Urban Uprisings

Challenging Neoliberal Urbanism in Europe

Edited by

Margit Mayer, Catharina Thörn and Håkan Thörn
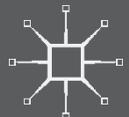
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Part I

Urban Uprisings, Social Movements and Neoliberal Urbanism

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Re-Thinking Urban Social Movements, 'Riots' and Uprisings: An Introduction

Håkan Thörn, Margit Mayer, and Catharina Thörn

> Whatever the intellectual sources of error, the effect of equating movements with movement organizations—and thus requiring that protests have a leader, a constitution, a legislative program, or at least a banner before they are recognized as such—is to divert attention from many forms of political unrest and to consign them by definition to the more shadowy realms of social problems and deviant behavior…. Having decided by definitional fiat that nothing political has occurred, nothing has to be explained, at least not in the terms of political protest. (Piven & Cloward, 1977, p. 5)

Urban Uprisings in Contemporary Europe

During the last decade, European cities have been shaken by a wave of urban collective action. In this book, we argue that this wave needs to be understood in connection with the structural context of neoliberal

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urbanism, and that it can be analysed using the concept of 'urban social movement'. This means that we go against conventional approaches to some of these collective acts, which researchers and media have labelled 'riots'. Considering the intensity, spread, duration and social dimensions of the 'rioting' that occurred in a number of Europe's major cities in this period, we prefer to describe them as 'urban uprisings', referring to a moment of rapid spread of collective action in an urban context, from district to district and/or city to city, which may or may not include violence, looting and torching. Consider the scale of the urban uprisings in the following brief introduction of the cases dealt with in this book, and the difficulty of making a conventional distinction between (disorganised) 'riots' and (organised) movement protest:

In October 2005, an urban uprising began in a Parisian poor suburb (*banlieue*) after police had chased boys with immigrant backgrounds into an electrical substation, where two of them died. The uprising spread to more than 300 cities and in the process hundreds of public and commercial buildings were destroyed and more than 9000 vehicles torched. In November, a state of emergency was declared and was extended for three months by parliament (Dikeç in this volume). In March 2007, an uprising turned central Copenhagen into a battleground between police and protesters for four days, after a combined military and police-force action against the Youth House, an autonomous cultural centre. Solidarity actions were performed in 13 Danish cities and in at least 46 cities in 22 other countries (Karpantschof & Lindblom, 2009, p. 15; Karpantschof & Lund Hansen in this book). In December 2008, an uprising began in Athens after a police shot a student in the Excarcheia district (Vradis in this volume). It lasted for three weeks, and included repeated violent clashes between police and protesters and the torching of public and private buildings. During the first week, a one-day strike against the government's economic policies involved 2.5 million workers. In Athens and Thessalonica, universities were occupied. The uprising spread to all major Greek cities and solidarity actions took place in at least 26 other countries. Two years later, a major national uprising began in Greek cities, involving a series of general strikes, demonstrations and violent clashes with the police. On 12 February 2011, buildings all over Athens were burning (Vradis & Dalakoglou, 2011).

In May of the same year, a massive demonstration against the Spanish government's austerity policies took place simultaneously in 57 Spanish cities—with Madrid and Barcelona being the nodes—and introducing the Indignados movement, which would have a strong presence in the public squares of Spanish cities in the years to come. It did involve some occasions of rioting and violent clashes with the police, but in general the movement was committed to peaceful direct action, such as major labour strikes and the occupation of public spaces with tents, sit-ins and public assemblies (Martinez in this volume). The Indignados were inspired by the Arab Spring that same year, and, in turn, they inspired the Occupy movement beginning in autumn 2011, and eventually spreading to 951 cities in 82 countries (Castells, 2012, p. 4). At the same time, in August that year, a major uprising started in London after police shot and killed a man in Tottenham (Slater in this volume). Lasting six nights, it spread to a number of poor districts in London and was described by Kawalerowicz and Biggs (2015, pp. 2–3) as 'the most widespread and prolonged breakdown of order in London's history since the Gordon riot of 1780'. The uprising, which spread to eight other major cities in England, included looting of shops, torching of public and private buildings and violent clashes with the police, who eventually took 3100 people to court. In May 2013, an uprising began in a poor suburb of Stockholm after police shot and killed a man of immigrant background. More than 100 cars were burnt during the first night, and the uprising continued for five more nights, spreading to other poor Stockholm suburbs and eight smaller cities around Sweden (Sernhede, Thörn and Thörn in this volume; Schierup, Ålund, & Kings, 2014; Thörn, 2013). A few days later, another uprising broke out in Istanbul, beginning as a small Right to the City demonstration against the planned demolition of Gezi Park. After the police responded with harsh repression, the demonstration grew into a major urban uprising. Six days of violent clashes between police and protesters followed, spreading to all major cities of Turkey. On 2 June, 235 protests were held in 67 cities across Turkey (Lelandais in this volume, Farro & Demirhisar, 2014, p. 12). In December of the same year, a three-week long uprising began in Hamburg after the police attacked a demonstration. The uprising was primarily about the impending eviction of the autonomous cultural centre Rote Flora, but also involved

the broader Right to the City movement formed in Hamburg in 2009. In response to the uprising, the municipality declared a curfew and the police established a 'danger zone', enforcing 'stop-and-frisk' rules (Birke in this volume).

In all of the cases in which 'rioting', i.e., violent clashes, looting and torching, occurred, it was triggered by violent police action that in four cases involved deaths as a consequence. But there are also other and more significant similarities between these cases, providing a more thorough explanation of events and processes. The uprisings in Paris, London and Stockholm share a racial dimension, which played a role in the deaths that ignited the uprisings, as those killed were black and/or had an immigrant background. In all cases, the killings occurred in urban areas subject to territorial stigmatization (Wacquant, 1999), i.e., districts where a majority of the inhabitants belong to the working class or the precariat, and are poor and non-white. While these uprisings were reminiscent of events in Britain in the 1980s, most notably in the London district Brixton in 1981 (Gilroy, 1987), but also in Parisian *banlieues* in the same year (Duprez, 2009), the scale and intensity of the 2000s uprisings make them, in a

Fig. 1.1 The 2013 urban uprising in Hamburg in 2013 began after the threat of an eviction of Rote Flora, a squatted building that had functioned as a centre for urban activism for more than two decades. Photo: Håkan Thörn

Western context, comparable only to similar events in the US: the so-called 'race riots' from the 1960s to Ferguson in 2014 (Abu-Lughod, 2007; Schneider, 2014).

