



Learning from informality? Rethinking the mismatch between formal policy strategies and informal tactics of citizenship

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Abstract

Democratic governance is increasingly focused on active citizenship. Governments in the Global North seek to make residents responsible for improving their communities. Democracy, however, is not solely experienced in abstract terms, it also materializes through more informal everyday interactions with public officials. This article explores the significance of routine and performative street-level encounters that shape people's experience of belonging or exclusion in a democratic state through a methodology of narrative mapping. Two ethnographic vignettes reveal the disjuncture between formal policy strategies that seek to foster citizenship and residents' informal tactics to perform citizenship in an urban neighborhood in the Netherlands. The article underscores a paradox: the fact that formal strategies can inadvertently disrupt informal citizenship tactics, and thereby undermine the goals of an inclusive project.

Keywords

Citizenship, governance, informality/formality, narrative mapping, street-level interactions

Introduction

... people experience deprivation and oppression within a concrete setting, not as the end product of large and abstract processes, and it is the concrete experience that molds their discontent into specific grievances against specific targets. ... People on relief [for example] experience the shabby waiting rooms, the overseer or case-worker, and the dole. ... it is the

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daily experience of people that shapes their grievances, establishes the measure of their demands, and points out the targets of their anger. (Piven and Cloward, 1977: 20–21)

If belonging and exclusion are experienced through everyday experiences at the street-level, the street becomes the prime realm in which to study both citizenship and democracy. Democracies in the Global North have been challenged with what some have called a ‘democratic deficit’ (Norris, 2011). The struggle for democratic legitimacy pushes politicians and civil servants to formulate new ways to actively engage citizens in decision-making. In response to issues like disintegrated communities, migration, multi-problem neighborhoods, and deficits on the welfare state account, European democracies have increasingly focused on fostering citizenship as an answer. Dutch governance, in particular, has been infatuated with the effort to create citizenship (Hurenkamp et al., 2012; Schinkel and Van Houdt, 2010). Inspired by a multitude of reports that urged ‘self-regulation’ and ‘active citizenship’ (Veldheer et al., 2012; WRR, 2012), national policies are focusing on urban disadvantaged neighborhoods. These policies seek to make citizens responsible for improving the security and integration of immigrants in their communities.

In this article, I seek to make sense of citizenship, not in abstract terms, but through the way it is practiced and contested at the street-level. The shift from policies to street-level practice is important because,

The decisions of street-level bureaucrats, the routines they establish, and the devices they invent to cope with uncertainties and work pressures, effectively become the public policies they carry out. ... [P]ublic policy is not best understood as made in legislatures or top-floor suites of high-ranking administrators, because in important ways it is actually made in the crowded offices and daily encounters of street-level workers. (Lipsky, 1980: xii)

I explore the everyday encounters between formal strategies of public officials and the informal tactics of residents and assess the short- and long-term significance of each for the creation of a democratic public.

The article begins with a description of narrative mapping that enables the reader to understand the subjective experiences of public officials and residents through both their stories as well as everyday routines in the neighborhood. Then I place this methodology within the context of the academic debate about informal citizenship, proposing the distinction between ‘tactical’ and ‘strategic’ citizenship. Lastly, we turn to two ethnographic vignettes of everyday encounters to analyze the relationship between formal and informal performances of citizenship.

A methodological proposition: Narrative mapping

The insight that democratic realities are discursively produced at the street-level requires a methodology that enables a description and analysis of street-level encounters. I propose a dramaturgical methodology whereby the researcher observes and analyzes the ways in which people make use of ‘scripts’ that construe appropriate behavior, how they behave in specific ‘settings’, and how they ‘stage’ their role or identity in interactions with others (Hajer, 2009: 66).

This dramaturgical approach is what I call ‘narrative mapping’ and it accommodates three forms of ethnographic data: thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973) of street-level encounters, narrative maps¹ of the neighborhood that reveal actors’ memories of everyday experiences, and stories of stakeholders who reflect on their experiences. It allows observing how people’s practices discursively produce urban communities, but also where and how different practices clash at the street-level.

