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CITIZENSHIP AND GENDER. SUGGESTIONS FOR MAKING CITIZENSHIP MORE RESPONSIVE

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Abstract
The category of citizenship is presented as gender-neutral and citizens are considered as individuals abstracted from bodiliness and gender roles. Such universalism fosters practices of invisibility of the inequalities hidden in citizenship. For although legally all citizens are equal, they have unequal access to resources, power, and privilege. Gender is also a determining factor in the allocation of rights and responsibilities. The aim of this paper is to show the exclusionary dimension of citizenship contained in the universalist interpretation. To achieve this, a hermeneutic analysis is made of political theory and political thought texts referring to the idea of citizenship. The article consists of two main parts. The first discusses the inclusive and exclusive potential of citizenship as a political community. The second presents feminist theories of citizenship, such as gender-neutral citizenship, gender-differentiated citizenship, and gender-pluralist citizenship. Adding new elements to the definition makes it possible to take into account the differences between people that affect their relationship with the state and to address the transformations that the idea itself is undergoing.

Keywords
community, gender-differentiated citizenship, pluralistic citizenship, intersectionality

Introduction

The issue of citizenship and civil society is one of the key themes addressed in analyses of democratic political systems. Traditionally grounded in egalitarianism, the idea of citizenship is presented as being gender-neutral; however, such universalism fosters the practice of overlooking inequality hidden behind the divisions of gender roles. Although, in the eyes of the law, all citizens are equal, they have unequal access to resources, power, and privileges. The determining factor in allocating these civil rights and duties is gender.

While analyzing the claim of the neutrality of citizenship, it should be mentioned that the neutral manner of writing about the categories of citizenship constitutes a certain

norm; however, the main issue lies in failing to notice the differences in the seemingly neutral descriptions rather than in their neutrality itself. To prove the exclusionary power of citizenship contained in its universalist interpretation, a hermeneutic analysis of literature in political theory and political thought was conducted. By reading source texts and applying equality tools to research them, it is possible to see the exclusion of certain groups from the categories of citizenship. However, for centuries, we were unable to label it outright exclusion.

Traditionally, citizenship has been defined as the status of individuals having full membership of a community understood as a state. However, referring to feminist interpretations and the idea of intersectionality, it can also be understood as a multilevel construction, taking into account the membership of individuals in multiple communities at the same time. Therefore, the purpose of this analysis, in addition to demonstrating the exclusionary potential of the universalist vision of citizenship, is to show alternative projects of feminist thought, enriching definitions of citizenship with elements that make it possible to take into account the differences between people, affecting their relationship with the state. The realization of the goal outlined in this way also makes it possible to address the transformations that the idea of civil society itself is undergoing. Thus, the hypothesis underlying this work would involve the statement that human diversity is also reflected in the relationship of citizens with the state. The article should be set within the framework of reflection from political theory and political thought, so the main research methods used to verify the hypothesis are hermeneutic analysis as well as the comparative method. The text consists of two main parts: the first discusses the inclusive and exclusionary potential of citizenship as a political community, while the second presents feminist theories of citizenship suggesting making it more sensitive.

The inclusive and exclusive potential of citizenship

Thus, citizenship, along with its rights, may be considered a type of privilege. Since privileges create inequality, the category of citizenship itself may include or exclude all non-citizens from a given community (Soysal 1989). The exclusive power of citizenship, therefore, fits within a whole range of other forms of exclusion (Nawratek 2011:20). Citizenship is experienced the most when one does not possess it, since the power and attractiveness of a community are magnified when one is excluded from it. Therefore, some of the key issues concerning communities should be highlighted (Środa 2003: 260–264).