Contemporary urban segregation, however, also involves, and is driven by, urban restructuring processes such as gentrification. A number of collective actions occurring in Europe during the last decade address the social effects of inner city 'upgrading'. This was the case with Gezi Park, where the initial demonstration involved activists from the Right to the City movement, which has also during the last decade developed a strong presence in German cities such as Hamburg and Berlin. The Copenhagen municipality's decision to sell off the centrally located Youth House, culminating years of clashes between police and activists around the issue, is also related to inner-city upgrading. Anti-gentrification action has also been an important element in urban movements emerging in Eastern Europe, where a wave of urban movements has emerged during the last decade (Jacobsson, 2015). While our book mainly focuses on Western Europe, Polanska's chapter provides insight into how an alliance of squatters and tenant associations has challenged Polish urban policies (Polanska in this volume). If these collective actions were clearly driven by activists with an articulated political agenda, this was also true of the uprisings in Athens, Barcelona and Madrid. The 2008 uprising in Athens may be seen as the first major manifestation of the emerging anti-austerity movement (Flesher Fominaya, & Cox, 2013; Mayer, 2016), escalating into Greece and Spain in 2010–2011, and spreading to a number of other European countries in the years to follow.

While there are many crucial differences between the collective actions just mentioned, primarily related to their differing national and local political contexts and socio-economic conditions, the links between them are equally important. In exploring such links, we have found the conventional distinction between 'riots' and movement action unhelpful. This is related to the emphasis the chapters of this book place on how collective actions that may look different on the surface share an urban dimension: They are all in different ways reactions to the developments and effects of neoliberal urbanism. While this urban dimension does not exhaust these phenomena analytically, as they also involve elements of structural processes that go beyond the urban dimension, it is an impor-

tant and revealing one. Therefore, we first and foremost analyse how the different forms of collective action articulate and resist spatialised social inequalities produced by processes of segregation and gentrification. The production and deepening of such spatialised inequalities is a key dimension of contemporary neoliberalism worldwide (Brenner, 2014), and also of urban collective action (Mayer, 2013a).

The empirical case studies and analyses in this book address three inadequacies in contemporary research that have been made particularly apparent by urban developments in the 2000s. *First*, considering the wave of urban collective action recounted above, it is curious that research on contentious politics and social movements rarely addresses the urban dimension (as highlighted by Hamel, 2014; Jacobsson, 2015; Nicholls et al. 2013; Pickvance, 2003). *Second*, the distinction made in contemporary research between urban riots and urban social movements, which may even be said to represent different research fields, is unsatisfactory for an adequate analysis of contemporary urban collective action. The fact that there are two entries relating to riots in the recent *Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements* (Snow et al 2013) may seem to contradict our claim that such separation exists. However, on the topic of 'Urban riots in Europe, post 2000', leading riot researcher David Waddington draws the following conclusion from the events in Paris, Athens and London mentioned above:

> Though unquestionably driven by profound political grievance, they did not constitute the type of 'insurrection', 'uprising', or 'upheaval' that is generally more synonymous with enduring, bona fide social movements. (Waddington, 2013, p. 3)

Third, while contemporary analyses of neoliberal urbanism have begun to take an interest in urban collective action (e.g. Harvey, 2012), such analyses rarely draw on social movement research. Against this background, this book constitutes an attempt to bridge the gap between these relatively separate bodies of research by providing a structural analysis of urban uprising that focuses on processes of large-scale urban transformation in the shape of what has been called 'neoliberal urbanism'—and explores to what extent, and how, these developments involve the formation of new urban social movements in Europe. It contributes to

a rethinking of the relations between social movements, 'riots' and neo-liberalism, a rethinking that has been made urgent by urban developments since the 2000s. In the following sections, we will discuss key themes in these three research areas, further developing our own points and conceptualisations.

We begin by recapitulating the debate between those who emphasise macro- and micro-perspectives on riots because, in contrast to the 1960s and 1970s, micro-approaches today dominate research in the field. However, the recent developments discussed in this book seem to us to call for revisiting structural theories, and particularly Marxist-oriented perspectives that emphasise the link between crises and opportunities for collective action, be they violent or non-violent. As the distinction between riots and 'movement events' is less significant in structural approaches, they provide a logical starting point for diminishing the gap between such related collective phenomena. In the following section, we will first take a closer look at the major conceptions and findings of the field of 'riot research', then move on to social movement theory, and conclude the section by presenting the analytical approach we propose for bridging these two research fields. The next section will link this analytical approach to urban theory to provide an understanding of the specific way in which urban social movements are urban. Finally, we provide a thematic overview of the chapters of the book, focusing on how their analyses of urban uprisings and social movements relate to the themes highlighted in this introductory chapter.

Riots, Resistance, Uprisings and Social Movements

On a purely descriptive level, there seems to be relative consensus in contemporary research (e.g., Myers, 2013) that 'riot' signifies a temporary collective act taking place in an urban context, and involving damage to property and violent clashes between groups of actors, most often rioters and police (or other representatives of authorities, such as fire squads), but in some cases also between different 'ethnic' groups (such as, e. g., in the 1992 Los Angeles uprising when Korean shop-owners were attacked).

