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Geographies of public space Variegated publicness, variegated epistemologies

Rukiye ADANALI1Atatürk University, Erzurum,TURKEY
Mete ALIM2Atatürk University, Erzurum, TURKEY

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Abstract
This article proposes new ways of thinking about publicness—epistemologies of publicness—that expand the scope of study beyond the narrow confines of presence, accessibility, and visibility in light of the fast changing nature of public life and public spaces throughout the world. Public space as assemblage, public space as a liminal zone between inclusion and exclusion, and public space as placed and lived are the three theoretical perspectives that are developed. This essay is one of the first efforts to systematically map the permutations of new theoretical and conceptual innovations in the investigation of public space. It signsposts more open-ended, flexible, processual, performative, and ambiguous notions of publicness and public space.

Keywords
assemblage thinking, epistemology, exclusion, inclusion, public space, publicness, situated approach

I Introduction

Public space has once again been a hot topic among social and political analysts, after a short hiatus when it was considered a rather static area of urban thought (Vigneswaran et al., 2017).1 New political and cultural sensitivities have breathed life into public life and public space as a result of the fast transformation of social, economic, and political circumstances across the world. There are many new developments that could be affected by the shifting boundaries of publicness, and I will only touch on a few of them here. Secondly, the trust of grassroots people in public space as a major theatre of struggle has been reinvigorated via the political momentum gained by consecutive waves of revolutions, revolts, and demonstrations, from the Arab Spring to the Occupy Movements.

(Vigneswaran and colleagues, 2017). Another point is that mobile media and technology cultures have

caused the emergence of dynamic hybrids of physical and digital environments, as well as the ephemeral formation of relational typologies and publics (Merrifield, 2013). Thirdly, in the context of daily living, public space plays a significant

role. One the one hand, cities' physical and social textures will change as a result of rapid urbanisation and urban transformation. Conversely, more and more communities are experiencing a period of hypermobility, super-diversity, and often postsecularity; conversely, individuals need increasing amounts of self-awareness, collaboration, and tools to make sense of the overwhelming variety of perspectives and experiences they encounter (Ye, 2017). As a fourth point, during the

nlike neoliberal governmentality and, more lately, post-truth politics, congregating in a public forum does not always lead to progressive outcomes. According to Rose-Redwood et al. (2018), it has the potential to be both polarising and reactive, characterised by hate speech, symbolic violence, and the reinforcement of barriers to involvement based on factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, class, and sexual orientation. Lastly, rather than openly displacing those with 'lower' social standing, regulations regarding public space are more focused on actively creating spaces that are supposedly inclusive and teaching placed rules of behaviour (Blomley, 2012).

Issues of public space and publicness have seeped into conversations about gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, art, media, technology, memory, protest, activism, and countless other facets of our social lives in light of these contexts, as I aim to demonstrate in this article. Let it enough to state that being public is still fundamental to our existential circumstances and urban experiences, even if it does not occur in static places but rather in a dynamic, evolving, and interconnected topos, as well as at the intersections of real and virtual worlds.

New theoretical and empirical approaches to public space have been catalysed by the rapid diversity and mutation of actual realities. This claim, however, is not meant to downplay the reality that the long-standing theoretical frameworks in public space research may be counterproductive at times (for a summary, see Orum and Neal, 2010). As an example, Koch and Latham made a critical observation in a 2012 article on how studies on urban public spaces "feel increasingly repetitive and predictable" (p. 515). They noted that the literatures tended to focus on instances where commercial interests intruded on public places or when regulations and police enforcement were implemented in an effort to maintain order and civility. On the other hand, "a whole universe of mundane and prosaic activities that give urban life its texture" (p. 515) does not get the same level of care. Why there is a lack

From a theoretical and analytical standpoint, publicness is seen as an ideal type, representing the desire to be a part of the democratic urban commons, according to Koch and Latham (2012). This is in contrast to the idea of a collective ambience or habitus that is evoked through inhabitation, emotional atmospheres, and materialities.

The argument put forward by Koch and Latham (2012) is persuasive and full of useful information. But even after almost five years of release, it seems little deceptive. This article argues that public space research has emerged from the conceptual rut of publicness as characterised by accessibility, presence, and visibility, and has progressed significantly in the 21st century. Consequently, this article's goal is to draw out the boundaries of these emerging academic fields. It posits new ways of knowing that challenge fixed ideas about what it means to be public by making ideas about public space and publicness more fluid, open, participatory, performative, and ambiguous. To sum up, the article's analysis of publicness as situated, decentred, mobile, emergent, open-ended, embodied, materialised, etc. takes into consideration a myriad of circumstances, forces, and socio-spatial formations.

In Section II, I lay forth the theoretical and conceptual groundwork for this paper by introducing a number of key theoretical viewpoints. I synthesise, on an a posteriori basis, from many sources in order to rethink and re-conceptualize public space from various perspectives. These theoretical posi-tions are derived from three theoretical approaches that will be outlined in the following sections. In

Section III, we looked at one method that reimagines publicness to emphasise how public space is contextual, dynamic, and lived. This way of thinking challenges the assumptions that there is an ideal state of publicness or that publicness is an established norm in space. One definition of publicness is without a predetermined public or private character, places are more likely to be spontaneous and responsive to the sensibilities, interests, and interactions of the people using them (Watson, 2006; Iveson, 2007; Amin, 2008; Staeheli et al., 2009). As a result, the investigation is well-suited to understanding the dynamic character of publicness and the uneven and severely degraded topographies of public space (Terzi and Tonnelat, 2017).
The second method is summarised in Section IV. It reframes publicness as something that arises from the interplay and relations of persons, objects, surroundings, practices, meanings, and emotions, and it does this by drawing on the endeavour of assemblage thinking in urban studies. This approach brings attention to the creative and generative potential of places and spaces by using ontologies of networks, associations, and relations. It does this by contrasting the relative stability and fixity of specific socio-spatial formations with the endless impulses of emergence, excess, and becoming (Kärrholm, 2012; Anderson and McFarlane, 2011; Jacobs, 2012; Merrifield, 2013).
This essay contends that the dichotomy between inclusion and exclusion has to be broken because the incorporation of people and activities into physical spaces is very significant in discussions of public space (Koch and Latham, 2012). In Section V, I demonstrate that the strict epistemic divide between inclusion and exclusion, unless it is limited according to accessibility, becomes meaningless. In spite of the commonplace limiting assumptions made about the relationship between inclusion and exclusion based on their respective roles in enacting publicness, I contend that these concepts need not be mapped onto a topographical distinction between being physically present or absent in a given location. On the contrary, the social, political, and ethical ramifications of inclusion and exclusion are complex and uncertain. Both may create and control attention since they are collections of ideologies, powers, materialities, and individuals. This line of thinking suggests that the logics of publicness of inclusion and exclusion coexist in

