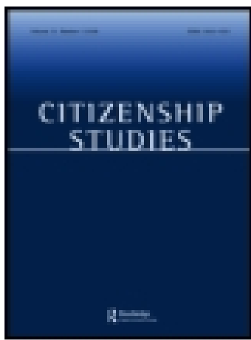

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'Whether you like it or not, this is the future!': everyday negotiations of the community's boundary in urban space

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ABSTRACT
How are the boundary and ground of community produced and negotiated in mundane practices of interaction and language use in urban space? The article explores how claims of belonging and legitimate presence are formulated, communicated, and contested and what kind of daily collisions emerge between people in multilingual and multicultural urban contexts. By so doing, it contributes to critical scholarship that discusses connections between community-making and everyday citizenship. Empirically, we draw on data collected in the suburb of Hervanta in Tampere, Finland, where various and internally diverse social groups engage every day in dialogues and negotiate the community's boundary. We suggest that, ultimately, these negotiations regard the norms, habits, and values upon which the idea of community is founded. The article uses Rancièrian notions of consensus and dissensus to understand tensional community dynamics in diversifying environments and to pave the way for an emergent understanding of community.

KEYWORDS
Multivocality; everyday citizenship; urban encounters; community dynamics; Finland

Introduction

> Back in the 70s, you almost had to look again, if you saw a dark-skinned person, but nowadays it is the opposite: you're lucky to even hear Finnish from the other languages when you go to the local shopping centre. (Markku,[1] 65-year-old pensioner)

Markku is one of the people who moved to the suburb of Hervanta in the late 1970s, in the early days after the residential area was built. Since those times, the area has undergone a considerable transformation in the composition of people as well as the urban infrastructure. Nowadays, Hervanta is one of the biggest suburbs in Finland, with some 25,000 inhabitants. The area is the most diverse, multilingual, and multicultural suburb in the city of Tampere. Markku has witnessed the development first-hand.

As the formation of multilingual neighbourhoods in Finland is in its early stages when compared to many other countries in Western Europe, the country offers a valuable case to study regarding the development of community dynamics. Furthermore, at a time when polarisation, growing diversity and intersectional inequalities are on the rise, the question of how we live together bears relevance in many

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societies, not only in Finland. There is a need for a nuanced and context-sensitive understanding of how the boundary and grounds of community are expressed and negotiated in the course of everyday life.

The dynamic nature of community and the negotiations of its boundary are highly visible in urban spaces characterised by socio-economic, ethnic, religious, linguistic, and cultural differences. In social theory, there is an increasing interest in the city and its relation to themes such as community and diversity, difference and spatial divisions, and the experiences and everyday practices that are related to both (e.g. Tonkiss 2005; Björkdahl and Strömbom 2015; Dikeç 2017). Cities are founded on difference instead of commonality (Tonkiss 2003), even to the extent that sometimes cities are thought of as inimical to community. However, such a take dismisses the potential to explore the urban everyday as a dynamic scene of community-making (Tonkiss 2005, 30–32, 59). The city as a site of inhabitancy and agency is characterised by immediacy and materiality (Tonkiss 2013, 437–440) that enables studying citizenship in terms of situational, embodied practices, and reciprocity (see Lazar 2012; Williams 2015). Building on this, we argue that everyday urban encounters and interactions offer a meaningful way to explore the negotiations about the community's boundary and ultimately also the 'common' ground of the community. Here, we draw on Rancière's (2010a, 2011) notion of dissensus as a conceptual means to disrupt static forms of belonging and highlight the negotiations over having a part (also Corrêa 2018, 50–53).

The article identifies and analyses practices of everyday citizenship to highlight how diverse people articulate claims to community and contest its boundary. Our approach to everyday citizenship is informed by the work of political anthropologists who have pointed out the relevance of exploring the multiple mundane sites and ways of producing exclusions and difference, as well as negotiating their meaning (e.g. Lazar 2013; Lazar and Nuijten 2013; Caglar 2015). Ultimately, we are interested in exploring *how difference and commonness are reciprocally constructed and circulate in the everyday as people encounter each other in the urban space*. Hence, we take a critical distance from discussions around the potential of everyday encounters and interactions to promote peaceful relations and coexistence (Valentine 2008; cf. Amin 2002, 2006; Allport 1954). We want to further explore what becomes of a community's relational dynamics when its idea cannot unambiguously be built upon shared values, history, education, habits, and culture (cf. Appiah 2018).

We conceptualise community as a normative and habitual construct that is inherently related to everyday practices of community-making and boundary-drawing. Notions of normativity and habituality arise from and are related to a bounded understanding of history that normalises certain bodies and their presence as legitimate and having a part and which are thus entitled to make claims to community (Rancière 2010a; see also Tonkiss 2005; Blommaert 2013; Corrêa 2018). In this imagery, having a part in community becomes connected with language skills but, crucially, also appearance, culture, and habits (see Hopkins, Reicher and van Rijswijk 2015, 86; also Milani et al.2021, this issue). In the urban everyday characterised by difference, this normative ground is put under strain, and the community's constantly evolving and tensional nature is revealed. The article contributes to discussions about community dynamics, but without relying on group-based identities or a predefined conception of the 'common', thus refraining from promoting a sense of 'community' as a quick fix for complex political and social problems (see also Danley 2018).