A theoretical proposition: Tactical and strategic citizenship

Where in a liberal democratic sense the notion of citizenship refers to representation through formal elected assemblies (Isin and Turner, 2002: 132), the concept of representation has been reinterpreted to deal with the ways in which meanings of citizenship are discursively construed in practice and deliberation (Dryzek, 2000; Sysner, 2011: 112; Young, 2000). My attempt to study street-level interactions is in line with the latter approach.

By understanding citizenship through performance – the ways in which residents themselves practice citizenship in relation to how public officials practice citizenship policy at the street-level – this article proposes a grounded theoretical approach to the emerging literature (Chauvin and Garces-Mascarenas, 2012; Hall and Lamont, 2013; Sassen, 2002). Grounded theory allows developing theoretical insights from informants’ notion of citizenship ‘that reveal alternative interpretations of citizenship practices than the state-focused model’ (Stack, 2012: 882). This emic approach speaks to a concern of scholars who argue that there is a theoretical and empirical gap in understanding citizenship beyond the state (Piper and Von Lieres, 2015).

Informal tactics of citizenship do not fit neatly with modern planning approaches in both the Global North and South (Devlin, 2011). City governments in the Global North must rethink the formal–informal divide and seek ways for informality to strengthen neighborhoods (Davis, 2014: 390). An analysis of everyday encounters in a city in the Netherlands provides an opportunity to learn from the ways in which residents perform informal tactics to practice their ‘right to the city’ (Lefebvre, 1996 [1968]) in relation to formal governmental strategies that also seek to foster active citizenship.

To analyze bottom-up performances of citizenship and top-down performances of citizenship policies, I build on what De Certeau called the ‘practices of everyday life’ and his distinction between two types of practices: tactics and strategies (De Certeau, 1988). Strategies refer to the modernist practices of people in positions of power within politics, planning, and governing (De Certeau et al., 1980: 5). Tactics, by contrast, take place in ways that do not fit the conventions of political action and are often based on what Scott (1998) called tacit knowledge. Both strategies and tactics are performed at the street-level, but the former are a product of the formal policies and discretionary practices of public officials (Lipsky, 1980), and the latter emerge out of the capacity of individuals or groups to translate their tacit contextual knowledge into everyday informal action.

In order to analyze how informal tactics relate to formal strategies at the street-level, I analyze how ‘big’ and ‘small’ stories (Ochs and Capps, 2001) get performed on the street. Some stories are more easily voiced than others (Bamberg, 2006; Freeman, 2006; Georgakopoula, 2006). Big stories are often based on widely accepted knowledge and

interpretations of what is at stake in a neighborhood and what is the best approach to deal with problems. Formal policies strategies could be understood as big stories. On the other hand, small stories provide a less accepted perspective of what is at stake. Informal tactics of small groups of citizens could be understood as small stories. Small stories do not refer to the dominant understanding of what is at stake, and provide an alternative storyline that is often based on personal experience. They are prone to be cast aside as ‘not representative’ and are therefore more difficult to voice in the public sphere. In other words, they have less ‘tellability’ (Norrick, 2005).

Studying democracy through informal tactics and formal strategies provides a means for recognizing that everyday life spaces are critical sites for the constitution of different forms of citizenship, and a medium through which citizenship negotiations take place (Davis and Raman, 2012; Holston and Appadurai, 1999; Isin, 2000). It helps demonstrate that ‘informality is not “outside” the formal systems, but is instead produced by formal structures and always intimately related to them’ (Porter, 2011: 116). Residents’ informal tactics of citizenship can only be understood in relationship to a government’s formal strategies to foster citizenship.

Why formal vs. informal citizenship in the Netherlands?

The Netherlands is an interesting case because recent events have challenged the political contract between citizens and the state in ways that call into question past mechanisms for ‘good citizenship’. Historically, the Dutch welfare state fused welfare and work in ways that equated citizenship rights with inclusionary government policies protecting the right to work and the right to income (Esping-Andersen, 1990: 28). Over the last decades, however, the Dutch welfare state has adopted an aggressive form of neoliberal governance. At the local level, city governments, social housing cooperation, and welfare organizations are expected to make citizens responsible for taking an active role in making their communities livable (WRR, 2012). Making citizens responsible for ‘security’ and the ‘integration’ of migrants is considered to be an important component of what governments understand as ‘good citizenship’ (Uitermark et al., 2005).