conflicted connections, but they do not have to be fixed, fundamental "forms" of space; instead, they may coexist and even transform into one another (Massey, 2005). Indeed, inclusion and exclusion may mutually influence one another in the construction of public space. Part V primarily makes the case for several inclusion/exclusion-spanning possibilities of publicness.
Section VI wraps up the article by going over the three approaches' contributions to the field of urban public space geography, how they theory public space differently based on their research priorities, and how they conceptualise space, power, agency, and relations differently. Additionally, it considers potential avenues for future study that might enhance the three techniques even further.

II Theoretical positions

In Sections III, IV, and V, I will examine three theoretical approaches; this part synthesises the important theoretical positions that I derive from each of them. Above all else, I contend that the nature of publicness is dynamic, nebulous, and changeable; that (co-)presence in public spaces is not a final destination but rather a process that can only be understood via sophisticated empirical research; and that inclusion and exclusion are interdependent and co-evolving. Publicness, according to Iveson (2007), is not an inherent property of space but rather an oeuvre that is born out of labours and not a reference to ideal spaces or spaces that are fixed and defined by topographical distinctions between public and

private.

government organisations. According to Massey (2005), there is an endless variety of ways to occupy urban spaces beyond the private and domestic, and to be a part of a condition of "throwntogetherness." This is examined in Section III, which views publicness as a contextual and performative construct. Rarely do solitary, monolithic narratives take over public space. Contrarily, it is not left up to chance.

via coexisting ways of living and different, often unplanned, reactions to variety and heterogeneity. Both top-down structural pressures and bottom-up agency and creativity influence the types of habitation.

As an alternative, Section IV views publicness as being characterised by the uncertainty of newly formed connections of diverse elements. As it sways between assembly and deconstruction, relative stability and tendencies of becoming, public space brings together the social, political, symbolic, material, and corporeal. Public space's "social centrality," to use a phrase from Hetherington (1998), arises from highly decentralised rubrics of power and agency, and new modes of building and inhabiting publicness are born out of these ad hoc intersections of many daily domains.

Also, the paper makes a strong case (particularly in Sections III and V) that (co-)presence in public spaces is something that has to be problematized, explained, and theorised extensively since it is a fluid, uncertain, and contentious phenomenon. The temptation to see presence as a final destination or a fait accompli should not be allowed (Terzi and Tonnelat, 2017). In addition to not guaranteeing publicness, the (co-)presence of individuals and behaviours does not produce social isolation. Not only does it bring people together, but it also perpetuates and even exacerbates societal divisions and conflicts; as a result, it is intricately tied to larger social and material realms. Interaction spaces often reimagine and reenact power dynamics, engagement parameters, and spaces of difference, even only for a minute (Wilson, 2017). Importantly, (co-)presence is defined by several ways of claiming and making sense of space, which in turn creates affordances, manoeuvrability, and uncertainties in the attainment of certain objectives. Most of the time, a lot of material circumstances, practices, symbolic rituals, physiological dispositions, affective/emotional labour, etc., come together to cause (co-)presence to develop. Finally, I contend that (co-)presence does not constituteuniversal, obvious truth; nonetheless, it is a social construction, theoretically laden and full of significance. In conclusion, this article's study agenda opposes a simplistic view of the connections between inclusion and exclusion. It focuses on the co-existence, co-evolution, and mutual construction of inclusion and exclusion rather than their antithesis and incompatibility. That is to say, it sheds light on the many instances when exclusion and inclusion are complementary (Ye, 2017). The rationalities of contestation or exclusion in Sections III and IV, wherever the terms are used, do not depend just on the pre-existing status of social groupings and were developed before public life came into being. They instead arise from real-life experiences of inhabiting, sharing, and interacting. Section V delves further into the theoretical aspects of the inclusion/exclusion dynamic and poses questions about the many instances in which exclusion does not lead to disen-gagement, relocation, or civic dissociation. According to Mitchell and Staeheli

(2005), I demonstrate how dominant connections, interests, and powers may be enforced by actively constructing associations, collectives, and inclusive publics, as well as by selectively promoting public spaces. While the rhetorics of active citizenship, empowered communities, and revitalised public spaces of the city revolve around the everyday technologies and techniques of governmentality, exclusion is becoming more and more of a capillary logic in contemporary urban politics and policy practices. Theoretically, we must so avoid taking exclusion at face value and instead theorise its intimate connection to the construction of urban publics.

III Public space: Situated and lived

One way to improve upon and broaden our understanding of public space and

A brief definition of publicness would be the belief that "every public space has its own rhythms of use and regulation" (Amin, 2008: 9), and that the focus should be on the "changing repertoire of public rituals and politics enacted there" (Goheen, 1998: 480; Madden, 2010). Clearly, this is a more sophisticated strategy.

compared to the quest for the ideal public space, as discussed in the writings of authors like Habermas (1989) and Sennett (1977). Looking back, it's clear that this approach has progressed on two fronts. First, there has been a shift in emphasis over time, moving away from seeing idealised public spaces as unattainable and towards creating theories that are more contextualised and open-ended about the meaning of space and publicness in different socio-spatial settings. The former arises from people's recognition of the gap between their aspirations and the practical issues they bring to public places. Public places as they are in reality, both created and used, differ greatly from idealised representations in discourse (Houssay-Holzschuch and Thébault, 2017). To summarise, it is not certain that publicness will be delivered just because accessible venues are provided

(Iveson, 2007). There is little hope for public spaces to ever attain a transcendent status free of power dynamics and the divisive consequences of diversity because of their ideological foundations.