The article is structured in five sections. First, we present our conceptual framework that discusses urban space and its relevance for thinking about community. We suggest that everyday citizenship can be a particularly valuable tool to unpack this connection and to understand practices of negotiating the community's boundary and its ground. Second, we introduce our empirical context and data. The third and fourth sections analyse the data. We unpack the role of language in the construction of audible subjects that make claims to the community, after which the analysis explores the habitual and normative aspects of community-making that bring forth the contested nature of the 'common'. The analysis yields insight on how diversity does not present an empirical problem but rather exposes the community's ontologically vulnerable foundation. In the fifth section, we discuss community as an emergent and multivocal construct that is characterised by constant dialectics between consensus and dissensus.

Everyday citizenship in the city

In the field of urban studies, as Tonkiss (2005, 73) claims, 'rights to communal space are an obvious, routine, and basic expression of public belonging'. Yet, these rights are only an ideal. Tonkiss further notes that some bodies are marked as different, and their presence and articulations are seen as intrusive in the public sphere. Therewith, urban neighbourhoods are scenes for everyday citizenship that allow the exploration of the types of practices through which commonality and difference are constructed. Public spaces in the city, as Laura Guimarães Corrêa (2018) notes, are 'riddled with tensions and negotiations over cultures, values, norms and rights'. She argues that the tensions and negotiations 'are connected to how bodies and behaviour are labelled and categorized against the idea of who belongs and who is an outsider, Other' (ibid.). Conceptions of who has or can have a part in community resonate with the logic along which the idea of community – what its members have in common and share – is founded (see also Peled 2021, this issue).

We introduce the notion of everyday citizenship as a potentially valuable concept to analyse how the connection between urban space and community unfolds. Through everyday citizenship, attention is paid to those mundane encounters and interactions where diverse and potentially competing and conflicting forms of identity, culture, and belonging come together. According to Ayse Caglar (2015, 641), everyday citizenship regards processes of subject formation that unfold through personal narratives and lived experiences, as well as contextualised enactments of citizen practices and their shifting meanings. For us, everyday citizenship is not only about action that explicitly seeks to overturn or question extant hierarchies or power relations (cf. Williams 2015, 161). Rather, it embraces the everyday as a significant sphere of negotiating and shaping the community's boundary and its ground from below, sometimes implicitly (Lazar 2013, 2). Hence, practices of everyday citizenship are not exclusively about the 'minor' circumstances of daily life. Mundane practices are affected by and connected to institutions and structures of power that give rise to notions of normalcy, order, and appropriateness (Williams 2015; see also Blommaert 2013).

In diverse urban neighbourhoods, there exists a complex dynamic between how claims to community are framed and articulated, on the one hand, and how these articulations are received, on the other (see Hopkins, Reicher and van Rijswijk 2015). A focus on

practices of everyday citizenship in the context of urban life can expose both the inherent vulnerability of the community's 'common' ground and the tensioned dialectic between consensus and dissensus as ways of articulating the 'common'. In other words, the dialectic between consensus and dissensus frames community as a question of sharing – or, perhaps more accurately, *parting*. An articulation of having a part also indicates those who are parted from the sphere of the 'common': those who cannot have a part. Hence, community is a site of simultaneous inclusion and exclusion that is in the constant process of being made.

Before we move on, the notions of consensus and dissensus deserve some unpacking. Rancière (2011) fathoms dissensus in terms of a struggle 'between those who set themselves as able to manage social interests and those who are supposed to be only able to reproduce their life'. Dissensus does not represent a state or form of community, but an agentic process of community-making that is to remain incomplete and subject to debate. It concerns definitions and demonstrations of and claims to the 'common'. Dissensus questions the 'common' ground of community. A Rancièrian notion of politics signifies the creation of 'dissensual "commonsense"' (2010a, 69), where the political subject becomes understood as 'a capacity for staging scenes of dissensus' (ibid., 139). Politics is about procuring a new way of sharing the 'common' (Corrêa 2018, 52). In principle, Rancière argues that expressions of equality bring about disharmony that represents an act of dissensus within the current social order (Todd 2008, 43). In this vein, dissensus is not only a practical disagreement on how social affairs are organised, but it denotes contingency regarding the conception of order or the 'distribution of the sensible' (Rancière 2010a, 36).

(2010aConsensus reduces the space of politics to what Rancière calls the 'police', thus marking the end of politics (Rancière 2010a, 50). A Rancièrian notion of 'police' defines the forms of partaking by dividing up people and delineating what is visible and what is not, and who is audible and who is not (ibid., 44). Consensus is 'the supposition of an identity between a fact and its interpretation [. . .] between a factual status and an assignation of rights' (ibid., 11). Consensus, therefore, delimits the sphere of whose voices and what kinds of claims are audible as a discourse concerning the 'common' of the community (Rancière 2011, 147). While not meaning that everyone is in full agreement about everything, consensus designates an agreement about who has and who does not have the right to speak and to be recognised as a voice that counts (Corrêa 2018, 52). Consensus denotes agreement of the 'common' foundation of community. It outlines who can have a part in the community, but also what kind of bodies and voices are excluded from it.

