

Special Thematic Section on "The Social Psychology of Citizenship, Participation and Social Exclusion"

Micropolitics of Public Space: On the Contested Limits of Citizenship as a Locational Practice

Micropolítica del Espacio Público: Sobre los Límites Contestados de la Ciudadanía como Práctica de Localización

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Abstract

This article provides a social-psychological account of how public space dynamics may be consequential for the daily construction of citizenship. The article is organised around three interrelated ideas that are illustrated by a case study. First, it is argued that certain social-psychological processes that are typically involved in the construction of citizenship can be re-conceptualised as place-based processes that are located in public space. This interest in the 'locational' construction of citizenship implies focusing on membership, belonging, status, rights, entitlements and recognition as emplaced practices rather than as dislocated entities. The second idea relates to the troubled nature of citizenship as a place-related psychological category whose boundaries are hotly contested whenever disputes about controversial behaviour in public spaces surface. Accordingly, 'the citizen' is constantly re-shaped as everyday place-discourses and territorial practices in the public domain unfold in problematic ways. Finally, it is argued that such 'locational' constructions and enactments of citizenship in public space are usually framed by broader ideological dilemmas that are relevant to the maintenance and change of a given socio-political order. The ultimate purpose of the article is to demonstrate the potential for public space to become a possible site for grounding a social psychology of citizenship.

Keywords: micropolitics, public space, locational citizenship, right to the city, social psychology, ideology

Resumen

Este artículo propone un relato psicosocial sobre cómo las dinámicas propias del espacio público pueden ser relevantes para la construcción cotidiana de ciudadanía. El artículo se organiza en torno a tres ideas interrelacionadas e ilustradas mediante un estudio de caso. En primer lugar, se plantea que ciertos procesos psicosociales típicamente implicados en la construcción de ciudadanía pueden ser re-conceptualizados como procesos espaciales localizables en el espacio público. Este interés en la construcción "locacional" de la ciudadanía supone definir la pertenencia, la identidad, el estatus, los derechos y el reconocimiento como prácticas emplazadas, más que como entidades deslocalizadas. La segunda idea se relaciona con la naturaleza problemática de la ciudadanía, entendida como una categoría psico-espacial cuyas fronteras son fuertemente contestadas siempre que emergen disputas en torno al comportamiento controvertido en el espacio público. En consecuencia, 'el ciudadano' se re-configura permanentemente a medida que los discursos relativos al espacio y las prácticas territoriales en el dominio público se despliegan de forma polémica. Finalmente, se argumenta que estas construcciones y actuaciones "locacionales" de la ciudadanía en el espacio público están habitualmente enmarcadas por dilemas ideológicos más amplios que son relevantes para el mantenimiento y el cambio de un orden socio-político determinado. El propósito del artículo es mostrar el potencial del espacio público para convertirse en un posible lugar en el que fundamentar una psicología social de la ciudadanía.

Palabras Clave: micropolítica, espacio público, ciudadanía "locacional", derecho a la ciudad, psicología social, ideología

Journal of Social and Political Psychology, 2015, Vol. 3(2), 63–83, doi:10.5964/jspp.v3i2.322

Received: 2014-01-31. Accepted: 2015-01-14. Published (VoR): 2015-10-26.

Handling Editor: Clifford Stevenson, Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge, United Kingdom

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Can social psychology say something relevant about citizenship? Recently, there have been successful attempts to address this question (e.g., Barnes, Auburn, & Lea, 2004; Haste, 2004; Shotter, 1993; see Condor, 2011, for a detailed discussion). The theoretical and empirical foundations of this emerging approach to citizenship include a well-established range of concepts (e.g., social identity and self-categorisation, membership and belonging, ideological dilemmas, prejudice, cultural values, etc.), sensitising topics (e.g., immigration, racism, nationhood, civic participation, multiculturalism, etc.) and recurring ideas (e.g., the contested nature of citizenship, its political connotation, its context-related and historically situated meaning, etc.). These incipient contributions have made citizenship a theme that is worthy of exploration by social psychologists because they provide shared analytical frameworks that are insightful and familiar within the usual disciplinary boundaries.

However, the topic of citizenship also has the capacity to relate to other notions that are outside psychology and might be useful when examined using the discipline's usual explanations. One of these 'importable' topics is public space, which is a relevant site where citizenship is enacted on a daily basis. The relationship between social life in public spaces and citizenship poses a twofold challenge for social psychology. On the one hand, there is an interest in determining why the discipline should offer a specific sort of knowledge about public space that is capable of enriching ongoing debates about citizenship. On the other hand, there is the need to articulate the conceptual paths for examining the interface between citizenship and public space from a social-psychological viewpoint. This article grapples with these tasks and contributes a social-psychological account of how public space dynamics may be consequential for the daily construction of citizenship.

The article develops three main ideas based on an empirical case study. First, it is argued that the daily construction of citizenship can be conceptualised as a place-related process located in public space. This focus on the 'locational' construction of citizenship implies that some of the main social-psychological processes that are involved in the representation and enactment of citizenship, such as membership, belonging, status, rights, entitlements and recognition, can be viewed as *emplaced practices* rather than as dislocated entities. The second idea highlights the extent to which the boundaries of citizenship, understood as a place-related psychological category, are overtly contested whenever conflicts concerning controversial practices in public spaces surface. The stress on the *troubled nature* of citizenship implies that definitions of 'the citizen' are constantly re-shaped as everyday place-discourses and spatial practices in public spaces unfold in problematic ways. Finally, the article pinpoints the main *ideological dilemmas* (Billig et al., 1988) that frame the construction of citizenship as a process located in public space, considering their value to support or challenge the normative socio-political order. The aim of the article is to show how a social psychology of citizenship can be articulated through the analysis of everyday understandings of socio-spatial behaviour in public places.

From the How to the Where: Locating Citizenship in Public Space

Citizenship can be broadly understood as a legal status, a set of rights, a political activity or a form of collective identity and solidarity (Bosniak, 2000). From these four conceptualisations, explicit attempts to address the psychology of citizenship have clearly focused on the last one, which highlights “feelings of citizenship, belonging and social integration” (Chávez, 2008, p. 14). Although early attempts to broach the psychological dimension of citizenship were mainly individualistic, cognitive-centred and based on behaviouristic assumptions (e.g., Tyler, Rasinski, & Griffin, 1986), later developments have tackled the relational processes that ‘construct the citizen’ (Haste, 2004) as a social and cultural being within the interactional dynamics of everyday life. In this social-psychological framework, citizenship has been conceived to be a contested field of belonging that is achieved through joint interaction (Barnes et al., 2004; Shotter, 1993), an identity-experience that involves positive recognition in the public sphere (Hopkins & Blackwood, 2011), a condition that is related to the intergroup processes of differentiation (McNamara, Muldoon, Stevenson, & Slattery, 2011) or a rhetorical construction of legitimate membership to a political unit (Gibson & Hamilton, 2011). When combined, these studies justify talking about ‘psychological citizenship’, which is added to the list of dimensions (e.g., political, civic, social, legal, ecological, cultural, economic, etc.; see Condor, 2011) that are usually used to describe this concept.