Therefore, agonistic and discordant interactions, which may manifest in many ways via speech and body, are what build public space (Collins, 2010). Many different types of publics making up a single public place,

in contrast to a unified, as "the distribution of the sensible" (Rancière, 2004; Cassegård, 2014),

unified whole, may be traced back to the feminist and postmodern criticisms that mushroomed in the '90s (Marston, 1990; Fraser, 1990; Deutsch, 1996; Sharp et al., 2000). "Public space is significant not because it transcends contestation and prioritises harmony," Deutsch (1996) said, but rather because it provides a platform for contestation and conflict, allowing the intricacies of urban

procedures and political processes are established and agreed upon.

Deconstruction of the conventional, idealised portrayals of symbolic public places is therefore not unexpected, given their centrality in the projected geo-graphies of the perfect public sphere. In contrast to the bourgeoisie's rational-critical ideals, the English coffee shops included a wide variety of rhythms, discursive techniques, and

practice of communication (Laurier and Philo, 2007). The Speaker's Corner in Hyde Park is another example; it was highly restricted by laws that defined what constituted "decent" and "indecent" speech, and

"Carnevaleesque" and "comic" (Roberts, 2008),

filled with unexpected contacts with persons who do not share one's political views, verbal gibberish, personal insults, playfights, and proselytising (Cooper, 2006).

Theoretically, this collection of works is valuable because it challenges the teleological, transcendental conception of public space. Scholars have built on these findings to try to re-define publicness as decentred, widespread, ever-changing, and dependent on textures of everyday life, rather than negation. Considered as a whole, this is a reaction to the widespread belief that

ticated quality, publicness is still not well understood or well explained, like a "black box" idea (Iveson, 2007; Terzi and Tonne-

(1717) by Nelat.

"There are different conceptions of the public for different subjects: the 'public' and public space are deployed and understood in multifaceted and particular ways," Watson (2006) reflects in City Pub-lics, arguing that publicness is not a one-size-fits-all template but rather an ongoing process of negotiating difference.

methods, building themes in a variety of ways' (pp. 5-6). Various factors, including people's practices, imaginations, embodiments, and

abilities throughout several dimensions of social, economic, and cultural diversity. The argument for a procedural conception of public space is advanced by Iveson (2007). The term "public space" refers to any area where an address may be made.

locale, even while "many forms of public space provide unique chances for public

lic activity; to determine these distinctions, empirical research is necessary (p. 13).

This idea is saved by these fresh perspectives on

the public sphere from the recesses of teleological and epistemologically static thought. An action's publicness may so be studied in this way.

via an approach known as "historical and contingent actualization" (Terzi & Tonnelat, 2017: 520), in an open manner. Examining the work of Terzi and Tonnelat (2017),

Please, in the vein of Dewey, provide a pragmatic, workable definition of publicness that

'jumps ship from theoretical investigation and sails into the purview of ethnography' (p. 526). This idea of public space that is both contextual and procedural

as well as visibility, the following may be explained:

This idea of publicising is intriguing since it does not depend on predetermined ideals but on norms discovered locally in what may be a public place via investigation and experience. This means that, while existing in many different areas, public relations ethics are continual and not universal. (532, 2017).

In this paper, I provide four research avenues to explore in order to operationalize theoretical arguments in grounded assessments of the world, all the while keeping in mind that publicness is dynamic and ever-changing. To start with the most basic definition, public space is made up of many

ebb and flow of spatial-temporal "syn-chronization," or the simultaneous presence, expression, and harmonisation of disparate

activity cycles (Kärrholm, 2009). While new spatial scripts are triggered to envision and implement alternative ways of inhabiting space, dominant prescriptions of space are continuously emphasised, if not entirely replaced.

(Bresnihan and Byrne, 2015; Köksal, 2012; Domosh, 1998). Examples of empirical literature that provide alternative narratives to the dystopian portrayals of shopping malls are Hopkins (1990) and Goss (1993, 1999). The grand narrative of space invaded by spectacles and consumerist identities fails to account for the numerous spatial narratives and performances that may be accommodated in shopping malls, according to these studies. This is especially true for malls in

non-Western locations. Narratives of this kind have, among other things, looked at a Canadian mall's carnivalesque and ludic performances (Shields, 1989), an Australian mall's user-and community-based ethics and rhythms of inclusion (Tyndall, 2008), and Indonesian shopping malls as heterotopic spaces positioned ambiguously between Islam and the phantasmagoria of urban modernity (Shields, 1989).

Schmidt (2012) and Pospěch (2017) discuss the post-socialist Czech background and how families want privacy, safety, and comfort.

Second, these ideas help us understand when there isn't an ever-present goal in people's interactions, exchanges, and activities.

a public arena that welcomes all individuals, but "the formation of multiple publics that jostle against each other" (Staeheli et al., 2009: 634) and split communities

publicness figurations that are meaningful to certain groups of individuals. Establishing rapport is key, as shown by Anjaria's (2016) ethnographic research on street vendors in India

When a place of exclusion is also a place of political involvement, as a result of contacts and manoeuvring between different parties, and not before such occasions. Researchers have looked at disputes over who gets to use public areas as a common occurrence. It is not caused just by the state or money, and it is not accelerated by singular portrayals of otherness. Instead, different groups react and respond based on how public space is really used. Public space, from a theoretical perspective, is best understood as a complex arena of behaviours and discourses where many forms of social, symbolic, and material capital intersect.

affirming and promoting one's idea of being publicly visible.

For instance, Trouille (2013) investigated Jewish eruv (a Jewish ritual enclosure preventing inhabitants carrying specific goods beyond their houses) in American and British settings, while Watson (2006) focused on contestation over this practice.