How do these new practices with respect to ‘security’ and ‘integration’ intersect with contemporary forms of citizenship, whether formal or informal? The neighborhood Zuilen in Utrecht is one of the Vogelaar neighborhoods, a policy scheme that defined 40 multi-problem neighborhoods that needed special attention in order to tackle the issues of high rates of criminal activities, low-income families, and inhabitants with a migrant background. City governments became responsible for facilitating citizen activities and distributing resources equally across citizens with different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, aligning active and inactive citizens, and paying extra attention to people who are excluded – often migrants living in multicultural neighborhoods (Tonkens, 2009: 18–19).

In its heyday, the neighborhood of Zuilen was a major industrial hub where the employees of two railway factories lived in well-kept social housing projects. As a result of the steel crisis, the factories closed in 1989. Thereafter, Zuilen faced high unemployment rates and many laborers moved away. Local policy documents describe today’s Zuilen in terms of a multi-ethnic population. The local government, the welfare

organization, and the social housing corporation work within the framework of an ongoing regeneration plan that emphasizes decreasing ‘security’ and ‘participation’ (Wijkbureau Noordwest, 2007). Many of the targets in this plan were located around Zwanenvecht Square – the square that is the backdrop in this study. Let us turn to two ethnographic vignettes that reveal how these formal strategies to foster security and participation interact with informal tactics of citizenship at the street-level.

Stories of security and participation

Story of policy practitioners

The story of policy practitioners of the local borough starts by addressing the problem of security via crime rates and a survey that the local council carried out on experiences of ‘insecurity’ among residents. These figures formulated a problem definition that emphasizes the role of youngsters who threaten the experience of security in the living environment:

Very defining for the question of whether people can live comfortably is the social living environment. There is much room for improvement here. Think for example of youth nuisance and the improvement of social interaction among neighbors. (Neighborhood action plan, September 2007: 6)

Policing youth nuisance and improving social interactions among neighbors accordingly became the markers of improving the living environment around the square. The neighborhood manager explains:

The youth nuisance is really the primary motive that influences security in the neighborhood. (Neighborhood manager, June 2010, personal communication)

Policy practitioners produced a problem definition about security and participation that emphasizes the theme of ‘threat’ and regards the public space of the neighborhood as the most important realm that is being threatened. In line with the national emphasis on security and the integration of migrants (Schinkel and Van Houdt, 2010), the local government formulated a policing strategy that focused on dealing with immigrant youth who use the public space to hang out together in their leisure time:

There is a group of 43 youngsters that can be quite annoying. And if they strike, the number [of the security index] decreases. ... the police and welfare and everyone else focuses on that group. That is how bizarre reality is, that such a group can have such a great impact on the overall atmosphere. (Area manager, June 2010, personal communication)

In response, a policy was formulated to promote physical interventions seeking to change the routines of what they call *hangjongeren* or ‘loitering youth’. This directly relates to the formal story of policy practitioners – a narrative that is based on declining security measures and rising crime rates. This local narrative becomes the dominant interpretation of what is at stake in the neighborhood, especially since the data are in line with the