Therefore, dissensus and consensus outline profoundly different conceptions of the community's ground. Together, they can illuminate how the community's boundary is articulated through mundane interactions in urban environments. The practice of everyday citizenship, we claim, unveils scenes of both consensus and dissensus. Both dissensus and consensus are present, sometimes simultaneously, as diverse people meet and engage with each other. Building on such understanding, it is possible to discuss community dynamics without resorting to a predefined understanding of the 'common' in which people either have a part or not. Practices of everyday citizenship are complex and cannot be captured or understood by dichotomies and antagonisms (see also Corrêa 2018, 50). Conceptually, this interpretation can refine the understanding of community dynamics

in increasingly diverse contexts and avoid framing disagreement and conflict in terms of foundational difference that frames diversity as a problem and a source of social and political stratification.

Data and methods

In the Finnish context, the term 'suburb' (*lähiö*) refers to a particular type of residential area characterised by apartment houses. The history of Finnish suburbs dates back to the late 1960s, when they were seen as a solution to meet the growing demand for housing in urban regions as part of the wider urbanisation process. The building of Hervanta started in the early 1970s in a wasteland located some ten kilometres south from the centre of Tampere, the country's second-largest urban area. The district is characterised by greyish concrete buildings and a visible and immediate presence of nature, which are typical features of many Finnish suburbs of the time (see Tommila 1984). Since the 1970s, Hervanta has undergone a significant transformation in terms of urban infrastructure, connectivity, and landscape. A tramway that connected the area more directly to the centre of the city began to operate in August 2021.

The city of Tampere practises an active policy of social mixing in Hervanta, which seeks to prevent processes of urban segregation and the heavy concentration of social groups in individual housing companies. As compared to the rest of Tampere, Hervanta is a diverse area, with almost 25% of inhabitants speak a native language other than either of the official languages, Finnish and Swedish. At the level of the whole city, this percentage is less than 8% (in 2019). The population data also shows a high concentration of socio-economically disadvantaged residents in the area. In the Finnish context, Hervanta is known both as a 'problem' area and as a cosy neighbourhood with friendly inhabitants and a tight-knit sense of community – depending on who is telling the story. Hervanta is also a home of technology and education: Finland's only Police University College, Tampere University's technical sciences campus and the science park Hermia, which hosts high-tech companies, are all located there. When asked to describe the neighbourhood, the residents themselves used adjectives such as 'rustic', 'rough', 'street-credible', 'multicultural', 'cosy', 'vibrant', and 'international'.

During our research, we conversed with approximately 1,300 people and conducted in-depth ethnographic interviews with 80 people from various socio-economic, ethnic, and educational backgrounds. The interviews were focused on everyday experiences of living in Hervanta, social divisions and networks, and patterns of social interaction or lack thereof among its inhabitants. We interacted with our research participants in different languages, such as Arabic, Bengali, English, Finnish, French, Somali, and Russian, which was a natural course of dialogue emanating from the multicultural background of our research group. However, we resorted to tactile interpretation when conversing with participants with hearing and visual impairments. The fact that our research team was internally heterogeneous enabled positional reflection and offered insight into the manifold construction of life trajectories, community-making, and hence everyday citizenship negotiations (see also Kynsilehto 2011a, 2011b). During data collection, our participants also interpreted our backgrounds and constructed their narratives

in relation to what they thought was our position as regards the suburb and in the wider society. Hence, the data we collected are extremely rich in their constructions of similarity and difference in this regard as well.

For this article, we have identified and analysed excerpts where a claim to citizenship is enacted and where the boundary of community is drawn, and its ground negotiated. The interview data were thematically coded with Atlas.ti software, and sections related to both *migration* and *communication* were identified. The quotes that further related to everyday interactions, encounters, similarities, and differences were chosen for detailed analysis. Our analysis is thematically divided into two central categories: conceptions of language and practices of language use, and negotiations about the habitual elements and normative claims regarding the cultural and normative boundary of community. In our analysis, we scrutinise how various boundaries are constructed between people in the everyday and what idea of the 'common' they build up.

Language is a key to society – or is it?

In urban publics, gestures, and gaze constitute key dimensions through which everyday citizenship is practised and the community's boundary constructed and negotiated. In addition to these, language usage plays an important role in making claims to the community and building its boundary (Shindo 2019; also Määttä et al. 2021, this issue). Yet, the language of rights upon which claims of citizenship and community are made is not neutral or ahistorical, but highly contextual and historically constructed (Lazar 2013; Caglar 2015). Indeed, as Blommaert (2013, 33) claims, each society has its own interaction order that is 'an effect of the dialectics between the historical body and historical space'. For him, language use in public space is never neutral; it is always related to social structure, power, and hierarchy (ibid., 40). We want to explore if and to what extent language can construct one as a member in a local community and in society. If mastering the language is not enough, what does this reveal about the idea of the 'common'?

