding of citizenship rights and duties enables the analysis to shed light on localised and everyday dynamics impacting the inclusion and participation (as well as the exclusion and marginalisation) of different groups of people at the local level. This allows for analysis of the actual access to resources and obligations coming from the performance of citizenship practices, even when these are decoupled from an official and legal acknowledgement. For exactly this reason, from a political point of view, this perspective can inform both the policy-making process and the definition of new and more complex forms of citizenship, taking into account bottom-up, space-specific processes—the outcomes of which are anything but predictable.

2. Research Context and Methods

The research was conducted between 2014 and 2015 by means of 60 semi-structured interviews (30 in each city) with inhabitants of specific neighbourhoods in Milan and Rotterdam (throughout the article, M will represent interviewees from Milan, whose quotes have been translated from the original Italian, and R interviewees from Rotterdam, whose quotes are original). The choice to compare these two cities was motivated by the fact that Milan and Rotterdam, although similar in terms of size and position within their own national contexts, present some peculiarities in terms of political and economic structure that distance each other in a significant way, precisely in relation to their approach to an (explicit or implicit) understanding of urban citizenship. Both cities are former industrial cities, important hubs, and economic centres of their respective countries; were hit hard by the economic crisis that started in 2008; and have a large share of foreign residents: 19% in Milan (Comune di Milano, 2015) and 10% in Rotterdam (Eurostat, 2014; if considering the total portion of the population with an immigrant background in Rotterdam, the number rises to 49.1%). However, in terms of economic performance, while Milan is a sort of best practice in the Italian context, Rotterdam has one of the highest shares of unemployment in the Netherlands and is home to the most deprived areas of the country. On the political and policy levels, as clearly emerges from the literature, Milan is embedded in a weak national framework in which immigration has been treated as an emergency for too long, leaving much room for discretionary, fragmented, and territorial measures and lacking an effective shared national discourse about integration (Angelucci, Marzorati, & Barberis, 2019; Barberis, 2018; Barberis, Kazepov, & Angelucci, 2014). In comparison, Rotterdam

is grounded in strong and consistent national guidelines that have shifted from a multicultural and pluralist approach to an assimilationist one that shows a decrease of openness and tolerance regarding citizenship and immigration (Duyvendak & Scholten, 2012; Koopmans, 2013). Strongly influenced by the national model of integration, Rotterdam’s local policy context mirrors that assimilationist assumption even though it primarily focuses on enhancing the city’s economic performance (Tersteeg, van Kempen, & Bolt, 2013). These relevant differences embedded in similar structural conditions draw a comparison between actual practices of urban citizenship and urban space that can highlight how these may or may not influence the emergence of urban citizenship spaces.

As for Milan, the neighbourhoods considered are in the north-eastern part of the city (Figure 1), and in Rotterdam the focus was prevalently on the southern and western parts of the city (Figure 2).

To consider peculiar categories such as stigmatisation and marginality, the selected neighbourhoods mirrored specific characteristics. First, the neighbourhoods are among those generally considered the most marginal ones within the two cities; second, they are highly diversified in both cultural and socioeconomic terms. The two specific examples of representational space were selected because they reflect in a perfect way the characteristics of the neighbourhood, and they are considered by residents a sort of emblem of the neighbourhood to which they belong. The interviewees were purposefully selected to cluster two groups who were highly heterogeneous in terms of social class, occupational status, origin, age, and gender. In the first group (Milan), 15 women and 15 men were interviewed, both Italians and immigrants from nine different countries (China, Egypt, Eritrea, Japan, Peru, the Philippines, Somalia, Sri Lanka, and Tunisia), belonging to different age groups, ranging from 18 to 77 years old. Within this group were also

internal migrants (no. 7, from both rural areas of the north and poorer cities of the south of Italy) and second-generation migrants (no. 3). Income levels and social class varied from working to upper classes.

In the second group (Rotterdam), there were 17 women and 13 men, and the interviewees came from 14 countries (including the Netherlands). In addition to natives, the people interviewed were from the Antilles, Belgium, Colombia, France, Ghana, Iran, Italy, Norway, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Suriname, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. In this case also, different age groups were represented (from 18 to 75 years old), and both internal migrants (no. 5) and second-generation immigrants (no. 4) were included, as were different income levels and social classes. In both cases, the selection was made starting from different *foci*, accessed through gatekeepers, and then snowballing from the first interviewees to the following.

The data collected through the interviews were then analysed using Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 2003), which is a kind of sociolinguistic analysis characterised by its attention to societal power structures produced, maintained, and reinforced by way of language. According to this approach, analysing discourses in a critical way makes it possible to unveil power relations that structure society, connecting (social) structure and (people) agency. From this work perspective, Critical Discourse Analysis enables the analysis to keep together spatial practice (agency), representation of space (structure), and space of representation (narratives) in a circular movement from the micro to the macro and vice versa.

If Critical Discourse Analysis is the analytical tool adopted by this work, then intersectionality theory (Crenshaw, 1989) constitutes its methodological framework. Although providing an exhaustive definition of the intersectionality theory¹ is not possible here, it is possible to partially describe the theory as an analytical

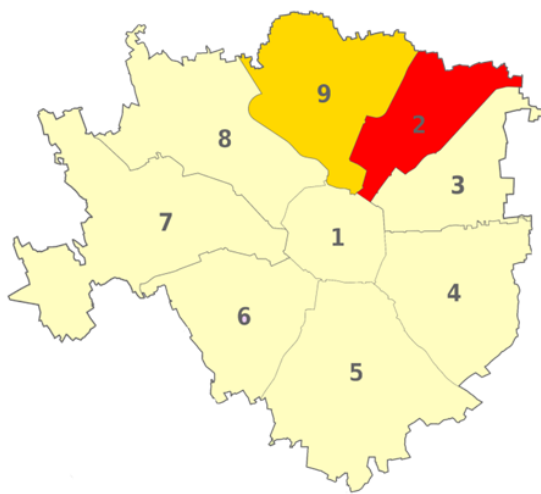


Figure 1. Milan divided into municipalities, highlighted no. 2 and no. 9. Source: Author.

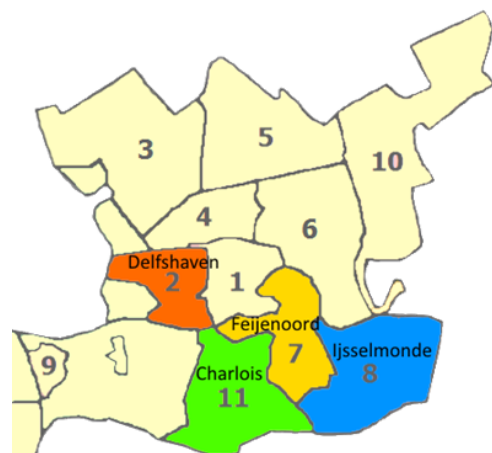


Figure 2. Rotterdam divided into city districts, highlighted no. 2, no. 7, no.8 and no. 11. Source: Author.

¹ The definition of the intersectionality theory (is it a theory? Is it a methodological framework or a heuristic paradigm?) is the object of an ongoing interesting and articulated debate, which cannot be accounted for here, so I refer to Bello (2015) and Marchetti (2013) for an in-depth analysis of it.

lens for investigating multiple intersecting discriminations, considering them a process in which the resulting discrimination cannot be taken for granted as a mere sum of the original discriminations in that it becomes a *sui generis* phenomenon, with new and peculiar characteristics (McCall, 2001). In this work, I use the insights provided by this approach pragmatically to frame the research on two levels. The first one is the profiling of the interviewees, which was conducted considering the complexity of the intersection of different personal characteristics. The second level concerns the analysis of the specific intersections between the above-mentioned personal characteristics and the contextual spatial categories of *spatial position*, *spatial acknowledgement*, and *spatial mobility*. These categories were identified starting from the definition of space provided by Massey (1984), who described it as constituted by *distance*, *place*, *symbolism*, and *movement*. These elements can be easily reconducted to the above-mentioned categories, in which distance refers to the position of people and objects within the city, place and symbolism are associated with the symbolical dimension of the acknowledgement and sense of belonging, and movement is connected to the mobility within an urban space.

Therefore, the heterogeneity of the two groups of interviewees depends not only on their characteristics taken as *per se* entities, but also on the specific intersection of personal and spatial categories which entail peculiar positions within society and different degrees of participation, appropriation of space, and sense of belonging.

3. Spaces of Representation in Milan and Rotterdam

3.1. Milan: A Neighbourhood School as a Space of Representation

3.1.1. The Place and the People

The sample coming from Milan concerns a neighbourhood school, hosting children from 3 to 14 years old, in one of the focal areas of the research.

The most important characteristic of the school is its position within a park, which during school hours is completely devoted to pupils: When children are at school, no one but school staff can enter the park. Usually children play in the park after school, and adults create relationships with other parents (or child carers in general).

The second peculiar aspect of the school is the social composition of pupils attending it. Indeed, the school hosts a very high number of students who have an immigrant background, and the educational and social environment is strongly multicultural. This is because the school is located in a highly diversified neighbourhood, in which the share of foreign minors is close to 50% (Comune di Milano, 2015).

The third element to take into consideration is the presence of a civil association in the park. This is very

much bonded to the context because the association implements activities targeting children and adults within and outside the park. The association's main aim is the improvement of the park and the social participation of its regulars, but the activities implemented usually try to involve the entire neighbourhood (even if with limited results).

The group of people who make it a representational space is constituted by people who generally have children or who take care of them (for kinship bonds or professional reasons). They are mostly Italians or long-term resident foreigners with high social skills and excellent proficiency in the Italian language. In this group, the female component is neatly predominant with respect to the male one. This can be linked to the unbalance in the sharing of childcare responsibilities between women and men within the family, which is relevant also in the practices and activities connected to the school (Barker, 2011), and it generally couples with the limited mobility experienced, or at least perceived, by the interviewed attendees. For simplicity, I will call this group the child carers group.

3.1.2. Participation, Sense of Belonging, and Appropriation: A Gendered Representational Space

The first thing to say to introduce myself is that I am a mother of two daughters....And then, an important piece of my life is the fact that I live here....Because of the neighbourhood—and above all the neighbourhood school—[name of the place] is a place of encounters, of friendships, and of engagement. It's the place where my daughters spend most of their time, so I created a net of friends there, and it became the most important for me. And so, this thing had to be underlined to explain who I am. (M10)

As clearly stated in the quotation above, the predominance of mothers and (female) child carers within this group is at the basis of an identification process that implicitly excludes part of the feminine population (women without children) and almost the entirety of the masculine one. Consequently, the place assumes a peculiar gendered dimension which strongly influences the way in which the dynamics of participation and belonging take place. Participation is, indeed, basically linked to children's activities and mothering practices, and these practices ground a strong sense of community and belonging: It's primarily through the mutual help in childminding, for example, that intragroup solidarity takes place. This very strict gendered and parental space's connotation results in a sort of appropriation of it by the child carers' group which links its identity with the place-identity:

I define it [the school and the park] as a little welcoming community. I feel at home here. (M1)

You get to know other moms here, and you become friends. And when you understand that your prob-

lems are the same as their problems, you start to create some 'survival strategies'. We help each other with children. I know that there are some women who play the role of 'fake grannies' to help some moms with their children. (M12)

Nevertheless, the emergence of the representational space is also linked to specific socio-spatial features that come into play and that intertwine with the gendered and parental dimension. In this case, a strong role is played by the position of the school within the park:

And the park constitutes a proper 'lung' for the area, not only in terms of trees and clean air, but also in terms of sociality and spaces. Spaces that are devoted to children but also to adults. (M17)

The limited mobility of the child carers' group is one of the motivations encouraging mothers to attend the park regularly: In this way, they manage to balance part of their family workload with socialization and group-identification needs. However, their strong emotional bond with place and people is long lasting. Even when the children grow older and leave the school, the child carers' group continues to attend the park and the school, even if with different roles—above all, as volunteers for the association.

This process may be seen as a socially virtuous circle: Support is provided when needed, and at the same time, women are empowered and stimulated to engage and volunteer, in turn supporting other women in need (even if this support network is provided exclusively to insiders).

Insiders perceive the park as a familiar place that they usually describe as being like home. This is due to the commitment within this little community, the strong sense of belonging, and the identification processes that take place within the park. This thick group unconsciously creates high barriers to the access that fosters the perception of a safe and domestic environment. These characteristics, in addition to their link to the mothering practice, make this place a hybrid space between the public and private spheres, where the latter seems to pervade the former through a partial appropriation of it.

This process results in a representational space which is created through the gendered redefinition of meanings, narratives, and practices that connote it as an *emotional place-based dimension*.

With this term, I intend a representational space in which mainstream and dominant perceptions and conceptions of the space, as well as the power relations lying on it, are renegotiated by way of an emotional involvement with the place in a recursive process. In the case of the neighbourhood school, the renegotiation concerned the gendered redefinition of the separation between the public and domestic spheres, with a trespassing of one into the other. In this sense, an opposite example may be what Del Re (2016) called a multifunctional-island house

(*casa isola polifunzionale*). With this expression, Del Re referred to the increasingly different forms of work-from-home, which cause an intrusion of the public sphere into the private one. Different from the case presented here, the multifunctional-island house fosters isolation, frustration, and a negative emotional response to the place.

However, the representational space of the park has negative side effects, too. If the strong community bond engenders a support network for insiders, it also generates exclusion and high access barriers for outsiders. This is not only negative for outsiders, but also for the same group, which risks being too closed off and finding itself surrounded by an unfriendly environment:

This thing drives me mad! I can't stand that we can't use the park for the entire morning and part of the afternoon because all turns around kids! I live this thing as a discrimination: I can't live that place because I don't have children. And I think it's foolish because that place is such a wonderful place where a lot of initiatives could be implemented for all, not just for a part of the neighbourhood. (M6)

The second dark side of this representational space is in the same hybrid nature between a public and a private space: Although it has undeniable effects of improving women's lives, mixing childminding responsibilities and social needs can actually worsen the unbalance of the workload within the family and strengthen the stereotypical role division through the implicit exclusion of men from this space. This may result in a weakening of women's agency and advocacy power as citizens.

3.2. Rotterdam: A Community Garden as a Representational Space

3.2.1. The Place and the People

The example emerging from Rotterdam concerns a community garden located in one of the most deprived areas of Rotterdam South. Actually, this community garden does not exist any longer. Indeed, a few weeks after my research campaign finished, it was closed following a decision of the municipal council that has been described by the local press as schizophrenic (see for example, Lorbach & van Steenbergen, 2015).

During the fieldwork, the death sentence for the garden had already been emanated, and much of the concern expressed by the interviewees was directed to the upcoming closure. An adjacent school was going to buy the fertile garden to expand its facilities and build a parking area for its staff. However, the tensions and the extensive debate that took place around this community garden and the fact that eventually it was closed prove the relevance that this space had gained and make it particularly interesting in this work perspective.

The community garden aimed to improve neighbourhood life thanks to the shared and delightful use of green

areas and their productive capacity. The garden was run by a foundation that utilized volunteers. At first, the garden was subsidized by the municipality, and at the same time, its sustainability was granted by the exchange between products (the garden hosted various kinds of crops, from flowers to vegetables) and in-kind contributions. Cash contributions were discouraged because the organisers wanted the initiative to be a social and not economic venture.

Volunteers organised themselves through shifts as necessary to keep the garden open at least some days each week. Nevertheless, anyone who wanted to enter and collaborate was welcome at any time. A couple paid persons oversaw management and organisational tasks, including various projects that were implemented within the garden.

Notwithstanding its open access, the garden was mostly attended by a specific group of people comprised of low-income Dutch natives, usually over 45 years old. The most characterising element of the group attending the garden was that most of these people had gone or were going through troubled periods in their lives, connected to socioeconomic or health issues (e.g., the loss of their job, an addiction, illness, and the like).

Although activities implemented within the garden were not significantly gendered, nor was the place determined to be particularly women-friendly, most of the attendants/volunteers were women from 45 to 60 years old. This could be associated to the above-mentioned peculiarity of being a place where people with troubled personal histories find room: Women are generally more exposed to socioeconomic vulnerability, having a weaker position within the labour market (Hegewisch & Hartmann, 2014).

3.2.2. Participation, Sense of Belonging, and Appropriation: The Value of Being Active

This is also my city, that's why I want to have this garden, this space. Here in the garden everyone is worthwhile as a person, not like somebody who can buy things, but somebody who can do things, and by doing things can be part of the society, and being part of this society, can be responsible, responsible together. And this I think is the most amazing thing that can happen in places like this, it doesn't happen in shopping malls. (R27)

The quotation above highlights how the chance to participate into a productive activity which gave volunteers the perception of creating something new and beautiful in a deprived context made the community garden a representational space. Adding value to the place was the fact that these people managed to feel themselves worthy and useful in this society.