The first question pertains to constitutive and organic ties. Constitutive communities are not based on cooperation and rights but on a common form of life that causes its members to treat each other as "coexistent" (Sandel 1982: 152). In such "organic concepts", the public sphere is a "body" from which emotions, traditions, family affection, friendship, solidarity, and goodwill cannot be separated. Meanwhile, constitutive ties are not based on commerce and the exchange of goods and services but on sharing. As a result, the community is a sphere of "warm solidarity" rather than "cold cooperation". Ferdynand Tönnies pointed out that the starting point for establishing ties is the emotions and will of those headed in the same direction together, not a rational premise. The *Gemeinschaft* community, based on the mutual understanding of all its members, differs from the contemporary *Gesellschaft* society (Tönnies 1963). Eric Hobsbawm claims that the word "community" has never been used so frequently as in times when it is difficult to find

(Hobsbawm 1995:16). When a community collapses, an identity emerges that is merely a substitute for that community (Young 1999:164). Although identity is meant to provide a sense of safety, it also entails distinguishing oneself and being different from the remaining identities; thus, by definition, it divides and separates.

Secondly, the overarching value here is the concept of the common good, understood as a way of societal life. The community is the centre for pursuing the good life (Walzer 2004: 66–89). Therefore, the community is not so much the source of morality as morality itself (Seligman 2003: 257–258). Amitai Etzioni (1991) defines community as a group of individuals among whom affectionate relationships and common values, norms, and history and identity, are shared. Communities are oriented on bringing about the common good and a high level of sensitivity to the needs of the members of the group (2003: 257–258).

Thirdly, the issue of common meaning, values, and vocabulary is essential. Michael Sandel argues that a common vocabulary and communication practices create a community. The community is a certain axiological structure that binds participants in a narrative and helps them recognize each other. Charles Taylor adds that the community provides its participants with an "axiological social context" and a "horizon of meanings" which they use to define themselves. According to Alasdair MacIntyre (1996), the community connects its members by means of time, space, responsibilities, institutions, and values, which constitute a set of practices, goals, meanings, and virtues created based on a common vocabulary and a narrative rooted in a shared past.

Fourthly, it is also essential that the community is space for discussion, approval or disapproval, and assessment of the various expressions of the good life. Robert Redfield (1971) believes that it is always clear where a community starts and where it ends because it is small enough to recognise all its members and distinguish between "us and "them". The community's small dimension makes full communication possible, protecting its members and ensuring unity and uniformity.

For Thomas Humphrey Marshall (1950), citizenship means being fully connected with the community. This connection takes place within three spheres – civil rights, political rights, and social rights. Therefore, citizenship is the right to be rooted in a community associated with the biological (ethnic) aspect of human existence. Changes in understanding citizenship occurred as a result of the transition from biological to political and social citizenship and to a new biological citizenship once again. Thus, these changes may be perceived as a mechanism of deterritorialization from the community rather than rooting oneself in it. Citizenship's transition from the political to social dimension took it out of the sphere of loyalty to the state and community (nineteenth-century ethnic citizenship) and into the sphere of individual privileges (the European model of the welfare state), built on individual rights rather than duties (Fitzgerald & Cuesta-Leiva 1997).

Since its inception as a concept, citizenship has been intended to detach people from their clans or religious or ethnic communities and place them in the natural political sphere, thereby connecting them to the state. When the nation-state retreated to neoliberal positions, loyalty to it was replaced either by ethnic and religious loyalties once again or by loyalty to supernational and deterritorialized structures, international organizations, or large corporations. Today, this situation is subject to new changes resulting from the Renaissance idea of nation-states and geopolitical shifts in terms of security and access to natural resources.

In this sense, citizenship is also attractive as an idea of inclusion in the political community for the purposes of claiming one's rights or privileges and not feeling connected to a larger group united by common values and aspirations (Nawratek 2011:23).