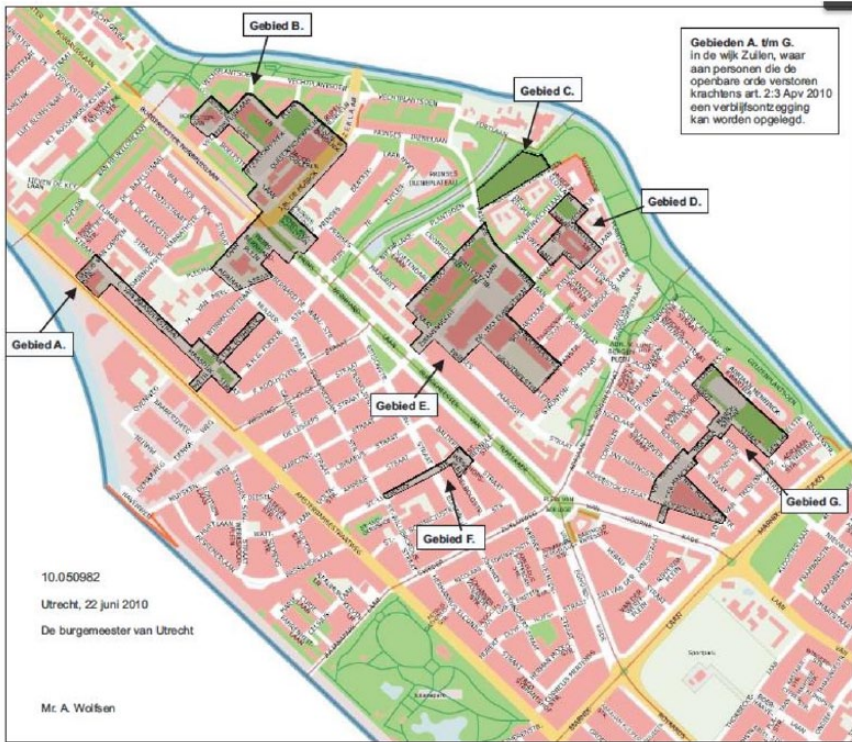


Figure 1. Map of problematic spaces by the local government.

national policy story (Roe, 1994) that relates security to high numbers of immigrant families. The singular problem definition being ‘youth nuisance’ therefore leads to a strategy that is focused on spatial interventions.

The intervention strategy includes a map that depicts the most problematic spaces in the neighborhood (Figure 1). Area D marks the Zwanenvecht Square neighborhood. As early as 2006, the neighborhood came to be understood as an ‘area of urgency’, where extra attention was paid to both repressive and oppressive security measures such as cameras and special policies for troubled youth who performed petty criminal activities. In the areas that are marked on the map, special measures to police the youth became allowed:

There are cameras in the public space. And there are gathering restraints. We drew in other youth workers, more direct welfare. (Security manager, June 2011, personal communication)

This approach to security thus assumes that participation leads to more integrated communities with less crime and nuisance, and more responsible citizens:

... we are no longer pampering, but we look for ways to engage people and make them partly responsible so that the public space gets better used and acquires a function that everyone wants. (Program manager neighborhood action plan, spring 2010, personal communication)

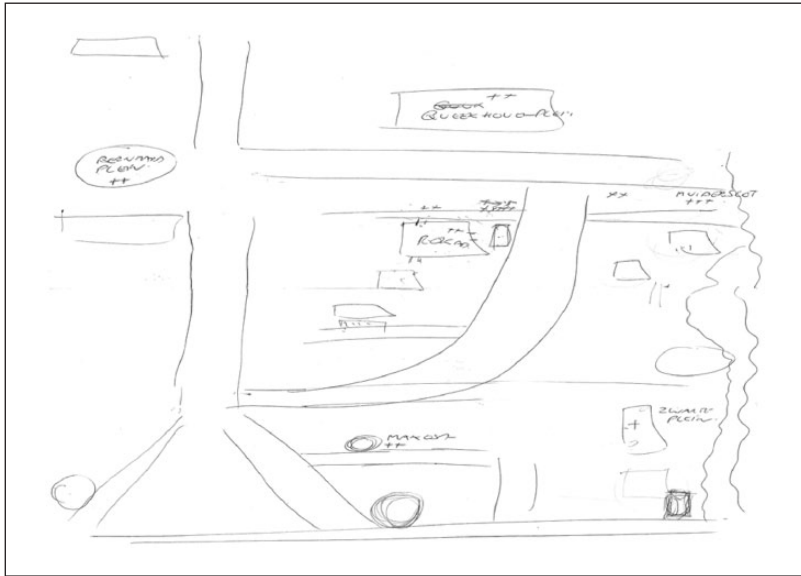


Figure 2. Map of problematic spaces by a local police officer.