Most of the people attending the garden, due to their vulnerable socioeconomic positions, had experienced a sort of expulsion from city life, which resulted

in a perceived spatial expulsion from most urban spaces in Rotterdam. Places and infrastructures that they attended before suddenly became somehow inaccessible and not welcoming. The perception of being excluded from their city was mirrored in their difficulty finding a (localized) source of identification and belonging. The following quotation from an interviewee, although quite long, is worth being fully included for its completeness and clarity:

And what happens when you lose a job? What happens is that you get sort of cut off of most of the things that are going on in the city....So it's like you have to re-invent the city for yourself because there are so many places, there are so many...not so much closed off, is that you're not able to do anything there. It was really difficult to me in the beginning to feel safe and to feel that there was a place where you can belong, and then I came here at the garden, and I walked in, and I said, 'Do you need a volunteer?' And they said, 'Yes, sure!' And within the year I realized that I had found what I was looking for, a place where I didn't have to pay anything, where I was welcomed, where I can make a difference, where I can do something, and where I'm again part of a small community. So, this garden has been a life saver to me. (R27)

The community garden helped these people to establish new, acknowledged, and worthy identities and to belong to a place even if they were not able to economically contribute to city life in a different manner: Their economic and personal values were decoupled.

This engendered a sense of attachment and belonging to the place, the perception of being in a safe and familiar environment where all could express themselves through participation, bringing their personal value to the community.

People from very different backgrounds formed strong interpersonal bonds and a sense of belonging to the place-based community, linking their participation to a *green culture*, a kind of common value:

I always liked nature and peace and green surroundings, but now I realize more than ever how important is a piece of land, with trees and the possibility to let vegetables grow, how important it is for people who haven't a garden and are longing for being outside. So, yeah, my ideal of how important social life and green surrounding, how important it is for a lot of people is growing; my awareness is growing more than ever. (R25)

In this respect, the community garden is a place that generates a significant emotional involvement by means of activities such as farming and gardening in the first place but also by providing new identities to the volunteers. The narrative of personal rebirth is much shared among the attendees and is reinforced by the personal responsi-

bility in the 'rebirth' of the garden's natural environment and in the general improvement of the neighbourhood, too: The area is perceived as highly stigmatised (stigmatisation which, according to interviewees, is only partly justified by its actual conditions).

As already seen in regard to the neighbourhood school in Milan, the community garden generates an emotional place-based dimension where feelings of attachment and active participation come into play to re-define power relations, laying into the mainstream perceptions and conceptions of the space.

In this case, the renegotiation does not directly involve a gendered dimension, but it is focused on the value of the individuals against the loss of economic capability due to different contingencies during their life course. In that space, people can feel accepted again and appreciated according to a 'decommodified' value system. Vulnerable people were able to find a place and renegotiate their own social value by way of an alternative conception of a space where economic rules are bracketed.

The appropriation of this space occurred through its improvement and through the emotional investment that volunteers put into that activity. The familiar environment and the community dynamics taking place in the garden blurred the boundaries between the domestic and the public spheres. Most of the volunteers barely distinguished the two spheres of life, increasingly investing in terms of emotional commitment to the place.

As in the case of the neighbourhood school in Milan, one of the consequences of this trespassing of the domestic sphere into the public one is that on the one hand, it engenders a warm and welcoming environment for insiders who manage to find support networks within the group. On the other hand, in-group bounded solidarity creates high access barriers for outsiders who, in particular cases, do not manage to gain access. In the case of the community garden, radical exclusion prevalently regarded immigrants with limited proficiency in the Dutch language. Furthermore, most of the volunteers went through a long process before feeling accepted and welcomed within the garden. This bounded solidarity may have a sort of lock-in effect which limits insiders' capacity to create wide and transversal social networks that may help them to face daily problems.

The garden was closed in December 2015 for more profitable uses of the land. This was consistent with the urban renewal plans of the administration, which aimed to make the city, and especially its more deprived neighbourhoods, more economically attractive. When the closure was announced, the volunteers responded by increasing their attachment to the place. Their response, however, did not prove sufficient to prevent the closure of the garden and the resulting loss of years of voluntary and community work.

In this sense, one of the main weaknesses of the community garden was its complete dependency on public financial support. Although most of the people involved in the gardening and farming were volunteers who worked

for free, the entire management and the foundation who ran the garden had costs that could not be covered by the municipality: The garden was basically a social place that needed to expel profit-driven logics from itself to stay a 'social' place of its kind. Therefore, when the City Council made the decision to close the garden, the funding was stopped and the people who had literally constructed the place had no advocacy power to oppose that decision.

4. Spaces of Urban Citizenship in Milan and Rotterdam

The representational spaces presented above set the basis for the emergence of alternative forms of urban citizenship within the two cities, which takes place through a spatialised performance of the right to the city. But how does this happen? It occurs by means of participation in a social network and its activities which delineates an explicit or not appropriation of a specific space and engenders a sense of belonging to that (physical and symbolic) space.

Starting again with Milan, the neighbourhood school context fosters the emergence of a form of urban citizenship characterised by two basic aspects: It is *child-centred* and *space-specific*. The expression *child-centred* refers to the pivotal role played by the parental practice in defining the place-identity, which in turn influences the way in which affiliation and feelings of attachment are constructed: The school network provides a strong sense of belonging which is based on the self-definition of and identification with the role of 'mother.' This role becomes the access key to the community, and it is a source of self-identification and hetero categorization which allows people in this group to feel part of a clearly defined community. The strong sense of belonging supports a strongly bounded solidarity. The appropriation of the spaces of the school and the park takes place through these practices, which are emotionally characterised and require a certain degree of personal involvement. As a consequence, those not fitting into the strict characteristics of the group are excluded.

The result of this kind of associative and appropriative practices is a sort of *micro-citizenship* based on childcare practices and connected to the physical and symbolic space of the park (and that for this reason has been defined as space-specific).

On the one hand, this kind of citizenship can be considered a *representational citizenship*, a symbolic space where women within the neighbourhood manage to express themselves and give positive value to their caregiving roles. On closer inspection, though, this kind of participative practice is based on women's factual limitation in mobility and in their limited access to active and political urban spaces.

Therefore, the strong gendered characterisation of this model of urban citizenship is related to the imbalanced sharing of family workload within the domestic sphere that also permeates the public sphere. If the over-

load of care-work for women becomes a participative and integrative device in this little community, these same practices are confined within the park and the associative activities, limiting women's political and social influence in other urban spaces.

The result is the creation of a hybrid dimension of urban citizenship which is confined within a specific space and linked to parental practice and that worsens rather than improves women's opportunities for participation at the city level. Indeed, access to this form of urban citizenship seems to be an adaptive strategy which, at most, enables women to insert themselves in interstitial urban spaces.

Women's agency seems to be in this way confined within a semi-domestic urban space, where boundaries among private and public sphere are blurred and where gendered stereotypes are strengthened rather than challenged.

In Rotterdam, the economic capability of inhabitants seems to play a central role in defining their spaces of urban citizenship and in grounding alternative, or even insurgent, forms of urban citizenship.

Even in this case it is possible to argue that the representational space created within the community garden engenders a peculiar kind of urban citizenship by means of the practices, relationships, and affiliation bonds.

Different from the Milanese case, the community garden is not based on gendered practices or stereotyped gender roles. Nonetheless, this representational space sees a prevalence of women, which connotes in a meaningful way the place-identity.

As argued, the accentuated socioeconomic vulnerability of women makes them the most subjected to the loss of access to mainstream urban spaces and at the same time, makes them the most inclined to participate and activate for the creation of a space which can stand outside market logics and mechanisms.

People in this garden made an effort to rescue a social and physical space from the strict market logics which rule in an increasingly pervasive way the definition of urban space and urban citizenship in Rotterdam (see Uitermark, Duyvendak, & Kleinhans, 2007). The garden's volunteers managed to define an alternative way to enjoy and participate in city life through the appropriation of that space. Its management was focused on the human value of the individual rather than on his/her economic capability, and this generated a sense of attachment and belonging to the place.

Through the emotional bond that they created within this space, the volunteers managed to feel part of a community, and they overcame the sense of exclusion from the city that they had previously perceived. They explicitly addressed their affiliation to the garden as a way to regain their urban citizenship and the dignity of their status as Rotterdammers.

On the one hand, this was an important success of this initiative, which helped marginalised and vulnerable people feel useful and provided access to the right to the city

from which they had been expelled. They managed to re-define and renegotiate the meaning of participation (voluntary activities), modalities of appropriation (exchange without economic obligations), and the value of the sense of belonging (not based on economic conditions).

On the other hand, this kind of access to and appropriation of urban citizenship rights can be seen as a failed attempt to get out of a sphere of political invisibility. Indeed, this kind of alternative urban citizenship is based on an adaptive strategy aimed at overcoming the limitations caused by their expulsion from the remunerative, productive sphere. In a moment of vulnerability, these people found themselves deprived of advocacy power and, finally, excluded from most of the urban spaces and initiatives going on in their city.

By finding room for their social and urban citizenship rights within the community garden, the people involved gained a sort of containment of their potential political role that had disqualified them as urban citizens. Furthermore, the fulfilment of their needs for participation and for belonging to a community, through a partial and revocable appropriation of that kind of urban space, ended up reinforcing the basic subdivision between the domestic and public spheres rather than challenging it.

Indeed, as for the neighbourhood school and park in Milan, the community garden resulted in being a hybrid space between the public and domestic spheres, where activities and practices of participation are based on and nurtured through high emotional involvement that produces strong affiliation bonds. At the same time, though, this kind of space raises high access barriers and reduces the advocacy and political power of the people who live those bonds as insiders.

In this sense, the closure of the garden is evidence of the weakness of this group, and it marks in a significant way the direction that the local government wants the city to follow. Frustrating all of the attempts to save the garden and all of the requests of the foundation and volunteers to be listened to, the city did not just make a contingent decision, but they decided on a specific overall direction for the city. People living the garden have perceived the decision taken by the administration as a further clear message about what a Rotterdammer should be, or better, what a Rotterdammer should have to be considered a worthy urban citizen, and they do not mirror themselves in that definition.

5. Conclusions: Representational Spaces as a Double-Edged Sword?

The examples of representational space in the two cities give me the opportunity to draw some conclusions about the trajectories that urban citizenship can take depending on the peculiar intersection of context-based factors. As the examples have shown, the two considered places seem to foster the performance of the right to the city and the emergence of urban citizenship in different ways: In Milan, the main role is played by gendered roles and

practices which express themselves in mothering and childminding activities, and in Rotterdam, the basic element is the contraposition to market-driven logics by the means of green and social activities.

On closer inspection, though, some common points between the two cases emerge, and they seem to be connected to the same main drift along which practices and identification processes take place.

In particular, some features coming from the common industrial past of the two cities prove to be relevant: the neat physical and symbolic separation between the public and domestic spheres and between the productive and reproductive realms, within which the role of women is still clearly and definitely connected to the second, subaltern, emotional, and marginal sphere of domesticity.

As a matter of fact, in both cases, women try to escape from this marginal condition via adaptive strategies, accessing and appropriating interstitial urban spaces. These spaces are interstitial because they are left behind by the, so to speak, 'dominant citizens,' and they assume a gendered meaning which makes them appear as hybrid spaces, emotionally connoted, in a grey zone between the private and public life. Although in Milan the gendered dimension of this cleavage is much more perceived as such, in that it is also explicitly addressed in spatial practices, this dimension is not less important in Rotterdam. In this case, it is disguised through neutrally perceived practices, but it is still pivotal in determining the conditions of socioeconomic vulnerability. Vulnerability and marginality, in turn, determine the expulsion from certain spaces and from the dominant modalities of urban citizenship, which consequently fosters a search for alternative ones.

The intersection between space and gender seems to confine vulnerable people into a specific emotional place-based dimension. Indeed, albeit significantly important for self-definition and for overcoming conditions of isolation, these forms of urban citizenship have a disqualifying effect on the advocacy power of vulnerable citizens, because they are not able to empower those citizens in a social and political way. This is because of the peculiar socio-spatial configuration in which they are embedded: The domestic sphere invades the public one, reproducing, in fact, a private dimension in a public space. These dynamics do not break the stereotypical male/female division (as emerges from the Milanese case), and they do not challenge the subaltern position of women and other vulnerable categories in the market-driven society (as the Rotterdam case shows). They can provide relief and satisfaction, (partially) neutralising possible conflicts between these groups and the rest of the city. The advocacy power of these groups is, in this way, weakened by a lower motivation to participate in the wider context of the city (which still is the real political space) and by the fact that being lived and perceived as a private dimension, these spaces do not have any public or political weight, and these groups are not

able to influence or even be listened to at the political and administrative levels.

However, this does not make the emergence of these representational spaces less positive. The challenge for urban level policy makers is exactly in taking advantage of these bottom-up processes, fostering the positive effects that they have (such as the creation of community and solidarity bonds, the sense of belonging and attachment to the place, and the ability to overcome more or less severe forms of isolation with the consequent possibility to access vulnerable groups) and limiting their negative side effects with dedicated measures and activities aimed at empowering these places and groups. Though in Milan this has been difficultly done so far by the above-mentioned civil association, in Rotterdam, the lack of public support determined the closure of the garden and the loss of years of work and of a slowly rising social capital.

Therefore, urban spaces are far from being neutral in a wider and more pervasive sense than just in relation to the typical gender-related issues of security and the work-family balance. At issue is the same possibility to self-determine and self-define oneself as an urban citizen and have access to the right to city.

Acknowledgments

This work was supported by the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration under Grant Agreement no. 319970—DIVERCITIES. The views expressed in this article are the sole responsibility of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission. The publication has been funded by the Department of Economics, Society and Politics of the University of Urbino Carlo Bo, Italy.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

References

- Angelucci, A., Marzorati, R., & Barberis, E. (2019). The (mis)recognition of diversity in Italy between policy and practice: The case of Milan. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 26(3), 254–267.
- Barberis, E. (2018). Interculturalism as conservative multiculturalism? In S. Oosterlynck, G. Verschraegen, & R. van Kempen (Eds.), *Divercities: Understanding super diversity in deprived and mixed neighbourhoods* (pp. 113–138). Bristol: Policy Press.
- Barberis, E., Kazepov, Y., & Angelucci, A. (2014). *Assessment of urban policies in Milan, Italy*. Urbino: DESP—University of Urbino Carlo Bo.
- Barker, J. (2011). "Manic mums" and "distant dads"? Gendered geographies of care and the journey to school. *Health and Place*, 17(2), 413–421.

- Beauregard, R. A., & Bounds, A. (2000). Urban citizenship. In E. F. Isin (Ed.), *Democracy, citizenship, and the global city* (pp. 243–256). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Bello, B. G. (2015). Diritto e genere visti dal margine: Spunti per un dibattito sull'approccio intersezionale al diritto antidiscriminatorio in Italia [Rights and gender seen from the margins: Ideas for a debate on the intersectional approach to anti-discrimination law in Italy], *Diritto e Questioni Pubbliche*, 15(2), 141–171.
- Chiodelli, F. (2009). La cittadinanza secondo Henri Lefebvre: Urbana, attiva, a matrice spaziale [Citizenship according to Henry Lefebvre: Urban, active, with a spatial matrix]. *Territorio*, 51(4), 103–109.
- Comune di Milano. (2015). *Sistema Statistico Integrato*. Retrieved from sisi.comune.milano.it
- Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1989(1), 139–167.
- Del Re, A. (2016, May 26). Il lavoro cambia le città [Work changes cities]. *inGenere*. Retrieved from <http://www.ingenere.it/articoli/il-lavoro-cambia-le-citta>
- Duyvendak, J. W., & Scholten, P. (2012). Deconstructing the Dutch multicultural model: A frame perspective on Dutch immigrant integration policymaking. *Comparative European Politics*, 10(3), 266–282.
- Eurostat. (2014). Population change: Demographic balance and crude rates at regional level (NUTS 3). *Eurostat*. Retrieved from http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=demo_r_gind3&lang=en
- Fairclough, N. (2003). *Discourse analysis*. London: Routledge.
- Fenster, T. (2005). The right to the gendered city: Different formations of belonging in everyday life. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 14(3), 217–231.
- Glick Schiller, N., & Çağlar, A. (2010). *Locating migration: Rescaling cities and migrants*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Glick Schiller, N., & Çağlar, A. (2015). Displacement, emplacement, and migrant newcomers: Rethinking urban sociabilities within multiscalar power, *Identities*, 23(1), 17–34.
- Harvey, D. (2008). The right to the city. *New Left Review*, 53, 23–40.
- Hegewisch, A., & Hartmann, H. (2014). *Occupational segregation and the gender wage gap: A job half done*. Washington, DC: Institute for Women's Policy Research.
- Holston, J. (2008) *Insurgent citizenship: Disjunctions of democracy and modernity in Brazil*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Koopmans, R. (2013). Multiculturalism and immigration: A contested field in cross-national comparison. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 39, 147–169.
- Lefebvre, H. (1968). *Le droit à la ville* [The right to the city]. Paris: Édition Anthropos.
- Lefebvre, H. (1974). *La production de l'espace* [The production of space]. Paris: Édition Anthropos.
- Loorbach, D., & van Steenberghe, F. (2015, 26 June). Carnissetuin tegen de vlakke voor groen wonen [Carnissetuin against the plain for green living]. *Vers Beton*. Retrieved from <https://versbeton.nl/2015/06/carnissetuin-tegen-de-vlakte-voor-groen-wonen>
- Marchetti, S. (2013). Intersezionalità [Intersectionality]. In C. Botti (Ed.), *Le etiche della diversità culturale* [Ethics of cultural diversity] (pp. 133–148). Florence: Le Lettere.
- Massey, D. (1984). Introduction: Geography matters. In D. Massey & J. Allen (Eds.), *Geography matters! A reader* (pp. 1–12). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press in Association with the Open University.
- McCall, L. (2001). *Complex inequality: Gender, class and race in the new economy*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Painter, J. (2005). *Urban citizenship and rights to the city* (Background Paper for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister). Durham: International Centre for Regional Regeneration and Development Studies (ICRDS), Durham University.
- Pine, A. (2010). The performativity of urban citizenship. *Environment and Planning A*, 42(5), 1103–1120.
- Plushteva, A. (2009). The right to the city and struggles over urban citizenship: Exploring the links. *Amsterdam Social Science*, 1(3), 81–97.
- Purcell, M. (2002). Excavating Lefebvre: The right to the city and its urban politics of the inhabitant. *GeoJournal*, 58(2/3), 99–108.
- Purcell, M. (2003). Citizenship and the right to the global city: Reimagining the capitalist world order. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 27(3), 564–590.
- Tersteeg, A. K., van Kempen, R., & Bolt, G. S. (2013). *Urban policies on diversity in Rotterdam, the Netherlands*. Utrecht: Faculty of Geosciences of Utrecht University.
- Uitermark, J., Duyvendak, J. W., & Kleinhans, R. (2007). Gentrification as a governmental strategy: Social control and social cohesion in Hoogvliet, Rotterdam. *Environment and Planning A*, 39(1), 125–141.