A common underlying concern in these seminal studies is *how* citizenship is articulated through, and is intertwined with, social identity processes. The stress on the *how* allows for the exploration of the complex dynamics of belonging, self-categorisation, identity-recognition and claims for legitimate membership, which shape citizenship as a psychological experience. In addition to this argument, one can adhere to the basic assumption of what has been recently labelled as the ‘spatial turn’ in social psychology (e.g., Dixon & Durrheim, 2000). If human experience and social relations are inevitably located, then citizens’ relations and the construction of citizenship may also have a common place. Related to the *how*, there must be a *where*-dimension of citizenship that is implicated in the sort of identity work and legitimacy construction that defines citizenship’s psychological nature: a setting in which one can examine how these processes *take place*, either by observing territorial actions or through discursive accounts of who does what, how and *where*, in regard to citizenship. Public space seems to fit this description because it is an important arena where citizenship is experienced, staged, performed, challenged and demanded on a daily basis (Di Masso, 2012).

Considering citizenship as a locational experience that usually unfolds in public space implies at least two things. First, it means that public socio-spatial behaviour and citizenship status/identity are somehow organically related. What we shall refer to as ‘locational citizenship’ considers that positive belonging, acceptance and recognition as legitimate presences in the public sphere (i.e., citizenship status and identity; see Barnes et al., 2004) are derived *in a specific manner* (although, not the only manner) from the differentiated possibilities and modalities of access and use of particular types of public spaces (e.g., squares, streets, parks, markets, etc.). As a few authors have suggested (Hopkins & Dixon, 2006; Painter & Philo, 1995), people who use the public space in ways that are frequently constrained or perceived negatively (e.g., youngsters, social movements, etc.), including those who lack positive recognition or are overtly discriminated against and excluded from public space (e.g., the homeless, undocumented immigrants, sex workers, etc.), are the people who experience a lack of the positive inclusion that defines legitimate citizenship. Being a citizen, in the full sense of the term, implies not being disturbed, challenged

or persecuted for one's mere presence in public space. Consequently, locational citizenship can be defined as the right to have a place in public space.

The latter idea is directly related to the 'right to the city' (Gilbert & Phillips, 2003; Lefebvre, 1968; Mitchell, 2003), which can be broadly defined as the entitlement of any urban dweller to freely access and use public space. Accordingly, locational citizenship presupposes the right to the city. In its most politically 'charged' connotation, it entails the right to be in public space, as well as the right to appropriate it and materially transform it, either as a means for political protests or as a result of unmediated interaction (that is, either *against* or *on the margins* of the State and the market). Therefore, the right to the city ensures *having a place* in public space, in its most moderate version, whereas in its most 'radical' expression, it also demands the ability to *make a place* within it.

'Locational Citizenship' and Social Psychology

The right to the city is a conceptual hinge between citizenship and public space. This offers a few analytical advantages. Most evidently, it allows researchers to extend the language of rights, which is central to any theorisation of citizenship, into the exploration of public space. As Mitchell (2003) notes, rights are important catalysts of conformity, conflict and social change because they automatically legitimise organised forms of authority, power and resistance. The discourse of rights offers a different angle in the discussion of the issues of identity, entitlements, status and agency, which typically construct 'the citizen'. The argument is rather simple. If the right to the city is ideally defined by the universal access to, free use of and spontaneous appropriation of public space, and if this is a fundamental right that shapes citizenship status, then conflicts and debates regarding the access to, use of and appropriation of public space will affect the condition of citizenship. Such conflicts and debates usually revolve around the normative meaning and boundaries of *universality* (i.e., who has/must have more or less access to public space), *freedom* (i.e., how is public space being used, occupied and transformed/how should public space be used, occupied and transformed) and *agency* (i.e., to what extent the citizen, as a political subject, can appropriate and transform public space vis-à-vis the institutional powers and structures). Underlying the question of universality, there is a controversy over the psychological limits of citizenship as a field of identity (i.e., who *belongs* in the citizenry). The debate over freedom foregrounds the social representations of normative behaviour in public (i.e., how must a '*proper*' citizen behave in public). Agency relates to the symbolic constructions of citizenship status and autonomy (i.e., how is a citizen *politically recognised and positioned among other political actors* within a given arrangement of the socio-political order). Under this formulation, social psychology can provide useful tools that can broach the 'osmosis' (Burte, 2003) between public space and citizenship.

One possible way to do this, as will be further illustrated, is to focus on how ordinary understandings of spatial behaviour in public entail shared views of what it means to be a citizen, and conversely, how definitions of the 'good citizen' construct normative understandings of behaviour in public. In both cases, the assumption is that citizenship can be re-specified as a place-related psychological construct and, similarly, that conflicting place-understandings may be connected to competing views of the citizen.

This re-conceptualisation of citizenship as a locational issue capitalises on previous work on discursive social psychology that is interested in place-talk and spatial practices. Specifically, Dixon and Durrheim's (2000) initial study on desegregation in South Africa concluded that particular understandings of place and self-in-place (i.e., place-identity) can warrant an ideological tradition that, in their context, had naturalised the spatial patterns of racial

belonging which were being threatened by desegregation. Using a conversation analytic approach, [Stokoe and Wallwork \(2003\)](#) illustrated how 'good' and 'bad' neighbours and '(in)appropriate' neighbouring relations can be discursively depicted and regulated by using morally connoted spatial language, so transgressions to the moral order become expressed in spatial terms (e.g., climbing hedges, playing on the gate, etc.). Additionally, they showed how the discussion about physical boundaries allowed for the negotiation of the meaning between the public and private spheres. Using a discursive-rhetorical approach, [Dixon, Levine, & McAuley \(2006\)](#) explored everyday thinking about street drinking in Lancaster (UK), in light of a recently introduced ban. Their analysis illustrated how people's responses constructed street-drinking as an incivility, both in terms of an infringement of civic entitlements and as a form of visual defilement. It showed how normative features of social situations may be transgressed through the breach of the established meanings of place (i.e., place-transgressions). Additionally, it underlined the ideological and dilemmatic nature of public space by suggesting that the rhetoric of incivility and place-transgressions that is implied by street-drinking supported an ideological tradition of public space 'sanitisation' ([Sibley, 1995](#)), based on the removal of certain types of people who are not conceived to be people who legitimately belong to the 'public' category (e.g., drunks or people who are drinking in the streets). More recently, [Gray and Manning \(2014\)](#) examined young people's experience of regulation in public space, focusing on how they positioned themselves (as youth who are on the border between childhood and adulthood) in the face of restrictions to access and use and in how their argumentations echoed dilemmatic ideological assumptions of who is a legitimate user of public space, the extent of their rights of access and when these rights can be accessed.