If the political, social, and economic rights citizens are entitled to today are a particular type of privilege that pushes those who cannot receive citizenship to the side, denying citizenship creates a mass of people who *de facto* lose their fundamental human rights. As Hanna Arendt argues and Giorgio Agamben reiterates, such rights do not exist apart from citizen rights (Nawratek 2011:90). For Arendt, the necessity of having a nationality meant, at the same time, the ability to enjoy civil rights. On the other hand, statelessness meant being denied both civil rights and human rights. Throughout history, human and civil rights have been inextricably related to each other, a topic Arendt addressed in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. For this reason, denying someone their civil rights is contradictory to human rights declarations and is politically the same as denying someone their human rights (Nawratek 2011:60). However, we became aware of the right to have rights only when people had lost their rights and could not regain them (Arendt 1973:414). As a result, Arendt advocates for the civic, and not ethnic, ideal of the community and belonging to it. Seyla Benhabib (2006), who created the concept of cosmopolitan citizenship, intending to build a community of communication in which foreigners and the weakest members have a means of questioning and criticizing unjust social structures, follows the same train of thought. Problematic citizens – women, the disabled, the poor, and cultural minorities – are treated as an object of comparative and assimilation processes rather than as an equal group of people whose values and experiences should be considered when defining the legal and ideological foundations of the state.

Extension of the citizenship definition

One of the most popular ways of understanding citizenship is referring to the individuals who are part of the nation. This identifying category makes them a part of the community which shares a range of ideas and conditions. In this way, we approach the idea of citizenship as something simultaneously individual and collective, and political, social, cultural, and economic (Yuval-Davis 1997: 4–27).

Although citizenship is traditionally defined as the status of full membership in a given community (Marshall 1950:14) and understood as a synonym of the state, citizenship may also be perceived as a multi-layer construction that takes into consideration the membership of individuals in various local, ethnic, national, and supernational communities, which constitutes a holistic relationship shaped by identity, social position, functioning cultural assumptions, institutional practises, and feelings of belonging (Yuval-Davis1999:4). Enriching the definition of citizenship with new elements is, on the one hand, a construction that makes it possible to include the differences between people that impact their relationship with the state in this concept, and on the other, it allows for a simpler interpretation of the changes it undergoes (Lister 1997: 191).

Citizenship and its associated rights and duties create space between the validated norm and the margin. For this reason, this process is not limited to the state apparatus alone but is much broader in scope. The possibility of being recognized as a citizen would entail the condition of existence and coexistence, subject to a threefold obligation (Lahire

2007:21–38). met by the following socializing factors: family and peers/community and school/the nation-state) (Yuval-Davis 2010: 68–92).

The public sphere as a space for the practice of gender discrimination

The basic criteria for having full citizenship as determined by public law include being born free, age, gender, and material status. Researchers attribute civil rights to the particular time in which they were achieved or granted – civil rights (the eighteenth century), political rights (the nineteenth century) and social rights (the twentieth century). In most cases, women gained full civil rights only after gaining political rights, particularly the right to vote (Walby 1997: 171). These stages indicate that excluding women from citizenship in Ancient Greece and later eras was no accident (Lister 2001:324). The gender-based division of labour, a consequence of preventing women from performing public roles, freed men from domestic responsibilities, thus giving them time for political activity. Therefore, pushing women into the private sphere was essential for implementing the entire project (Lister 2001: 324).

In his work *Politics*, Aristotle writes that there are three possible types of interpersonal relationships; those between master and slave, husband and wife, and father and children (Aristotle 2013: 225). Therefore, on the one hand, we have masters, husbands and fathers, and slaves, women, and children on the other. If we compare this with an analysis of the public and private spheres conducted by Hanna Arendt in *The Human Condition* (1958), we can clearly see that this division is also a determinant of the rights of male property owners. Citizens worthy of respect, conducting their affairs by means of speech and action (*lexis* and *praxis*) were included in the public sphere, the sphere of light, universal appearance, and a form of culture. It was constituted by values such as freedom, the common good, justice, and equality. On the other hand, nature, barbarians, slaves, women and children, suffering, violence, hard labour, and passions hidden in the shadow of the domestic sphere, were attributes of the private sphere.

Feminists characterise inequality with a wide range of differences between people, which translate into relationships of power and submissiveness, including ownership, gender, age, race, sexual orientation, and the degree of control over one's own body. Attributing social roles to people, which results from belonging to a group and social collectivity, defines their potential as citizens (Walby 1997: 173).