About the Author



Alba Angelucci (b. 1988) holds a PhD in Sociology, Governance, Social Participation, and Citizenship. She is a Research Fellow in Sociology and Adjunct Professor of Gender and Family Sociology at the Department of Economics, Society and Politics at the University of Urbino Carlo Bo, Italy. Her main research interests concern discrimination and inequality dynamics, mainly analysed through an intersectional perspective which considers gender and origin-related disadvantages.

Article

Hostile Immigration Policy and the Limits of Sanctuary as Resistance: Counter-Conduct as Constructive Critique

Cathy A. Wilcock

International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University Rotterdam, 2518 AX The Hague, The Netherlands;
E-Mail: wilcock@iss.nl

Submitted: 12 July 2019 | Accepted: 29 August 2019 | Published: 28 November 2019

Abstract

This article addresses the tense relationship between national and municipal approaches to the inclusion and exclusion of irregular immigrant ‘non-citizens.’ While national policies in the UK have created hostility for irregular migrants, municipal-level cities of sanctuary offer a ‘warm welcome’ which has been extolled as immanently progressive in the face of hostility. This article assesses the extent to which city-based sanctuary movements in the UK provide effective resistance to the national policies of hostility. Building on critiques of the City of Sanctuary (CoS) movement, effective resistance is redefined using a Foucauldian counter-conduct approach. Through applying a counter-conduct lens to a document analysis of the CoS newsletter archive and online resources, the article shows it is not easy to dismiss sanctuary as ineffective resistance, as some earlier critiques have argued. Rather, CoS is demonstrated as both effective and ineffective counter-conduct due to its uneven approach to the various discourses within the hostile environment.

Keywords

cities of sanctuary; counter-conduct; hostile environment; UK immigration policy

Issue

This article is part of the issue “Inclusion through Enacted Citizenship in Urban Spaces” edited by Rachel Kurian (Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands) and Helen Hintjens (Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands)

© 2019 by the author; licensee Cogitatio (Lisbon, Portugal). This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

1. Introduction

This article addresses the relationship between national and municipal approaches to the inclusion and exclusion of irregular immigrant ‘non-citizens.’ It speaks to conceptualisations of citizenship which see beyond formalised citizenship ‘status’ and describe instead a tacit ‘right to presence’: the conditions for which are collectively instantiated—or enacted—by a political community (Isin, 2013). Using this conceptualisation of citizenship, multiple conditions for inclusion are performed and competed for by various actors. Inspired by Lefebvre’s *Right to the City* (1968), several scholars have focused on urban space as a site where national modes of exclusivity can be ‘ruptured’ or ‘threatened’ (Bauder, 2016; Harvey, 2003; Purcell, 2002). While the state dictates who is entitled to legal ‘rights,’ the ‘right of presence’ for belonging to the urban political community is the province of

the city and its inhabitants. This article addresses how municipal-level actors resist the conditions for exclusion and inclusion which they inherit from the state. It does so through a document analysis of the UK’s national immigration policy—termed the ‘hostile environment’—and the City of Sanctuary (CoS) movement which is embedded within local council infrastructure. As will be shown, the UK national immigration policy promotes substantive citizenship whereby the ‘right of presence’ is reserved for some and denied to others based on the false distinction between morally corrupt irregular migrants and morally pure regular migrants. Against this, urban actors in CoS enact competing conditions for inclusion based on hospitality.

First, the article outlines the details of ‘hostile environment’ policy-making and the responses from the CoS movement. It then demonstrates that critiques of CoS have concluded that, overall, it fails to resist hostil-

ity. Seeking to offer a more constructive critique, I argue for the reimagining of resistance as Foucauldian counter-conduct. Drawing on the heuristic model developed by Death (2010, 2016) and examples of successful counter-conduct from various contexts, the article then discusses to what extent CoS is successful counter-conduct to the hostile environment. It draws evidence from an archive of CoS documentation and media reports. Specifically, the article engages with CoS newsletters from the period August 2018–August 2019 as well as handbooks, charters, annual reports and online resources available on cityofsanctuary.com. In addition, media reports between 2010–2019 and secondary academic sources contribute to illustrative exemplification. I also write with ten years' experience of participating in the UK migrant and refugee rights sector in a voluntary capacity, engaging with—but not formally a member of—CoS.

2. The Hostile Environment

The 'hostile environment' has come to describe the UK's policy approach to immigration (Webber, 2019). In its broadest sense, it refers to the gradual introduction of selectively restrictive policies most significantly under New Labour in the late 1990s (Lewis, Waite, & Hodkinson, 2017, p. 189; Mulvey, 2011) but it can also be traced back to the 1970s (Bowling & Westenra, 2018, p. 2; Yuval-Davis, Wemyss, & Cassidy, 2018, p. 233). In its narrow sense, the hostile environment describes the rhetorical and legislative platform of the Conservative/Liberal coalition and Conservative government (2010–current). Two Immigration Acts (2014 and 2016) were introduced by then home secretary Theresa May who stated that they should create a 'hostile environment' for migrants (Kirkup, 2012). While often credited with coining the phrase, May borrowed the term from Labour Home Secretary Alan Johnson who first used it in relation to immigration policy in 2009 (Taylor, 2018, p. 2). Much of the content of the Acts was devised by the "Hostile Environment Working Group" established to concoct policies which would 'make immigrants' lives more difficult' (Aitkenhead, 2013; Webber, 2019, p. 77). While the hostile environment was disowned following the 2018 Windrush scandal by then home secretary Sajid Javid, no legislative changes have been implemented (Grierson, Farrer, & Sparrow, 2018). Critics maintain that the UK still pursues a *modus operandi* of fervent hostility (Webber, 2018).

The 2014 and 2016 Acts enshrined specific efforts to police irregular migrants, of which there were an estimated 800,000 living in the UK (York, 2015, p. 228). Migration status can become irregularised in a number of ways: People can enter the UK clandestinely or fraudulently, they can overstay their visas or violate the terms of their visas, and they can have their asylum claims rejected but avoid deportation (Finch & Cherti, 2011; Papademetriou, 2005). Trafficking victims can also become irregular migrants upon entry into the UK. The stated aim of the hostile environment was to implement

the 'four Ds of deterrence' on irregular migrants: dispersal, detention, destitution, and deportation (Webber, 2004). According to May, this introduced a push factor which would overwrite the pull of previous excessively lenient immigration regimes (House of Commons, 2015). Ironically, the justification for these Acts, described in the Conservative manifesto, was to meet the arbitrary target of reducing net immigration to the tens not hundreds of thousands (The Conservative Party, 2015, p. 29). Since irregular immigrants are—by definition—absent from official statistics, the justification is entirely spurious. This marks the hostile environment as an example of 'symbolic policy making' (Weisz, 2018, p. 12) which is designed to appease agitated voters and has no basis in rational analysis. The policing of those with irregular status can therefore be seen, not as a means to meet immigration targets, but as an assertion of state control over substantive citizenship, or the 'right of presence.'

The 2014 and 2016 Acts were characterised by two main contributions: first, 'everyday bordering' (Yuval-Davis et al., 2018) or the expansion and internalisation of border checking into 'quotidian life' (Lewis et al., 2017, p. 190) and second, the removal of rights for asylum-seekers. The 'insourcing' of border control (Menjívar, 2014) involves serving fines or imprisonment to employers who hire irregular immigrants and to landlords, banks, and the Driver Vehicle Licensing Agency when it has been found that they have provided their goods and services to irregular migrants (Immigration Act, 2014, c. 3, s. 33–47; Immigration Act, 2016, c. 2). The Acts also removed rights for asylum-seekers, specifically to appeal decisions on their cases (Immigration Act, 2014, c.2; Immigration Act, 2016, c. 4) and empowered immigration officers to detain and electronically tag asylum-seekers in the appeals process (Immigration Act, 2014, c. 1, s. 4; Immigration Act, 2016, c. 3). These measures built on previous Acts legally requiring public servants such as doctors, teachers, social workers, marriage registrars and university professors to check and report the status of their patients, clients, students, etc. or face fines and imprisonment (Immigration and Asylum Act, 1999; Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act, 2002, c. 6, s. 129–133). Asylum-seekers already had their right to work denied in 2002 (Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act, 2002, c. 6) and their right to non-emergency health care and free English language classes withdrawn in 2006 (Yuval-Davis et al., 2018, p. 233). The 2014 and 2016 Acts extended these hostilities through creating information sharing pathways between the Home Office and social and health services (Immigration Act, 2016, c. 3, s. 55) and ensured the enforcement of penalties enshrined in earlier Acts.

3. Cities of Sanctuary

Various forms of local-level resistance have undermined this national hostility including collective non-compliance among doctors, teachers and social work-

ers (Kmietowicz, 2018; Skinner & Salhab, 2019). The Safe Surgeries campaign backed by #peoplenotpassports asks General Practitioners to stop sharing patient data with the Home Office (Saadi & McKee, 2018). Following successful campaigning by Migrant Rights Network, the Memorandum of Understanding between NHS Digital and the Home Office has been scrapped during the time of writing this article. In addition, lobbying groups such as “Still Human Still Here” and “No Recourse to Public Funds” argue for the re-establishment of rights for failed asylum-seekers.

The most institutionalised form of resistance is the CoS movement. It represents the largest consolidated effort among municipal governments and local councils to counteract the directives of the state. CoS originated in the USA out of a multi-faith movement of churches and synagogues which had historically sought to subvert national policy on issues such as slavery and civil rights (Bauder, 2017; Critchley & Trembly, 2017). Taking inspiration from such movements and institutionalising that resistance within the local council infrastructure, the first UK cities of sanctuary were announced in Sheffield and Swansea in 2005 (Darling, Barnett, & Eldridge, 2010, p. 46) and in 2019 there are 113 officially recognised cities and places of sanctuary in the UK.

While cities of sanctuary operate independently, in order to attain official status from the CoS network, they must: a) show they are committed to the key goals of the movement; and b) receive the backing of their local city council (Darling et al., 2010, p. 47). The key goals, outlined in the *City of Sanctuary* handbook (Barnett & Bhogal, 2009) and the CoS Charter (City of Sanctuary, 2017, p. 3) are ‘to build a culture of hospitality for people seeking sanctuary in the UK’ and to ‘influence policymakers and public attitudes throughout the country.’ As the national co-ordinator states, CoS aims ‘to dispel misconceptions and build a culture of hospitality’ (Salman, 2008, p. 2). These goals are achieved through creating ‘opportunities for relationships of friendship and solidarity’ (City of Sanctuary, 2017, p. 3) between those ‘with and without status’ (Barnett & Bhogal, 2009, p. 83). Typical CoS activities involve storytelling nights, boardgame evenings, blogging workshops, community gardening, conversation clubs and the facilitation of school visits and training workshops for public service providers. In addition, CoS grants Sanctuary awards to various establishments—schools, museums, theatres, and even cafés—to recognise their commitment to hospitality towards migrants. All activities have an underlying commitment to offering a ‘positive message of welcome’ to immigrants of all kinds and to transforming the ways in which migrants are perceived by local populations (City of Sanctuary, 2019, p. 2).

4. The Limits of Hospitality as Resistance to Hostility

Proponents claim that the sanctuary movement is a ‘much needed and healthy antidote to the creeping crim-

inalisation of migration’ (Hintjens & Pouri, 2014, p. 224). Many commentators have found the movement immanently progressive in the dark national context. Bauder and Gonzalez (2018) argue that CoS represents the re-framing of belonging at the urban, rather than the national level. In the face of national exclusivity, the city is ‘reimagined as an inclusive space’ (Bauder & Gonzalez, 2018, p. 125). Darling et al. (2010, p. 47) quote a Georgian refugee in Sheffield who said:

It’s brilliant work. It’s bringing together locals and foreigners and saying: Look, we’re human beings and we can live together, we have a lot to share and we can work together to make our city a better place for all of us.

Through answering hostility with hospitality, CoS clearly ‘troubles assumptions about who does and who does not have the right to be present in the city’ (Squire, 2011, p. 298). It encourages ‘minor acts of citizenship’ in everyday contexts which ‘momentarily disrupt’ the social hierarchies imposed by the state (Squire, 2011, p. 304). If the question is whether or not the sanctuary movement has done any social good, the answer is yes, demonstrably.

However, while being a social remedy to hostility, the extent to which CoS can *resist* the hostile environment has been seriously questioned. CoS organisations are almost always established and run by non-vulnerable members of communities: those who are neither seeking asylum nor with irregular status (Hintjens & Pouri, 2014, p. 223). Activism led by undocumented migrants has constituted a form of insurgent citizenship where belonging is actively claimed by the excluded, with or without a spirit of welcome from those on the inside (Swerts, 2017). Concerns have been raised that CoS could overshadow the nascent insurgent politics originating with the highly agential and capable—but often infantilized—irregular immigrant population. This has even been recognised by CoS, and their Strategic Objective One in their 2018 annual report is to ‘improve the engagement and participation of people seeking sanctuary’ (City of Sanctuary, 2019, p. 2).

The most incisive critique of the CoS movement has been made against their wilfully apolitical stance. Early critiques claimed that ‘City of Sanctuary explicitly avoids political lobbying or campaigning in favour of a more subtle process of transforming culture’ (Squire, 2011, p. 296). Since then, CoS has recently initiated a political campaigning sphere of activity: For example, they spearheaded the ‘Lift the Ban’ campaign in 2018 which asked for asylum-seekers to have the rights to work, to family reunification and a time-limited detention. Their campaigning, however, does not recommend tactics beyond letter-writing and petitioning and does not extend to the protection of other criminalised migrant groups, for example, the exploitation of undocumented workers. Their apolitical stance also extends to individual asylum cases. As Bagelman (2013) has observed, CoS organisations

place their emphasis on the experience of waiting for Home Office decisions. During this time of waiting, sanctuary cities go to lengths to make people feel welcome, comfortable and distracted. In doing so, they contribute to the ‘normalisation’ or ‘domestication’ of being held in limbo (Bagelman, 2013, p. 55). In cases where the status of an individual becomes genuinely irregularised—when their claim or appeal is rejected—CoS does not offer support to challenge or campaign against such decisions, even when asylum claimants believe the Home Office has acted unfairly or incompetently. While they have supported isolated anti-deportation campaigns (see, for example, BBC, 2019), they have not protested against the ‘voluntary assisted return’ policy where asylum charities are given government funding to advise failed asylum-seekers to self-deport.

As such, some service users have observed that when a CoS is unveiled, there is ‘a lot of noise, some newspaper articles, but nothing really change[s]’ (Hintjens & Pouri, 2014, p. 223). Without rights to participate in society independently, being made to ‘feel welcome’ is somewhat insufficient for many of those without status. In other words, CoS pursues a ‘be welcome while you wait’ agenda which is institutionally cautious about questioning the ever-diminishing rights available during the wait, and when the wait is over. In this way, Bagelman (2013, p. 49) argues that ‘the seemingly hospitable City of Sanctuary in fact contributes to a hostile asylum regime’ and the relations of injustice produced by the hostile environment are perpetuated rather than resolved by the sanctuary movement (Squire & Darling, 2013, p. 60).