Thus citizens are expected to participate in organizing ‘community activities’ and ‘maintaining public spaces’ in the neighborhood. The program manager explains how people should feel responsible for the way such places are used. It is important that ‘they [residents] start to address each other when things happen’ (program manager neighborhood action plan, spring 2010). More street-level professionals were assigned to police the public space and facilitate participatory activities at the street-level.

Story of a local police officer

In response to intervention strategies, specifically cameras, youngsters changed their spatial routines. A local police officer explains how youngsters seek to circumvent the gaze of the cameras:

And we have a number of cameras hanging here. At the shopping center [near the square] there is one [camera] and there is one at the square. Here [he draws a circle on his map; Figure 2] ... but they run to the other side into a living area and there they hide at the entrance to a building. (Neighborhood police officer, December 2010, personal communication)

The officer knows how youngsters consciously move to avoid the cameras. He circles the camera and points to the route that youngsters take to circumvent it. The camera is not able to register what happens beyond the square where the youngsters now hang out. Instead of public spaces, they are using semi-public spaces like staircases and the inner gardens of apartment blocks. Unintentionally, the strategy to police them has created a situation that makes policing more difficult.

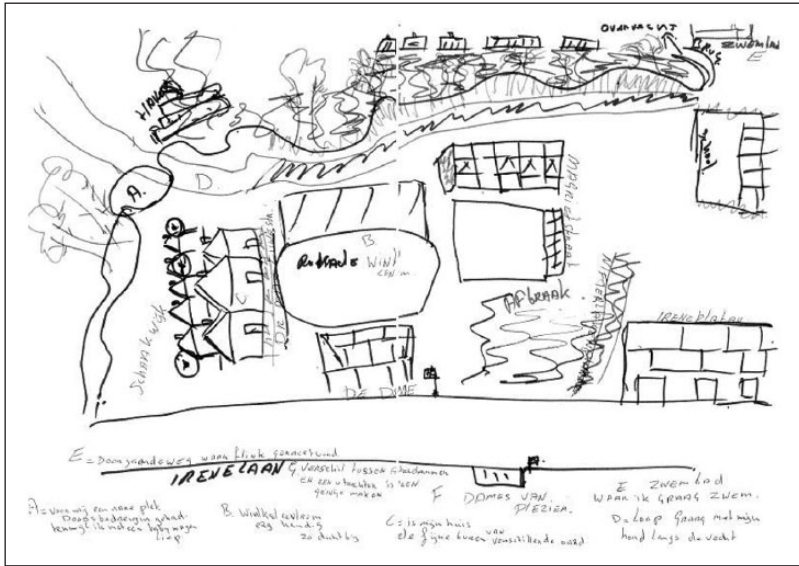


Figure 3. Map of problematic and good places by a citizen.

In response to this new problem, the local government developed a new strategy to install an official *hangplek*. *Hangplek* is a Dutch term that refers to a meeting place for youngsters in the public space. A *hangplek* looks like a bus stand beneath which neighborhood youngsters can hang out and stay dry. The new *hangplek* was supposed to prevent them from loitering in the staircases and wandering around the neighborhood, and was to be installed in a park next to the square.

Story of residents

The changing routines of the youth mark the starting point of the residents' storyline. The new and unexpected spaces where youth would linger changed the way in which other residents experienced security and participation in their daily routines. Contrary to the formal story of crime rates and youth nuisance, the story of residents tends to center on personal experiences.²

Through informal routines, neighbors have developed various tactics to deal with the challenge of feeling insecure and the varying usage of public space. For example, the dog walking club is an informal initiative of several ladies who share the same problem: they feel unsafe when they walk their dogs at night. One of the ladies describes an experience that has shaped the route of the dog walking club. Ms De Wit marks the site of her memory with an A on her map (see Figure 3). This is the place where the ladies never walk alone. The site is a street near the little harbor where a youngster threatened her. As she relates it, 'this is a miserable place for me. I was threatened to death while I walked there with a baby' (Ms De Wit, narrative mapping session, June 2011). The experience has a central place in her drawing and narrative of the neighborhood. She depicts the park and the route she walks with her dog with a D.