The evolution of the theory and practice of citizenship indicates the ways women have been excluded and how this exclusion is masked by universalist terminology. Citizenship is based exclusively on relations with the state and market, *i.e.*, male-dominated areas with limited access since it relates to the public sphere. Since women have been associated with the private sphere, they have become less visible as citizens and less able to exercise their rights. The concept of action, the foundation of active citizenship, was based to a great extent on the lifestyles of men – hired workers, and it privileges features stereotypically considered as masculine (Eschle 2000: 36).

Feminist critique of the private-public divide has contributed to making phenomena considered so far as private, the subject of public debate. Carol Hanisch's slogan "private is political" emerged in reaction to the reluctant attitude of public opinion, including part of the women's movement, to introducing personal problems such as corporeality, appearance, abortion, or childcare into the public sphere (Hanisch 2006). Here, the political

nature of privacy does not refer so much to the system of institutions and state actors as to the broadly understood relationships of power held by those functioning in society. The problems experienced by women, considered part of the private sphere, are a reflection and effect of the unequal division of power between the sexes in the state and on the market (Kwiatkowska 2010).

According to feminist authors, the public – private divide is historically changeable and politically determined. The boundary line between the public and private spheres is, therefore, a political process that reflects and strengthens the relationships of power at work in society, particularly those related to gender, race, and class. Economic, social, and political power form part of the public sphere to which women have limited access and limited control. Power dynamics within the private sphere are created and sustained by the law (Sullivan 1995: 128). Therefore, the systemic solution for women's "private" problems lies in the public sphere and may be achieved only through their active participation.

Feminist theories of citizenship

According to feminist theories of citizenship, this solution is understood primarily as the actual ability to exercise one's rights and freedoms. Feminist attention focuses on the process of exclusion: externally, *e.g.*, in the case of non-citizen immigrants, and internally due to gender, poverty, skin colour, etc. The exclusion factors often overlap, known as intersectionality, (Lister 1997: 36) *i.e.*, interlocking systems of oppression (Crenshaw 2004:2; Crenshaw 1989:139–167; Crenshaw 1991: 1241–1299) reinforcing discrimination of groups and individuals, *e.g.*, gender, ethnicity, race, class, sexual orientation, nationality, age, religion, or disability.

The feminist critique of the classic concepts of citizenship calls into question the universalistic assumptions that all citizens are identical and have the same needs and that equal rights guarantee their neutrality in terms of particular group interests. Two types of arguments may be distinguished in this trend, reflecting the basic division within the feminist movement and theory: liberal and radical feminism (Voet 1995: 72).

The liberal approach primarily focuses on equal rights in the formal and substantive sense. It criticises the "masculine" concepts of citizenship that ignore inequalities between the sexes, particularly in the private sphere, which, in turn, translate into unequal opportunities to exercise one's rights, fulfil civil duties, and undertake activities in the public sphere[1].

Discrimination against women in the differentiating approach does not consist in hindering their access to the public sphere, but in devaluating women's needs, values, and means of self-realisation. Furthermore, laws beneficial for men are presented as universal rights and duties. Classic concepts of the citizen and an individual's relationship with the state defined by them unify and impoverish diverse people who belong to various groups.

Although both these strands of feminism criticise the concept of citizenship as such, both point to differences between the sexes in activities in the public sphere. The liberal current proposes the elimination of these differences and the creation of a community of

1 Centuries of excluding women from citizenship and unequal gender relations based on tradition and additionally reinforced by state law (*e.g.*, parental leave for women only) and blockades brought by the policies of male-dominated state institutions causes the state's unequal treatment of both sexes to result in unequal opportunities.

equal citizens, while the radical current points to the necessity of taking these differences into account in state policies.

Excluding women from citizenship manifests itself in their underrepresentation in the public sphere and justifying it with false beliefs. Women constitute a minority among people exercising their political and social rights. They also vote and sit in government bodies less frequently, are less active in the labour market, and thus have limited access to social benefits.