The usage of a football pitch by Latino immigrants fosters a territorial feeling of identity and incen-

in order to protect their own territory. Invoking and performing difference via spatial practices and encounters, rather than prior to such occasions, makes cultural concern around difference the most palpable (and negotiable), according to both works. Theoretical frameworks more sensitive to the complexity and volatility of public places are likely to arise if these varied and contentious circumstances are chosen as the subjects of research. As an example, I am considering

According to the "regimes of publicity" model put out by Staeheli et al. (2009), there are three types of connections that make up public space: social norms,

authority and ownership dynamics. Public space is seen as a distinct genre in Bodnar and Molnar's (2015) concept of "gradu-ated publicness," which is based on a comparative analysis of Berlin and Budapest. In this view, geographical heterogeneity and temporal development are

vital to the realisation of publicness for various forms of public places (Bodnar, 2015).

Thirdly, since publicness is not a fixed, easily measurable quality, there are many opportunities to create complex and sometimes unsettling biographies of public spaces as the result of a great deal of human effort, emotion, and agency. The geographical literature on public protest, for instance, has recently opened up new avenues for empirical research. The literature on public protest and demonstration is undergoing a metamorphosis, shifting from an overemphasis on protest sites and the availability of pre-arranged public forums to more nuanced perspectives, in part as a reaction to the worldwide explosion of demonstrations that broke out in 2011.

Research by Lessard-Lachance and Norcliffe (2013), Padawangi (2013), Spiegel (2015), and Iveson (2017) has unravelled demonstrations as a performance, whereby political impulses, identities,

and demands are understood in the here and now. In Abaza's

(2014) research on Cairo after 2011

pay attention to "new inventive urban forms of resistance and action according to the local context" (p. 164). During Cairo's public rallies and protests, the development of

The rise and dominance of a visual and performing cultural regime has forced academics to examine the everyday and creative repertoires of claiming, contesting, expressing, and interacting, and has transformed our understanding of public space. Meanwhile, Padawangi (2014) notes that grassroots activism in Jakarta has recently shifted its focus from street demonstrations to micro-activities like neighbour- upgrade the hood and provide training in the neighbourhood. Along with (or maybe because of) spectacles of street politics, the public city, according to Padawangi (2014), requires the ongoing contribution of grassroots work, interactions, and interventions. the actual circumstances of individuals. The many arrangements of public space in urban environments outside of the West are better understood when publicness is seen as contingent, ambiguous, and amorphous (Staeheli, 2010). The public/private divide is typically formed in various, ephemeral, and nebulous ways, and the accessibility of public spaces is not always a normative aim in non-Western cities. However, it is widely acknowledged that there is a separate domain between the state and the household. This domain serves behaviours and goals that, when seen through a Eurocentric theoretical and conceptual lens, may seem somewhat puzzling. This raises the obvious issue of how relevant the idea of public space is in these settings. An alternative to ignoring this idea is a contextual approach, which, by promising conceptual robustness and inclusion, promotes conversations between western and non-western experiences. Because of the complicated translation (à la Latour) between western concepts of urbanism and indigenous social and cultural textures, public space and publicness have fluid and uncertain local manifestations and consequences in many non-Western urban societies. This is because public space and publicness are products of colonial and postcolonial processes. On the other hand, cultures Some indigenous peoples, like those in China, see a "third realm" that exists between the nation and the home (Huang, 1993). I propose that research on different understandings of publicness across different time periods and places, and more crucially, how Academic conceptions and discourses in urban theory stand to benefit from their re-invention and re-working in the context of the global circulation of western modernity. For instance, research on nations like India, China, and Japan may help us understand publicness in different circumstances. Public spaces were and are highly esteemed in all three of these contemporary, developing civilizations. city planning, and closely related to the belief held by political and social elites that well-planned and administered cities will foster a sense of civic pride and discipline (Kaviraj, 1997; Waley, 2005; Shi, 1998; Sakai, 2011). As a result of colonial interactions and postwar social engineering, a new urban modernity began to take shape, and elites with an eye towards reform actively promoted and programmed socialities in public spaces. More important than encouraging people to mix freely and show tolerance for one another's differences was the cultivation of responsible

people living in "modern" and "civilised"

methods of living. So, the prevailing political ideologies of the time agreed that it was reasonable and even desirable to keep certain groups out of cities so that people may live their best lives there. For example, in India "Common spaces" were originally to serve as public areas suitable for a variety of everyday activities, including bathing, sleeping, and even defecating. They were looked down upon by the local elite in the postcolonial era because they were too disorderly and did not promote the development of civic ideals. Even now, people feel the need to control their behaviour in public areas (Chakrabarty, 1992; Arabindoo, 2011). However, it would be a significant understatement to claim that different urban settings and experiences are readily integrated by western modernity. As an example, a

fascinating corpus of work has emerged based on the current trend of holding public dance events in metropolitan areas of China during the reform period. These pieces connect the dots between the resurgence of collectivist and Maoist principles in China during a time when the country is being consumed by capitalism modernity, consumerism, and individualism, and the carnivalesque, improvised use of public space through performative, embodied, and affective practices (Qian, 2014b; Jayne and Leung, 2014; Richaud, 2018).

IV Public space as assemblage

With the goal of assemblage thinking in urban studies and urban theory comes a second approach to rethink public space and publicness. Consideration of spatiality through the lens of assemblage, or "some form of provisional socio-spatial forma-tion" (Anderson and McFarlane, 2011: 124), has provided a valuable theoretical lens through which scholars in the field of urban studies have rethought and problematicated the distinctions between human and non-human, social and material, and agency and structure. According to Farías and Bender (2009), McFarlane (2011a, 2011b) and Jacobs (2012), the idea of assemblage is influenced by both the Latourian network ontology and the Deleuzian theories of assemblage.