With the exception of rioting in connection with political demonstrations, most researchers do not consider riots as social movement phenomena.[1]

In understanding how riots are conceptualised today, and why such acts are often held separate from social movements, we need to go back to the early phase of social science and the notion of 'crowd behaviour'. This concept was largely inspired by social-psychological thinking on 'the mob' by Gustav Le Bon, Gabriel Tarde and Sigmund Freud. This involved the idea that the participants lose their individual selves when drawn into a crowd. While such a process may involve rational behaviour on the part of demagogic leaders with charismatic capacity, the core idea in this mode of thinking is that the crowd is constituted by irrational behaviour. This perspective became an integral part of the structural-functionalist social movement theory associated first and foremost with Neil Smelser's theory of collective behaviour (Smelser, 1962), a category including 'panics' and riots ('hostile outbursts'), as well as more organised political collective acts, which all could be structurally explained by 'grievances' caused by 'structural strain' and 'deprivation':

> Real or anticipated economic deprivation, in fact, occupies an important place in the initiation of hostile outbursts, reform movements, revolutionary movements, and new sects as well. (Smelser, 1962, pp. 15–16)

The current separation, or under-theorised relation, between research on riots and social movements is related to the fact that the dominant schools of contemporary social movement theory more or less take their

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[1] In *Riot, Unrest and Protest in the Global Stage*, the editors David Pritchard and Francis Pakes (2014) do not make such a distinction. On the other hand, they do not provide any theoretical framework for linking these phenomena either. *From silence to protest: International perspectives on weakly resourced groups* (Chabanet & Royall, 2014) does not operate with a distinction between social movements and 'riots' either, as the editors seek a renewal of social movement theory and link to the dynamics of contention perspective (Tilly, 2008). In addition to, e. g., chapters on the World Social Forum and political mobilisation by Muslims in Europe, the volume includes the chapter 'Urban riots in France and Britain: Arguments in favor of political analyses', by Didier Chabanet (2014), who provides an analysis emphasising the political nature of these events in a manner similar to the authors in our volume. However, while the dynamics of contention perspective undoubtedly have opened up the mainstream social movement research paradigm in an interesting way, and partly work as a way of bridging riot research with a social movement perspective, we still find it insufficient in order to grasp, and analyse as political, those collective acts that do not make explicit political claims and/or do not target the government (see further in footnote 5 below).

starting point in a critique of Smelser's approach, particularly the way it linked social movements to 'irrational crowd behaviour', and explained them with reference to deprivation, whether absolute or relative, real or anticipated. In opposition to this, the use of 'collective action', rather than collective behaviour, as a fundamental analytical category in contemporary social movement theories, most often involves an assumption that social movements are goal-oriented, rational and strategic.

Post-War Riot Research

As already mentioned, the uprisings in Paris, London and Stockholm discussed in this book are similar in the sense that they took place in territorially stigmatised urban areas, where a majority of the population belong either to the working class or the precariat (Standing, 2011), and are subjected to structural racism. Such a type of uprising has, in the decades following the Second World War, mostly been a US phenomenon. Beginning in the 1980s, however, similar uprisings started to occur in deeply segregated European cities, where boundaries of class dominance and racialisation intersect, predominantly in Paris, Lyon (Dikeç, 2007a) and London (Gilroy, 1987). It is basically these historical experiences on which US/UK riot research, which has been dominant for the past decades, is based.

A standard reference in this research on riots is the report by the Kerner Commission (National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 1968) that examined 75 riots in predominantly black urban districts in the USA between 1964 and 1967. In accordance with the dominant sociological terminology at the time, the commission listed 12 'grievances' at three 'levels of intensity' as causes for the civil disorders it had studied. The list is worth citing in its entirety because all of the factors it contains have resurfaced in the academic and media debates following the urban uprisings in Paris, London and Stockholm in the 2000s.
First Level of Intensity

1. Police practices.
2. Unemployment and underemployment.
3. Inadequate housing.

Second Level of Intensity

4. Inadequate education.
5. Poor recreation facilities and programs.
6. Ineffectiveness of the political structure and grievance mechanisms.

Third Level of Intensity

7. Disrespectful white attitudes.
8. Discriminatory administration of justice.
9. Inadequacy of federal programs.
10. Inadequacy of municipal services.
11. Discriminatory consumer and credit practices.
12. Inadequate welfare programs. (National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 1968, pp. 7–8)

Research on US riots that followed the Kerner Commission (see Schneider, 2014 for an overview) has questioned its broad range of explanations on certain points, while emphasising the relevance of others. More important, however, is that the discussion has tended to centre on the notion of deprivation as an overall explanation. For example, using statistical data, both Lieberson and Silverman (1965, examining 75 riots in black districts between 1913 and 1963) and Olzak and Shannan (1996, examining riots in 204 cities between 1954 and 1993) have questioned the conclusion that riots were caused by extreme deprivation, based on the finding that a commonality for districts where riots occurred was that the situation for blacks was improving.[2] There are, however, different ways of interpreting these data. Modifications of the deprivation perspective, such as Eisinger's (1973) and Gurr's (1972), have emphasised the notion of *relative* deprivation. An improving situation for the poor may cause rising expectations, a situation which risks being

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[2] In search for such mechanisms, Olzak and Shannan (1996) use a problematic, economistic competition theory, and an equally problematic interpretation of riots in terms of 'ethnic conflict', to argue that it is the combination of increasing opportunities for blacks to compete for job opportunities and a shrinking job market that is the most important factor behind riots, making moments of rising unemployment particularly explosive.

turned into increasing frustration if the actual gaps between blacks and whites remain or even increase, which has been the case since at least the 1970s. Other researchers have discussed structural inequalities in terms of class rather than 'grievances' and 'deprivation', drawing on theories of an urban underclass (Massey & Denton, 1993), and more recently on 'urban outcasts' (Wacquant, 2008). Farley and Allen (1989) and Wilson (1987) have shown that improved conditions also involve a process of 'internal differentiation' among the urban poor; while a minority start to climb upwards, others remain, and may feel their situation has even declined, increasing their frustration.