5. Reimagining Resistance as Counter-Conduct

While sharing the above frustrations, I question the utility of this critique for a movement which is enacting resistance from within a formal local council political infrastructure. The bar is very high for what counts as resistance in the above critique. To satisfy their critics, CoS would have to commit fully to radical political tactics, anti-deportation campaigning and begin engaging with ‘illegalised’ factions of undocumented migrants. This would entail CoS dissolving their links with local councils and foregoing the concomitant funding and connections. They would then have to join forces—or compete for space—with the already existing radical lobbying groups who often struggle to gain support from local communities except among the already initiated. In short, the critique is not constructive because it suggests that CoS should adopt an entirely different set of organisational principles to those around which it has built an impressive national network over more than a decade.

I propose that the extent to which the CoS movement is effective resistance should be analysed against a framework which leaves open the possibility for constructive critique by taking as unalterable its positionality within the local council structure. That is to say, the problems identified with the movement should be, at least

to some extent, comprehensible from within its existing confines. It is not my intention to morally defend the reluctance of the CoS to intervene at the front line of immigration politics where it is usually the unfunded and most marginalised organisations who lead battles against the UK state. Nor is it my intention to promote the moderate and soft tactics of CoS over and above the more radical forms of resistance enacted by organisations doing excellent work often under the radar. That notwithstanding, the fact remains that CoS is the most visible and most influential counter-weight to UK hostility. It is often the first encounter people have with pro-immigrant politics and the first port of call for ordinary people who are suddenly compelled to act compassionately for migrants. To illustrate, CoS Bristol reports there are 200 people per day offering help (Topping, 2015, p. 3). Due to their local council links, they are the primary organisation providing advice and training on issues of immigration to public service providers such as libraries, schools and museums. Critics recommending a total overhaul of their entire way of working miss an opportunity to shape this influential movement within its own terms. Therefore, I identify the need to assess the sanctuary movement using a framework which recognises that resistance can come in subtle hues and can also be implicated in the systems of power they seek to challenge. A counter-conduct approach is appropriate for this task.

Counter-conduct, introduced by Foucault in his 1978 lectures (Foucault, 2007a), describes activities which are on the soft end of resistance and come in mundane forms (Bulley, 2016, p. 243). The ‘conduct’ being countered refers to the ‘processes implemented for conducting others’ and is a way of conceptualising governmentality (Odysseos, Death, & Malmvig, 2016, p. 153). Distinguishable from Foucault’s other conceptualisations of power (discipline and sovereignty), *conduire* (‘conduct’) emphasises that power is not exercised coercively but is ‘dependent on the freedom and activeness of individuals and groups of society’ (Pyykkönen, 2015, p. 8). It follows, then, that conduct works as a ‘self-limiting form of power, which is ever conscious of the counter-productive effects of imposition, and is therefore ever in pursuit of the “involvement,” “co-ownership,” and “willingness” of those it seeks to rule’ (Malmvig, 2014, p. 295). While governmentality has been discussed in relation to immigration and asylum (Bigo, 2002; Darling, 2011; Fassin, 2011), its opposite number ‘counter-conduct’—as a means of analysing resistance to governmental conduct—has been relatively understudied.

Counter-conducts employ a ‘not necessarily spectacular or ground-breaking set of tactics’ in their struggles against control (Bulley, 2016, p. 244). A counter-conducts approach is therefore apt to analyse ‘much more diffuse and subdued forms of resistance’ (Foucault, 2007a, p. 200). As argued by Death (2016, p. 217), ‘practices which risk being rejected by a “resistance approach” for being insufficiently transformative can be re-evaluated through a counter-conducts approach.’

Counter-conduct differs from resistance, disobedience, or revolt because it does not involve a ‘complete refusal of the process of government’ (Asl, 2018, p. 5). Rather, it expresses ‘the will not to be governed thusly, like that, by these people, at this price’ (Foucault, 2007b, p. 75). While resistance approaches find uncomfortable the notion that resistance and governmentality are mutually dependent and enhancing, counter-conduct approaches recognise that particular operations of governmentality are not objected to, and may even be reinforced through counter-conduct. In other words, ‘counter-conducts are forces and tendencies that emerge from within, but are marginal to, the form of conduct examined’ (Bulley, 2016, p. 244). Against this background, counter-conduct has guided analysis of several opposition movements including Occupy (Rossdale & Stierl, 2016), youth protests in Turkey (Çabuk Kaya & Ural, 2018) and *izikhothane* protests in South Africa (Death, 2016), all of which reinforce or uphold some aspects of the forms of control they are opposing while countering others.

This Foucauldian approach has been formalised into heuristic models by Death among others (Death, 2010, 2016; Odysseos et al., 2016; Rosol, 2014). Death (2016, p. 211) argues that counter-conducts ‘leads us to ask different questions’ to those in resistance analyses. He proposes a focus on ‘ways of being’ which follows from the conceptualisation of conduct which is centred on the orchestration of selves:

The activity of conducting (*conduire*) [others]...the way in which one conducts oneself (*se conduit*), lets oneself be conducted (*se laisse conduire*)...and, finally, in which one behaves (*se comporter*) as an effect of a form of conduct (*une conduit*). (Foucault, 2007a, p. 193)

Counter-conduct, therefore, is a way of demonstrating ‘we are not like that’; a subversion of the ‘ways of being’ which are hegemonized in *conduire*. Counter-conduct emerges as ‘ethical self-formation’ which works to ‘alter modes of being in the world’ (Death, 2016, p. 216).

In addition, as elaborated by Death (2016, p. 214), drawing on Moore (2013), a counter-conducts approach not only leads to inquiry about the ways of being conducted as the self, but also extends to the conducting of selves in relation to one another. As found in Foucault (Foucault, 2007a, p. 193), ‘we can ascertain the multiple and related dimensions and domains of conduct as the conduct of individuals, *relations between individuals*, and as the way in which individuals conduct themselves.’ In other words, a counter-conduct approach urges a questioning of which relational political subjectivities are being objected to and which new ones are emergent in their place. This can be achieved through asking questions such as: ‘What new standards and practices of self-conduct are produced through protest?’, ‘What processes or technologies of intellectualised subject forma-

tion can protests enable?’ and ‘What modes of selfhood and what processes of reflection on selfhood do they make possible?’ (Death, 2016, pp. 215, 218).

Taking forward this model, counter-conduct has defined oppositional acts including local defiance against resource extraction in Brazil (Nepomuceno, Affonso, Fraser, & Torres, 2019), parkour practices among young migrant men (de Martini Ugolotti & Silk, 2018), Middle-Eastern women’s life writing (Asl, 2018) and amateur slam poets in the USA (Rivera, 2013). These studies focus on counter-conduct as the construction of ‘alternative political subjectivities’ (Çabuk Kaya & Ural, 2018, p. 2010). They ‘elucidate the political subjectivities emergent from the performance of dissent’ (Nepomuceno et al., 2019, p. 124) against the forms of political subjectification imposed during governmental conduct. Following this lens and its applications, I provide a constructive analysis of where specifically, and against which models of governmental conduct, the sanctuary movement is (in)effective in counter-conducting the hostile environment.

6. Countering Hostility through Storytelling

The hostile environment conducts two pairs of dichotomous political subjectivities which are imposed on the non-citizen population. First, as Mulvey (2011, p. 1478) describes: ‘Key to this process [of establishing hostility] was the attempt to create different conceptions of migrants according to “type”’. In doing so, the UK state constructs ‘ways of being’ a migrant in the UK into two mutually exclusive categories into one of which, it implies, all immigrants must fall.

Most UK migration regimes have governed according to this kind of dichotomous subject formation yet the notion of what is good and what is bad changes with each new trend in governmentality. In the Blair era, for example, the ‘good migrant’ was defined as economically beneficial to UK society and the ‘bad migrant’ was a burden on the economy (Mulvey, 2011). What sets apart the Conservative hostile environment era from the economic reasoning of New Labour, is the moralising tone it applies to subject formation. As Theresa May said in 2015: ‘There are people who need our help, and there are people who are abusing our goodwill—and I know whose side I’m on. Humane for those who need our help, tough on those who abuse it’ (The Independent, 2015). Here, the migrant political subjectivity is categorised into good and bad halves where the ‘bad migrant’ is construed, not only as an economic burden, but as morally corrupt and conspiratorial. Hostility is targeted at the economic migrant masquerading as a refugee, the benefit tourist, and the potential terrorist all of whom are here to ‘abuse the goodwill’ allegedly shown to them by the UK immigration system. On the other hand, the good migrant is construed as the morally virtuous refugee victim/hero who is fleeing a threat to their life and is fundamentally entitled to compassion.

Within this rubric, the asylum seeker occupies a liminal space where it is not yet known into which of the two types of migrant they fall. Their status and the logic of the hostile environment implies that they must fall into one or the other. It is clear that this dichotomous narrative ‘cannot speak for the heterogeneity of Britain’s irregular migrant population’ and uses ‘a confused and unquantifiable construction’ of irregularity (Price, 2014). Yet, it is these ‘ways of being’ which are conjured by this particular expression of control and the right of presence is reserved only for those who pass this moral test.

As other studies of counter-conduct demonstrate, ‘the state uses “techniques of the self” to create governable subjects yet counter-conduct gives rise to new identities and subjectivities’ (Nepomuceno et al., 2019, p. 129). In many cases of successful counter-conduct, alternative subject positions are produced through acts of protest which expose conducted subjectivities as erroneous or mythical. Creative expression and storytelling, as Asl (2018) has shown in relation to Middle-Eastern women’s writing, can be an avenue through which to perform novel political subjectivities: For instance, ‘the struggle to be conducted differently...involves the negation of the prescribed modes of subjectivity that patriarchal governmentality forms and implants on the subjectivity of Arab women’ (Asl, 2018, p. 10).

One key CoS activity, named the ‘Arts Stream,’ is participatory arts and public outreach whereby migrants are supported to craft and tell their stories to public audiences. Some cities have employed professional writers to deliver training workshops (Stickley, Hui, Stubley, Baker, & Watson, 2018) and a recent project in Durham focused on storytelling through song-writing. Recently, a ‘Raise my Voice’ training workshop was held in Preston. Storytelling appears in CoS online literature as recommended practice for their training of public service providers and school visits. CoS therefore provides an opportunity to counter the morally good/bad subject formation of governmental conduct.

Evaluations of CoS storytelling practice have concluded they empower migrants, make them feel that their voice is finally being heard and positively affect the well-being of the individuals involved (Stickley et al., 2018). However, through these minor acts of protest, CoS have missed an opportunity to protest against and perform alternative modes of subject formation to those being constructed during governmental conduct. In the context of hostility towards all forms of irregular migrants, CoS focuses exclusively on the stories of those seeking asylum and, within that group, the asylum testimonies portrayed are highly homogenised to fit within the ‘archetypal refugee’ narrative described by Sandelind, Woods, and Nah (2018) as ‘uncomplicatedly tragic.’ Importantly, personal tragedy is used to demonstrate moral purity. In resources available (and linked to) on the CoS website and in CoS newsletter material, a total of 27 migrant stories draw on familiar tropes which emphasise the moral purity of asylum-seekers. The stories are taken from the

CoS newsletters and CoS website in the ‘Resources’ section. They link to specific stories from the BBC, Refugee Action, The Refugee Council, The Gulbenkian Foundation, Testimony Project and Al Jazeera.

To emphasise moral purity, CoS stories foreground stereotypically innocent identities. While the majority of asylum-seekers are single men aged 18+ (Eurostat, 2018), out of the 27 stories in the CoS resources, 12 were about children, 11 about women and only 4 about men, all of them with families. In addition, CoS resources commonly refer to the religious commitment of the protagonists. Sometimes their religious commitment is central to their asylum claim as in Rachel’s story (Glynne, 2019) but on other occasions, religious indicators appear as arbitrary details. For example, ‘A devout Catholic, Jenny believes what happened next was divine intervention’ (Miller, 2019a, p. 11) and ‘she stuffed a bag which now contained only her Bible with its black dog-eared leather cover’ (Miller, 2019b, p. 10). Furthermore, stereotypically virtuous backgrounds of the asylum-seekers are foregrounded in the stories: 6 of the 11 women were employed in ‘women’s rights,’ and one of the men was employed in a stereotypically virtuous line of work: human rights activism. From the 27 stories, 13 of them include stories of sexual abuse (suffered by almost all of the women and some of the children) and an additional 14 include stories of torture. The details are often presented as everyday occurrences to demonstrate their daily experience of victimhood: ‘Marie went to the market in Kinshasa. She returned to an empty house and was sexually abused by police’ (Miller, 2019b, p. 8).

While these kinds of stories are true for many people, other asylum-seekers and irregular migrants have far more complex stories to tell but are no less ‘deserving’ of the right of presence in the UK. For example, during their journeys, people may have made morally dubious decisions to cross borders illegally, pay traffickers, use false documents, or lie about their age. Many people, while living with a genuine and reasonable fear of persecution, have not experienced direct personal and/or sexual violence. Similarly, some people have made very ordinary journeys to the UK, on charter flights, or through over-staying student visas. None of these activities undermine what may be genuine claims of asylum, but they are silenced—edited out, or deselected—in CoS stories because they do not fit comfortably with the moral purity which has become so central to refugee ‘credibility’ and rightful presence (Sandelind in Sandelind et al., 2018). As observed by Woods (Sandelind et al., 2018), ‘refugees are an incredibly diverse group’ yet the stories told about refugees ‘do not reflect that heterogeneity.’ Instead they have contributed to a ‘paradigmatic idea of what *the refugee* is’ and in doing so have ‘closed down the avenues for solidarity with all kinds of refugees’ whose stories do not fit this narrow mould (Woods in Sandelind et al., 2018).

Furthermore, prospects for solidarity with other irregular migrants, not only those claiming refugee sta-

tus, are also closed down by the absence of diversity in CoS migrant testimonies. Undocumented labour migrants who are not in the asylum system but whose lives have been made destitute by the hostile environment, are not made visible in CoS public outreach. As in the hostile environment, the right of presence is seen as dependent upon evidence of moral purity. This persistent re-telling of the classic refugee tale which portrays a very narrow picture of rightful presence does not unsettle the binary subjectivities set out in the hostile environment but upholds them.

A note in defence of CoS: The storytelling tropes in CoS literature do shift emphasis from the notion that *most* irregular migrants are morally dubious—as governmental conduct dictates—and instead suggest that the scale of the hostility is disproportionate to the numbers of migrants who are actually ‘abusing the system.’ While an average of only a third of asylum applications are deemed genuine by the UK state (Sturge, 2019, p. 6), CoS promotes the idea that nobody is here to ‘cheat the system.’ Furthermore, for CoS, the task of convincing a sceptical public is made easier with simple storytelling and thus the homogeneity of narratives serves the practical purpose of countering suspicion in the general public. However, these constitute short-term gains at the expense of long-term change that we know is made possible through committed counter-conduct. As explained by Çabuk Kaya and Ural (2018, p. 207), the notion of *novelty* in subject formation is key: ‘the concept of counter-conduct points out the will to be governed differently as it seeks to cultivate an *ethos of novelty*.’ It is clear in their study that counter-conduct has been successful when a ‘new political subjectivity has been constructed’ (Çabuk Kaya & Ural, 2018, p. 209) through a ‘novel way of being and acting.’ The young protesters in their study in Turkey succeeded in constructing ‘an alternative political subjectivity’ to that which was imposed on them and thus qualified as successful counter-conduct (Çabuk Kaya & Ural, 2018, p. 210). Therefore, it is the production of novel—not adapted nor differently proportioned—political subjectivities which makes counter-conduct effective resistance. The storytelling so central to the outreach and therapeutic work of CoS, while having positive impact for those using the service, does not go as far as to produce novel political subjectivities since their definition of the ‘good migrant’ is just as narrow as the state’s. A suggestion for CoS, therefore, is to follow the example of successful counter-conduct elsewhere and incorporate more nuance into the stories, include non-asylum-seeking migrants, and, importantly, make the right of presence independent of an unrealistically morally honourable lifestyle and identity.

7. Countering Hostility through Refusing Judgement

The second dichotomous set of political subjectivities constructed during governmental conduct are the judgemental citizen and the judged non-citizen. Crucially, the

hostile environment dictates that so-called good and bad migrants can be exposed as such through one simple check of status: whether or not they are ‘irregular.’ The state has co-opted its citizens to take part in these judgemental checks based on the myth that, in doing so, they are performing the noble and highly ‘citizenly’ task of sifting the good from the bad. As Theresa May explained, ‘the fewer people there are who wrongly claim asylum in Britain, the more generous we can be in helping the most vulnerable people’ (The Independent, 2015). In seeking to recruit people into the judgemental process, Prime Minister David Cameron patently exhorted the British public: ‘I want everyone in the country to help, including by reporting suspected illegal immigrants to our Border Agency through the Crimestoppers phone line or through the Border Agency website....Together we will reclaim our borders and send illegal immigrants home’ (Travis, 2011). Civil society—here operating as an extension of the state—enact judgement in two ways: first, through the identification of migrant ‘irregularity’; second, through deciding which category asylum-seekers fall into. The citizen is encouraged to play a role in both forms of judgemental procedure.