First, I will outline the ways that the field of asset-based thinking has influenced the field of

space for the public, allow me to quickly restate the main contributions of the assemblage urbanism project. The manifesto of assembly thinking is the indeterminacy and plurality of space and its development. When different parts of an assembly work together in complex and unexpected ways, we call it a "creative association" (Dewsbury, 2011). Instead of any linear determination connection, what matters is the "co-articulation and compossibility" of the components (McFarlane, 2011b: 653). In addition to producing stability and set patterns, the alignments and mobile alli-ances of heterogeneous parts also have inherent tendencies towards excess, change, and becoming (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004). For this reason, assembly is an endless cycle of stabilisation and disruption, re-territorialization and de-territorialization. According to Jacobs (2012), even in more stable situations, there is always the chance of dispersion and disassembly, which may lead to different spatial and social formations. Put simply, assembly means dispersed agencies. Based on the work of McFarlane (2011a, 2011b) and Anderson (2011), it is recommended that researchers pay attention to the agency of wholes and alignments without neglecting the agency of disparate pieces. According to McFarlane (2011)b, 2011c; Dewsbury (2011); Jacobs (2012), agency may be exerted via both the human and non-human components of an assemblage. The former includes social interactions, symbolic meanings, bodies, emotions, etc., while the latter includes material circumstances and affordances, nature, animals, and so on. Assemblage, according to Anderson and McFarlane (2011), is "an uneven topography of trajectories that cross or engage each other to different extents over time" (125).
To date, there has been very little systematic engagement between public space research and assemblage thinking. A small number of studies have used elements of assemblage thinking to develop new ontologies of public space, including works by Koch and Latham (2012), Allen (2006), Kärrholm (2007), Amin (2008), Campbell (2013), and Merrifield (2012).

2013 and 2015 by Sendra. This tiny collection of works interprets public space as a meeting place for individuals, groups, relationships, material-technological systems, symbols, and emotional frameworks (Merrifield, 2013). There is a dialectic between form and formlessness in public space and publicness, which is a tangible abstraction. In this context, form denotes periods of relative stability, the tangible, imminent socio-spatial structures

that emerge at certain points in history, while formlessness highlights a feeling of ebb and flow, undirected and non-teleological - According to Merrifield (2013), urban space is more concerned with trends, possibilities, and surprises than with rigid rules or plans. According to Merrifield (2013), "a simulta-neity of everything that comes together in a social act" is implied by the idea that public space is socially essential (Hetherington, 1998). Constant de-centering, re-alignment, and mobilisation characterise it; it is never fixed. In her research on roadside memorialization, Campbell (2013) used the assemblage perspective to argue for a public space that is different from what Arendt and Habermas had in mind. According to Campbell, "the public sphere has come to denote multiplicity, plurality and hetero- geneity in the ways in which individuals engage in the politics of the day" (p. 527). Instead of seeing the components as a composite whole, her main point is that linkages and syntheses are dependent, ephem-eral, and constant. Therefore, her theory emphasises the importance of immanence, improvisation, uncertainty, and becoming while also celebrating the multiple modalities of communication activities and networks.

Amin (2008) proposes a more thorough theory that focuses on three main areas. The "thrown-together-ness" of people, substances, interactions, and practices—what Amin calls a "situated multiplicity"—is the best way to understand public space, according to him. Humans' implicit and pre-cognitive reactions to this contextual plurality give birth to publicness. Nothing can be done to stop the flow of people, goods, and activities.

the traits and characteristics of publicness are dynamic and ever-changing due to the swirling dynamics among the actants. Situations, or the 'force-field of influence,' as Amin puts it (2008: 15), are the primary determinants of circumstances of publicness, which include the domestication of urban variety and the inculcation of a feeling of belonging to the urban collective.

A number of theoretical advancements now underway in the corpus on public space reflect the principles of assemblage thinking, in addition to such broad dialogues between assemblage concepts and public space. How the public perceives and interacts with physical objects is the focus of one of them. The tangible aspect of the urban social, as well as the mixing of strangers, the quality of interactions, and the symbolic and discursive creation of encounters, are all parts of public space, which was previously thought of as an assembly of tightly interconnected aspects (Amin, 2007). In the mobilisation of the many rhythms, flows, and activities of ordinary urban life, materiality is acknowledged to have a lasting role (Kärrholm, 2008: 1904; Watson, 2015).

Amin (2007) argues that we need to rethink the urban social beyond the social in light of the inseparable relationships, things, people, and technology. The primary indicator of this shift is the evolving literary treatment of technology. Prior research on the publicness-technology nexus (Graham, 1998; Crang, 2000; Koskela, 2000; Flusty, 2001) saw technology in a variety of ways, including as an outside force intervening, a tool for control and monitoring, and a catalyst for social isolation in a kind of nomadic, centerless urbanisation. But, urban academics have only just noticed how public socialities and experiences are heavily influenced by technology (Rubio and Fogué, 2013). Because of this, technology is examined as a medium via which non-human entities and humans may interact, and the possibilities that technologies, particularly media technologies, provide may be

used in creative, often oppositional, and defiant ways (Crang, 1996; Molnar, 2014; Padawangi et al., 2014; Grommé, 2016). At the same time, research has focused on the porous and negotiable boundaries between physical and technological spaces rather than the inflexible separation between the two. This

can be seen in the 'hollowing-out' of physical urban spaces in favour of privatised digital cocoons (Hatuka and Toch, 2016), or, conversely, in the increasing visibility and exposure of physical public spaces through the everyday use of information collection technologies (De Souza e Silva, 2012; Hatuka and Toch, 2017), or in the positive feedback loop between digital immersion and physical participation in public life (McQuire, 2016).

The creative alignment and interplay of the body and embodied component with other qualities of public space has been highlighted by another development. Public space from a traditional sociological and geographical viewpoint emphasises verbal, interactive, and communica-tive aspects; however, an analytical sensitivity views the body as the centre of cultural politics and the (dis)enchantment of public space. The formation of cultural distinctions and moral standards relies heavily on bodies. To understand this concept, one can peruse the extensive literature on moral and ideological concerns regarding sex workers on city streets (Hubbard, 2001, 2004), the utilisation of public spaces by sexual minorities (Valentine, 1993; Andersson, 2012; Qian, 2017), Muslim women who wear headscarves in secularist settings (Bowen, 2008; O'Neil, 2008; Gökarıksel, 2009, 2012), and, more recently, breastfeeding in public spaces (Lane, 2014; Grant, 2016). Instead of leading to overt and forceful policing, these twists and conten-tions produce ambiguous, elastic, and contingent boundaries of publicness that bodies nonetheless have to traverse.