Critics of deprivation theory and other structural approaches argue that these: (1) cannot explain why rioting does not occur in all deprived areas; and (2) do not provide any explanation in terms of the mechanisms through which a deprived social condition or profound structural inequalities give rise to a riot (e.g., Olzak & Shannan, 1996). This has led riot research in the direction of focusing on micro-processes, particularly the interaction between police and groups of youth that are most often in the forefront of rioting (e.g., Abu-Lughod, 2007; Schneider, 2014; Waddington, 2007). Responding to the series of British riots beginning in Brixton in 1981, a group of researchers developed 'the flashpoint model' (Waddington, 2007), which involves six factors.[3] *One* of these is a structural dimension lumping together unemployment, relative deprivation and racial discrimination. The focus of the empirical research, involving participant-observation as an important tool, is, in the manner of symbolic interactionism, on different groups' interactions with one another, including, as an important element, their different interpretation of events. Based on this research, Waddington has argued that urban rioting could be analysed as an interaction ritual, with a distinctively patterned scenario, involving a 'triggering event' ('the precipitating incident') as an

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[3] The six factors are, in brief: (1) structural—poverty, unemployment, relative deprivation and racial discrimination; (2) political/ideological—a group's political legitimacy, power and influence; (3) cultural—the rules, norms and self-definition of a group and their relation to those of the police and society at large; (4) contextual—history of negative interactions between a minority group and the police; (5) situational—spatial and symbolic characteristics of the site of conflict; and (6) interactional—miscommunication and misreading of particular actions (Waddington, 2007, pp. 49–59).

important element. In a similar manner, combining a structural perspective with an emphasis on a micro-perspective, Schneider's *Police Power and Race Riots* (2014) is a comparison between the 1964 New York uprising and the 2005 Paris uprising, emphasising similarities between them. Drawing on Lieberson's and Silverman's (1965) as well as Abu-Lughod's (2007) research on US riots, Schneider focuses on police action as the most important cause of riots. This research has shown how the so-called 'triggering event' is merely a culmination of a long series of police actions, such as frequent 'stop-and-frisk' actions, ID-controls, use of violence and targeting the residents of a stigmatised district. Building on Tilly (1998), Schneider's key concept is 'categorical inequality', signifying an overlap between power hierarchies and political identities, the latter based on boundaries drawn by states defining, e.g., who is a citizen and who is not, or classifying citizens according to ethnicity or race. According to Schneider, the most important explanation for riots such as those in New York and Paris is a sustained and brutal policing, involving a racist dimension, of such boundaries, which in the context of urban segregation also has a geographical dimension.

It is clear that scholars such as Waddington or Schneider *do* recognize the significance of structural inequalities and poverty as a fundamental condition for the occurrence of rioting, and their research into micro-processes undoubtedly improves our understanding of the dynamics of conflicts emerging from power inequalities and urban segregation 'on the ground', which eventually erupt in urban uprisings. Nevertheless, in their search for the micro-mechanisms to explain why riots occur in some cases and not in others, paired with a strong criticism of scholars who emphasise structural factors, they tend to lose sight of relevant structures. While it can hardly be denied that a violent uprising may spread from district to district, and from city to city, through the social-psychological mechanism of mimicry, actively facilitated and fuelled by spectacular media images, we believe it is more important to pay attention to revealing social-structural patterns in the districts involved in the uprisings. After all, what all research on post-war riots in the USA, France and Britain surveyed in this section confirms, irrespective of analytical perspective, is that without exception these riots begin in, and spread to, urban districts inhabited by people belonging to the working class or the precariat, who

are also subjected to structural racism. To us, this dictates that structural factors need to be in the foreground of the analysis. While those who emphasise the micro-dimension pay careful attention to the particular context of each riot on the micro-level, they tend to pay less attention to the fact that structural dimensions are also context-specific and need careful and systematic analysis. Schneider accounts for the differing historical dynamics behind structural racism in the USA versus France, but dismisses explanations of the Paris uprising that refer to neoliberal developments (Schneider, 2014, 20ff.), such as the one presented in Wacquant's *Urban Outcasts* (2008).

Beyond Classical Riot Research

Our approach starts from the view that territorial stigmatisation, 'deprivation', social inequality and structural racism describe social situations that are profoundly political in the sense that they are defined by power inequalities, and thus by social tensions and conflict (Mouffe, 2005). Some of the 'riots' discussed in this section may be defined by the fact that they are not political in the narrow sense, meaning that those who participate in the uprising planned and staged them to make political demands or to bring about social change (although statements along those lines are not unusual in media interviews with rioters), but that they are *politicising* events (Miller & Nicholls, 2013; Thörn, 2015) in the sense that they act on, and make manifest, social inequalities and conflicts that constitute social relations under different phases of modern capitalism. Without exception, the urban uprisings occurring in poor urban districts discussed in this book have given rise to major public debates on social inequalities and structural racism. As discussed in detail by Slater in this volume, such processes of politicisation are met with efforts to de-politicise the events as defenders of the social order seek to turn the events into a moral issue. Common arguments are that participation in an uprising is first and foremost to be defined as a criminal act, initiated by youth who lead criminal lives in urban districts beyond social control; a situation ultimately to be explained by the failure of those individuals and institutions who have the obligation to teach the young

proper values and norms, such as the single mother in a 'broken family' and the 'soft' school teacher.

When urban uprisings broke out in a number of US cities in 1964, one of the most well-known proponents of non-violence in the twentieth century, Martin Luther King, stated that 'a riot is a language of the unheard' (quoted in Killian, 1968, p. 109). Social scientists soon proved him right: Surveys by Feagin and Hahn (1970) showed that 86% of the inhabitants in a Detroit district where riots had occurred believed that deprivation and racial discrimination were the main causes behind the riots, with discontent with police brutality second on the list. (For similar results presented in a report based on interviews with residents of the poor suburb Husby, where the Stockholm uprising began, see de los Reyes et al., 2014). Of 'deprivation' factors, 60% in the Detroit survey more specifically pointed to unemployment as a cause. A larger number of surveys conducted between 1964 and 1968 found that 12 to 17 % of the respondents advocated violence as the best way for black people to struggle for their rights. With a variation between one-third and two-thirds in different surveys, respondents expressed the belief that violence did help the cause. Between 11 % and 35 %, depending on the city, were estimated to have taken part in riots (Feagin & Hahn, 1973, Myers, 2013; Oliver, 2008). These surveys suggest that riots, rather than being irrational, 'hostile outbursts', involve strategic action, which is also supported by some contemporary research that views the violence of rioting as 'inherently rational', (Myers, 2013, p. 4), and should be interpreted as deeply political.[4] More recent research also supports our emphasis on structural factors. Building both on a review of previous 'riot research' and an extensive examination of the social structural patterns of the 2011 London uprising, involving the residential addresses of 1620 people who were arrested, Kawalerowicz and Biggs (2015, p. 1) conclude that their 'findings challenge the orthodoxy that rioting is not explained by deprivation.'