These studies provide the theoretical bases and the methodological resources to reframe identity, belonging and the related social-psychological processes that regulate behaviour in public (e.g., attitudes, norms, etc.), as *place-based processes*. However, the conceptual implications of this locational reinterpretation of behaviour in public when specifically analysing citizenship practices are still under-researched. [Dixon et al.'s \(2006\)](#) study clearly begins to address citizenship matters when it discusses incivilities and the discourse of norms that warrant civic entitlements. Likewise, [Gray and Manning \(2014\)](#) stress that claims for the access to and use of public space by the young people in their study relates to competing constructions of citizenship and that "this relationship between discourses of place and discourses of citizenship is an important topic for future research, insofar as [it] allows one to consider the ways in which places are constituted relative to claims about rights and freedoms, as well as the ways in which citizenship is constituted relative to claims about the nature of places" (p. 13).

Building on these contributions and on the early and current developments in the social psychology of citizenship, the conceptualisation of locational citizenship that is proposed in this article begins by considering citizenship status and identity as being defined by the legitimacy of occupancy in the public sphere ([Barnes et al., 2004](#); [Shotter, 1993](#)). This involves positive recognition and acceptance ([Hopkins & Blackwood, 2011](#)) as someone who is a part of 'the public', which is defined as a "community of people who constitute the subjects and/or collective agents of governance" ([Condor, 2011](#), p. 194). Hence, citizenship entails belonging/membership to a political community ([Gibson & Hamilton, 2011](#)). The public 'sphere' is not just an ethereal political atmosphere, but it importantly includes a material public 'space' in which different 'publics' make themselves visible and enact, negotiate and contest their condition as legitimate 'publics' on a daily basis ([Di Masso, 2012](#); [Dixon et al., 2006](#); [Gray & Manning, 2014](#)). Accordingly, locational citizenship is a status and an identity that are defined by the legitimacy of occupancy in public space by individuals, groups or crowds as acceptable 'publics' (i.e., as admissible presences and proper occupants of public space).

Again, this clearly resonates with the right to the city being a fundamental citizen's right involving universal access to, free use of and agency in public space. From the perspective of locational citizenship, universal access relates to identity, belonging and recognition of someone being a legitimate 'public'; free use relates to the acceptance of spatial performance, i.e., normative place-behaviour; and agency relates to status and empowerment of citizens as pro-active, autonomous political subjects (e.g., the State versus grass-roots movements). Consequently, the psychological boundaries of belonging, recognition, acceptance, entitlement and status that shape the normative view of the citizen can be worked through accounts about how, when and why individuals and groups of people (do not) have access to public space, can (not) use a public space in certain ways, and are (not) entitled to appropriate public space according to their will. It is even likely that such psychological boundaries are formulated in locational terms (e.g., belonging to the citizenry or having more civic entitlements being defined by belonging to a territorially bound community). Moreover, as was stated earlier, such psychological boundaries are never unproblematic. Therefore, disputes over the access to, use of and change in public spaces will easily trigger contested views about the limits and conditions of legitimate belonging, status and rights, both as a citizen and as a 'public'. The neo-Marxist theory of citizenship that underlies this conceptualisation implicates a politics of belonging that foregrounds contestation and conflict between different publics and counter-publics that struggle to re-draw the lines of the legitimacy of occupancy in the public sphere, and to redefine the meaning of citizenship itself (Crawford, 1995; Fraser, 1990; Staeheli & Thompson, 1997).

This definition of locational citizenship as an ongoing, contested set of emplaced enactments of the right to the city offers a framework in which the political consequences of what actually happens in a given public space can be discussed. For instance, it allows for the framing of the restriction of access to a given space for some social groups as an impediment of a citizen's basic right (i.e., equality), but it also provides the argumentative grounds to legitimately warrant such restriction to preserve another right (i.e., freedom and safety of other citizens). This sort of common-sense contradiction between equally reasonable ideas foregrounds a set of ideological dilemmas (Billig et al., 1988) of public space that mirror common ideological dilemmas of citizenship, such as rights/duties, equality/inequality, universalism/particularism, freedom/control or inclusion/exclusion. For instance, echoing Gray and Manning's (2014) work, the forced dispersal of young people from a park because they 'make noise' (i.e., exclusion from public space) can be contested by arguing that 'it is the only park that is available and that we are not bothering anyone' (i.e., vindication of inclusion). In terms of citizenship, this instantiates a debate over the legitimacy of occupancy in the public sphere and the limits of one's rights and freedom vis-à-vis the rights and freedom of others.

What Public Space? From the Normative Ideal to the Right to Exclude

The aim of finding a place for citizenship makes it reasonable to consider public space a relevant location, both in social-psychological and political terms. Definitions of public space tend to overlap with the fundamental components of the citizens' right to the city. Both assume full access to all sorts of publics and freedoms of use, which, in theory, entails that public spaces must be available to everybody, at any time and for any purpose that is desired by any citizen – who is a natural beneficiary. Kohn (2004) also reminds us that the public character of public space resides in its ownership and management by the State. This brings to the foreground privatisation and its consequences upon the right to the city, the latter being a condition of citizenship that must be guaranteed by the

public authorities. The democratic credentials of public space have been discussed in environmental psychological research by the argument that, in order to support the common good, public spaces must be responsive to citizens' needs, values, rights and demands (cf. Carr, Francis, Rivlin, & Stone, 1992) and must protect freedom of action and appropriation (Lynch, 1981; Rivlin, 1994). Theoretically speaking, public space and the right to the city are inter-related and seem to be significant components of any standard version of democratic citizenship as a locational practice.

This last remark pinpoints another powerful reason for talking about public space. In light of the contemporary urban changes in postfordist cities, which are oriented to the accommodation of the local patterns of city-making in global financial flows (Harvey & Smith, 2005; Sassen, 1991), a common belief has spread to all levels of the public sphere, according to which urban public spaces must be fostered and preserved because they are a crucial component of democratic life. Ignoring public space equals missing the point of any socially sensitive approach to citizens' rights, needs and quality of life. Academics, urban planners, politicians, mass media, social activists and common citizens seem to agree on the idea that public spaces meet the most important ingredients of democratic citizenship. In streets, squares, parks, markets and other open urban spaces, citizens fulfil their needs for social encounters, relaxation, entertainment, consumption and evasion; in a few strategic locations of public space, they express political demands via protests and other forms of collective action; and in the everyday settings of the open city, citizens perform the ordinary rituals of urban coexistence that are based on the fundamental democratic values of reciprocity, civility and respect. There now seems to be a cultural imperative, according to which it is necessary to promote good public spaces in order to have a healthy democratic society.