As noted by Pyykkönen (2015, p. 8), ‘Foucault emphasizes that modern governmentality—and more specifically the procedures he names “the conduct of conduct”—are not exercised through coercive power and domination, but are dependent on the freedom and activeness of individuals and groups of society.’ Therefore, the political subjectivities of judgemental citizen and the judged non-citizen are not fully ‘conducted’ until they are inculcated by the sections of the public. Public buy-in of judgement has been substantial: The Home Office received around ‘2,100 public allegations per week in 2011’ (Aliverti, 2015, p. 218). The wake of hostile environment policies saw increases in suspicion towards all people who are visibly ‘non-native’ as well as the ‘institutionalisation of hostility towards migrants and migration more generally’ (Mulvey, 2011, p. 1478). For example, following the recruitment of landlords into the judgement process, Lewis et al. (2017, p. 199) show clear evidence of ‘discrimination by landlords towards non-British passport holders, and even those with foreign accents or names.’ Furthermore, the context in 2019 including the rise of right-wing populism in general, and the deepening of anti-immigration rhetoric by Home Secretary Priti Patel and Prime Minister Boris Johnson can be traced, in part, to the foundations laid when the state asked its citizenry to consistently judge the migrant population.

CoS, owing to their being part of the local council structure, do not challenge the necessity of judgement by the state, and do not question the clarity of the state’s judgement on ‘irregularity.’ Their seat at the table in the local council infrastructure, comes at the price of this acceptance. That notwithstanding, ‘[w]orking with a government doesn’t imply either a subjection or a blanket acceptance’ (Foucault, 2000, p.455). Through the practice of counter-conduct, ‘one can work with and be in-

transigent at the same time' (Foucault, 2000, p. 455). What remains within the power of the CoS movement is to resist *being* the judgemental citizen through enacting alternative non-judgemental political subjectivities and encouraging others to do the same.

Here, CoS is successful in enacting alternative political subjectivities. While they defer to the state to judge on irregularity, they refuse to perform judgement on asylum-seekers themselves. In place of judgement, comes neutrality and friendship with 'befriending' being one of the key actions of CoS. CoS facilitates such opportunities for non-judgemental friendship through 'Meet your Neighbour evenings' 'Buddy Projects,' day trips and even weekend excursions shared between asylum-seekers and local people. The friendship-building activities have the dual purpose of 'tackling isolation and loneliness among refugees and educating and informing local communities to other cultures' (Molloy, 2019).

Davidson has shown the importance of friendship in cultivating counter-conduct since 'one conducts oneself in another way with friends, fabricating new ethical and political possibilities' (Davidson, 2011, p. 34). He argues that friendships both alter the relations between individuals and change one's relation to oneself. Taking this into their analysis of young Turkish people's resistance to the AKP government, Çabuk Kaya and Ural (2018, pp. 209–210) demonstrate how the LGBT factions within the movement were able to expose as derogatory many of the homophobic and transphobic slogans and works of graffiti being used by the other protesters. Their cultivation of new friendships among the diverse group of protesters allowed them to challenge the homophobic language deployed in the resistance movement. Working in a similar way, after a trip with CoS, one non-asylum seeker member reports 'Amazing memories, great times with incredible people, changing the world! Evening time together, making friends, thank you for the beautiful moments spent here' (City of Sanctuary, 2019, p. 17). Furthermore, instead of only accessing an already sympathetic section of the public, CoS befriending events reach those who express scepticism about asylum-seekers. For example, a CoS refugee meets a fisherman who 'thinks immigration should be controlled' (City of Sanctuary Newsletter, 2019) and a cub scout leader noted 'it's been good for our Cubs to meet refugees up close, being themselves, instead of just pictures on the news: to see that they're real people' (City of Sanctuary, 2019, p. 16). Similar to what was seen in the Turkish protest, in refusing to perform judgement, but instead facilitating non-hierarchical friendships, the judgemental citizen and judged non-citizen factions are dissolved as political subjectivities during CoS practice.

8. Conclusions

This article has two main contributions. First, an analytical contribution has been made to the debates on the social inclusion of immigrant non-citizens. Through

reimagining resistance as counter-conduct, the article offers a novel understanding of how unspectacular forms of resistance to state exclusivity, when performed from within—as opposed to from outside of—governmental structures, are part of the broader picture of resistance. More specifically, this deepens our understanding of the various approaches to the question of who has rightful presence in the UK political community. By refusing to judge non-citizens, CoS compete with the state's conceptualisation of the political subjectivities on the inside and those of the outside of substantive citizenship. Yet, by using the archetypal victim/hero refugee story in their training and public outreach, CoS align with the state's conditions for rightful of presence. The CoS movement enacts successful counter-conduct for those who directly experience its work: those who are involved in befriending activities and the specific migrant population who access its services. However, in terms of challenging the wider narrative on rightful presence and moral purity, CoS is largely ineffective in resisting the hostile environment. Therefore, it can be said that CoS offers specific and personalized, but not general and society-wide, resistance to the hostile environment. Second, this article makes a normative contribution implied by the analytical findings. The article is written from the standpoint that the hostile environment *should* be resisted. To this end, through demonstrating how counter-conduct can be utilized as a form of soft resistance, the article offers a constructive critique of the CoS movement, and shows how its practice could be modified, rather than overhauled, to provide an effective resistance to hostility.

Acknowledgments

A version of this article was presented at the Vital Cities and Citizens conference at Erasmus University Rotterdam in November 2018. I am grateful to the panel organizer Helen Hintjens and to the fellow panellists and audience for their insightful comments. The initial motivation for this article arose in response to an exhibition and workshop series organised by London and Marrakech-based arts organisation Mint Works on the theme of 'Guests and Hosts.' As part of their programme, I hosted a discussion workshop and spoken word event in London in October 2018 and this article responds to the themes raised there. Many thanks to Florence Devereux, the Mint Works team and all of the workshop participants.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

References

Aitkenhead, D. (2013, July 12). Sarah Teather: 'I'm angry there are no alternative voices on immigration.' *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.>

- theguardian.com/theguardian/2013/jul/12/sarah-teather-angry-voices-immigration
- Aliverti, A. (2015). Enlisting the public in the policing of immigration. *The British Journal of Criminology*, 55(2), 215–230.
- Asl, M. P. (2018). Practices of counter-conduct as a mode of resistance in Middle East women’s life writings. *3L: Language, Linguistics, Literature*, 24(2). <http://dx.doi.org/10.17576/3L-2018-2402-15>
- Bagelman, J. (2013). Sanctuary: A politics of ease? *Alternatives*, 38(1), 49–62.
- Barnett, C., & Bhogal, I. (2009). *City of sanctuary: A practical handbook with inspiring case studies*. Ripon: Plug and Tap.
- Bauder, H. (2016). Possibilities of urban belonging. *Antipode*, 48(2), 252–271.
- Bauder, H. (2017). Sanctuary cities: Policies and practices in international perspective. *International Migration*, 55(2), 174–187.
- Bauder, H., & Gonzalez, D. A. (2018). Municipal responses to ‘illegality’: Urban sanctuary across national contexts. *Social Inclusion*, 6(1), 124–134.
- BBC. (2019, January 14). Released asylum seeker returns to city. *BBC News*. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-46861727>
- Bigo, D. (2002). Security and immigration: Toward a critique of the governmentality of unease. *Alternatives*, 27(1), 63–92.
- Bowling, B., & Westenra, S. (2018). ‘A really hostile environment’: Adiaphorization, global policing and the crimmigration control system. *Theoretical Criminology*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362480618774034>
- Bulley, D. (2016). Occupy differently: Space, community and urban counter-conduct. *Global Society*, 30(2), 238–257.
- Çabuk Kaya, N., & Ural, H. (2018). The Gezi resistance of Turkey as young people’s counter-conduct. In S. Pickard & J. Bessant (Eds.), *Young people regenerating politics in times of crises* (pp. 199–215). Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- City of Sanctuary. (2017). *City of sanctuary charter 2017*. Leeds: City of Sanctuary. Retrieved from https://cityofsanctuary.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Charter_Final-updated-Oct-17-pdf-1.pdf
- City of Sanctuary. (2019). *City of sanctuary annual review 2018*. Leeds: City of Sanctuary.
- City of Sanctuary Newsletter. (2019). May Edition Newsletter. *City of Sanctuary*. Retrieved from <https://us10.campaign-archive.com/?u=3914d172a55a65237c1d2fe73&id=54ca14e816>
- Critchley, J. C., & Tremblay, L. J. (2017). Historical review, current status and legal considerations regarding sanctuary cities. *New Jersey Lawyer*, 2017(June), 32–36.
- Darling, J. (2011). Domopolitics, governmentality and the regulation of asylum accommodation. *Political Geography*, 30(5), 263–271.
- Darling, J., Barnett, C., & Eldridge, S. (2010). City of sanctuary: A UK initiative for hospitality. *Forced Migration Review*, 2010(34), 45–47.
- Davidson, A. I. (2011). In praise of counter-conduct. *History of the Human Sciences*, 24(4), 25–41.
- de Martini Ugolotti, N., & Silk, M. (2018). Parkour, counter-conducts and the government of difference in post-industrial Turin. *City*, 22(5/6), 763–781.
- Death, C. (2010). Counter-conducts: A Foucauldian analytics of protest. *Social Movement Studies*, 9(3), 235–251.
- Death, C. (2016). Counter-conducts as a mode of resistance: Ways of “not being like that” in South Africa. *Global Society*, 30(2), 201–217.
- Eurostat. (2018). Asylum statistics. *European Commission*. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics#Age_and_gender_of_first-time_applicants
- Fassin, D. (2011). Policing borders, producing boundaries: The governmentality of immigration in dark times. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 40(1), 213–226.
- Finch, T., & Cherti, M. (2011). *No easy options: Irregular migration to the UK*. London: Institute for Public Policy Research. Retrieved from https://www.ippr.org/files/images/media/files/publication/2011/05/No%20Easy%20Options%20Apr2011_1837.pdf
- Foucault, M. (2000). So, it is important to think (R. Hurley, Trans.)? In J. D. Faubion (Ed.), *Power: Essential works of Foucault 1954–1984* (pp. 454–458). Retrieved from <https://thenewpress.com/books/power>
- Foucault, M. (2007a). *Security, territory, population—Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977–78* (M. Senellart, Ed.; G. Burchell, Trans.). Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Foucault, M. (2007b). What is critique (L. Hochroth & C. Porter, Trans.)? In S. Lotringer (Ed.), *The politics of truth* (pp. 41–81). Los Angeles, CA: Semiotexte.
- Glynne, A. (Producer). (2019). *Rachel’s journey from a country in Eurasia* [Animated documentary]. London: BBC. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00vdxp0>
- Grierson, A., Farrer, M., & Sparrow, J. (2018, April 30). Sajid Javid disowns ‘hostile environment’ phrase in first outing as home secretary—As it happened. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/live/2018/apr/30/theresa-may-new-home-secretary-amber-rudd-quits-politics-live>
- Harvey, D. (2003). The right to the city. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 27(4), 939–941.
- Hintjens, H., & Pouri, A. (2014). Toward cities of safety and sanctuary. *Peace Review*, 26(2), 218–224.
- House of Commons. (2015). The secretary of state for the Home Department (Mrs Theresa May). *House of Commons Hansard*. Retrieved from <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2015-12-01/debates/15120141000002/ImmigrationBill?highlight=immigration%20bill#contribution-15120151001264>

- Immigration Act 2014, c. 22 (2014). Retrieved from <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/22/contents/enacted>
- Immigration Act 2016, c. 19 (2016). Retrieved from <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/19/contents/enacted>
- Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, c. 33 (1999). Retrieved from <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1999/33/contents/enacted>
- Isin, E. F. (2013). Claiming European citizenship. In E. F. Isin & M. Saward (Eds.), *Enacting European citizenship* (pp. 19–47). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kirkup, J. (2012, May 25). Theresa May interview: ‘We’re going to give illegal migrants a really hostile reception.’ *The Telegraph*. Retrieved from <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/immigration/9291483/Theresa-May-interview-Were-going-to-give-illegal-migrants-a-really-hostile-reception.html>
- Kmietowicz, Z. (2018). Doctors protest against ‘hostile environment’ immigration policy spreading to NHS. *British Medical Journal*, 2018(361). <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.k1953>
- Lefebvre, H. (1968). *Le droit à la ville* [The right to the city]. Paris: Economica.
- Lewis, H., Waite, L., & Hodkinson, S. (2017). ‘Hostile’ UK immigration policy and asylum seekers’ susceptibility to forced labour. In F. Vecchio & A. Gerard (Eds.), *Entrapping asylum seekers: Social, legal and economic precariousness* (pp. 187–215). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Malmvig, H. (2014). Free us from power: Governmentality, counter-conduct, and simulation in European democracy and reform promotion in the Arab World. *International Political Sociology*, 8(3), 293–310.
- Menjívar, C. (2014). Immigration law beyond borders: Externalizing and internalizing border controls in an era of securitization. *Annual Review of Law and Social Science*, 10(1), 353–369. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-lawsocsci-110413-030842>
- Miller, C. (2019a, June 16). A homeless refugee-activist’s relentless fight for justice in DRC. *Al Jazeera*. Retrieved from <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/homeless-refugee-activist-relentless-fight-justice-drc-190613103230898.html>
- Miller, C. (2019b, June 20). From Kinshasa to Liverpool: A mother’s painful journey to asylum. *Al Jazeera*. Retrieved from <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/kinshasa-liverpool-mother-painful-journey-asylum-190612085058050.html>
- Molloy, C. (2019). ‘Meet your Neighbour’—Breaking down barriers between local communities and those seeking asylum. *City of Sanctuary*. Retrieved from <https://arts.cityofsanctuary.org/2019/04/03/meet-your-neighbour-breaking-down-barriers-between-local-communities-and-those-seeking-asylum>
- Moore, H. (2013, August 12). Protest politics and the ethical imagination. *OpenDemocracy*. Retrieved from <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/transformation/protest-politics-and-ethical-imagination>
- Mulvey, G. (2011). Immigration under new labour: Policy and effects. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 37(9), 1477–1493.
- Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002, c. 41 (2002). Retrieved from <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/41/contents/enacted>
- Nepomuceno, Í., Affonso, H., Fraser, J. A., & Torres, M. (2019). Counter-conducts and the green grab: Forest peoples’ resistance to industrial resource extraction in the Saracá-Taquera National Forest, Brazilian Amazonia. *Global Environmental Change*, 56, 124–133.
- Odysseos, L., Death, C., & Malmvig, H. (2016). Interrogating Michel Foucault’s counter-conduct: Theorising the subjects and practices of resistance in global politics. *Global Society*, 30(2), 151–156.
- Papademetriou, D. G. P. (2005, September 1). The global struggle with illegal migration: No end in sight. *Migration Policy*. Retrieved from <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/global-struggle-illegal-migration-no-end-sight>
- Price, J. (2014). The hostile environment. In B. Anderson & M. Keith (Eds.), *Migration: A COMPAS anthology* (n.p.). Oxford: COMPAS. Retrieved from http://compasanthology.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Price_COMPASMigrationAnthology.pdf
- Purcell, M. (2002). Excavating Lefebvre: The right to the city and its urban politics of the inhabitant. *GeoJournal*, 58(2/3), 99–108.
- Pyykkönen, M. (2015). Liberalism, governmentality and counter-conduct; An introduction to Foucauldian analytics of liberal civil society notions. *Foucault Studies*, 2015(20), 8–35.
- Rivera, T. (2013). You have to be what you’re talking about: Youth poets, amateur counter-conduct, and Parrhesiastic value in the amateur youth poetry slam. *Performance Research*, 18(2), 114–123.
- Rosol, M. (2014). On resistance in the post-political city: Conduct and counter-conduct in Vancouver. *Space and Polity*, 18(1), 70–84.
- Rossdale, C., & Stierl, M. (2016). Everything is dangerous: Conduct and counter-conduct in the occupy movement. *Global Society*, 30(2), 157–178.
- Saadi, A., & McKee, M. (2018). Hospitals as places of sanctuary. *British Medical Journal*, 2018(361). <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.k2178>
- Salman, S. (2008, June 3). The Sheffield project dispelling misconceptions about asylum seekers and offering support. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2008/jun/04/asylum.support.sheffield>
- Sandelind, C., Woods, K., & Nah, A. (2018, July 12). *What does it mean to be in solidarity with refugees?* [Audio file]. Retrieved from <https://soundcloud.com/user-223351495/what-does-it-mean-to-be-in-solidarity-with-refugees>