Language use in urban space can be illuminative of the assumptions that lie behind the conception of community and membership in the wider society. It is not rare to claim that language is a key to culture and central in gaining full membership in society, as comes across in Aisha's account:

> Language is a key to the society you enter. So that for instance, when you come here to Finland and don't speak the language, all doors are closed. Then, when you speak the language, you can, like, enter anywhere you want. And then, we have a saying that is someone learns the language of the country, such as Finnish, so then you are safe. Like nothing bad will happen to that person. There's no ill treatment and so. The language is a key to everything. I always talk with my mom and dad, that why didn't you learn Finnish. . . . Our dad is a very religious person and he just wanted to hold on to his own culture, religion, and the person he used to be. So that he didn't want to become Finnish. That's how I see it. And my mom was a housewife, taking care of us kids.

Aisha is a mother in her late twenties. She came to Finland from Iraq with her childhood family some 20 years ago. In the account that she discloses in very good Finnish, she explains why learning the language has been so important for her: to know and master the language means that accessing and claiming one's everyday rights is easier, which

again puts her in a 'safer' position in the society, empowers her to take agency and strengthens her sense of belonging both in the local urban context and wider society (see Shindo 2019). In her account, Aisha refuses to be an outsider in Finland. Her words convey a willingness to incorporate both countries and cultures as her own, unlike her father. She explicitly claims belonging, and her words echo her determination in claiming full membership in the society. Aisha's contention of language being a key to society can be taken as an acknowledgement of the multiple ways language shapes societies and how it relates to social and political life in everyday encounters in local communities (see Blommaert 2013, 33). Yet, because language and society are so deeply intertwined in terms of culture, habits, and norms, a mere command of the language is not enough to claim an equal position, as Seppo's account depicts:

> I, at least, I very easily have a hard time understanding this kind of person, who speaks either poor Finnish or then may speak entirely in English. . . . This is a reason to avoid encounters, for sure it is. . . . And then when understanding cannot emerge, then all communication ends there. . . . The language problem, it is a serious problem in these issues. And even if these people learned Finnish, there are still in their speech, those tones. And the tones are the things that are crucial. I mean, if they speak Finnish, they can get the actual thing clarified. But [the communication] does not go further.

Neither speaking the language nor a personal feeling of belonging necessarily mean that one's presence in a local community or wider society is perceived accordingly. Seppo, a native Finn, has lived in Hervanta for some 20 years in an area dominated by townhouses. Nowadays, he is retired from his profession as an engineer. When contrasted with Aisha's account, Seppo's words convey bleak prospects for migrants to master the Finnish language in a way that more substantial interaction could ever take place. Seppo is, however, trying as he helps his mother-in-law in taking her migrant-background neighbours out on tours in the countryside. His account illustrates that minor nuances, accents, ways of speaking, and divergent world views are all an integral part of social hierarchies that are conveyed in communication. Hence, a mere ability to speak a language may not, after all, be a key that opens all doors. Language is not neutral and can be effectively used to maintain hierarchies, producing exclusions based on who uses the language in the right way.

These divergent understandings are also negotiated in everyday encounters through gestures and gaze, not only through language, as becomes evident when looking at how Aisha's interview continued after she had expressed her feeling of belonging. As a woman who wears the veil, Aisha is highly visible in Hervanta's urban landscape, which can result in unpleasant encounters in public space:

> Well, last week there was this thing. I was with my mum, and we got off the bus there in Opiskelijankatu [central street in Hervanta], and we talked there for a while. [T]hen, I noticed two young women on the other side of the street, at the bus stop. They, it was so clear, they were staring at us and laughing. I had to yell that 'what are you looking at?' That there's nothing to look at. We're just normal people. I yelled at them because I was so agitated. I couldn't stand them looking. And then they, like, ha-ha, were laughing like that. Although my mum didn't like that I yelled. But I could not just stay quiet. I lost my cool.

This excerpt shows how migrant-background individuals have to negotiate their position and belonging in the community. It illustrates how political subjectification is manifested and performed around differences. Furthermore, the process of political subjectivation instigates self-positioning within political disorder that ultimately enables the contestation of distance between political subjects (Rancière 1999, 36–37). When Aisha shifts away from talking about her self-conception towards how she is perceived by the others, it becomes clear that speaking the language of a country does not mean that the person would be accepted as part of the community. Therefore, Aisha's account illustrates a simultaneous negotiation about the boundaries of the self to find and claim a place in the public space, and about the community's boundary that is also communicated and constructed through gaze and gestures. The excerpt illustrates how this boundary is upheld in the everyday by excluding people who are perceived to disrupt the consensual articulation of the 'common'.