However, public space is a fundamentally contested concept. The 'normative ideal' (Crawford, 1995; Mitchell, 1995) of public space being a common ground for citizens' placid coexistence is firmly based on what has been called a 'bourgeois' conception of the public sphere (Fraser, 1990). This view is inherited from Habermasian deliberative democracy models, which are based on the fiction of equality between *de facto* hierarchically differentiated sectors of the public. This critical view is premised on the evidence of deep social and political inequalities that structure uneven arrangements of the social order which are mapped onto public space. Hence, whenever the socially disadvantaged, who tend to be seen "more as problems for the public than as part of it" (Staeheli & Thompson, 1997), are controlled or removed from public space, we witness the failure of the democratic ideal of citizenship, which is built more on the naturalisation of certain forms of oppression and exclusion than on the naive *desideratum* of universal publicity and acceptance. This exemplifies the ideological dilemma of 'public' space being an ideal of inclusion and equality that faces flagrant daily efforts to achieve precisely the opposite (usually in the name of the right – of those included – to enjoy public space).

Three Perspectives on Public Space

Structural inequalities shape uneven citizenship relations that become spatialised in public space. This idea undermines the hegemonic consensus regarding public space being a democratic arena that harmonically accommodates all sorts of publics. In fact, there are at least three broad perspectives in the literature on public space today, which are understood as diagnoses of contemporary public life in the open urban space. Each of these perspectives leads to a different conceptualisation of the relationship between citizenship and space.

The first viewpoint is the 'optimistic' one, which considers current public spaces to be the maximum expression of social integration. It adheres to the abovementioned normative ideal, which is defined by a wide diversity of citizens being able to mingle and interact in harmony. This perspective asserts that current public life is rich and

healthy and is progressively occurring in new locations and under renewed forms rather than the traditional open public spaces (Brill, 1989; Carr et al., 1992). This perspective suggests focusing less on streets or squares and, instead, examining the new places that are brimming with different sorts of social encounters between the diverse groups that commonly characterise public life (e.g., shopping malls, the Internet, etc.).

This clearly is contrasted by the second perspective, or the ‘terminal’ approach. This approach is mainly derived from studies in the United States and in Latin-American cities and asserts that the current trends of privatisation, commodification and control of the urban space annihilate public social life in the city. The common images of this alarming extinction of public space include shopping malls and gated communities, which are archetypes of the simulation of the traditional urban public life and neighbourliness (e.g., Davis, 1992; Sennett, 1974; Sorkin, 1992). As has been counter-argued, however, this narrative of decline of public space frequently relies on a romanticised view of the public spaces of the past that is similar to the optimistic view (Brill, 1989).

Finally, the ‘conflictivist’ perspective accepts the terminal diagnosis, but it focuses on the power struggles between the unequal sectors of the public that are attempting to reassert their domination or overcome exclusion in order to gain access to and claim acceptance in the city as legitimate citizens. This approach defends the idea that public space *has never really been public*, but rather, it is a terrain that is historically defined by the exclusion of disadvantaged groups that use public space to claim public attention and acceptance as regular citizens (e.g., slaves, women, barbarians, children, immigrants, teenagers, drunks, homeless, sex workers, etc.). From this perspective, urban conflict is a central component of public space and a fundamental instrument for achieving the right to the city because it expresses territorially structural power struggles between the accepted publics and the socially unwanted counter-publics. Here, the naturalised entitlement of the former to legitimately demand the removal of the latter demonstrates that the right to exclude is a basic, paradoxical tenet of the right to the city of the socially included (Staehele & Mitchell, 2008).

There are competing theories of democracy and citizenship that underlie these three perspectives on public space (e.g., liberal versus Marxist). For the purposes of this article, the ‘conflictivist’ view seems to be the most suitable view for two main reasons. First, it explicitly relates life in public spaces to processes that are central to the construction of citizenship (belonging, inclusion, recognition, etc.); and second, it brings to the fore the link between spatial conflict and the definition of legitimate citizenship, which is a troubled relationship. With this perspective as the backdrop, the following sections examine a case study concerning a struggle over one public space in Barcelona to illustrate the locational construction of citizenship.

Context: The Barcelona “Model”

A good example of a city where public space and its troubled relationship with citizenship construction can be studied is Barcelona. The ‘*Modelo Barcelona*’ (the ‘Barcelona Model’) commonly refers to a genuinely local policy of urban regeneration and public space-making, which began in the 1980s and has become widely acknowledged and internationally recognised. According to Marshall (2004), “Barcelona has in the past 10 or 15 years become the outstanding example of a certain way of improving cities, within both this Mediterranean world and in Europe” (p. 1). Indeed, Barcelona received the Harvard design award in 1987 and the Gold Medal from the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1990, which has influenced British urban remodelling plans since this time (Balibrea, 2004; Capel, 2005).

As [Borja \(2005\)](#) explains, the success of this model is unquestionable, including its construction of more than 300 public spaces and high-quality facilities, the creation of new centralities, the transformation of the waterfront and its obsolete industrial facilities, the integral regeneration of neighbourhoods, the political de-centralisation favouring districts, a rich cultural environment, a revaluation of the architectural patrimony, the acknowledgement of the important role of social actors in urban policy-making, and the inter-connection of different parts of the city through the creation of new infrastructures. This was possible mainly because the political conjuncture favoured the acceptance of urban renewal proposals that came from grassroots movements during the 1970s. During the first years of democracy after forty years of dictatorship, “the legitimisation of a participatory urbanism built an active consensus that the political forces could not keep aside” ([Borja, 2005](#), p. 24), and fostered an ‘egalitarian’ view of public space. In the words of [Mónica Degen \(2008\)](#), “the ‘Reconstruction of Barcelona’, as it was officially labelled, in the democratic period, focused on small urban interventions [including] new public spaces that would invigorate the diverse neighbourhoods of the city, creating a network of spaces for democratic gathering and connecting the external districts with its historic centre” (p. 87).

However, after the Olympic Games in 1992, the (officially) well-intentioned city-model entered a structural crisis. The city had prospered economically, but the local administration was insolvent ([Borja, 2005](#)). The Olympics was an excellent instrument for promoting public investments and attracting international capital, which could finance the large-scale public works that were needed to prepare the city for this important sporting event ([Degen, 2008](#)). After the commercialisation of the city for the Olympics, new public-private partnerships were needed in order to carry on promoting the city. Since the second half of the 1990s, the ‘Barcelona Model’ fostered the “improvement of the attractiveness and of the strategic position of the city” ([Brunet, 2002](#), p. 270, in [Delgado, 2007](#)). As [Maldo \(2004\)](#) describes it, “the conjunction of public institutions and private capital propitiated the integration of Barcelona into the circuits of multinational capital” (p. 13). [Degen \(2008\)](#) has described the recent processes of spatial change in Barcelona as a function of the triple circulation of images and signs, people and finances across the planet in a globalised transnational era, which produces negative consequences for citizenship. According to Degen, economic policies marginalised social welfare programs in pursuit of permanent economic wellbeing of the cities in the global market. In this frame, “a triumphant city is a city that is globally attractive: not only attractive as a place for investment but also a physically captivating place” (p. 85). The consequence of this is that global dimensions begin to shape local urban policies according to flexible economic calculi, which materialise in new ways of shaping the urban space and embedded cultural practices, regardless of the social needs of their inhabitants ([Zukin, 1995](#)). This ‘recipe’ was applied in Barcelona through the creation of huge infrastructural operations in its port, airports and railways, as well as by creating new Olympic-esque events (such as the *Forum of Cultures, 2004*) and re-developing the historic centre to attract millions of tourists per year.