According to Gökarıksel and Secor (2012) and (2015), subjectivities and identities are constructed via relationships and are subject to change. However, public spaces' vitality, conviviality, and political energy are generated by bodies. Scholars are able to imagine "soft," "ludic," formative, and more-than-representational" conceptions of public space and the city when the rhythms of everyday lives and practices transform bodies into centres of excess, affects, emotions, plays, and rituals (Raban, 1974; Stevens, 2007; Simpson, 2008, 2012; Qian, 2014b). A feeling of agency and situated resistance to hegemonic socio-spatial scripts and hierarchies also depend on bodies. Skateboarding, parkour, cycling, flash mobbing, and other forms of body-built-environment intersection can be enacted through the dispositions, schemes, and mobilities of bodies (Ehrkamp, 2008, 2013; Lee, 2011). Other examples of this include gender and race performances in public spaces (Spinney, 2010; Kidder, 2012; Ameel and Tani, 2012; Ive-son, 2013; Molnar, 2014). One more thing: assemblage thinking has sparked a re-theorization of power, which is now seen as a "plas-tic habit" that is decentralised and pervasive in public spaces (Dewsbury, 2011). According to Anderson and McFarlane (2011), the idea of assembly suggests that power is best understood as a plurality that is always evolving and coexisting. When researchers are trying to make sense of power dynamics in seemingly accessible and inclusive contexts, this way of thinking is quite helpful. Allen (2006) uses the concept of "ambient power" to highlight instances of acceptance and transparency. This kind of authority functions "through the experi-ence of the space itself, through its ambient qual- ities" rather than "through explicit actions of regulation and ousting" (p. 442, emphasis in original). Personalities, social ties, and other tangible aspects

People experience ambi-ence, a phenomenological state characterised by a predisposition towards certain actions, expressions, and experiences, and a hazy awareness of how these scripts are inscribed, as a result of cumulative cultures of place. To sum up, power is a product of an actor network's characteristics and has an impact on people's actions and emotions (Kär- rholm, 2007, 2008; Thörn, 2011; Adey et al., 2013). Kärrholm (2007) echoes these sentiments when he suggests a theory of spatial control as a kind of "territorial stabilisation," according

to which power is established, routined, and socialised via the "connections between a set of actors or actants" (p. 443). One important point made by Kärrholm (2007) is that public spaces that are well-used and easily accessible usually have a certain amount of network stabilisation and territorial production. This comes in the form of unspoken but widely-accepted norms and conventions, which increases the "terri-torial complexity" of the space.

V Public space between inclusion and exclusion

Lastly, the third perspective acknowledges that the boundary between inclusion and exclusion may be crossed and challenges the binary nature of the two concepts. Focusing on problems of exclusion and inclusion, I contend that a good starting point for understanding the complexity and fluidity of public life is to re-theorize publicness as a dialectic between exclusion and inclusion, rather than unidirectionally as presence and access. In order to legitimise discourses of inclusion and participation, public spaces do not need to embrace an endless influx of individuals and actions. In reality, the boundaries between each other's conditions are defined by inclusion and exclusion. What if inclusion and exclusion always-already entail and constitute each other? That is the question that the research I have cited here encourage us to consider. That doesn't mean inclusion and exclusion are synonyms.

connotations and are not often easy to distinguish. On the other hand, there are hybridity and crossing zones where the boundary between included and excluded disappears into the abyss of social reality.

In this part, I stress the need of shifting our focus from the enclosure of public space to its re-invention and creation as a means of power rather than its imposition. We must adopt a governmentality, management, and governance lens. As an example, there has been a noticeable shift in recent years in the research on the connections between statecraft and public space. Instead of concentrating on monitoring, regulation, and the forced removal of individuals and activities, the focus is shifting to how the state defines publicness by outlining the requirements for inclusion. That is to say, we need to learn how the state's disciplinary and penal powers are used to build and control publics, and how the subtle mobilisation of exclusion is entangled with visions of inclusion and participation. In addition to highlighting responsible citizenship and self-governing subjects, these rhetorics of public space ostensibly support individual freedom and liberal rights.

First, I got a feel for this concept from Don Mitchell's meticulous analysis of political sensitivities in US protest landscapes. The public forum doctrine is a legal concept that Mitchell set out to understand.

philosophy that, while advocating for and securing spaces for public protest, limits free expression due to worries about speech behaviour in an effort to maintain "order"

on top of the "general comfort" that the places and spaces provide.

expression (Mitchell, 1996, 2013). Actually, regulations

Legal jurisprudence has sought to normalise street politics and discourse, including them

into liberal democracies, whereas discourses have always seen freedom of speech ambiguously, as both defendable and regulatable.

aggressive, it also manages and defines the line of disagreement. According to Mitchell and Staeheli (2005), the police and demonstrators agree on which parts of a demonstration should be muzzled, therefore acts of civil disobedience are very well planned.

Another legal logic pre-existent in Nicholas Blomley's theoretical intervention into the formation of the police authority is a sensitivity to supposedly inclusive public space that is really extensively scripted and regulated."

to the development of public areas. Although police rationality shares some ground with other rationalities, such neoliberalism, it is important to see it through the lens of its own unique historical evolutions. By using this kind of power, urban policy discourses avoid directly addressing issues of politics, rights, and equality. Public space, on the other hand, is described as a place that serves practical goals, such as allowing urban traffic to move freely and without obstacles, according to Blom-

The 'traffic logic' of public space is explained by ley (2007, 2011). Behaviours that don't match the functional definition of Blamley (2012) argues that value-neutral technical reasoning provides the foundation for justifying public space, evading concerns of liberalism, right, and citizenship. Liberal rights to public space are not in conflict with police logic, according to policymakers, as the former does not use the word "rights" but rather clings to vague ideas of

order, communal welfare, and the public good—

everyone has an implied right to use public spaces, provided that they do not

broken into.