While language does not translate into being accepted as a part of community, knowing the language occasionally enables speaking back to practices of exclusion, and if not dismantling, at least undermining the legitimacy of the community's boundary. Much like Aisha, Zahra had also encountered her neighbours' prejudices and stereotyping when spending time in the yard of her building. In her interview conducted in Finnish, Zahra explicitly raised the importance of being able to speak back:

> [The neighbours] always complained that 'migrants, you have so many children'. Always! Can't I have peace anywhere? And I said, 'it's none of your business'. I can speak [the language], you know, but when someone new comes here, it's really hard. Even if they wanted to speak [back], they cannot. It is not easy.

Zahra's roots are in the Kurdistan region in Iran. She has lived in Hervanta for 25 years, at many different addresses; some have been more pleasant, others less so in terms of neighbours. What is important in her experience is that by knowing the Finnish language, she feels empowered by being able to speak back and claim her right to be in peace in the housing company's common outdoor spaces, just like all other residents. According to Rancière (2010a, 9), this is an expression of demand for equality within an inegalitarian order, and it can only take place through contradictions and disagreement.

Against this theoretical framework, it is understandable – while not justified – that sometimes people whose bodies are perceived as different are completely closed off from the sphere of audible speech and public space, regardless of their language skills, as Abdi's case illustrates. Abdi arrived in Finland from Somalia in the early 1990s and has engaged in the struggle of claiming a part and becoming an equal member of Finnish society for more than 30 years. He works two jobs and tells of feeling a strong responsibility towards the society that gave him a chance when he needed one. Occasionally, however, as the following quote illustrates, the immensity of the struggle feels paralysing to Abdi:

> Someone [in the street] looks at you like you had killed or eaten their mother alive. [laughs] And when they stare at you with that kind of a look, you start thinking. And you know you're so bloody tired, you work hard, and you pay taxes and you have tried your best. You try to build this society. So, when someone you meet for the first time thinks – still, in 2019 – that, they will not give you a chance . . . It affects you, and you start thinking: is there really this kind of person in the world still today? I mean seriously.

In his account communicated in Finnish, Abdi is frustrated at being stereotyped and categorised non-verbally by people whom he does not know, based only on his appearance. The quote reflects an encounter in which Abdi was denied a chance to speak back and in which he experienced simultaneous heightened visibility and complete inaudibility (Tonkiss 2003; Shindo 2019). In his interview, Abdi expressed pride in making a life not only for himself, but also for his children, and contributing to the whole society. He wished to build the community where he lives from within by offering advice and lending services and help to whomever needs them. His Finnish skills are excellent, yet in the urban public spaces, he is continuously refused an equal position in the community and often made only an object of gazes and gestures, without a recognisable presence or an audible voice.

Urban public spaces are supposed to be open to anyone, and everyone is assumedly equally anonymous in that shared space. According to Tonkiss (2005, 66, 72), difference operates in public spaces in multiple ways, producing exclusions and questioning the idea that presence in the urban commons is 'a basic expression of political and social membership'. As our data illustrate, people whose presence and body are marked with difference are forced to negotiate their presence daily in public spaces, such as streets and parks. The way in which difference operates is founded upon a particular normative understanding of community and its ground. The stories of Aisha, Abdi, and Zahra speak volumes regarding the exclusionary messages that can be communicated in everyday encounters and the way in which these encounters fortify the community's boundary against perceived others, verbally or non-verbally (see Valentine 2008). What is even clearer is that mastering the language does not ensure that one is perceived as having a part in the community or even being able to make an audible claim to the 'common'.

Negotiating normative and habitual grounds of the 'common'

The community's boundary cannot be overcome simply through language; a claim to have a part can be presented, but it is not necessarily accepted. To understand why this is so, we need to take a deeper look into what the 'minor' circumstances of everyday life and mundane expressions of disagreement reveal about the idea of the 'common' that lies at the ground of any notion of community. The minor circumstances of everyday life are related to the emergence of the 'common' in the here and now through people's acts, their linguistic and verbal formulations, and their behaviour (Harrison 2000, 502; Isin 2008, 27). The idea allows us to expose the ground of the 'common' and see how it is related to norms, habits, and a particular understanding of history – and how those imaginaries circulate in the everyday, sometimes in surprising contexts.

During our data collection in Hervanta, it was not rare to hear racialised and discriminatory remarks about migrants. The historical narration of the Finnish nation has been constructed on the idea of the homogeneity of the population and its shared traditions and values (Valtonen 2018). The narration has been increasingly contested, its violence towards Finnish minorities such as the Sámi and Roma acknowledged, and its racialised tone problematised (e.g. Valenius 2004; Keskinen, Skaptadóttir, and Toivanen 2019). Yet, during the last decades, building on this narration and ethno-nationalistic imagery, right-wing populists – among others – have successfully politicised external characterisations of Finnish citizens to create a scene of separation between 'real Finnish

people' and the 'others' whose physical features, such as dark hair and skin colour, do not fit with the racialised and ethno-nationalist idea of Finns (Norocel et al. 2020). In these cases, reference was implicitly made to so-called humanitarian migrants – that is, people who have arrived in Finland from outside the European economic area as refugees or asylum seekers. In his interview, Markku, a native Finn, reminisced about the 'good old times' when community spirit was valued in Hervanta and people abided by 'common' rules:

> That block [near Markku's home] is completely owned by the rental apartment foundation owned by the city of Tampere. The residents used to have a lot of collaboration. . . . It was before I moved here, I believe, so before 1977. . . . But nowadays, as other nationalities have moved in, there is disagreement over them following the law of their own country. They won't agree with those rules that the housing company has.