The basic feminist postulate is, therefore, engendering/regendering citizenship, *i.e.*, expanding its scope of meaning to include the experience of women. Liberal feminism and radical feminism, however, represent entirely different strategies for implementing this demand. The reformist strategy is aimed at mutually accommodating the needs of women and the institutions of the functioning system. In contrast, the revolutionary strategy calls for profound changes in institutions to meet the needs of women (Kwiatkowska. 2010). Here, the question could be posed whether the condition for women's participation in the social aspect of citizenship is conforming to the masculine pattern and sacrificing their professional careers. Perhaps the rules of the state system should be changed so that not only paid employment guarantees material support in retirement?

The experience of motherhood is shared by only some women. For this reason, in Nel Nodings's feminist discourse, the idea of civic motherhood has been replaced by the ethics of care, constituting a transition from "rights talk", which promotes an individualism not rooted in community values and formal equality to "needs talk". The feminist discourse, built on the ethics of care, is particularly concentrated on the social aspect of citizenship and exhibits suspicion towards women's activity in male-dominated spheres, including politics and the market (Lister 2001: 330).

A postulate has been made to include the necessity of caring for others and the right to receive care in times of need (Knijn &Kremer, 1997:357). According to this concept, the work of caregivers would be grounds to obtain social benefits in the same way as paid work. Similar proposals include basing civil rights on performing certain duties for the benefit of the local community (Lister 2002: 197–8).

The postulate to include questions of providing care in civil rights and duties generalises the problems of some women for all women (including childless women or those whose parents require care) and reinforces the social division of labour by gender[2].

Suggestions for making citizenship more responsive

Therefore, feminist recommendations to make citizenship more responsive are linked to exposing it to gender-related issues. Ruth Lister classifies them in a threefold manner: gender-neutral citizenship, gender-differentiated citizenship, and gender-pluralist citizenship (Lister 2001: 323). The first two views make direct reference to the division of feminism into liberal and radical camps. In the gender-pluralist citizenship model, gender is regarded as one of several differentiating factors and is, at the same time, highlighted in civil

2 This postulate is attacked by some liberal feminists as being activity that jeopordizes the centuries-old fight for emancipation. In the longer perspective, it will contribute to reinforcing the stereotypes of women shut in the private sphere at their own request, which hinders the actions of women who have decided to pursue a professional career and reconciling it with family life.

practices and overshadowed in a vast range of features, including class, ethnic origin, age, degree of ability, or sexual orientation.

One of the first theories of gender-pluralist citizenship was Iris Marion Young's concept of group-differentiated citizenship. Based on the heterogeneous character of modern societies, it outlines a vision in which differences are widely recognised and considered irreducible (Young, 2009: 228). Therefore, it excludes the possibility of a common political representation. As a result of the democratic rule of the majority, the interests and values of discriminated groups remain unheard. The author defines discriminated groups as such if the majority of its members meet one or more of the following conditions:

- exploitation, *i.e.*, a group benefiting from the work of another without receiving anything in return,
- marginalisation – exclusion from participation in the mainstream of social activities,
- political incapacitation – subjecting other groups to power, limiting autonomy and influence on the community,
- cultural imperialism – stereotyping a group with simultaneous social invisibility of its members,
- hatred or fear of a group manifesting itself in violence motivated by group membership.

According to Young, democratic societies should ensure discriminated groups special rights that would allow them to organise themselves, articulate their interests, and impact the political decision-making process. This is the right to be heard, which considers the opinion of those excluded in public discourse, and the right to veto decisions directly impacting the lives of group members (Young 2009: 229).

Later pluralising concepts include Anna Yeatman's politics of difference, Nira Yuval-Davis's transversal politics and Ruth Lister's politics of solidarity in difference. These theories criticise Young's concept of group representation and accuse it of perpetuating group identifications and ignoring the role of differences and inequality within the group itself. A concept based on the presumption that full communication between groups is impossible also limits the prospect of cooperation and solidarity between marginalised groups (Lister 2001: 331).

The gender-pluralist concepts of citizenship are linked to deconstructionism and also point out the individuals' membership in various groups and social communities. Hence the intersectional approach in which differences are not only gender-based, but also consist in speaking of a norm and margin in terms of all the categories and experiences that may be included in them.