Discourses of inclusion, engagement, and the formation of unthreatening, empowered publics may indeed excuse the exercise of exclusionary power under neoliberal governmentality (or the deliberate endeavour to reverse it). Berney (2011, 2017) identifies the new policy goals in Bogotá, a city that has lately received praise for its efforts to restore genuine public space, as a kind of instructional urbanism, a concept that the creating open areas allows everyone to feel welcome in the city and allows citizens to fully participate in civic life. Citizens look to public spaces to teach them about responsible civic participation and social interaction. The commercialization of urban space has been reversed as a consequence of public space intervention; yet, there are also concerted efforts to eliminate activities that are seen as uncivilised and disruptive, such street vending and homelessness (Hunt, 2009; Galvis, 2014). So, local expressions of class difference constitute the bedrock upon which discourses of inclusion and equality rest, rather than transcending them. The state and neoliberalism are two factors, but the politics of difference and cultural norms play an equally important role in determining inclusion via their power textures. Several publications by academics that study the daily geographies of public space see regulation as a series of normativized and negotiated conditions of inclusion, rather than as a sudden exclusion. Regulation, according to these studies, need not criminalise or delegitimize individuals based on their social, cultural, or political position;

rather, it may purportly target certain actions that are seen to disturb the peace, order, and regularity of public places. As a result, public places serve as platforms for social engineering and governmentality, with the goal of encouraging individuals to internalise and practise certain idealised forms of public behaviour. citizens.

For instance, academics have zeroed in on public citizenship models that rely on differentiating between the 'disorderly' British alcohol use and more "civilised" European According to (Jayne et al., 2008a, 2008b), and using camping regulations and building materials to limit the ways in which the homeless make a living and the opportunities presented by their physical environments, rather than eradicating them entirely (Thörn, 2011; Lan-gegger and Koester, 2016). It is intriguing to observe that the foundation of policy goals is the desire to avoid allegations of sexual, cultural, or racial discrimination, yet

wind up perpetuating prejudice and stereotyping to a significant degree. Municipal governments in traditionally Christian western cities may choose to implement noise ordinances to control the type, duration, and volume of the Islamic call to prayer (the adhan) in response to growing public debates about its acceptability. This way, they can avoid infringing on First Amendment principles while also addressing underlying cultural anxieties and moral panics (Perkins, 2015).

Tissot (2011) uncovers that the claim that veiled women

Muslim women have a right to use public spaces, provided that signs of religious extremism and physical dominance by males are eliminated. This goes against the notion of public spaces as places of gender equality and progressive secularism. Concerns about prejudices towards a sexual minority may be successfully diverted, as shown in the example of London's Russell Square being enclosed to eliminate gay cruising. This is due to the fact that homosexual subjects are still very much present in public cultures; rather, it is the commercialised manifestations of gay cultures in neighbouring Soho that receive official support.

investment group, and they get a lot of attention from the media (Andersson, 2012).

The concept of ambient power (Allen, 2006) resurfaces at this point in the reasoning process because it is pertinent to the everyday ways in which individuals use and traverse public spaces. It is common for people to encounter and actively participate in structural circumstances, differences, and inequities in public spaces that seem enticingly inclusive on the surface. This makes us think deeply about

on times when inclusion only entails'soft exclusion' (Thörn, 2011), and exclusion is defined as leading separate, uninvolved lives rather than physically displacing individuals or actions (Valentine, 2008; Spierings et al.,

2016 in the year. Assumedly democratic and open places of engagement and participation are often undermined by subtle social

limitations imposed along the dimensions of gender, class, colour, ethnicity, etc. While being in the same physical space as another person doesn't always guarantee a

meaningful conversation, there are times when it does lead to the reinforcement of prejudice, stereotyping, and the idea of insurmountable differences—all without the prying open of individually bound selves or group categories (Freeman, 2002, 2008; Houssay-Holzschuch and Teppo, 2009; Matejs-kova and Leitner, 2011; Qian, 2014b; Spierings et al., 2016).

People from different backgrounds live and manage diversity and difference in complex and conflicting ways, which creates both opportunities and constraints in public spaces that are already occupied by several groups. For exam-

social standards and politeness regulations "become tools of inclusion, and, relationally, exclusion, producing a politicised logic of man-aging diversity" in Singapore's ethnically varied public settings. (Ye, 2016; Ye, 2017: 1033). The way 'differential inclusion' is portrayed by Ye (2017) is in line with what Qian (2017) found while studying LGBT cruising in Guangzhou, China. As a homosexual

In a famous metropolitan park that was home to numerous user groups, males were allowed to establish a thriving public cruising culture. They stressed the need of self-discipline, maintaining a low profile, and being less rebellious so as not to challenge the heteronormative coding of the place.

People sometimes struggle with the issue of how to portray themselves in public spaces, as well as with contextualised hostility, subtle forms of rejection, and the ever-changing conditions of acceptance, due to the fact that inclusion is a challenging, tested, and filtered process (Ye, 2017; Gökarıksel and Secor, 2015). This is particularly true when

Ambitions about one's "authentic" identity are always at odds with contextual norms of behaviour. I am not restating the dualism of Goffman here.

... the space between an externally presented self and an inward, genuine one (Goffman, 1959). My contention that inclusion is not an endpoint but an ongoing process of identity and subjectivity exploration and construction would be severely undercut by this. I

instead agree with Wilson (2017), who contends that one's self is produced in part by one's cumulative experiences in public life and involvement, and that one's ideas and values are not independent of but shaped by contextual encounters.

Certain types of exclusion may even be necessary to help marginalised and disempowered persons and groups become more involved in public life and activities. People may not label these places as inclusive, but they are at ease with their exclusivity, and inclusion is not just political language but a lived perception in these circumstances. Complete inclusion may serve as a breeding ground for dominant power, norms, and subjectivities because it provides a platform for the maintenance and reinforcement of social rules and norms. Consequently, some forms of exclusion, while contradicting the liberal ideal of equal access for everyone, may paradoxically pave the way for diversity and tolerance (Iveson, 2003).

For instance, the research of McIvers Ladies' Baths in Sydney conducted by Iveson (2003) offers an alternative viewpoint to the notion

that exclusive Diversity and uniqueness always erode as a result of sion. His research reveals that the female bathers' demand that only they be allowed to use the facilities is grounded in a sexist assertion of their entitlement to utilise the facilities.

and creating a society unfettered by male intervention it must be upheld. By seeing the bath as a physical embodiment of a subaltern counterpublic, Iveson (2003) investigates the possibility of political justification for exclusion in light of the fact that it facilitates the construction of value and identity, which is in line with assertions of the right to the city.