Markku perceives that the eroding community spirit and respect for rules is due to the increased number of migrants living in the neighbouring housing company, from which the city of Tampere has rented several apartments to 'them' in line with its social mixing policy. Markku's words repeat a division between 'us', the rule-abiding Finns, and 'them', the foreign and trouble-making newcomers. However, Markku fails to acknowledge the contradiction in his account regarding the allegedly tight-knit community: the first inhabitants moved to Hervanta in 1973 and Markku himself moved there in 1977. Thus, the golden age of communality to which Markku referred in his interview lasted only around four years, while the number of migrants in the area started growing only in the late 1980s. Markku's narration reveals how closely normative understandings feed into a biased historical perception of community relations in Hervanta.

Other people we interviewed also relied on the account of 'us' versus 'them', but instead of history, they drew on their everyday experiences to highlight the difficulty of reaching a shared understanding. Suvi, a 35-year-old single mom, talked about her neighbours who refused to accept common rules. The situation was aggravated by the fact that Suvi did not have a shared language with them. She felt frustrated, as the noise from the neighbours' apartment disturbed her daily life:

> Their lifestyle is so different. They must be used to the kind where they stay up all night and sleep all day. I don't know. They have, like, such different lifestyles. So, the time when we go to bed, they start living. Particularly in the summer. It's super-annoying that they don't realise that we want to sleep. . . . I have tried to leave some notes downstairs in the hallway a couple of times, that 'can you please respect the silent times' and so. . . . Their culture is somehow, like, so different. Perhaps we should organise an event that how, what the Finnish culture is like and how neighbours need to be taken into consideration.

Suvi laments further that her migrant neighbours' children scream in the yard, while previously the 'Finnish' kids were playing 'normal' games, such as organising a children's Olympics. In addition, she complains about migrants littering the common spaces because they do not 'either know or care' where to put the trash. Suvi feels that she has reached the limits of her understanding, so much so that conversation may not even be possible. Both Markku's and Suvi's accounts that are voiced from a majority position, construct similarity around respect for common rules that are learned through a process of socialisation and that do not disturb a certain understanding of sociality that has historically been built upon silence, respect for other people's personal space, and social

distance. Both accounts also evoke the notion of Finnish exceptionalism, where the national identity is built with an inward-looking gaze, and its connections to structures of racism and colonialism are either ignored or negated (Rastas 2012).

In our data, claims to community, whether raised by majority Finns or migrant-background inhabitants, relate mostly to reinforcing or contesting place of birth and shared cultural heritage or ancestry as grounds for belonging. Both Markku's and Suvi's views turn perceived difference into a threat towards their understanding of community. This conception illustrates the importance of habits for the maintenance and creation of a 'self' (Harrison 2000, 506). As the self is relationally constructed and social, change in one's surroundings can cause a rupture as everyday life changes.

Yet, it is worth noting that the kind of accusations that Markku and Suvi voiced were often diminished when social relations with migrants were constructed through everyday encounters and when the relationship between people became more personal. Thus, language has a role to play in dismantling the community's normative boundary in everyday interactions, though it cannot be considered as a self-evident factor of inclusion in the 'common', as is sometimes perceived. Community relations, when studied through neighbourhood dialogues, offer nuanced insights into social and political change within societies and can be useful in understanding how societies stick together or how and along which lines they become divided. As Suvi's account illustrates, in neighbourhood relations, difference is not an abstract force that is separate from one's own personal life. Rather, in the urban environment, the operation of difference penetrates the private sphere of the home and can thus arouse strong emotions. Hence, daily life can be a site of struggle for those perceived as different from the normative idea of what citizens look like, how they sound, and how they behave.

Normative assumptions around belonging, which lie at the centre of Rancière's criticism, reveal the reciprocal and relational practices of everyday citizenship and become visible in mundane encounters and interactions (Caglar 2015; Blommaert 2013). Yet it is crucial to acknowledge that this normativity is not upheld only by the majority population but also by the migrants themselves, particularly when they wish to distinguish themselves from other migrant groups. The following excerpt is from an interview with Irina, who moved to Finland from Russia and is now living in Hervanta with her husband and small baby:

> [I]n kindergarten . . . you can count Finns, probably, just with your fingers. And for various other nationalities, even [fingers and] toes together won't be enough . . . I just want my child to go to kindergarten and not get used to another culture that I don't like. . . . In Hervanta, let's say, a child goes to kindergarten, and he catches different cultures, yes. And he will never see the Finnish culture. . . . He should understand principles of communication and behaviour of this country, and not of those who arrived and show other principles of behaviour.