We have shown that mainstream contemporary research on riots tends to start out with the question 'why do riots occur in certain cases and not in others'. In light of the data just presented, as well as statistics on rising

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[4] There are also contemporary social psychology scholars who argue that collective events such as riots could create an empowerment that can feed into social change (e.g,, Drury & Reicher, 2009).

social inequalitly, well-documented structural racism and police abuse, it seems that a more relevant starting question should be 'why do people *not* stage uprisings in most cases?' In addressing that question, it needs to be pointed out that critics of structural explanations are not entirely right in their claim that functionalists and Marxists have nothing to say about 'mechanisms' that explain why deprivation, class inequalities and oppression cause people to rebel in certain cases, but not in others. On the contrary, structural perspectives tend to emphasise how uprisings may be triggered by the disruption of a well-established social order caused by different forms of structural change. In the case of Smelser's (1962) functionalist model of social evolution, too-rapid economic or technological development could cause such eruption through the mechanism of social stress. For a structurally oriented scholar such as Wacquant, different historical phases in capitalist development require different explanations be given for the US riots in the 1960s and the French riots in the 2000s. He saw the former as triggered by the post-war restructuring of urban capitalism, causing a crumbling of the 'caste system' (meaning the USA's historically specific system of racial segregation), whereas the latter was caused by neoliberal developments that spawned a decomposition of working-class neighbourhoods (Wacquant, 2008, pp. 23–33).

Material factors are thus a key dimension in both functionalist and Marxist-oriented structural perspectives. Nevertheless, for understanding how such material factors translate into agency, a number of structural approaches emphasise that a window of opportunity for collective action is opened by disruptions of those *norms* or *discourses* which normally would prevent such openings, even when oppression is harsh and inequalities are deep. While classical Parsonian functionalism understands this in terms of a breakdown of the normative framework of social integration, explaining the 'irrational crowd' as a phenomenon of anomie, Marxist and particularly Gramsci-oriented scholars emphasise how collective agency is facilitated by the weakening of hegemonic discourse, and of ruling elites' legitimacy, caused by structural crises. Importantly, collective agency facilitated in connection with crises may in turn further undermine the hegemonic order—or, alternatively, cause a counter-reaction to reestablish legitimacy for ruling elites (e.g., Candeias, 2010; Cox & Nilsen, 2014).

For the research paradigm that has been rather dominant in social movement studies for the past decades, including research mobilization theory and the political process perspective, distancing itself from structural functionalism involved making a distinction between spontaneous, disorganised and temporary phenomena, such as the violent urban resistance that is part of some of the urban uprisings discussed in this book, and highly organised, sustained collective action, defined by conscious intentions in the shape of clearly defined political goals and clear targets.[5] The shortcomings of such an approach for capturing the plurality of shapes and logics of different forms of collective action, and how they may be linked with each other, were pointed out at an early stage by Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward in *Poor People's Movements*:

> The stress on conscious intentions in these usages reflects a confusion in the literature between the mass movement on the one hand, and the formalized organizations which tend to emerge on the crest of the movement on the other hand—two intertwined but distinct phenomena. Thus formalized organizations do put forward articulated and agreed-upon social change goals, as suggested by these definitions, but such goals may not be apparent in mass uprisings (although others, including ourselves as observers and analysts, may well impute goals to uprisings). (Piven & Cloward, 1977, p. 5)

To this we would add two more points: first, it is not only 'outside observers' and intellectuals who ascribe such meanings to uprisings. As revealed by the surveys taken in black communities referred to above, as well as by recent research on European uprisings (Karlsson, 2014 on Paris; Slater in this volume on London; de los Reyes et al., 2014 on Stockholm), it is not uncommon for participants in uprisings or those living in the areas where they occur, to ascribe political meaning to these events. Second, when such articulations, whether by participants in, or observers of, the uprisings, are made public (through media interviews or opinion-making and political debate), they are to be understood as *part of* the process, rather than something separate from or external to the 'actual events'.

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[5] The most recent turn within the dominant social movement research paradigm is the theory of contentious politics, which considers 'disruptive' collective action' (including riots) as an aspect of social movement politics. But the emphasis is still on (1) 'interactions in which actors make *claims*', in which (2) 'governments appear either as targets, initiators of claims, or third parties' (Tilly, 2008, p. 5).

Relinking 'Riots' and Movements: An Analytical Approach

Regarding the debate on how to understand riots and social movements, and the relation of the two, we make three arguments. *First*, we argue that the analysis of phenomena conventionally defined as 'riots' and 'movements' needs to involve, as a fundamental element, a focus on social structures, particularly structural power inequalities and their means of reproduction—and the discursive legitimization of these. *Second*, while a number of social movement studies since the 1960s have convincingly shown that structural functionalism was mistaken in assuming that collective action is *always* related to some form of structural change, we argue that modern history provides many examples of how structural crises often *do* involve the rise of social movements. This appears particularly to be the case with what Piven and Cloward (1977) call 'mass movements', such as the urban uprisings discussed in this book. In the case of post-war urban social movements in the Global North, Mayer (2009) has shown how four waves of urban mobilisation occurring since the 1970s can be seen as responding to specific tensions and contradictions inherent to each consecutive regime. While the movements of the 1960s and 1970s were triggered by specific features of the Fordist-Keynesian city, roll-back neoliberalisation of the 1980s reacted to the limits of the Keynesian city by cutting back on social provisions, and thereby bringing 'old' issues back on to the agenda such as poverty and new housing needs and at the same time also cutting into the material basis of much of the movement sector. The following phase of roll-back neoliberalisation of the 1980s reacted to the limits of the Keynesian city; roll-out neoliberalisation of the 1990s addressed some of the problems created by the roll-back and austerity measures of the first phase of neoliberalism creating thereby some openings for the movements; and, starting with the dot-com crash of 2001, in a third round of neoliberalisation, anti-austerity movements began to be spawned.[6] The recent uprisings across European cities should thus be seen in relation to an urban crisis, further fuelled by

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[6] The decades roughly correspond to developments in Western European countries, but even among them there are variations.

the 2008 economic crisis, and involving a legitimacy crisis for neoliberal urbanism (see Mayer's Chap. 2 in this volume).