This process of ‘brandification’ of Barcelona ([Balibrea, 2004](#)) has been strongly criticised by intellectuals, scholars and social movements. [Borja \(2005\)](#) has referred to the ‘perverse effects’ of the Barcelona Model, regarding the rise in the price of urban soil and housing, the sale of parts of the city to private promoters, the creation of ‘theme park’ zones (e.g., the area around Gaudí’s *Sagrada Família*), the destruction of architectural patrimony and the low-density urban sprawl in the peripheries. However, [Delgado \(2007\)](#) provided the most critical diatribe against the Barcelona Model by referring to Barcelona as a “business-city” that is only exemplary of a “model of technocratic interventionism and centralising despotism (...) a prototype of the city-factory, an *urbs* converted into a huge production chain of dreams and simulations” (p. 14). Rather than the pleasant and inclusive public spaces, attractive buildings and tasty paellas on the waterfront, the defining features of the model, according to Delgado, include the “massive evictions of neighbours, the destruction of whole neighbourhoods that have been qualified as ‘obsolete’,

the increase of levels of misery and exclusion, the police raids against undocumented immigrants and the repression against the un-governables” (p. 14).

As shown by Delgado’s words, as well as Degen’s and Borja’s descriptions, urban transformations in Barcelona have been hugely controversial from a social viewpoint, which raises questions about the (small) importance that is given to the rights, needs and desires of the local citizens in this allegedly exemplary city. In fact, there were many protests against the negative effects of this ‘model’ regarding its citizens, including the physical occupation of public spaces that aimed to impede the transformation of these spaces into socially exclusive, economically profitable environments. One of the most paradigmatic occupations occurred between 2000 and 2007 in the Old Town of Barcelona. The rest of the article will focus on this case study, which is an empirical example of how locational practices and citizenship enactments shape and regulate each other.

Case: The ‘Hole of Shame’ Struggle Over Public Space

On the 15th of December in 2000, a small group of people who lived in the neighbourhood of Santa Caterina (Barcelona) planted a Christmas tree in a loose space that had remained empty after the demolition of several buildings. Within the structural transformation of the city, a big urban development plan that was approved in 1985 had promised to create new public spaces and urban facilities for the historically impoverished and crowded population of Santa Caterina. From the viewpoint of the local inhabitants, the plan was taking too long to be effective, and for this reason, they decided to plant a fir tree in the middle of what was meant to be a local garden, according to the original plan. This collective action of territorial marking took place in the midst of a series of accusations towards the seemingly *laissez-faire* policy of the City Council, which was identified by the population of Santa Caterina as being co-responsible for the violent processes of the expropriation of dwellings and for urban speculation dynamics that pushed the local inhabitants away from “their” neighbourhood. The local inhabitants believed that the City Council and private investors wanted to gentrify the area by building high-standard dwellings and opening ‘trendy’ shops and elite restaurants, which had already happened in the adjacent neighbourhood (*e/ Born*). The Christmas tree began to symbolise the people’s claim for a green public space and their protest against a new project to build an underground sports’ facility and parking lots in the area. The tree was poisoned a few days after it was planted, and then a new one was replanted. This second tree was removed a few weeks later by the municipal workers, and the local police forces controlled the area to impede access to the place by the neighbours, who had already created the *Col·lectiu del Forat de la Vergonya* (the Hole of Shame Collective). Over the next years, the Hole of Shame, which was a name that expressed the neighbours’ feelings of discontent, became the site of an active struggle to appropriate, shape and control the urban space. After the tree was chopped, the Collective encroached on the area again and planted more trees. The police evicted the neighbours, removed the urban orchard and fenced the area, which was physically re-appropriated by the neighbours and groups of urban activists ten days later. The site became ‘the Hole of Shame Self-Managed Park’: the occupants planted flower-beds, made a football pitch, and created benches and an open theatre setting. These territorial actions led to a grassroots’ strategy that demanded a local, green public space and was against a city-scale, market-driven and commoditised urban area. The struggle lasted until 2007, when the Park was removed, the occupants were evicted, and a new public space that followed the official design standards was created after a controversial consultation process.

Locational Citizenship: Contested Psychological Assumptions

The experience of spatial appropriation in the Hole of Shame informs us about the relationship between public space and citizenship based on the terms that were defined in the earlier sections. The material that is used in this section is derived from sixteen personal interviews with the spokesmen of the main parties that were involved in the conflict (i.e., 3 district councillors, 5 occupants, 5 representatives of neighbours who opposed the occupation, the urban developer, the urban planner and the community mediator). Interviewees were contacted personally by the author between November 2005 and March 2006, during the period in which the 'Self-managed Park of the Hole of Shame' hosted its maximum variety of users and activities. Most of the interviews were conducted on the premises of civic organisations that were located within the area comprised by the Hole of Shame (i.e., they were in-place interviews, which reinforced the natural/contextual validity and the geographic indexicality of the accounts). The interview script included open-ended questions, which addressed the meanings that were attributed to the Hole of Shame by its users and its nearby inhabitants, as well as their views and opinions about the causes of the socio-spatial conflict and the future of the space. In previous work, transcriptions were analysed according to a discursive-rhetorical framework (see Di Masso, Dixon, & Pol, 2011, for details on the analytic strategy). However, for the purposes of this article, literal extracts will only be used to illustrate the place-based psychological assumptions that connect public space to citizenship. The sample of extracts selected and presented in the next section cover a variety of accounts that relate citizenship issues and place processes when discussing the meanings, purposes and functions of the Hole of Shame as a public space.