This small story (Georgakopoulou, 2006) about youth nuisance thus centers on a personal experience and enforces negative meaning onto the place where she drew an A. Her drawing assigns positive meaning to the path along the river (D). But, ‘the park next to the square is the only place where our dogs can run free’, one of the ladies explains. Since the cameras have forced youngsters from the square, however, they now use a small bench (which is the designated location of the future *hangplek*) to hang out at night. Thus, in order to have the dogs run free, the ladies have to pass the unpleasant spot, and south from where Ms De Wit drew an A, the youngsters on their bench.

In response to the presence of these youngsters, the ladies tacitly developed a coping mechanism in the form of ‘the dog walking club’. The dog walking routine allows them to walk their dogs in coexistence with the youngsters. The route crosses the square, passes over the path beside the river, and continues past point A into the park. Each night, they will leave at 11 o’clock, and everyone can join the trail directly from their own house. The route allows them to feel comfortable walking their dogs at night as a group. They explain:

(V3) Well, we basically leave the house at the same time and we all get there at the same time.

(V5) ... and then we walk together ... because that is cozy. (Ms De Wit, Mr Lavender, Mrs Lavender, narrative mapping session, June 2011, personal communication)

The big story of policy practitioners and the small story of residents are based on different understandings of what is at stake. As they are translated into strategies and tactics, they become performances at the street-level. When local authorities planned their formal strategy of the *hangplek*, they were not yet aware that it clashes with the informal tactic of residents. During an encounter between a local public official and residents of the dog walking club, the tension between the formal strategy and the informal tactic becomes apparent, as illustrated below.

Vignette one: Negotiating the *hangplek*

One afternoon in the spring of 2011, the security manager of the district council visits a community event at the square. The ladies of the dog walking club have heard that the local government is about to install an official *hangplek* for youngsters right on the path where they walk their dogs, and take the visit as an opportunity to speak with the manager. They ask the official to walk with them to the spot where the local government has decided to build the *hangplek*.

As the neighbors, security manager, and I leave the square, we take the route of the dog walking club, and the ladies explain their routine. The security manager does not respond to their complaints about the limited space for their dogs. As we cross the park, we take the path on which the *hangplek* is to be placed. First, the security manager utters her story of ‘threat’ and ‘security measures’. She explains that the local government has made a large effort to provide the youngsters with a *hangplek* and that this should take the nuisance away from the neighborhood. The professional script she uses tells her to express the formal storyline. This story has higher tellability as it refers to a widely accepted problem definition that is in line with national policies – a dominant problem definition that assigns the *hangplek* as the best solution to youth nuisance.

The ladies of the dog walking club disagree with her formal story. Their script limits them to voicing small stories. They explain their routine and argue that an official *hangplek* with a roof would attract even more youngsters. Ms De Wit clears her throat as she tries to voice her story about the threat she once faced. She starts with ‘one time I was walking here and I got threatened’. ‘Okay’, the policy practitioner responds, ‘but a *hangplek* keeps the youth away from the rest of the neighborhood.’ Ms De Wit swallows her emotions and steps back. She does not try to explain how her experience of threat relates to their dog walking practice. Ms Lavender takes over and once again tries to explain how the ladies walk their dogs. The security manager reasserts her formal point: ‘a *hangplek* will make the neighborhood safer’. But the ladies don’t listen anymore. They shrug their shoulders, quietly walk back to the square, and mingle into the festivities.

When stories turn into practices, they become tangible at the street-level. This vignette provides insight into a moment where formal strategies for increasing security in a neighborhood clash with the informal tactics of citizens who also seek a sense of security. One can see how the dominance of a formal storyline with high tellability unintentionally excludes the informal small story of citizenship. The dog walking club is a small-scale informal tactic that seems to be less salient in the broader policy strategies of security. Nevertheless, for the citizens, their tactic provides them with a sense of agency and security that they lose when the government decides to place a *hangplek* on their route. Although the street-level encounter that is described here might offer an opportunity to learn from an informal tactic of citizens, the details of the encounter reveal how residents experience exclusion from the decision about the *hangplek*. The formal not only structures the space in which the informal may take place (Porter, 2011), but unintentionally disrupts informal practices that may improve the quality of the public space in the neighborhood.