Third, in this approach, 'social movement' is an *analytical concept*. This is in contrast to a common usage in current social movement research, influenced by resource mobilisation theory, which over-emphasises formal organizations and agreed-upon goals in its definition of a social movement. More importantly, the concept of 'social movement' in this usage is constructed as an empirical generalisation, meaning that a social movement is perceived as a relatively well-defined entity, composed of certain interacting social movement organizations (SMOs), mobilisations and campaigns. While a version of resource-mobilisation theory, the political process perspective, highlights the role of political opportunity structures, the analysis of macro-structural processes is not an important part of this body of research, with the exception of Charles Tilly's historical work. As an analytical concept, 'social movement' implies that the study of empirical 'movement phenomena', whether demonstrations, riots or more organised and long-term forms of collective action, is an analytical operation which involves linking such phenomena to relevant structural elements. While such an analysis also considers the agendas and goals of social movement organizations as important, it does not limit its analytical gaze to such elements. The analytical approach will often make a researcher's understanding of a movement different from its self-understanding.

Such an analytical approach to social movements was originally developed by Alain Touraine (1981), Manuel Castells (1983) and Alberto Melucci (1989). While taking a certain distance from an orthodox class analysis of social movements, particularly Touraine's and Castells' roots in Marxism were clearly visible in their emphasis on structural contradictions and conflicts in their analyses of social movements. While this led Touraine to search for the new central social movement articulating the fundamental (class) conflict of post-industrial society, Castells and Melucci considered a variety of social conflicts and movements. Their point was, however, preventing the concept of 'movement' from 'becoming synonymous with everything in motion in society', which is a frequent misunderstanding of the new social movement approach (Melucci, 1989, p. 24).[7] On the con-

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[7] It is an irony that Melucci's theory has often been used in this way, while this is actually what he believed was the problem with the approach represented by, e.g., Tarrow (1983). The full sentence cited above reads: 'Contemporary American authors seem to call every form of non-institutional

trary; they considered new social movements to be defined by their conflictual dimension and challenge to the logic of social systems (Melucci, 1989, p. 23). In Castells' major contribution to the field, *The City and the Grassroots*, the new 'central' social movements were limited to structurally significant forms of collective action acting on the major contradictions of late capitalism: urban movements, feminism, new labour, self-management, alternative communication (Castells, 1983, p. 327). This emphasis also involved attention to the particular circumstances in which collective action occurred, but instead of abstract 'mechanisms', it highlighted specific historical conditions; and in the case of Castells' *The City*, even historical detail. This book included a chapter on the 1960s US uprisings conceptualized as 'urban revolt'. Here, Castells argued that while 'a social movement is never reducible to a structural trend', 'the urban revolt' of 'the ghettos' needs to be understood as resulting from 'a matrix of contradictions underlying the fabric of the inner-cities', including spatialised ethnic segregation, poverty, economic inequalities and political alienation, and being triggered by the disruptions of large-scale urban renewal, the social reform programs known as War on Poverty, and a more favourable situation for blacks as a result of the civil-rights movement (Castells, 1983, p. 50). Castells thus emphasizes a combination of factors discussed in the debate on 'riots'. Further, he argues that 'the urban revolt' needs to be examined in connection with another form ('at least in appearance') of urban collective action going on in US cities at the same time and in the same places—community struggles:

> the analysis of inner city revolts must consider the basic social trend underlying the community struggles, since they actually represented the most lasting connection between the new urban contradictions and the new forms of social movements. (Castells, 1983, p. 55)

Although it is not perfectly clear whether Castells thinks that the wave of urban collective action in US cities in the 1960s should be conceptualised in terms of an urban social movement, he states that all the mentioned indications point 'towards the existence of a major social movement that shook the foundations of the American city' (ibid., p. 51). A few years

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political action a social movement, to the extent that the word "movement" is in danger of becoming synonymous with everything in motion in society' (Melucci, 1989, p. 24).

later, drawing on Castells (as well as Touraine and Melucci), Paul Gilroy (1987) analysed the 1980s uprisings in British cities in connection with the emergence of a new social movement articulated around race and class. These works are an important source of inspiration in our own effort to analyse and understand contemporary urban uprisings. While the new social movement approach had its shortcomings, some of which we will address in our discussion of Castells' work below, its combination of structural analysis and emphasis on the complexities of collective agency, meaning its emphasis on not reducing agency either to a pure reflection of structure or an expression of basically rational calculation, provides a good starting point for rethinking urban social movements.

So the approach suggested here, linking 'riots' to social movements, is not new, but builds on earlier approaches which today, however, are both marginalised and in need of conceptual development, considering the developments that have taken place since the 1980s. Nor are we alone in this, as a number of other scholars, dissatisfied with the rationalist and empiricist social movement research paradigm, attempt to renew and develop the works of Touraine and Melucci (see, e.g., Baumgarten, Daphi, & Ullrich, 2014; Cox & Nilsen, 2014; Pleyers, 2010; Thörn, 2015), and in connection with urban social movements, particularly Castells (Birke, 2012; Hamel, 2014; Mayer, 2013; Merrifield, 2013a; Miller & Nicholls, 2013; Nicholls et al 2013; see also the 2006 special issue of IJURR on Castells' *The City and the Grassroots*). An important source of inspiration for recent urban movement analysis has been the writings of Henri Lefebvre, who himself had significant influence on Castells, particularly texts such as *The Right to the City* (1996) and *The Urban Revolution* (2003). This emerging conceptual development has also involved attempts to integrate Foucauldian concepts of 'resistance' into social movement studies (Baumgarten & Ullrich, 2012; Death, 2010; Mayer & Künkel, 2012; Thörn, 2015). In particular, Foucault's concept of resistance and how it relates to power is useful for understanding contemporary urban uprisings.