Citizenship and Place Identity

A common-sense idea about public space is that it is available to everybody. This means that the right to the city is a universal right: public space belongs to every citizen, and every citizen is entitled to use public space. However, this self-evident idea is complicated by an equally self-evident assumption about place-belonging, according to which a public space must be primarily available for the citizens who live nearby because they are its 'natural' beneficiaries, given the spatial proximity. This second assumption paradoxically constructs the right to the city as a hierarchically organised set of spatial entitlements. The following extracts from interviews with the representatives of the local inhabitants who rejected the occupation of the Hole of Shame (Extracts 1 and 2) and from the spokesman of the urban developers (Extract 3) exemplify this assumption (stressed in italics):

Extract 1

C: "the one who has to enjoy the neighbourhood is *the resident, not those coming from elsewhere*." (Interview with a representative of the local inhabitants positioned against the occupation of the space)

Extract 2

G: (...) when more *external agents of the Casc Antic surroundings* act [upon the space], then there are occupied buildings, and there are more alternative collectives that also affect this dynamic of intervention upon the space that has been abandoned by the Ajuntament [City Council].

S: And one must note that not all of those people who are in the space, *not all of them are from the Casc Antic or live in the Casc Antic*. (Interview with two representatives of the local inhabitants positioned against the occupation of the space)

Extract 3

F: The original idea, let's say, was to transform what was a busy road Via Laietana into a space *for the people who live there* (...): an open space, a space open, where *the first to enjoy it are the neighbours* but that the city can enjoy globally (...). (Interview with the spokesman of the urban development municipal agency)

Extracts 1 and 2 belong to a discursive context of complaint, in which C, G and S justify their opposition to the occupants' use of the space. This narrative of complaint mobilises the idea that the situation of the Hole of Shame was not acceptable because the people who occupied and used the space *did not belong in the neighbourhood* (i.e., 'people from elsewhere', 'external agents', and not 'being from' or not 'living in' the Casc Antic). There is an identity construction, which is defined by belonging to the place (i.e., place identity), that depicts neighbourhood insiders (i.e., residents and people from the Casc Antic) as being more entitled to the space of the neighbourhood than outsiders (i.e., people who lack the sort of place identity of local inhabitants). C highlights this explicitly, whereas S stresses a breach of this normalised assumption by reminding the interviewer of the lack of local place identity of the occupants of the Hole of Shame. In Extract 3, the urban developer, who is mostly concerned with pleasing the representatives of the anti-occupation stakeholders (who all lived in the Casc Antic), also addresses the place identity argument by stating that the official project for the Hole of Shame is principally oriented to the needs and wishes of its primary beneficiaries (i.e., 'the people who live there' or 'the neighbours').

In all three of these cases, belonging to the place implies a taken-for-granted territorial ownership by the 'neighbours', which warrants their privileged right to be in the Hole of Shame and to decide what happens in it because it is located within 'their' territory. The legitimacy of people-from-elsewhere taking part in the Hole of Shame process is consequently weakened. The right to the city appears, here, to be a hierarchical arrangement of entitlements that segments citizenship on the basis of spatial belonging. In conceptual terms, this introduces the idea that citizenship status and recognition can be derived from place-identity understandings that warrant territorial privileges over public space. Interestingly, this asymmetry in the right to the city was contested and dissolved in the occupants' discourse when they appealed to the image of the Hole of Shame as an ideal democratic public space that welcomed every citizen, regardless of their place identity:

Extract 4

X: All the projects, as well as the maintenance of the park, are planned and discussed in the collective's assemblies, which gather once a week in the square and that very different people attend *from the neighbourhood or from elsewhere* who have joined the struggle. (Interview with two representatives of the occupants)

These words depict the Hole of Shame as a sort of Greek agora, where responsible citizens who take care of the 'maintenance' of the park jointly deliberate and 'discuss' the 'projects' for the space. Framed as a democratic 'assembly', the extrematised (Potter, 1996) presence of all sorts of publics ('very different people') is thereby normalised and even positively connoted as a public space is defined by maximum social inclusion (i.e., accepting all citizens). Without discussing its rhetorical details, what this extract shows is that place identity, as a psychological category of belonging that draws a line in the field of citizenship, is easily contestable by equally common-sense assumptions about the unrestricted publicity of public space. Neighbourhood outsiders can be welcome and accepted as citizenship insiders because public space presupposes an unlimited acceptance of publics.

Citizenship and Place-Related Propriety

People's identity and status as citizens may also be constructed and contested in locational terms by referring to the spatial manners that are displayed in public space (Dixon et al., 2006). In other words, 'good' and 'bad' citizens can be defined by the way that they behave in public, which features morally connoted issues of civility. The stakeholders who were involved in the Hole of Shame conflict deployed discourses that addressed this question:

Extract 5

C: He [name of a neighbour] (...) called any social conflict group, a conflict, huh? *civic conflict*, squatters, Algerians, I remember a documentary on television, the rooftops of that environment better not to, *they were jumping from one roof to another*, so they *entered one building and came out three buildings further along*, buildings that were already evicted and waiting to be knocked down (...); their meeting point was Carders with Allada-Vermell (...): that was, I mean *like their playground*; I mean that *they lived there, and they lived there for as many hours as they were interested*. (Interview with the district councillor, 1999-2003)

This is an extract of an interview with the district councillor between 1999 and 2003, when the conflict in the Hole of Shame reached maximum violence. To discursively justify her incapacity to manage the conflict during her mandate, the councillor depicted the space as an ungovernable environment that was appropriated by trouble-makers ('civic conflict groups', 'squatters', and 'Algerians'). The transgressive character of these identities (beyond deep-seated common prejudices) is accounted for by describing *how they used the public space*. First, there is an apparent breach of the normal and decent ways of moving in the urban space, which certainly does not include jumping between rooftops and moving into and out of buildings. Second, there is a violation of a time-and-space implicit norm that regulates life in public, which implies that when the occupation of a public space takes too much in time, it becomes excessive and, therefore, potentially exclusionary. These groups '*lived there as many hours as they were interested*' (i.e., the space seemed to be '*their playground*'), which is clearly inappropriate if public space is meant for everybody. Hence, the right to the city is characterised by the free use of public space, as much as it presupposes respecting the spatial and temporal norms that enable all citizens to freely use public space (e.g., correct displacements and not self-appropriating a space for an excessively large period of time). The label '*civic conflict*' precisely foregrounds this place-transgression as a matter of civility, or a breach of the norm of coexistence that regulates citizenship relations in public.

In contrast to the Councillor's account, on the side of the occupants there was a permanent concern about depicting the Hole of Shame as a space that hosted the types of appropriate uses and correct behaviours that define a normal public space. Their discourse also confirmed that civic spatial manners allow for good, acceptable public spaces:

Extract 6

I: Who uses the Hole of the Shame?

X: Look, the use that, the spontaneous use, I mean, the use that doesn't come from the social organisations is the use of a square, of a square that is in a very bad state but is *used by the people as a public square*. What happens is that it's very deteriorated, but there are neighbours; there are *kids playing football*; *there are the elderly*; it's mainly *used by the people from the neighbourhood*...