- Skinner, J., & Salhab, A. (2019, May 17). How NHS staff are fighting back against the 'hostile environment.' *OpenDemocracy*. Retrieved from <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/ournhs/how-nhs-staff-are-fighting-back-against-the-hostile-environment>
- Squire, V. (2011). From community cohesion to mobile solidarities: The city of sanctuary network and the strangers into citizens campaign. *Political Studies*, 59(2), 290–307.
- Squire, V., & Darling, J. (2013). The “minor” politics of rightful presence: Justice and relationality in city of sanctuary. *International Political Sociology*, 7(1), 59–74.
- Stickley, T., Hui, A., Stubley, M., Baker, F., & Watson, M. C. (2018). “Write here, sanctuary” creative writing for refugees and people seeking asylum. *Arts & Health*, 11(3), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17533015.2018.1494450>
- Sturge, G. (2019). *Asylum statistics* (Briefing Paper No. SN01403). London: House of Commons Library.
- Swerts, T. (2017). Marching beyond borders: Non-citizen citizenship and transnational undocumented activism in Europe. In R. G. Gonzales & N. Sigona, *Within and beyond citizenship: Borders, membership and belonging* (128–139). Abingdon: Taylor & Francis.
- Taylor, R. (2018). *Impact of 'hostile environment' policy*. London: House of Lords Library.
- The Conservative Party. (2015). *The Conservative Party manifesto 2015*. London: Conservative Campaign Headquarters.
- The Independent. (2015, October 6). Theresa May's speech to the Conservative Party Conference—In full. *The Independent*. Retrieved from <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/theresa-may-s-speech-to-the-conservative-party-conference-in-full-a6681901.html>
- Topping, A. (2015, September 6). City of Sanctuary: Bristol rallies to help refugees as aid network swells. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/06/city-of-sanctuary-bristol-rallies-to-help-refugees-as-aid-network-swells>
- Travis, A. (2011, October 10). David Cameron launches immigration crackdown. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2011/oct/10/david-cameron-immigration-crackdown>
- Webber, F. (2004). Asylum—From deterrence to destitution. *Race and Class*, 45(3), 77–85.
- Webber, F. (2018). How refugee and migrant solidarity groups are confronting the hostile environment. *Institute of Race Relations*. Retrieved from <http://www.irr.org.uk/news/how-refugee-and-migrant-solidarity-groups-are-confronting-the-hostile-environment>
- Webber, F. (2019). On the creation of the UK's 'hostile environment.' *Race & Class*, 60(4), 76–87.
- Weisz, A. (2018). *Preventative or performative? Assessing the role and intention of the UK's 'hostile environment' since 2010* (Unpublished Doctoral dissertation). Faculty of Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Columbia University, New York, USA.
- York, S. (2015). Revisiting removability in the hostile environment. *Birkbeck Law Review*, 3(2), 227–257.
- Yuval-Davis, N., Wemyss, G., & Cassidy, K. (2018). Everyday bordering, belonging and the reorientation of British immigration legislation. *Sociology*, 52(2), 228–244.

About the Author



Cathy A. Wilcock is currently a Postdoctoral Researcher at the International Institute of Social Studies where she contributes to the Vital Cities and Citizens Programme within the Migration and Diversity stream. Here, she expands on her PhD which she received from The Global Development Institute at the University of Manchester through focusing on migration, citizenship and political subjectivities. Her main regional focus is on Sudan and the Sudanese diaspora in Europe, but she is also interested in the UK and EU asylum and immigration policy environments.

Article

Diasporic Civic Agency and Participation: Inclusive Policy-Making and Common Solutions in a Dutch Municipality

Antony Otieno Ong'ayo

ISS–International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University Rotterdam, 2518 AX The Hague, The Netherlands;
E-Mail: ongayo@iss.nl

Submitted: 27 July 2019 | Accepted: 21 October 2019 | Published: 28 November 2019

Abstract

With a growing presence in The Hague municipality, the sub-Saharan African diasporas like other minority groups face challenges related to integration, participation, representation, and social exclusion. The majority still find difficulties with the Dutch language, with access to education, the labour market, and public services. These concerns also inform initiatives by the municipality in search of joint solutions through citizen participation with the African diasporas. Equally, African diasporas engage in formal and informal initiatives targeting decision-maker in The Hague, seeking to reverse their sense of vulnerability and social exclusion in the city. Using data gathered through ethnographic fieldwork in The Hague from 2015 to 2017, this article examines how African diaspora organisations have sought to exercise their civic agency and to influence policy-making to become more inclusive, by proposing common solutions and collective initiatives. The aim is to understand how diaspora collective initiatives are informed by notions of civic agency, and how prospects can be generated for diasporas to secure the 'right to have rights' and ensure that the host municipality addresses concerns related to the diasporas' exclusion. The concept of civic agency is also used to analyse dynamics influencing diasporic activities, the broader context of diaspora engagement, and some likely socio-political outcomes. I argue that collective diasporic initiatives are broadly aimed at ensuring more inclusive policy-making and that solutions are an expression of diasporic people's collective energy and imagination. These collective initiatives demonstrate the significance of enacted citizenship in challenging broader conditions of social and economic exclusion that the African diasporas face in host municipalities like The Hague.

Keywords

citizenship; civic agency; collective initiatives; diaspora engagement; inclusive policy-making; The Hague

Issue

This article is part of the issue "Inclusion through Enacted Citizenship in Urban Spaces" edited by Rachel Kurian (Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands) and Helen Hintjens (Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands).

© 2019 by the author; licensee Cogitatio (Lisbon, Portugal). This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

1. Introduction

With an increasingly multicultural population generated by international migration, municipalities in most European Union member states are confronted with the implications of what has been termed 'super diversity' (see Vertovec, 2007), requiring greater responsiveness to the socio-economic and cultural needs of a range of ethnic minority populations (see Scholten & Holzacker, 2009). Equally, diasporas face challenges with their own integration and participation, and seek to influence policy priorities and the choices of host coun-

try governments, including municipal government. Some challenges faced by diasporas include legal rights for different categories of migrants, social exclusion, and possible lack of recognition of their group as deserving of particular policy attention. In the Dutch context, minority groups tend to feature as actors in integration and participation policies in relation to their size or perceptions of the specific group as 'problematic.' Examples include large minorities with a history of Dutch colonisation, like the Surinamese and Antilleans who immigrated from the 1980s (Rath, 1999) and Turkish and Moroccans, large groups who arrived from the 1960s on-

wards (Bosma, 2012). Sub-Saharan Africans, estimated as 241,644 people in the Netherlands in 2018 (Central Bureau of Statistics [CBS], 2019) remain less visible in policy prioritisation than these other groups of migrants. Most Sub-Sahara African diasporas arrived in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Many were refugees driven by conflicts and authoritarian regimes; others were migrant workers. Many later arrivals came for higher studies, for family reunification, or to escape poor economic conditions in their home countries (Ong'ayo, 2019).

In this article, the term diaspora is used as a descriptive and analytical category (Sheffer, 2003) to understand the self-identification by “ethnic minority groups of migrant origin residing in host countries” (Vertovec, 1999, p. 1). This self-identification linked to multiple identities and layers of belonging is influenced by ties to the countries of origin and diaspora experiences in countries of residence where members of the diaspora have either acquired or seek to acquire legal residency and sometimes citizenship. The citizenship question is central to understanding how diasporas relate to host municipalities, and the rights they can exercise collectively as actors, individually, and through their organisations. Shared experiences and shared diasporic identities can be tools for mobilisation, and diasporic self-identification intersects with citizenship status, both being central to understanding the nature of diasporas’ engagement with host country institution and policy makers in pursuit of common goals.

Citizenship, whether bound to the nation-state or de-nationalised and deterritorialised, as transnational, remains highly contested (Bauböck, 2006). In this article, I adopt a plural conception of citizenship to account for new categories of citizenship and belonging that seem to be emerging (Wotherspoon, 2018). This approach draws on Bauböck’s (2018, p. 9) description of democratic pluralism as having two sides, involving both an “internal plurality of interests, identities and political, moral and religious ideas and [an] external plurality of political communities.” A pluralist theory of citizenship as espoused by Bauböck (2018) succinctly captures the reality of diasporas’ cross-border connections that tend to inform their construction of identity and the extension of their sense of belonging beyond a single nation state. The pluralist theory also acknowledges diasporas’ multiple layers of belonging, attachments, and loyalties within the countries of residence and origin and how these impact on their citizenship and rights. Despite these multiple identities and layers of belonging, research on diasporas suggests they remain strongly connected to their host cities, which many consider ‘home’ alongside their original ‘homeland’ (Blunt & Bonnerjee, 2013, p. 221). For this reason, different forms of citizenship or denial of citizenship rights will affect diaspora participation in relation to how they negotiate the terms of their inclusion and exclusion when it comes to the ‘right to have rights’ in the first place. In relation to situations where citizenship is bounded by formal membership of a

state, rights enjoyed within a democratic polity can provide the openings needed for diasporic self-organising and collective action, aimed at making collective claims and influencing policies that affect the diaspora. In the case of the sub-Saharan African diasporas in The Hague, their collective organising is mainly geared towards addressing challenges around legal status, family reunion, Dutch language skills for newcomers and old timers, access to education and labour markets, and access to essential public services. For the African diasporas, self-organising through informal interventions has provided crucial platforms for securing their rights and having their interests heard. Using their civic agency, these diasporas have sought to link their own initiatives with more formal processes initiated by The Hague municipal institutions, in order to secure their rights, both as residents and citizens.

This article addresses a central question, namely to what extent collective initiatives by Sub-Saharan African diasporic groups in The Hague can promote more inclusive policy-making capable of addressing some of the key challenges facing these communities as well as the municipality. Even though most of these diasporic collective initiatives are informal, they offer useful models for thinking of more inclusive ways of addressing contemporary challenges posed by international migration and ‘super-diverse’ cities in host countries like the Netherlands. The article is based on fieldwork undertaken from 2015 to 2017 in The Hague, a city that profiles itself as an international city and the city of ‘Justice and Peace.’ Around one quarter of the city’s population is composed of persons of migrant background, half of these ‘non-Western’ migrants. Sub-Sahara African diasporas are a vibrant part of the associational life and have their own formal organisations, and yet remain largely invisible in policies targeting minority groups in general. Data for this article was collected through semi-structured interviews with 15 leaders of sub-Saharan African diaspora organisations, Dutch NGOs, and municipal departments involved with implementation of integration and participation policies in The Hague. It also drew on focus group discussions and participant observations during three diaspora community consultation events and three expert meetings involving representative of diaspora organisations, all held in The Hague. Especial attention is paid to the evidence from the three expert meetings, which illustrated how diasporic policy entrepreneurs enact their citizenship and deploy their civic agency when engaging policy makers from the host municipality. The first event, an expert consultation meeting held on August 4, 2017, was attended by some twenty representatives of different sub-Saharan diasporic organisations. The second meeting was attended by 21 people representing 20 organisations and 10 countries, and took place on August 24, 2017. The third event, an expert meeting held on September 27, 2017, also brought together African diaspora organisations, this time together with Dutch NGOs, policy officers from

the municipality and representatives of the Ministry of Social Affairs. Total attendance was 57 people representing 23 organisations and 12 countries. Notes on these meetings were augmented by a review of policy documents from the various relevant institutions.

The research asked whether diaspora collective initiatives in joint policy-making can offer useful models for more inclusive ways of addressing challenges of social exclusion facing diasporas. It also focused on how diasporas respond to a constantly shifting political and policy environment, and the impact of municipal policy choices on how Sub-Sahara African diasporic communities organise and engage influence the policy agenda. For policy-makers and Dutch NGOs working with diaspora communities, their main concerns were how to design their own policies and activities targeting diasporic communities and how to anticipate political and policy shifts, in a context of a high degree of fragmentation among diasporic groups. What kind of policy frameworks would enable policy-makers to access minority groups, whose informal initiatives could play a significant role in the realization of integration and participation, a priority for NGOs and the municipality? The study used narrative analysis (Riessman, 1993) to give an account of identity constructions and claims made by African diasporic actors. By “turning narratives into an analytical causal explanation” (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 211), insights were gained into how diasporic community leaders and policy makers described their visions towards engagement with one other. Participants’ narratives during consultation and expert meetings were important for understanding perceptions and meanings attached to various experiences and to imagined solutions. The analysis focused on the interactional context to understand the underlying power dynamics, relations of trust and agenda-setting in claimed or created spaces. To some extent, a sense of the agency of diasporic actors, or their lack of agency, emerged from how participants engaged with one another.

After this introduction, the second section examines some characteristics of Sub-Sahara African diasporas in The Hague municipality and their experiences with various integration and participation policies in the past.

The third section introduces conceptual reflections on the kinds of civic agency that drive sub-Saharan African diasporic collection action in this setting. The fourth section illustrates how collective diasporic initiatives by these groups attempt to negotiate more inclusive policy-making with The Hague municipality, and thus to find mutually agreed solutions to diasporic problems. The fifth section revisits notions of inclusive policy-making through the lens of civic agency to reflect on how sub-Saharan African diasporas in The Hague enact rights to social inclusion. I conclude by reflecting on citizenship rights, social inclusion, and the role of diasporic agency in these processes.

2. Sub-Saharan African Communities in The Hague: Characteristics, Experiences, Civic Agency

As mentioned earlier, sub-Saharan Africans remain one of the less visible minority groups in The Hague municipality when it comes to their formal participation in integration policies and programmes. According the Dutch CBS (2019), there were 49,987 Sub-Saharan Africans in The Hague municipality in 2018, which accounts for almost 10% of the total population (see Table 1). This makes up 9% of the population (CBS, 2019), while the second generation as shown in Table 1 constitute almost half of the Sub-Sahara African diasporas in The Hague (CBS, 2019). The Sub-Sahara African community is diverse and composed of persons from different countries and sub-groups from same country and have different immigration and integration histories and experiences.

Besides the expatriates and diplomats, in The Hague most Sub-Sahara Africans are persons that moved to the Netherlands because of conflict and political repression from countries like Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda. In contrast with this, most Ghanaians, South Africans, Nigerians, Guineans, Cameroonians, and Kenyans fall broadly within the category of economic migrants, assumed to be largely voluntary, having arrived for further studies, for international jobs, and for family reunification. Even within single nationality groups, the diversity of status of Sub-

Table 1. Population backgrounds in The Hague municipality, 2010–2018. Source: CBS (2019).

Categories	2010		2018	
	All	Second generation	All	Second generation
Total	488,553	95,164	532,561	115,293
Dutch	253,860		246,633	
Migration background*	234,693	95,164	285,928	115,293
Non-western migration background*	16,945	65,045	189,541	80,304
Sub-Sahara Africa	41,938	18,691	49,987	24,450

Notes: * Terms derived from the definitions by the Dutch CBS, linked to categorisation based on the national origins of citizens. These categories are often used alongside the construct of allochthone used in reference to “repatriates (Indonesians), Ambonese (Malukans), Surinamese, Antillians, labour migrants (mostly Turkish and Moroccan), Chinese, refugees, students from the ‘Third World’ (mostly African and Asian countries)” (van Schie, 2018, pp. 78–79).

Saharan African communities represents a considerable challenge both for the diasporas and for those policy-makers who might wish for more inclusive forms of diasporic engagement with, and representation in, municipal affairs. Conversely, the vibrant associational life among Sub-Saharan Africans has led to various kinds of collective organizing across various social policy domains such as civic integration, health, education, culture, labour market participation and housing. Even so, direct engagement between Sub-Saharan African diasporic organisations and The Hague municipality remains quite limited, leaving these diasporic groups in a relatively disadvantaged position when it comes to accessing municipal policy-making processes and subsidies, for example.

It is perhaps instructive to examine how such diasporic groups seek to negotiate their space for participation in the context of increasingly assimilationist and restrictive immigration and integration discourses and policies in the Netherlands (Scholten & Holzacker, 2009). Cut-backs on subsidies tend to impact vulnerable diasporic communities since such policies reproduce exclusionary obstacles to a more generalised 'right to have rights' in the urban context (see Hintjens & Kurian, 2019). The problem is especially acute among Sub-Saharan Africans who are undocumented, such as rejected asylum seekers and the homeless. Through the prism of citizenship, integration, and participation, it is useful to assess their status, how and they perform in Dutch language, in the labour market, and in other forms of urban citizen participation.