Combining the achievements of the equality and differentiating currents, gender-pluralist citizenship recognises that the world is perceived differently from various perspectives. Therefore, knowledge based on a single view is inefficient. As a result, the only legitimate method of investigating the truth is a dialogue between people of differing opinions.

The discussion on multiculturalism in feminist theory, initiated by American anthropologist Susan Okin when she asked if multiculturalism is bad for women, could be included in the concept of gender-pluralist citizenship[3]. Issues of race and class concern

3 Here, it should be explained that although socio-political equality for "all women" has always been the fundamental objective of feminism, postmodernism has undermined the totalizing nature of these demands and introduced the concept of "difference" and "locality" to feminist theory as well. Therefore, at the beginning of the second wave of feminism, the anti-universal orientation was predominant.

women to the same extent as those of age and sexual orientation. As a result, multicultural feminism and global feminism reject the idea of feminine essentialism and the idea of universal femininity. On the other hand, multicultural feminists notice that women experience oppression due to their affiliations based on culture, class, race, sexual orientation, age, religion, level of education, and social status. The nature of this oppression also depends on the place of residence – a highly industrialised, developing, or post-colonial country (Putnam Tong 2002).

Multicultural, global feminism concentrates on the negative outcomes of the colonial and nationalistic activity of governments and corporations. For global feminists, what is private and what is political are one. Private events also impact the nature of the relations between women and men in the social sphere, and the problem of reproductive freedom should be no less significant than economic freedom.

For this reason, multicultural feminism remains a challenge. How can women be united despite the differences they face and create? For global feminists, there are two ways of achieving unity in diversity. The first consists in forming bonds of sisterhood and friendship in line with Robin Morgan's *Sisterhood is Global* (1984: 35.). After all, women are not that different if they speak honestly about differences since they all look for the same thing – themselves. The second way is associated with a different understanding of sisterhood. According to Bell Hooks and Audre Lorde, the phrase "sisterhood" is used only in a political sense. If women confront their differences, they can be sisters as companions in the struggle. This type of sisterhood rejects sentiment and focuses on confronting the differences that divide women (Hooks 1984:404).

Conclusion

To refer once again to the purpose of this analysis, which is to show the exclusionary potential of the universalist vision of citizenship by pointing to alternative feminist projects that enrich citizenship with differentiating elements, affecting the citizen's relationship with the state, and to the hypothesis that, human diversity is also reflected in the relationships of citizens with the state, it should be stated that: The idea of including gender and other ideologically non-dominant perspectives in the concept of citizenship is radical because it questions the hierarchy of the importance of "objective" state goals, which determine citizen's rights and duties. It points out that military service as the basis of citizenship is more important than raising children for certain groups and not the entire state, and it also emphasises the value of unpaid domestic work. According to Ruth Lister, it is the gender division of labour, *i.e.*, the status assigned to unpaid care work considering the perspective of gender in relation to civil rights and duties, which appears to be the key to re-articulating the division of private and public spheres. Here one must agree with Ruth Lister. It seems that despite the passage of time and the development of emancipation processes, this is still the most significant differentiating factor among citizens, and, even more significantly, still underestimated by the state and decision-makers. Importantly, in feminist theories, caring for dependent people is defined as both grounds for citizenship

Today, however, under the influence of postmodernist criticism, the tendency to find common values for society as a whole has emerged in feminist projects. Together with the development of global feminism, discussions on issues including universalism, subjectivity, autonomy, solidarity, and care have returned, albeit in a different form.

and a factor that prevents making full use of it (Lister 2008: 6). However, attempts to solve this contradiction by including caregiving among fundamental civil duties, and therefore, applicable to all people, is opposed by, *e.g.*, men, or disabled people, for whom such care is too much of a burden.

We encounter a similar problem when considering the concept of citizenship from the perspective of other forms of exclusion. The concepts of gender-pluralist citizenship provide a partial solution by pointing out that the set of civil rights and duties does not have to be identical for everyone since it aims for factual and not formal equality. However, they lead to further dilemmas resulting from the intersection of various levels of exclusion and separation.

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