Irina, herself speaking Russian in the interview, expresses a strong willingness for her child to integrate into Finnish society, which for her equals learning the language and principles that represent 'true' and 'authentic' Finnish culture and values. She draws a line between 'good' migrants – like herself and her family – who wish to assimilate and not be noticeable in the public space by their appearance or language use, and 'bad' migrants who do not want to or fail to conform to the norms. In Irina's perception of

community, there are those migrants who merit full membership and those who do not. This view is built upon a consensual and, as a result, exclusionary understanding of the 'common'. Similar narrations were also maintained by those migrants who arrived earlier than the 'newcomers', a nomination used to denote people who arrived during or after the so-called refugee crisis in 2015, or by those who stressed their secular and assumedly more liberal worldviews that they regarded as being more compatible with Finnish society.

In the imagery that Irina voices, people whose skin colour or clothing stick out, who speak less than perfect Finnish and who thus disrupt monolithic understandings of Finnishness embody profound and irreconcilable differences, as they do not meet the stereotypical and racialised idea of being white and Finnish-speaking. The quote communicates that – aside from language – appearance, habits, and routines are also deeply connected with understandings of citizenship (Appiah 2018; Harrison 2000). The examples we have discussed in this section regard how the 'common' ground of community is constructed against a perception of how well one is able to fulfil the underlying norms of the community and to meet the expectations of who claims the position of a political subject in Hervanta. They reveal that the 'common' foundation of the community is a historical, normative, and ideological construction.

Between consensus and dissensus

In the two previous sections, we have shown how the community's boundary is constructed and its common ground is constantly negotiated in the practice of everyday citizenship in urban environments. The discussion marks the unstable basis of the community that sometimes seems to refer to society, sometimes political community and sometimes to citizenship status. This illustrates how a sense of community, in its various meanings, emerges in mundane encounters between people through communication, be it verbal or gestural. In any case, the negotiations of the 'common' ground of community reveal a complex dialectics between consensus and dissensus that we want to turn to next. Rather than explicit claims to and articulation of the 'common', the dynamics are manifested through the 'minor' circumstances and gestures of daily life, through seemingly inconsequential acts and instances where something important happens (also Harrison 2000, 503). Zahra's story is illustrative in this regard.

After moving to another apartment from the house where her neighbours reproached her for having 'too many children', Zahra had made contact with her new neighbours in the sauna. In Finland, residential houses often have a common sauna where all apartments have or can book their designated turns. There are also weekly turns that are open to everyone who lives in the building, with men and women having separate timeslots. Zahra describes her strategy of approaching the neighbours in the following way:

> That neighbour has been so kind and friendly from the first day. We met in the sauna, when she came to talk to me there. Nowadays, particularly in the sauna, I speak with people, even start the conversation. I say something, and if the other person wants to talk, then they'll reply. If not, then not. . . . Perhaps the best way is to introduce myself to the neighbour, tell where I have lived and how long I have lived in Finland and who I am.

The sauna is a place where many Finns may not expect to see their neighbours with a migrant background, perhaps due to stereotypical images related to differences in habits and cultures. For Zahra, the sauna has proved to be a place where she can approach her neighbours and practise her language skills. In the quote, she describes how she has managed to establish a good relationship with her neighbour and continues to explain at length how they now exchange favours. Yet Zahra's account also speaks to the normativity regarding who are perceived as members of the community as she describes the need to talk about her background and tell something about herself to get the conversation started. Her position is not equal, as a white person speaking fluent Finnish would hardly start explaining their background in the country to a new neighbour. Yet Zahra does not seem willing to contest the logic of the 'common' here, but rather uses it to become recognised as a member of the neighbourhood community instead of being one of 'them', a member of an imagined and uniform community of migrants. When viewed from this angle, sauna bathing appears as a site of subject-construction and negotiating the community's boundary rather than a contestation of its ground. The experience of Maria, who is retired, with her Afghan neighbours presents food-sharing as serving a similar function:

> Before, one family lived here, who always brought me food. That was nice, but then they moved away. They used to ring my doorbell and come with a portion of food that was enough for two or three servings. The lady, who didn't know Finnish yet . . . she learnt really well by having neighbours who she could talk to in her ordinary surroundings. For someone who does not have work and who is at home with the family and relatives, that is important. I feel it is important both ways. The beauty is that I've been able to get to know such different cultures.

In Maria's case, her neighbours had initiated a dialogic relationship by bringing food to her door. Preparing and consuming food has a social function and sharing food with neighbours gives opportunities to send messages of hospitality and trust (Mauss 1966 [1950]). As Maria points out, this serves a dual function, as it makes it possible to pave the way to creating connections and relationships that enable addressing differences and negotiating the community's boundary in a way that does not disrupt a consensual sense of the 'common'. As can be seen from Maria's contention that 'I've been able to get to know such different cultures', while cultural difference is essentialised to some extent, there is room for including different people as members of the community. Hence, the idea of community is somewhat flexible, at least when the disruptive presence of the perceived 'other' is mediated by minor gestures of hospitality. According to Rancière (2010b, viii), consensus 'is not people's agreement amongst themselves but the matching of sense with sense: the accord made between a sensory regime of presentation of things and a mode of interpretation of their meaning'. Both Zahra's and Maria's neighbours' actions illustrate the willingness to search for a common ground in a way that does not explicitly challenge the consensual vision of community, but rather builds on it. Yet the meaning of such small gestures and efforts cannot be negated. They allow different people to explore what they can and do share with one another, both figuratively and concretely. These acts hold potential in bridging different takes on the 'common' or articulating the 'common' from the bottom

up, instead of presupposing that a shared ground already exists or excluding its possibility beforehand. There is a dissensual element in both Zahra's and Maria's neighbours' act: they challenge the operation of difference and the ground on which this operation relies.