V: No, and it is also *cleaned by some neighbours*, and furthermore, there is the basketball pitch, which is *used by a group with supervisors*, and it's used by the neighbours. (Interview with two representatives of the occupants)

The occupants' account clearly contrasts with the Councillor's version of the socio-spatial anomie in the Hole of Shame. Regardless of how deteriorated the space was, it was used as a 'public square' for civic purposes (e.g., for the children to play and for the elderly to enjoy) and in a civic manner (i.e., it was cleaned up, and activities were supervised by trained adults). Moreover, it was not just the occupants who used it, but 'the people from the neighbourhood' broadly, which fulfils the universal ideal of inclusion (however limited, in this case, to the boundaries of local inhabitants' place-identity, which is referred to in the previous subsection).

These examples support the argument that spatial enactments of the right to the city must be appropriately staged and performed in public space in order to be admissible and correct. It is not only about *who* has the right to access and use public space, but it is also about *how* to be in public space. This defines (un)civic behaviour as a set of (counter)normative spatial manners that occur in public and bind citizenship and public space to each other. It must be noted here that this locational view of citizenship considers civility to be a fundamental value and a normative requirement that is based less on the civic rituals of *social* interaction than on common assumptions about civic *socio-spatial* behaviour. Within this locational frame, civility implies a moral re-substantiation of public *space* that is added to the ethical know-how of civic, dislocated face-to-face interaction. In turn, it defines the 'good' and the 'bad' citizens as emplaced identity constructions according to which the people's (il)legitimacy as (in)competent occupants of the public sphere depends on their will or (im)possibility to accept the dominant norms of spatial civility.

Citizenship and Place-Making Agency

A third psychological assumption that locates citizenship in public space extends the issue of spatial propriety from the domains of moral decorum (Dixon et al., 2006) to ordinary understandings about the socio-spatial order in democratic societies. The question, in this case, refers to the limits of citizens' spontaneity and agency in regard to the material creation of public spaces. The 'conflictivist' perspective of public space reminds us that a basic tenet of the right to the city is the citizen's unmediated capacity to appropriate and produce the city-space, especially to claim justice and flag his/her political rights. Additionally, the same idea of democratic citizenship concedes that citizens play a role in shaping the public sphere by participating in the design and management of public space (e.g., via participatory budgets, consultation processes, etc.). If public space is for the people, it is expected that the people should contribute to shaping public space according to their own needs and desires (Carr et al., 1992).

The spatial occupation and self-construction of the Hole of Shame manifested the contested boundaries of what we shall refer to as 'place-making agency', which is defined as the active role of citizens in the physical production of public space. The representatives of the urban developers (Extract 7) and of the occupants (Extract 8) synthesised their views of the spatial appropriation in the Hole of Shame (see Di Masso, 2012, for analytical details):

Extract 7

F: Now, [the space] it's in a situation of impasse, an abnormal impasse *from the point of view of the citizen*. For any reason that one may or may not have, *there is not a single citizen who is allowed to appropriate a space, make it his own, grow his own orchard there, or do whatever he wants*. It's evident that public

space is for everyone, and nobody can close it off and make it his own. (Interview with the spokesman of the urban development municipal agency)

Extract 8

X: We saw that the Ayuntamiento was implementing the same city model here, as in Born and La Ribera, and then *the struggle became concentrated in the Hole of Shame* because it was the only remaining place where the neighbours identified that there could be a square, what we refer to as the plaza mayor of the neighbourhood, yes? (...) *the struggle concentrated on that*. Then, *by means of a large amount of popular pressure*, three years ago now, well, it was achieved. (Interview with a representative of the occupants)

What the developer says in Extract 7 is that the citizens' taken-for-granted freedom of appropriation of public space does not include spontaneous construction and enclosure. The ideological dilemma that this foregrounds will be discussed in the next section. It is appropriate to mention here that when common sense dictates that 'public space is for everybody', this does not mean that everyone can claim ownership over it, but rather, it means that *nobody* can do that. Therefore, it is a deviant act of citizenship ('an abnormal impasse, from the point of view of the citizen') to encroach on a public space and to close it off, regardless of the type of justification that is given ('for any reason that one may or may not have'). Agency is thus reduced to the access to and normatively delimited usage of public space, but it does not include spontaneous place-making.

In contrast to this idea, the occupant in Extract 8 frames the spatial appropriation as a 'popular struggle' for a public 'plaza mayor' (central town square) that is against the 'Barcelona Model' ('we saw that the Ayuntamiento was implementing the same city model here...'). This narrative legitimises the occupation as a politically ridden collective action to conquer the right to the city by materially encroaching on a space and making it public (against the will and interests of private investors). The marginalised population of Santa Caterina had waited too long for a green space that was promised years before and now felt threatened by the exclusionary, gentrifying plans. Encroaching on a public space and producing it appeared to be a logic reaction to the politically hostile circumstances. Appropriation was, thus, a legitimate enactment of citizenship that would open public space for everybody to enjoy: a spatial action that would reinforce the people's right to the city.

The 'place-making agency' dimension of locational citizenship ultimately stresses that the (il)legitimacy of material transformations of public space is contingent upon different views of the citizen's political status vis-à-vis the State: the citizen either being an antagonistic agent who struggles for social change against the institutional powers or a political subject who complies with the State's authority, according to standard democratic procedures. There is a structure-agency friction here that lies at the core of modern democracies and opposes two equally common sense assumptions about public space: on the one hand, citizens are entitled to confront the State, and public space is the main resource and stage to do this. On the other hand, the State has authority over public space because it allegedly represents the citizens' will. The final section of the chapter broadens this and other ideological dilemmas of public space and locational citizenship.

Ideological Dilemmas That Frame Locational Understandings of Citizenship

Common representations of the citizen include place-related understandings that re-specify belonging, status and entitlements as locational components of citizenship that are rooted in public space. The Hole of Shame case has been useful in illustrating, for instance, how higher citizenship status and recognition can be derived from the psychological assumptions about the territorial privilege over a public space of those who belong to a space-bound community (i.e., place identity). Additionally, it has been discussed how positive acceptance and the identity of being a 'good' citizen depend on how public space is used and on the extent to which spontaneous actions of city-making challenge or respect State-defined protocols of city-making. These common assumptions are actively contested when, for instance, they are formulated as a part of political strategies that either warrant or reject a dominant paradigm of public space-making (e.g., the 'Barcelona Model').

These locational assumptions connect the competing understandings of the meaning, functions and norms of public space to the psychological boundaries of citizenship. More specifically, they connect the everyday politics of public space to the ideological construction of the citizen in two main ways. On the one hand, normative representations of spatial behaviour in public lead to different views of the citizen that confirm or challenge particular versions of the social order. On the other hand, spatial talk provides a new language that warrants or discounts controversial practices of social control, which are precisely in the name of citizenship.