While, for practical reasons, we have used the term 'riot' in our discussion of previous research, we belong to those researchers who feel that the term is tainted because of its associations, in both research and public debate, with 'mob behaviour', criminality and hooliganism, a perspective that further contributes to a de-politicisation of profoundly political

structural conditions, and a greater stigmatisation of participants (Myers, 2013). In order to provide a more appropriate theoretical underpinning, we define those collective acts referred to as 'riots', in cases where they manifest structural inequalities, as *violent urban resistance*, in the Foucauldian sense of 'counter-conduct' in relation to the exercise of power (Death, 2010; Foucault, 1990, p. 95). Such acts display the same logic as the forms of resistance which Foucault called 'anti-authority struggles'. A defining element of such collective acts of resistance is that they are 'immediate' in the sense that they target the *direct effects* of power:

> These are 'immediate' struggles for two reasons. In such struggles people criticize instances of power which are the closest to them, those which exercise their action on individuals. They do not look for the 'chief enemy', but for the 'immediate enemy'. Nor do they expect to find a solution to their problem at a future date (that is, liberations, revolutions, end of class struggle). (Foucault, 1982, p. 211)

That is to say that the challenge to dominant institutions that such collective action *primarily* poses does not need to involve direct or explicit demands for urban change, but may be merely symbolic.

Let us summarise our understanding of the relations between the concepts developed in this introduction, which we propose as the most adequate for capturing the processes analysed in this book. We emphasise that urban resistance, urban uprisings and social movements are different forms of collective action. Please note that this terminology is not consistently used by the contributors to this book. Our proposed conceptualisations have been developed by us, the editors, as a result of our work on this volume, and can thus be seen as a conclusion. *First*, the most general term *collective action* refers to actions that might be more or less consciously coordinated and more or less goal-oriented and strategic, but it is always conflictual, addressing one or several adversaries. *Second*, *urban resistance* refers to collective action that is immediate in the Foucauldian sense and may or may not involve the explicit articulation of political demands, and may or may not include violence. *Third*, when such acts of urban collective resistance temporarily spread to a number of urban districts and/or even to a number of cities, we refer to them as *an urban uprising*. *Fourth*, the

analytical concept of *urban social movement* refers to an array of collective acts that, within a given space and time-frame, address certain spatialised power inequalities. While empirically this may involve both violent and/or non-violent urban resistance and moments of urban uprising, it also transcends such temporary phenomena through *sustained* urban collective action; i.e., a chain of collective acts linked to each other in different ways. *Linking is crucial* and refers to processes of articulation (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). Such processes are key to understanding how singular acts of urban resistance, or moments of urban uprising (often referred to as 'rioting'), can *become* part of an urban social movement and its articulated demands for, and acts to achieve, structural change (cf. Sernhede, Thörn and Thörn in this book).

The analysis of urban social movements that we suggest, then, implies linking empirical 'movement phenomena', such as various forms of organisations, protests and less structured acts of collective resistance, to relevant structural and historical contexts (cf. Mayer, 2009; Thörn, 2012). This means that, given our emphasis on structural analysis guiding the interpretation and linkage of different forms of collective action, it is an empirical question whether acts of urban resistance and uprisings are part of a social movement or not. This also means that for two different collective acts to be considered as part of a social movement, it is not necessary that there is concrete interaction between them, as long as they address the same spatialised structural inequalities.

While we have defined the spatialised structural inequalities as the most basic element of the 'urbanness' of a social movement, this needs to be further elaborated with respect to the dramatic processes of global urban transformation that have occurred in the 2000s.

What is Urban About Today's Urban Social Movements?

A number of influential social scientists have convincingly argued that the most structurally significant social conflicts in the 2000s concern the production, control and effects of *urban* structures and processes. While

some scholars emphasise a new significance of *cities*, as 'a theatre of global transformation' (Hamel, 2014, p. 464) or 'a strategic site for a whole new type of political actors and projects' (Sassen, 2006, p. 281), others highlight 'planetary urbanization' as a process now defining social life globally (Brenner, 2014; Harvey, 2012; Merrifield, 2013a). In his presidential address at the 2014 International Sociological Association's World Congress, Michael Burawoy called on the world's sociologists to pay close attention to these conflicts and the various movements involved in them, in order to improve their understanding of the fundamental dynamics of contemporary societies (Burawoy, 2015). Why is it then that the field of social movement research is not already at the forefront of such an effort? In fact, important handbooks, such as *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements* (Snow et al 2004), don't even have an entry for 'urban movements'.

This absence is perhaps a consequence of the fact that the study of urban social movements has often involved the kind of macro-structural analysis from which much of mainstream social movement research has distanced itself. It is then logical that those who, like ourselves, call for a rethinking of (urban) social movement theory in light of contemporary global urban developments and collective action, approach the study of movements as an 'entry point' into social, and urban, phenomena more generally (Hamel, 2014, p. 471). This, again, takes us back to Castells, for whom, following Touraine, the study of social movements was fundamentally concerned with conflicts over the production of society. Accordingly, when defining the concept of 'urban social movement', Castells argues that, while it represents exceptional events, it is nevertheless the most appropriate method for studying the production and reproduction of social relations and their material manifestations:

> only by analyzing the relationship between people and urbanization will we be able to understand citizens and cities at the same time. Such a relationship is most evident when people mobilize to change the city in order to change society. For methodological reasons, thus, we will focus on the study of urban social movements: collective actions consciously aimed at the transformation of the social interests and values embedded in the forms and functions of a historically given city. Yet, if the process of production

of cities by societies is most evident in the case of social revolt and spatial innovation, it is not limited to such events. Every day and in every context, people acting individually or collectively, produce or reproduce their rules of society, and translate them into their spatial expression and their institutional management. (Castells, 1983, p. xvi)

What we find interesting in this approach to urban social movements is the idea that *the production of cities by societies is particularly evident in social revolt*. Castells' approach is dynamic. It implies that, as the production of cities and the forms of urban social movements are changing, they also need to be rethought.