At the associational level, Sub-Saharan Africans in The Hague face material challenges of accessing community resources and working capital to fund their entrepreneurial initiatives. These social conditions inform several collective initiatives of the diasporas (their politics of action) and how they target their various needs (especially their politics of livelihoods; see Biekart & Fowler, 2012; Fowler, 2009). As one participant at the consultation meetings later observed:

Initiatives by the African diaspora organisations in The Hague already contribute to the well-being of their members but also contribute to the realisation of [the] municipality's policy goals....This role became critical with the arrival of newcomers during the recent refugee crisis. (Chairperson Eritrean Community, Personal communication, August 2, 2017)

One problem is the absence of an institutionalised diaspora engagement strategy that has compounded many of the challenges Sub-Saharan African diasporas face in their integration in The Hague. The hope remains that by meeting with wider stakeholders involved in integration, in participation, and in culture and social cohesion-related policy fields, diasporic organisations can start to develop their own civic energy and professionalism, so they can also become more effectively engaged in dialogue with municipal-level policy-makers.

3. Conceptual Reflections

3.1. *Diaspora Engagement*

The Hague municipality has come under intense pressure to find solutions to these challenges through urban transformation in response to rising and complex international migration, and increased multiculturalism within the city (Duyvendak, Hendriks, & van Niekerk, 2009). As the literature on diaspora engagement (Gamlen, 2008), makes clear, the onus is on initiatives by governments to reach out to diasporas. Whilst official policies acknowledge the value of remittances, they often lack clarity about how diasporas can become more involved in policy processes, finding common solutions to their own challenges by being formally invited to take part in civic engagement with the municipal authorities. A narrow definition of diaspora engagement denotes: "government overtures to diaspora communities through policy measures that establish formal channels for contacting and involving diaspora organisations in policy processes" (Ong'ayo, 2019, p. 77). Beyond the formal channels, however, the host society needs an understanding of what Francis Nyamnjoh (2012) refers to as the "conviviality" of diaspora groups. Those with different social, cultural, or political orientations co-exist (or 'convive') with each other, whilst realising their interdependence. Within sub-Saharan African diasporic communities such conviviality is largely informal. Yet through civic agency, even informal diaspora groupings collectively are demanding space to engage in policy deliberations and influence policy formulation (Gaventa, 2006). This leads us to a wider definition of diaspora engagement, that refers to both "the formal and informal interactions between diaspora organisations and policy-makers and key actors in within institutions and organisations involved in migrant-related policy fields" (Gaventa, 2006).

The proper role of diaspora participation in integration processes has become a major policy debate in the Netherlands in the past couple of decades (Penninx & van Heelsum, 2004), with a heavy emphasis on migrants' own responsibility in the integration process. Other factors can be just as critical for diasporic integration and participation, beyond their own motivations and aspirations, such as their legal status and residency rights, the openness or restrictions of the national and urban policy environment, the labour market, social welfare entitlements, and wider socio-economic conditions (Ong'ayo, 2019). These conditions are obviously connected with questions of citizenship and belonging, and touch on law and rights, including the right to political and civic participation (Bauböck, 2006; Bloemraad, Korteweg, & Yurdakul, 2008). Enactment of citizenship by diasporic organisation usually has social, economic, and cultural dimensions (Isin, 2013, 2017), and at municipal level involves diasporas engaging in collective organising to secure and defend their social and other urban policies that affect them. Whilst it is the agency of diasporic

groups that shapes their engagement with municipal institutions and their participation in various urban public spaces, civic agency requires the municipality to be open to such initiatives of engagement by diasporas.

3.2. Civic Agency

The ability of diasporas to engage with policy-makers at different levels is a reflection of their degree of agency and of how they enact both individual and collective strategies to improve their own precarious living conditions. By adopting a civic agency perspective on change (see Biekart & Fowler, 2012; Fowler, 2009), we focus on the strategies of the diaspora without losing sight of the responsibilities of municipalities like The Hague (Bakewell, 2010). Ultimately, civic agency can be described as the driving force that originates in “people’s energy and imagination,” in the diaspora but also in the municipality (Biekart & Fowler, 2012, p. 181).

The concept of agency as used in diaspora studies is very broad, involving “the meanings held and practices conducted by social actors” (Vertovec, 1997, p. 24). In the case of the diasporas, they attach various values and meanings to collective actions both in the country of residence and in the country of origin (see Ong’ayo, 2019; Vertovec, 1997). Drawing on Vertovec’s view, agency can be used to characterize the ability of diasporas to construct and reconstruct narratives around identity and create spaces for negotiations about the various aspects of diasporic experiences (Ong’ayo, 2019). Examples include narratives about belonging, demands for space and recognition, decision-making around migration policies, engagement in collective organising, and cooperation with government institutions around socio-economic and political challenges that diasporic groups encounter (Ong’ayo, 2019).

As described by Biekart and Fowler (2012, p. 182) civic agency is a “type of action that involves two core values: a concern for the whole—at whatever scale is appropriate—and respect for the many differences between people and groups that a society contains.” Applied to diaspora collective organising, a civic agency lens points to the importance of understanding change beyond what Biekart and Fowler call the ‘excluding view’ of socio-political processes confined by a ‘sector’ concept of (civil) society as limited to a ‘citizen view’ among others (Biekart & Fowler, 2012, p. 181). Drawing on the

described principles of civic agency, diaspora collective organising as part of civil society initiatives demonstrate the enactment of citizenship through demands of space for their voices and to participate in the new society. They aim to engage The Hague municipality to help address their social exclusion, subverting hierarchies of citizenship and belonging, and to secure the ‘right to have rights.’

4. Diaspora Collective Action: Cooperation with the Municipality

In the Dutch context, immigrant integration and participation policies derive from national integration policies and from specific experiences in ‘model’ municipalities. Diasporas respond to these policies by cooperating with the municipalities through a mix of top-down, bottom-up, and iterative approaches. At the municipal level, there are policies that have direct links to the status of the diasporas, their organisations, and interests (see Box 1). The main policy fields—such as youth, health, employment, and investment require civic integration and participation. Moreover, they should embrace the principle of diversity, which aims to secure “involvement of different groups and includes emancipation, inclusion and social cohesion” among its goals (Ong’ayo, 2019, p. 153).

Sub-Saharan African diasporas seek to address the problems they face through collective organising. Box 1 highlights some of these problems, including access to public services such as health for refugees, youth and education for newcomers, and non-recognition of qualifications from countries of origin, which denies many old timers the opportunity to access the labour market. Others find it difficult to access public utilities such as sports facilities, especially the newly arrived refugees with limited language skills, or undocumented people who are unable to obtain the ID card required to access municipal sports centres and swimming pools. Vulnerabilities generated by these requirements can lead to informal arrangements to address emergencies, such as health emergencies, extreme poverty and homelessness, legal problems, or educational exclusions. Municipal departments do provide some of these services. However, some diasporic groups may lack not information as such, but familiarity with Dutch institutional and policy environments where the relevant services can be accessed.

Box 1. Policy areas of interest to the African diaspora communities and organisations. Source: Adapted from Ong’ayo (2019).

- Youth, youth health, education, and internships;
- Health care and elderly care;
- Labour market participation (newcomers and highly educated people with language deficits);
- Integration of newcomers (new asylum seekers);
- Multicultural exchange;
- Exchange of information about investment opportunities in the countries of origin.

From a policy-making perspective, the Dutch liberal democratic political system is sufficiently decentralised to provide an overall environment in which non-state actors can engage in the policy process to some extent (Norglo, Goris, Lie, & Ong'ayo, 2016; Ong'ayo, 2019). At municipal level, residents and citizens have opportunities to place issue on the municipality's policy agenda through their own initiative (either individually or collectively). As part of the general public—and as consulted minorities—diasporas can thus take part in influencing municipal decision-making processes through referenda, hearings, council committee meetings, and public meetings in which the municipal staff explain their plans and invite feedback (Ong'ayo, 2019, p. 69).

The African community and diaspora organisations in The Hague opted for a broad form of civic engagement based on the priority of social inclusion (Wotherspoon, 2018). An illustration of this is their project entitled "African Community—Dialogue and Cooperation with the Municipality." This project sought to bring different African diaspora communities together in one inclusive platform, preserving their diversity whilst emphasising their common points and strengths. The strategy has been to act jointly in their dialogue with The Hague municipality, so as to have a common voice on policies affecting all African diasporas, across nationalities, citizenship status, and migration experiences. Such recognition of common ground, in diversity, underscores how diasporic civic agency has drawn from the cumulative energy, imagination, and creativity generated by a common diaspora platform in the city.

As pointed out by one community leader, "lack of support for the African community is an obstacle to their active participation and contribution to the Dutch society" (Chairperson Kumasi Youth Association, Personal communication, The Hague, June 26, 2015). Unfortunately, in recent years, municipal support for consultations of this kind has dwindled as austerity measures cut into local social programmes in The Hague. Diasporic organisations that have relied on subsidies have had to cut their services to members, whilst African diasporas remain largely invisible under current diversity policy.

The Sub-Saharan African diaspora organisations often focus on those members of the community that may be the most difficult for municipal interventions to reach. This important bridging role complements services organized formally through the municipality, and for The Hague municipality, it is vital to understand how diasporic organizations work with members and clients, informally as well as formally. This could make the municipality more aware of the kinds of challenges diaspora organisations face in their respective communities (Policy adviser, Department of Education, Culture and Welfare [OCW], Personal communication, The Hague, January 30, 2017). By the same token, it is just as important for sub-Saharan African diaspora organisations in The Hague to gain insights into the objectives and working methods of their municipality.

Following agreement on the significant role a common position could play in influencing the municipal policy agenda, the African Community Initiative Group in The Hague brought various African communities together under one single platform. Several meetings were organized to explore the possibility of using this platform to enable diasporic African actors and organisations to identify common problems. They could then work in collaboration with municipal departments and institutions on finding common solutions. The process was facilitated by the Participation Emancipation Professionals programme of the municipality in 2015, and went parallel to outreach initiatives within the community. These 'expert meetings' became strategic response to diaspora fragmentation. The term 'expert' was chosen to address contestations about the expertise, skills, and experiences within the community and the donor narratives about capacity building. As noted by a community leader from the Kenyan community:

If we want to be taken seriously and change perceptions about migrants in terms of capabilities, we must do things differently....It is about seeking own solutions with external support as complimentary....We organise these activities based on our strengths including experience, knowledge, and expertise in many fields. (Focus Group Discussion, August 4, 2017)

During an expert consultation meeting on August 4, 2017, Sub-Saharan African community leaders in The Hague discussed challenges experienced by different organisations (see Table 2). The consultation meeting focused on mapping themes, activities, and challenges facing organisations and communities where they work. The exchanges during this meeting sought to find convergences and commonalities that will serve as a basis for a joint platform. This meeting dealt with perceptions, meaning and real experiences, the diversity and fragmentation question as challenges to joint diaspora initiatives and a common stand when engaging with policy makers. The outcome of the consultation process led to a proposal for a pre-expert meeting targeting more than 40 organisations within the Sub-Saharan African diaspora community in The Hague to continue with the exchange sharing of experiences about their respective challenges, opportunities and solutions. This suggestion was based on practical experiences, knowledge of the political, policy, and institutional context by leaders from various country of origin communities. As outlined in Table 2, the pre-expert meeting as a broad consultation process had specific objectives that recognise the diversity of interests and challenges within the diaspora communities.

The pre-expert meeting on August 24, 2017, as a platform can be argued to have served as a created space for collective enactment of citizenship and securing of rights. This can be noted in the framework for engagement and participation, interaction with policy-makers on jointly agreed terms, jointly identified issues of impor-

Table 2. Objectives of consultative meetings. Source: Focus Group Discussions, August 4 and 24, and September 21, 2017.

<i>Expert consultation meeting: August 4, 2017</i>	<i>Pre-expert meeting: August 24, 2017</i>	<i>Expert meeting: September 21, 2017</i>
1. Mapping out challenges facing the wider community (individuals and organisations), through sharing experiences and exchange of information;	1. Bringing together the different African communities in The Hague in a collective platform to connect with policymakers and relevant institutions within the municipality;	1. Policy-makers in the municipality to directly acquaint themselves with important organisations and players from the African community;
2. Seeking a common understanding on issues that affect the wider community;	2. Establish a framework for addressing challenges within the African community and municipality;	2. Share knowledge about how different African organisations address problems within their communities;
3. Reaching out to more organisations for adequate representation and inclusivity;	3. Establish a framework for exchange between diaspora organisations;	3. Identify successful initiatives and explore possibilities for scaling up;
4. Giving mandate to a leadership that facilitates the platform and present a proposal to the municipality.	4. Explore how to harness existing potentials within the African community.	4. Exchange ideas on how informal diaspora initiatives can be validated and linked to formal processes.

tance to both parties, and recognition of the added-value and policy relevance of diaspora initiatives. However, for the realisation of such broad objectives, a mechanism for gathering information and building consensus within the community while taking on a strategic approach to dealing with the policy environment is required.

The expert meeting held on September 21, 2017 (see Box 2), served as a space for experience sharing and seeking common solutions. Conducted within a created space, the meeting was diaspora-led in terms of agenda setting and programme implementation. For example, participants comprised of the representatives of African diaspora organisations, welfare organisations, policy-makers in the municipality, and the ministry of social affairs engaged in facilitated discussions, presentation of case studies, small group discussions, and plenary sessions. This contrasts with participation in invited spaces where input in such processes are limited to select speakers.

Guided by the themes outlined in Box 2, participants did an exercise of mapping and matching of actors on the basis of their concrete activities which were visualised through PowerPoint presentations. They also examined the conditions under which diasporas function and their relationship with policy-makers. These

thematic areas reflect the need for a deep understanding of the policy environment and politics that inform policy choices and effects on diaspora involvement in policy-making. Given the issues in Box 2, the success of diaspora initiatives is challenged by invisibility in policy considerations. The professionalism of diaspora organisations is not always fully recognised (Chairperson Foundation Women Initiative Network, Personal communication, September 21, 2017). This applies to experiences of the diaspora collective initiatives outside the formal processes as crucial for finding commonalities and convergences of interests and policy relevance of diaspora activities.

Validation of informal practices is relatively rare. Thus, within the diaspora communities, it is common practice to informally support new members in the integration process, on a voluntary basis (Penninx & van Heelsum, 2004) as well as during emergencies involving social welfare, health, or finances (Ong'ayo, 2019). Most of this work is done by volunteers who often work alongside their diasporic engagement. Thus, one interviewee explained:

Many practical matters must be arranged often at night, past official working hours in institutions, with

Box 2. Expert meeting, September 21, 2017: Exchange, reflections, recognition, validation, and possible solutions. Source: Focus Group Discussion, September 21, 2017.

- Interface with the government;
- Professionalization and institutionalization;
- Validation of informal practices;
- Planning, resources and accountability;
- Data and information;
- Image and public relations;
- Lobbying and advocacy.

many additional expenses....It is difficult for diaspora organisations to include these activities in their planning and budgeting....Volunteers are left with the feeling of not being recognized, yet such activities complement institutions working with newcomers. (Chairperson Stichting GobeZ, Personal communication, September 21, 2017)

These initiatives highlight the importance of diaspora organisations in addressing issues around integration, representation, and livelihood questions linked to exclusion. This practical and timely assistance to refugee families, to those with housing problems, to those needing care or hospital treatment, and to those faced with bereavement, is often not costed for and less recognised as labour to be compensated.

5. Diaspora Engagement: Inclusive Policy-Making amidst Unequal Power Relations

Sub-Sahara African diasporas in The Hague acknowledge the complex political and policy environment in which they function, hence they resort to collective initiatives that target joint solutions involving major stakeholders. The shift towards joint solutions emanates from recognised competing interests of many policy entrepreneurs in policy processes (Kingdon, 2014). It also relates to the Dutch government's policy changes from focus on specific groups towards diversity. As noted by one respondent:

Policy-makers are confronted with the challenge of making policy that only fits the needs of specific groups....Collective initiatives focusing on inclusivity contribute to our cause and we want this model for improving the integration of African diasporas in The Hague. (Policy Officer Integration, OCW, Personal communication, April 24, 2016)

Because of the devolved system of governance and decision-making, municipalities in the Netherlands can address needs of citizens based on context-specific realities (see Kos, Maussen, & Doomernik, 2016). This policy space as part of the local political opportunity structures (Ong'ayo, 2019) enables diasporas to develop working relations with policy-makers. Equally, decentralised decision-making and policy implementation allows diaspora organisations as part of the civil society to get involved in the co-implementation of social policies in the municipalities (Ong'ayo, 2019, p. 153).

Initiatives by Sub-Sahara African diaspora organisations in The Hague demonstrate how diasporas make use of political opportunity structures and policy windows to influence policy in different policy spaces. This include participation in invited spaces (Cornwall, 2002) where diasporas contribute in government-organised policy consultation processes and in claimed and/or created spaces (Gaventa, 2006) where diasporas present their concerns

to policy-makers during self-organised events. Diasporas and policy-makers acknowledge the importance of legitimacy derived from the inclusive orientation of activities which fits with municipal's diversity policy. As reiterated by a policy advisor in The Hague municipality:

In our experience with migrant groups, we prefer to work with formations that are more inclusive in their structures and activity focus....This is essential for addressing the challenge of diaspora fragmentation during policy consultations that require group representation. (Policy Advisor Integration, OCW, Personal communication, April 24, 2016).