This level of sensitivity has also been used to investigate the changing consumer landscapes in Islamist modernising nations like Turkey and Egypt, as well as the effects of gender and class (Abaza, 2001). Temples of capitalist materialism that exclude the impoverished, shopping centres and cafes are at the same time places of emancipation and empowerment. According to Erkip (2003), shopping malls in Turkey are one of the only places where women may act out their flâneuse identities freely, away from the influence of harmful gender norms and the pervasive male gazes they encounter on the streets.

Similarly, De Koning's (2009) research on posh coffee shops frequented by the well-to-do

Based on interviews with Cairo's working women, we may infer that middle-class women's desire for contemporary flânerie and the pressures to conform to gender norms imposed by religious and cultural teachings are connected causes of their retreat into safe spaces. Feminised and private venues both display classism and gender inequality on a societal level.

Conclusion

To better understand and respond to emerging trends in public life and space, this article has made an effort to provide a theoretical framework and set of analytical tools. As a theoretical framework for a revitalised public space agenda, I have followed three lines of inquiry: public space as lived and placed, public space as assemblage, and public space as a liminal zone between inclusion and exclusion. While this review acknowledges and appreciates the importance of canonical approaches that highlight the ideological commitment to presence, inclusion, and accessibility, it seeks to go beyond previous theoretical fixations in order to re-invent, relativize, and enhance the epistemologies of publicness.

There are significant theoretical linkages between the three approaches, despite the fact that they have grown out of different intellectual traditions and concerns. In sum, these perspectives reject the idea of public space as an environment where different people, places, things, and identities coexist in perfect harmony. So instead, they connect public

theorise publicness as the product of labours and agencies dispersed across individuals, things, physical environments, meanings, and emotions; and provide room for social heterogeneity, ideological cleavages, cultural sensibility, and power relations at many

scales. This article's cited empirical stories show that public-ness is an ongoing process where practices, performances, syn-chronized rhythms, clashes between publics and counterpublics, mediation of technology and materiality, embodiment and bodily politics, etc., constantly shape and remake our ways of relating to people and the world. The very act of considering public space in this way calls into question the very idea of presence and the harmony that has been built up between the two concepts. Being physically present in a public place is not enough to encourage public engagement, as I have shown throughout this post. Contrarily, presence is diverse, distinct, and developing. Subtle power and differentiation processes, rather than an inclusive perspective, often dictate the outcome. Also, the article's claims call for a new way of thinking about inclusion and exclusion, which are now re-theorized as being not just interdependent but also co-constituted and co-evolving. In addition to divergent study objectives and epistemologies of publicness, the three methods also lead us in distinct directions. Public space as situated and lived is the first method, and it works best for studying different positionalities, fluid identities, and the politics of differences as they pertain to particular political goals and interests. Theories of public space often centre on the idea of parallel horizons of activities and practices, which allow for the performance, contestation, and remaking of identities, subjectivities, and disparities. Although this method is intrinsically unequal, power and agency are distributed and decentralised. Public space as assembly is the second method, which is also located and processual but has a firmer hold on the temporary and new. character of openness. Since public space is about human action and social mobilization—while also including the non-human, the material, and the embodied—this perspective takes a wide and demeaning view of power and agency. Lastly, there is the liminal condition of public space as an approach that firmly grasps the inequality between distinct groups and the situational behaviours that temporarily flip power. In spite of this, inclusion and exclusion are not seen as immutable realities but as dynamic processes that complement and enrich one another. Knowledge and discourses about what constitutes places of inclusion and participation, as well as the programming, scripting, and coding of space, are crucial to the formation of social power in this process. Everyday procedures and technologies of generating, controlling, administering, and consuming environments have theoretical connotations; this is a complex process in which the state and grassroots people both want to play a crucial role (Ye, 2016). In conclusion, all three methods reject the idea of a static public space, whether it be the utopian ideal of a well-lit shopping district or the nightmare scenario of uncontrolled development, since they are sensitive to the contextual, lived, and ever-evolving character of publicness. Finally, I provide three proposals for future research sensitivity that are certain to be early on, but they should help move these techniques forward. Of the three methods, Watson (2006), Iveson (2007), and Vigneswaran et al. (2017) all

agree that the first one is the most advanced and well-theorized. Nevertheless, a more comparative viewpoint may enhance this method, even if the literature has argued persuasively about the situational character of publicness. It will help us understand how similar elements, influences, and cultural norms may produce different results in different settings. Comparison has the potential to be useful, particularly in situations where Given that the creation of public space has always been an integral component of the interactions, flows, circulations, and cross-referencing between urban settings worldwide, from colonial times to the present day of global urbanisms, this study examines both Western and non-Western urban experiences (Sheppard et al., 2015). This kind of comparison will be useful in identifying the elements that function on a global scale and understanding how they interact with local conditions to generate specific configurations of publicness.

Many theoretical concerns remain unanswered about the second strategy, which has seen the least development out of the three. I contend that whereas assemblage thinking has opened up new possibilities for geography study, it has also carried over the theoretical challenges that were previously present. Flat ontologies may absorb research interests in structure, inequality, and the human subject, as Storper and Scott (2016) provocatively contend, if power and agency are promiscuously and arbitrarily distributed among humans and non-humans. It would be difficult to differentiate between the impersonal agency of inanimate things and the intentional sentience of people, or to determine which factors are more influential. Therefore, a reasonable direction for future study may be to clarify the relationships of components by disentangling the real characteristics and nature of connections, whether such connections are between people or between people and the material world.

Lastly, I've come to recognise that studying public space has unique theoretical and ethical issues due to the indefiniteness and ethical ambiguity of inclusion and exclusion, even though the third method highlights the dialectical linkages between the two. For instance, would it be reasonable to outlaw breastfeeding in public or having sex in public if there are already regulations in place to ensure that everyone feels welcome? Could enforcing a ban on extremist rhetoric and practices in public spaces help beneficial community forums? Although these problems remain unanswered in this study, they remain thorny and ethically complex; maybe, future research will delve into them, adding to the theories on the dialectics of inclusion and exclusion.

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