Let us look at a second vignette to understand how the formal strategy of participation relates to the informal tactics of neighbors to build community.

Vignette two: Negotiating activities at the square

A group of welfare professionals were assigned to facilitate children’s activities at the square. But they were unaware of informal activities already taking place. According to some of the more active residents, informal efforts to organize the public space around the square had become an important vehicle to get acquainted with residents of different ethnic backgrounds:

... And then we started to greet each other on the street, they asked how I was doing, how we were doing, how well we did and so on. People started to become interested. One came, then two, and at a certain point three, four ... (Jeanette, neighbor in narrative mapping session, June 2011, personal communication)

The informal activities that residents organized created a script of interaction that welcomed many different members of the community, neighbors Demet and Jeanette were able to attract a diverse group of residents to participate in activities. Many of them were fellow mothers. Engaging them had great value:

Yes, then we were able to work with the mothers. Mothers came out of their houses, they did not watch from behind their curtains or from their balconies. No, they came to the square with their children. (Jeanette, June 2011, personal communication)

The square became the focal point of tactical citizenship performances as informal interactions caused a sense of public familiarity that engaged mothers of different ethnic backgrounds.

At the same time, however, another practice unfolded at the square. Social workers framed their responsibility as to facilitate what citizens were unaccustomed to, while citizens' perceptions of the social workers' role were different:

And residents are not up-to-date on the changes, 'you get paid so you have to organize for us. We want a neighborhood party so you have to make sure the party will be there.' (Social worker, January 2011, personal communication)

According to social workers, people's expectations should change. The problem definition lies in the lack of citizen engagement in the community. Like the story of security, it becomes a big story with high tellability since the interpretation of what is at stake at the local level refers to the national policy goal of integrating immigrant communities through active citizen participation. Their strategy was to appoint certain days in the week to making toys available to children playing at the square. These 'play sessions', however, were regulated by two professionals who would oversee the children, thus introducing a different script with staged professionals who would wear T-shirts and jackets bearing the logo of their organization. Neighbor Jeanette explains the immediate effects of this 'professionalization':

We accomplished a lot. Now she [the Moroccan mother behind the window] looks down at the square and sees people of the [local welfare organization] with jackets with the organization's logo printed on it. They don't come [the mothers], no really, they don't. (Jeanette, June 2011, personal communication)

According to Jeanette, the presence of professionals disrupted the activities in the square because mothers would now stay inside their homes again. Whereas the other mothers were safe companions, the welfare workers were strangers. The strangeness of the professionals lies in nuanced details of the way activities were staged. The logos distinguished professionals from residents. The mothers lacked a script to interact with the professionals, and as a result, no longer participated in activities at the street-level. Whereas informal activities created a space for community, the script of formal activities and the staging of professionals symbolized the state and thereby transformed the public space into a regulated space where authorities police the setting.

Significantly, many neighbors stressed that they do not even know the difference between a social worker, a policymaker, and sometimes even a police officer. A person in a suit seems to express the welfare strategy of monitoring. The suit communicates formality that does not invite mothers of different ethnic backgrounds to come outside and participate in community activities.

The stories of policy practitioners and street-level professionals seem to directly contradict the stories of residents. Where professionals characterize residents as 'needy' and themselves as 'facilitators of empowerment', residents characterize themselves as 'self-organizing' and professionals as 'taking over'. Informal activities at the square tacitly created public familiarity that invited residents to participate as a community. These everyday interactions provided a basis to familiarize and integrate different people within the community. In contrast, the practice of formalizing informal interactions disrupted the public familiarity that neighbors constructed through everyday routines.

Conclusions

This article explored how democracy is discursively produced and experienced through everyday encounters at the street-level. 'Narrative mapping' provides a methodology to study these encounters as they get enacted in the urban realm. The resulting ethnographic vignettes provided the basis for a dramaturgical analysis of the relationship between the informal tactics of citizenship and formal strategies to foster citizenship.