Regarding the first connection between the politics of public space and the construction of citizenship, it can be stated that the three sets of place-related psychological assumptions that were discussed in the previous section echo three ideological dilemmas (Billig et al., 1988) that are shared by debates about public space and about citizenship. First, place-identity understandings trace a line of *inclusion and exclusion* in the field of citizenship by conferring the privilege of voice and vote in the creation and use of public spaces to those who are considered as *belonging in* the place. This constructs a psychological boundary within the right to the city, which undermines both equality as a central value of citizenship and the universality of publics as a core aspect of public space. Hence, the paradox here is that not all the citizens are equally entitled to take part in a public space which is, at the same time, for every citizen to enjoy.

Second, contested assumptions about (im)proper behaviour in public refract a broader tension about *freedom and control* in public space (see Dixon et al., 2006). As the liberal tradition of negative liberty recalls, the very essence of the act of freedom involves awareness of its own limits. Citizens' freedom must unfold until it reaches the limits of the freedom of others. When this is translated to public space language, free use implicates respecting the others' possibility to use public space in their own terms. This, in practice, transforms the citizens' freedom of use of public space into a complex interplay of civic limitations; therefore, what one can 'freely' do in public depends on what the other can legitimately claim. The ideological problem here arises when defining the criteria for those limitations, in addition to their discretionary application, depending on the case.

Finally, assumptions about place-making agency resonate with an ideological dilemma opposing *social order and disorder*. As was stated earlier, citizens are entitled to appropriate public space in order to protest and render their claims visible, but this should always occur within the democratic norms that regulate the expression of public dissent. Active appropriations that go beyond these norms (e.g., the occupation of the Hole of Shame) are generally

perceived (in the hegemonic political imaginary) to be problematic, anti-democratic, anti-civic and anomic, which was clearly reflected in the words of the urban developer in Extract 7. The order/disorder tension ultimately questions the *public* ownership of public space, which seems to be either the people's or the State's property.

The second connection between the politics of place and the ideological construction of the citizen considers that locational understandings may be mobilised in discourse as metonymic formulations that warrant opinions and actions that can be profoundly exclusionary from the point of view of citizenship (see Di Masso, Castrechini, & Valera, 2014). In regard to the Hole of Shame struggle, discussions about 'squatters' or 'immigrants' being unwanted users would have exposed many neighbours to be perceived as ordinary bigots, which would diminish the legitimacy of their protest against the occupants. Place-identity talk and the rhetoric of spatial manners were more effective in justifying the negative depiction and the removal of such categories of people. The discourse of spatial relations in public, which is filled with common sense assumptions about who belongs where and how a public space should be properly used, provided a legitimate framework for promoting the exclusion of unwanted publics. It was just a matter of saying that those people did not belong to the neighbourhood and that their spatial usages were not adequate (i.e., they were 'bad' citizens and out of place). This is even more evident when looking at Barcelona's municipal bylaw against incivilities, which was enforced in January 2006 to ban behaviours in public places that were qualified as indecent. While theoretically designed to be an instrument for preserving the 'exemplary' character of the city's public space against an alleged state of urban chaos, the bylaw had the practical effect of persecuting vulnerable groups that were more likely to breach the norms, such as the homeless (e.g., washing in the fountains or sleeping in the streets), the sex workers (e.g., offering sex in the open space) or the undocumented immigrants (e.g., selling in the streets). The bylaw redefined such practices as 'incivilities' that are unbecoming of a good citizen. In other words, the spatial language of civility has provided, in Barcelona, an ideological framework that normalises the exclusion of certain 'problematic' publics, precisely in the name of citizenship. No racial, class or gender prejudice and no urban marketing strategy allegedly motivated these measures: these people's use of the public space was simply wrong. These sorts of 'sanitising' practices (Sibley, 1995) demonstrate what the conflictivist thesis about public space reveals: that public space is less related to maximum inclusion than to normalising socially acceptable ways of excluding.

Conclusion

Condor (2011) has recently underlined the need "to explore ways in which social psychologists might profitably engage with current debates concerning citizenship" (p. 196). This article has provided arguments that show how the study of public space may contribute to materialising this engagement. I have postulated the existence of a spatial dimension of citizenship (i.e., locational citizenship) that is defined by the citizens' entitlement and capacity to have and to make for himself/herself a legitimate place in public space. In this frame, the identity of 'the citizen' is discursively worked through a set of place-related experiences of membership, recognition, status, entitlements, agency and normative behaviour, which are located and staged in the city's public spaces. The contested nature of these place-related categories confirms the troubled character of citizenship as a psychological construction, whose boundaries of belonging, positive recognition and social positioning are constantly re-drawn via the language of place. Ultimately, I have argued that this locational construction of citizenship implicates a micropolitics of public space: a network of contested place-representations and territorial practices that have normative effects upon the ideological reproduction of the socio-spatial order in the city.

'Micropolitics' means here that power relations in public go far beyond social protest and the institutionalised practices of social control and resistance. These also include ordinary bodily gestures, spatial uses and common sense beliefs about 'normal' and 'inappropriate' behaviour in public. The micropolitics of public space are, on the one hand, a disciplinary mechanism of citizenship, whereby the 'good' citizen self-regulates his/her embodied performances in public. On the other hand, it is a regime of governmentality that is rooted in common sense and makes, unmakes and 'subjectifies' the citizen as the 'locus' of a set of normative ways of thinking, feeling, talking and acting, which ensure positive acceptance in the public sphere.

This locational framework for the study of citizenship can be further developed and problematised by considering three related topics. First, a focus on the sorts of embodied and affective practices that articulate everyday experiences of citizenship in public space would expand the limited focus on place discourse (e.g., Di Masso & Dixon, 2015; Durrheim, Rautenbach, Nicholson, & Dixon, 2013; Wetherell, 2012). This would allow us to examine locational citizenship as an unfolding 'assemblage' of place-talk, feelings of citizenship and spatial enactments that goes beyond the narrower approach to spatial discourse, which, it could be argued, is less sensitive to the where-dimension of citizenship than to the how-people-talk-about-where. Second, the notion of belonging as a central feature in the experience of being a citizen could be revisited from an intersectional approach (e.g., Carolissen, 2012; Yuval-Davis, 2011), which is less concerned with boundaries than with multiple standpoints and identifications that reconstruct 'the citizen' in each situation. Finally, the connection (in this article) between place-related citizenship talk and the Barcelona Model reveals the 'glocal' nature of certain ideological dilemmas. This means that although the dominant trends of city-making are widespread and refract the same sort of ideological tensions in many cities (e.g., freedom-control, private-public), the local translation of these dilemmas generates context-specific political meanings of public space as a common ground. Social-psychological analyses of citizenship as a spatial category would certainly benefit from these types of approaches.

Funding

The author has no funding to report.

Competing Interests

The author has declared that no competing interests exist.

Acknowledgments

The author wants to thank the two anonymous reviewers for their insightful comments on earlier drafts of this article.

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