Deliberations during the diaspora-organised expert meeting on September 21, 2017, for instance, demonstrate that interactions and exchanges between diaspora leaders and policy-makers lead to recognition and validation. This iterates observations that claimed or created spaces by the diasporas through bottom-up and iterative initiatives can create policy windows for influencing agenda setting (see Kingdon, 2014; Ong'ayo, 2019).

Sub-Sahara African diaspora organisations in The Hague municipality make use of both invited and claimed spaces to influence policy, but their ability to do so depends on how they deploy their agency to maximise on the existing political opportunity structures and policy windows created through overtures by policy makers or their self-organising. Underlying this self-organising is the policy environment in which the diasporas function and seek to influence. Access to policy spaces whether invited or claimed face challenges with regards to contestation about representation, interests of groups and policy makers. The policy environment in which the Sub-Sahara African diaspora organisations operate in The Hague is comprised of a variety of actors (state and non-state) and policy entrepreneurs with diverse interests. These interests affect recognition and invitation, modes of operation and access, representation and participation, and the kind of influence a group can have.

The complexity about participation of Sub-Sahara African diaspora organisations in policy processes in The Hague municipality stem from their heterogeneity even though Sub-Sahara Africa or African community are terms used for mobilisation and engagement with policy makers. There is no African community but still, (Sub-Sahara) Africa as an identity becomes a tool for mobilisation in relation and competition to other migrant groups with large and long presence in The Hague municipality such as the Surinamese, Turks, and Moroccans. The various Sub-Sahara African communities represented in the platform and joint initiatives are in themselves diverse and fragmented on the basis of cleavages such as ethnicity, religion, regionalism, and political affiliations (in the country of origin and in the Netherlands), organisational categories (Umbrella organisations, Hometown associations or Migrant Development NGOs; see Ong'ayo, 2019). This diversity and fragmentation generate contes-

tations about value and meanings attached to issues presented to policy makers in terms of their relevance and importance but also on the questions of representation and legitimacy.

Power struggles round representation and inclusion linked to diversity is a challenge to the unity of diasporas and presentation of a common position. This is more challenging in the context of the shift from the more multiculturalist policies that subsidized ethnic organizations to the diversity policy which gives focus to initiatives that reach out many groups within the neighbourhoods and not specific communities (see Hoekstra, 2018; Ong'ayo, 2019). A recognition of these realities linked to past failures to make impact during policy consultations, informs the approach of a board consultative meeting guided by the principles of transparent conversations about interests, acceptance of plurality of world views informed by different experiences. Nonetheless, a likely, persistent challenge to this approach is the subsidy logic, which continues to capture the imagination of many diaspora organisations since they have not made the shift in line with new funding realities, namely reduction in funding for integration programmes and migrant activities and the overall shift toward diversity policy that focuses of inclusivity of initiatives.

Additional area of contestation around diaspora engagement and participation in policy processes also relate the interactions between diaspora and policy makers. Drawing on the observations made during the expert meeting on September 21, 2017, it can be argued that the interactions between diaspora actors and policy makers, constitute a constellation of different dimensions of power relations both in invited and claimed or created spaces. First, it relates to agenda a setting. In the invited spaces at the municipal level, the agenda of the meetings are often set in advance by policy makers as informed by the policy priority fields and politics of the day within the municipality. In such cases, the diasporas have less leverage even though their participation is based on recognition of the added-value of their initiatives within the community to policy goals. This is in contrast to consultations within the framework of Citizen Initiative (*Burgerininitiatief*) forums where diaspora officials present their views on problems, challenges and opportunities, which they seek to address with support from the municipal institutions (see Ong'ayo, 2019).

Second, the power relations between diaspora organisation and policy makers remains fluid in the sense that the two actors need each other. Due to the complementary nature of diaspora initiatives to the institu-

tional efforts especially the interventions that target the needs of hard to reach groups, diaspora organisations have some strength in their relative weak position in relation to policy makers. Likewise, the power wielded by policy makers in terms of funds given to diaspora organisations and other welfare organisations might not be in question, but international migration brings together both global and local social process that generate challenges linked to urban transformation and multiculturalism in the municipalities (Duyvendak et al., 2009). These social dynamics require alternative forms of intervention that find resonance with diaspora collective initiatives. The expert meetings organised by the Sub-Sahara African diaspora organisations therefore demonstrate how diasporas strategically apply their agency by inviting policy makers from relevant institutions to participate in their own events in order to undertake lobbying and advocacy at a collective level (see Ong'ayo, 2019).

The recommendations made during the expert meeting of September 21, 2017 (Box 3) are an acknowledgement that diaspora initiatives take place in spaces shaped by complex institutional and policy frameworks. This complexity compels the diasporas to reorganize and seek contact with policy-makers in their own space. Such initiatives and process are largely influenced by civic agency of the diasporas, how they enact their citizenship, pursue the 'right to have rights,' and address situations of social exclusion.

The spaces created by diaspora organisations seem to be useful from a strategic point of view in terms of agenda setting and steering the deliberation processes, interactions within these created spaces goes hand in hand with the nature of the framework for engagement (scope, mandate, and legitimacy), process, presentation, and language. Linked these observations, the dynamics during the expert meeting of September 21, 2017, reveal that diasporas, have to learn the policy language to be able to put forward their concerns for consideration in the policy and perform in a professional manner to change perceptions about their competence, skills, and knowledge. Because of the informal nature of most diaspora initiatives, limited knowledge about these activities and non-recognition in the policy parlance obscure opportunities for recognition and validation of diaspora activities. These dynamics constitute an aspect of power relations concerning positionality (recipient and giver) and the knowledge that informs the design and production of policy and subsequent interventions on matters affecting diaspora communities. For instance, the prevailing perceptions about the limitations of these informal ini-

Box 3. Joint policy-making: Mapping diaspora and policy concerns. Source: Focus Group Discussion, September 21, 2017.

- Joint analysis of problems, target groups, and solutions;
- Overview of themes and actors, convergences, strengths, and weaknesses;
- Recognition, validation, visibility, policy relevance, and social value of diaspora initiatives;
- Resources for strengthening and scaling-up initiatives.

tatives from a policy point of view, inform the nature of relationship, and interactions between the diasporas policy makers and limited openness to creative solutions developed from within the diaspora communities. In this regard, translation of the ideas of the diaspora into relevant and recognisable policy proposals constitute an area of power relation and challenge in diaspora engagement and participation in policy processes.

The relations between diasporas and policy-makers takes place within a complex institutional environment and intersection of policy domains involving multiple actors with competing interests. Nonetheless, there is less divergence on issues of concern to the diasporas and municipality as reflected in the themes emerging from the expert meetings. Notable ones are language, integration and participation; access to the labour market; education; culture; health youth and sport. These themes match policies in different municipal departments (Municipality of The Hague, 2011) and politics behind them. However, major contestations are about citizenship and rights, multiple identities and layers of belonging, and diversity as described the literature on super-diversity (Vertovec, 2007) and changing discourses (Scholten & Holzhaecker, 2009). For diaspora organisations, the identified issues are products of a long deliberation process that sought consensus in understanding their experiences. The conditions captured by these themes determine diaspora integration, performing of citizenship (Isin, 2017), social exclusion (Kos et al., 2016; Wotherspoon, 2018), and the 'right to have rights.' They also relate to the well-being of the different categories of Sub-Sahara African diasporas, and how they seek to realise their aspirations within a 'win-win' framework. This 'win-win' framework relates to the benefits of the outcomes of collective initiatives to the diaspora organisations in terms of access to policy-making spaces, where they can channel their concerns about rights and space to influence agenda setting (see Ong'ayo, 2019). To policy makers, these diaspora collective initiatives contribute to the realisation of various social policies targeting integration and participation, public health, and social cohesion (Ong'ayo, 2016) through diaspora activities that complement the existing public services (see Ong'ayo, 2016, 2019).

The collective initiatives by the Sub-Sahara African diasporas in The Hague offer evidence of the praxis of civic agency in terms of how diasporas seek to create spaces for making claims and influencing policy agenda which starts with how they frame issues that matter to them. For example, shift towards the use of diaspora experiences, knowledge, skills, and expertise as a basis for taking the lead in steering the consultation and expert meetings, is a demonstration of civic agency in practice as diasporas create conditions they collectively imagine and want, and the terms for engaging with policy-makers. Their civic agency thus informs the choice, definition, and re-definition of topics to reflect meanings diasporas attach to these topics. This iterates the conceptualisa-

tion of civic agency whereby collaboration is informed by "power in the foreground, about negotiating and forming relationships that further civic agency" (Biekart & Fowler, 2012, p. 7).

6. Conclusion

This article considered the case of sub-Saharan African diasporas and how their civic agency sought to influence enacted citizenship initiatives aimed at more inclusive policy-making towards shared outcomes and common solutions with The Hague municipality. Collective initiatives helped to generate prospects for these diasporas to secure their rights and address conditions that led to social exclusion. If diasporic civic engagement is undertaken through initiatives that build on collectively-created spaces, informed by an understanding of individual and collective interests, these formal and informal initiatives can promote more participatory diasporic involvement in reciprocal and complementary decision-making at municipal level. Underlying this argument, based on observations during various policy consultation processes, is the principle of joint policy-making for finding common solutions.

These diaspora collective initiatives manifest the critical role of diasporas as bridge-builders and interlocutors, able to inject elements of complex diversity into urban transformations that respect the diasporic right to the city and to urban spaces and services. Central to the civic agency and energy of diasporas is their ability to tap into policy windows and prevailing political opportunity structures in the municipality in order to ensure their needs are better addressed. Their agency is linked to the politics of action and redistribution of resources that challenge conditions of social exclusion and destitution in the host municipality of The Hague.

For the diasporas, access to decision-making spaces, whether invited, claimed, or co-created, can expand the scope for enacting diasporic urban citizenship. This includes the 'right to have rights' by influencing agenda setting alongside other policy entrepreneurs from within and outside civil society. In this sense, civic agency operates at the intersection of diasporas' pursuit of influence and municipal strategies of inclusive policy-making and finding common solutions. Given the relative novelty of openings towards greater diaspora engagement, the processes involved require robust theorizing, especially given the complex local, national, and global environment in which diasporas are working to challenge their own prior conditions of social exclusion and invisibility to policy-makers working in the migration-related policy fields.

Acknowledgments

I wish to thank Kees Biekart and Helen Hintjens for initial feedback and the two anonymous reviewers for their useful comments.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

References

- Bakewell, O. (2010). Some reflections on structure and agency in migration theory. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 36(10), 1689–1708.
- Bauböck, R. (2006). *Migration and citizenship legal status, rights and political participation*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Bauböck, R. (2018). *Democratic inclusion: A pluralist theory of citizenship*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Biekart, K., & Fowler, A. (2012). A civic agency perspective on change. *Development*, 55(2), 181–189.
- Bloemraad, I., Korteweg, A., & Yurdakul, G. (2008). Citizenship and immigration: Multiculturalism, assimilation, and challenges to the nation-state. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 34, 153–179.
- Blunt, A., & Bonnerjee, J. (2013). Home, city and diaspora: Anglo-Indian and Chinese attachments to Calcutta. *Global Networks*, 13(2), 220–240.
- Bosma, U. (2012). *Post-colonial immigrants and identity formations in the Netherlands*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Central Bureau of Statistics. (2019). Bevolking; leeftijd, migratieachtergrond, geslacht en regio, 1 januari [Population; age, migration background, sex and region, 1 January]. *Central Bureau of Statistics*. Retrieved from <https://opendata.cbs.nl/statline/#/CBS/nl/dataset/37713/table?fromstatweb>
- Cornwall, A. (2002). *Making spaces, changing places: Situating participation in development* (Institute of Development Studies Working Paper No. 170). Brighton: Institute of Development Studies.
- Duyvendak, J., Hendriks, F., & van Niekerk, C. M. (2009). *City in sight: Dutch dealings with urban transformation*. Amsterdam: NICIS–Amsterdam University Press.
- Fowler, A. (2009). Civic agency. In H. Anheier & S. Toepler (Eds.), *International encyclopaedia of civil society* (pp. 150–155). New York, NY: Springer.
- Gamlen, A. (2008). *Why engage diasporas* (Working Paper No. 63). Oxford: Centre on Migration, Policy and Society, University of Oxford.
- Gaventa, J. (2006). Finding the spaces for change: A power analysis. *Institute of Development Studies Bulletin*, 37(6), 23–33.
- George, A. L., & Bennett, A. (2005). *Case studies and theory development in the social sciences*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Hintjens, H., & Kurian, R. (2019). Enacting citizenship and the right to the city: Towards inclusion through deepening democracy? *Social Inclusion*, 7(4), 71–78.
- Hoekstra, M. S. (2018). Governing difference in the city: Urban imaginaries and the policy practice of migrant incorporation. *Territory, Politics, Governance*, 6(3), 362–380.
- Isin, E. F. (2013). Claiming European citizenship. In E. Isin & M. Saward (Eds.), *Enacting European citizenship* (pp. 19–46). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Isin, E. F. (2017). Performative citizenship. In A. Shachar, R. Bauböck, I. Bloemraad, & M. Vink (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of citizenship* (pp. 500–523). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kingdon, J. W. (2014). *Agendas, alternatives, and public policies* (2nd ed.) Essex: Pearson Education Limited.
- Kos, S., Maussen, M., & Doornik, J. (2016). Policies of exclusion and practices of inclusion: How municipal governments negotiate asylum policies in the Netherlands. *Territory, Politics, Governance*, 4(3), 354–374.
- Municipality of The Hague. (2011). *De Haagse participatiemaatschappij uitvoeringsprogramma welzijn 2011–2014* [The Hague participation society implementation program on welfare 2011–2014]. The Hague: Municipality of The Hague.
- Norglo, B. E., Goris, M., Lie, R., & Ong'ayo, A. O. (2016). The African diaspora's participation in policy-making concerning Africa. *Diaspora Studies*, 9(2), 83–99.
- Nyamnjoh, F. B. (2012). Potted plants in greenhouses: A critical reflection on the resilience of colonial education in Africa. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 47(2), 129–154.
- Ong'ayo, A. (2016). *Diaspora organisations and their development potential: An analysis of Ghanaian diaspora organisations in the UK, Germany and Netherlands* (Discussion Paper No. 200). Maastricht and Brussels: European Centre for Development Policy Management.
- Ong'ayo, A. (2019). *Diaspora organisations, transnational practices and development: Ghanaians in the Netherlands* (Unpublished Doctoral dissertation). Tilburg University, Tilburg, the Netherlands.
- Penninx, R., & van Heelsum, A. (2004). *Bondgenoot of spelbreker? Organisaties van immigranten en hun mogelijke rol in integratieprocessen* [Ally or game breaker? Immigrant organizations and their possible role in integration processes]. Utrecht: FORUM.
- Riessman, C. K. (1993). *Narrative analysis*. London and Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Scholten, P., & Holzhaacker, R. (2009). Bonding, bridging and ethnic minorities in the Netherlands: Changing discourses in a changing nation. *Nations and Nationalism*, 15(1), 81–100.
- Sheffer, G. (2003). *Diaspora politics: At home abroad*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- van Schie, G. (2018). Origins: A history of race-ethnic categorisation in the Dutch governmental data ontology (1899–2018). *Tijdschrift voor Mediageschiedenis*, 21(2), 67–88.
- Vertovec, S. (1997). Three meanings of 'diaspora,' exemplified among South Asian religions. *Diaspora*, 6(3), 277–299.
- Vertovec, S. (1999). Conceiving and researching transna-

tionalism. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 22(2), 445–462.
Vertovec, S. (2007). Super-diversity and its implications.
Ethnic and Racial Studies, 30(6), 1024–1054.

Wotherspoon, T. (2018). Migration, boundaries and differentiated citizenship: Contested frameworks for inclusion and exclusion. *Social Inclusion*, 6(3), 153–161.

About the Author



Antony Otieno Ong'ayo is a Researcher at the International Institute of Social Studies of Erasmus University. He holds a Bachelor's and a Master's degree in Political Science from Stockholm University and a PhD in Humanities (International Development) from Tilburg University. He is an Associate Researcher with Globalization, Accessibility, Innovation and Care (GAIC) and member of the Commission on Development Cooperation (COS) of the Advisory Council on Foreign Affairs (AIV) to the Dutch Government. Research interests include politics of development, migration and development, diaspora transnationalism, digital citizenship, and governance.

Social Inclusion (ISSN: 2183-2803)

Social Inclusion is a peer-reviewed open access journal which provides academics and policy-makers with a forum to discuss and promote a more socially inclusive society.

The journal encourages researchers to publish their results on topics concerning social and cultural cohesiveness, marginalized social groups, social stratification, minority-majority interaction, cultural diversity, national identity, and core-periphery relations, while making significant contributions to the understanding and enhancement of social inclusion worldwide.

www.cogitatiopress.com/socialinclusion