The case study shows that in the Global North, it is significant to study informal practices through which residents perform a 'right to the city' claim (Lefebvre, 1996 [1968]). In the everyday reality of formal governance, these tactical performances of citizenship are ignored or disrupted. The formal understanding of citizenship leaves little space to recognize the value of informal and tactical activities. The informal social and spatial performances of residents were not understood as citizenship by the policy practitioners or by other street-level professionals.

The vignettes underscore a paradox. The street-level encounters between public officials and residents produce unintended and unequal power relations between smaller informal stories that have little tellability and bigger formal stories that have higher tellability. The script of policy practitioners and street-level professionals encourages them to speak in favor of the big story of the public good rather than to include a small story of personal experience. On the other hand, the study shows how community is constructed through the 'nitty gritty' interactions at the street-level. These have more to do with the quantity of interactions – walking the dog every night and being present on the square – than the quality of the resulting conversations. Such interactions are characterized by small stories where familiarity turns the public space into a realm that strengthens community – a meaning of place that street-level bureaucrats unintentionally disrupt.

The dramaturgical analysis of street-level interactions suggests a need to be present at the street-level and actively learn about formality and informality in action. Looking at the relationship between tactics and strategies that unfold in daily routines provides many clues about the reality of our democratic state. Learning from informality thus means to study the practices of citizenship, and the routine and performative encounters that discursively produce democratic realities.

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Notes

1. This method draws on Lynch's (1960) insight that a city is imaginable through cognitive maps that people construct in their heads. Mental maps provide insights into the way that neighborhood gets produced through everyday practices.
2. For this analysis I focused on the story of residents who live around the square and are actively involved in dealing with local problems, such as security and community organizing. Instead of examining the behavior of youth itself, I wanted to understand how other residents dealt with these youngsters. That is, I look at the youngsters through the eyes of other residents.

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Author biography

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Resumé

La gouvernance démocratique accorde de plus en plus d'importance à la citoyenneté active. Les gouvernements des pays du nord insistent ainsi sur la nécessité de responsabiliser les populations pour apporter des améliorations aux communautés. Cependant, l'expérience démocratique ne se réduit pas à des termes abstraits. Elle se matérialise lors des interactions quotidiennes avec les autorités publiques. Au moyen

d'une cartographie narrative, cet article mesure l'importance de ces routines et de ces rencontres performatives de bases qui façonnent le sentiment d'appartenance ou d'exclusion des individus dans un État démocratique. Deux brèves descriptions ethnographiques révèlent le déphasage existant entre les stratégies politiques officielles visant à promouvoir la citoyenneté et les tactiques informelles des habitants pour exercer leur citoyenneté en milieu urbain aux Pays-Bas. Cet article met en évidence un paradoxe : ces stratégies officielles sont susceptibles de compromettre les tactiques informelles de citoyenneté et la réalisation des objectifs du projet inclusif.

Mots-clés

informalité et formalité, gouvernance, cartographie narrative, citoyenneté, relations de base

Resumen

La gobernabilidad democrática se centra cada vez más en la ciudadanía activa. Los gobiernos del Norte Global tratan de hacer a los residentes responsables de mejorar sus comunidades. La democracia, sin embargo, no se experimenta únicamente en términos abstractos, sino que también se materializa a través de interacciones diarias más informales con los funcionarios públicos. Este artículo explora el significado de las rutinas y de los encuentros performativos en la calle con la experiencia de las personas de pertenencia o exclusión en un estado democrático, a través de una metodología de mapeo de narrativas. Dos viñetas etnográficas revelan la disyunción entre las estrategias de las políticas formales que buscan favorecer a la ciudadanía y las tácticas informales de vecinos para llevar a cabo la ciudadanía en un barrio urbano en los Países Bajos. El documento pone de relieve una paradoja: el hecho de que las estrategias formales pueden interrumpir inadvertidamente tácticas informales de ciudadanía, y con ello debilitar los objetivos de un proyecto inclusivo.

Palabras Clave

informalidad / formalidad, gobernabilidad, mapeamiento de la narrativa, ciudadanía, interacciones en la calle