In addition to paying attention to minor gestures of everyday citizenship, it is necessary to acknowledge and address structural inequalities and epistemic violence that become visible in the everyday (see Caglar 2015; Williams 2015). Ultimately, these inequalities and this form of violence are normalised by the kinds of identity narratives and notions of the 'common' that we have sought to unpack with our examples. The struggle of having a part in the society, hence, is not the individual's responsibility or something that a person can achieve alone. Zoran, a father of a small boy, raised this issue explicitly when talking about his son not being offered appropriate care and affection in the kindergarten when the child was crying for his parents:

> I think that, in Hervanta, there are quite a lot of foreigners. And foreigners don't know how to complain, to give feedback. . . . In my view, the quality of many services is really very low here as compared to other areas. . . . Now, I can say that it is true that we are not Finnish. But we do have Finnish citizenship. We live here and of course we care about the future of the services. I told the director [of the kindergarten] that 'like it or not, this is the future generation. These children will build Finland'. Whether you like it or not, this is the future. If you act like this, they will feel marginalised, and the combination may not end well. . . . These children are in Finland, they have citizenship, and they need to have the same services, treatment, and opportunities. This issue is so important. This will directly impact us, our children's future, and even peace in the society.

Zoran makes an explicit claim towards the community. He uses the term 'citizenship' in a dual way: it not only denotes a legal status but implies a position of interest in relation to the 'common'. He points out the importance of addressing structural and epistemic forms of violence that exist and that become evident through everyday practices (on these forms of violence, see Spivak 1988; Galtung 1969). Zoran also acknowledges that mundane exclusions and inequalities can have drastic consequences for societies, not only individuals. He makes a normative claim to the necessity of redefining the 'common' as a strategy to build peaceful community relations. Zoran's view exposes community as a contested site of claim-making (Isin 2012, 450). When considering all excerpts presented in the article, we wish to push the argument further and suggest that in increasingly diverse urban environments, community is not only a contested site but emerges through multivocal practices of claim-making between consensus and dissensus.

Conclusions

The daily construction and circulation of difference and similarity in a multicultural and multilinguistic urban neighbourhood enables fathoming community in terms of emergence and multivocality. Through our data, we have illustrated how everyday conflicts, practices of exclusion and discrimination and claims of belonging can be understood to build on different conceptions of the ground or source of community: they regard disagreement over the nature of what is shared and common between members of a community. Drawing on these interviews, we claim that understanding dissensus as a condition for increasingly diverse communities does not need to lead

to the dissolving of community. The article has put forward an understanding that community cannot be conceived as a unified subject, a 'we' in the first place. Community is made and negotiated in people's everyday interactions and encounters. What follows from this is that the community's foundation is always in the process of being formed. There is no 'common' ground for a community that could readily encompass diversity, since community is articulated through a simultaneous act of sharing and dividing, being part of and parting. Therewith, any idea of community necessarily both relies on consensus and evokes dissensus.

To understand how the 'common' is negotiated and articulated, there is a need to explore how people live *in* difference, not through difference or with it. We have taken the first step in this direction by bringing together discussions of everyday citizenship, community, and urban space. However, it is crucial to note that the practice of everyday citizenship is connected to larger social and political structures and power relations. We have shed light on the connections between everyday practice, imaginaries of sameness and alterity, and community dynamics. This is important if we wish to understand how people live together and how community dynamic develops. We claim that this step allows us to think about the prospects and challenges of peaceful coexistence in diversifying urban contexts.

Our data point towards an understanding that practices of everyday citizenship are multivocal and characterised by a tensional dialectic between consensus and dissensus over the very ground of community – that is, the ways of articulating 'we'. This dialectic puts forward an understanding of community as inherently multivocal and the 'common' being in an incessant process of emergence. Multivocality refers to the multiplicity of voices, not only languages, that make claims to community and negotiate its ground. In places like Hervanta that are characterised by multifaceted diversity, multivocality is already the reality. It is something that unfolds every day in people's interactions and encounters. Emergence, as a characteristic of the 'common', repeats the idea of multivocality in acknowledging that there can never be a shared understanding of the community's ground in contexts where there exists a multiplicity of voices and views. If an understanding of the 'common' is not to become a tool of exclusion, it needs to remain a contested site – in the process of being formulated all the time, but never reaching closure.

Note

1. All names are pseudonyms

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