What is it, then, about the production of cities that is most evident in recent collective action and spatial innovation? Some scholars have argued that the most defining aspect of contemporary spatial production and processes is that the city—the very phenomenon that defines 'the urban' for Castells' and most urban scholars in the sense of being the primary unit of analysis—has been transformed to the point where it has become an inadequate category for analyzing urbanisation processes. Commenting on recent urban collective action in *Rebel Cities*, Harvey (2012, p. xv) provocatively argues that 'to claim the right to the city is, in effect, to claim a right to something that no longer exists (if it ever truly did)'. This proposition has most forcefully been made by Brenner and Schmid (2014, 2015), as they seek to develop a theory of planetary urbanisation. This proposition involves two different arguments. First, the concept of the city, as conceived in classical urban theory, has always been problematic, because it neglects the essential interrelatedness of the opposites of urban/rural or urban/non-urban in capitalist societies. Second, if cities with relatively clear boundaries ever existed, such boundaries have been dissolved not just by urban sprawl but by 'operational landscapes' that explode the urban/rural divide as they produce vast zones of urbanised terrains, which are to be more adequately explored in their co-evolution and mutual transformation by conceiving of them as an urban fabric. Harvey (1982; 2005; 2012), Brenner and Schmid (2014; 2015), Keil (2013) and others draw on a shift in Lefebvre's thinking, in which he came to abandon the concept of 'the city' and instead emphasised urban

Fig. 1.2 The international Right to the City Conference in Hamburg in 2011 gathered urban activists from Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe and North America. Photo: Catharina Thörn

process and urban life. This was related to his observations on the continued expansion of urbanisation. In *The Urban Revolution* (1970/2003), he argued that this process would eventually reach a critical point where the planet had been completely urbanised. In the essay 'Dissolving City, Planetary Metamorphosis' (2014), originally written in 1989, he argued that the critical point had been crossed (Lefebvre, 2014, p. 18; Merrifield, 2011, 2013b).

Urban Movements and Place Politics

In Harvey's (2012) discussion of what this implies for contemporary urban collective action, he highlights how these developments involve the destruction of *centrality* as a key feature of the classical city. As Brenner and others have pointed out, the notion of urban centrality involves a Eurocentric conception of the city. In many major cities outside of Europe, such centrality never existed. Nevertheless, if not in *all* cities, centrality has been a fundamental *political* dimension of *cities all over the world* in the modern era. Associated with places defined by buildings of government administration and political representation, or of finance and commerce, centrality has not only been defined by material manifestations of the exercise of power and domination. It has also been defined by the *challenge* to power and domination in modern society by social movements that, through demonstrations, sit-ins or direct action, have occupied public spaces, on some occasions turning them into material manifestations of public spheres (Mitchell, 2003; Thörn, 2012),

Considering this, the appearance of some of the major urban uprisings analysed in this book not in the centre but in the peripheries of cities, such as Paris, Stockholm and some of the British cities, seems historically novel. Rather than taking place in central squares and spaces, they erupted in the poor, high-rise suburbs of the urban periphery; urban districts that were constructed at the very moment when Lefebvre abandoned the concept of the city and mourned the destruction of urban centrality. On the other hand, urban uprisings analysed in other chapters, such as those on Madrid, Hamburg, Istanbul and Copenhagen, seem to contradict the claim that centrality is no longer relevant. In making precisely this observation about the chain of urban uprisings in 2011, Harvey (2012, p. xvii) highlights how centrality is a fundamental aspect of Lefebvre's theory of the 'revolutionary movement' as coming together in a moment of 'irruption', which is why centrality, as a political construct, still matters:

> The traditional centrality of the city has been destroyed. But there is an impulse towards and a longing for its restoration which arises again and again to produce far-reaching political effects, as we have recently seen in

the squares of Cairo, Madrid, Athens, Barcelona, and even Madison, Wisconsin and now Zucotti Park in New York. How else can we come together to articulate our collective cries and demands? (Harvey, 2012, p. xvii)

While collective action has undoubtedly gone viral with the spread of the Internet, in contrast to some initial predictions, this has not meant that social movement activists have ceased to occupy public spaces in 'real life'. On the contrary, the 'Arab Spring', the Occupy movement and the urban uprisings analysed in this book imply that the 'era of the Internet' has, in fact, facilitated an *expansion and proliferation* of public collective action.

To sum up, though urban movements have made use of multi-scalar action repertoires, exploiting transnational networks as well as global summits as arenas for mobilising around their concerns and grievances (cf. Mayer, 2013b), they continue to challenge local decision-makers, capture media attention, and rally local support by staging marches and civil disobedience actions in the spaces most visible to the public: the central squares of their cities.

So what light does the thesis of planetary urbanisation shed on the contemporary uprisings which are the subject of this book? While the Paris and Stockholm uprisings indicate a tendency of de-centralisation of urban resistance even in 'classical' European cities, other events indicate that both concepts, that of the city and that of urban centrality, are still needed for the analysis of urban contestation. While now 'the city is everywhere and in everything' (Amin and Thrift [2002], quoted in Brenner [2014, p. 16]), the strategic economic importance as well as the political and cultural significance of big cities have in fact grown. As aspiring cities today compete globally to attract investors, tourists and 'creative' classes, city branding and cultural strategies have become a key focus of municipalities. But municipalities are still not autonomous. Whereas they depended on national governments and were in fact conceived as extended local arms of central governments during the Fordist era, today they have entered into a symbiosis with private capital in public-private partnerships. More and more, it is global developers and international investors who shape the urban environment, rather than local actors. In

the process, many public spaces have been privatised and the inner-city phenomenon of gentrification has entered a new global phase (Smith, 1996), involving the displacement of poor or underprivileged people from city centres.

A distinction is commonly made between social movements 'in the city' and 'of the city' (e.g., Hamel, 2014, p. 474). This involves differentiating between movements that merely stage their public collective actions in cities, and those that address specifically urban issues and conflicts. Castells focuses only on the latter, but considering his argument on how social movements take part in the production of cities, as well as Harvey's (2012) point about 'the far reaching political effects' of collective acts of occupying central urban spaces, it makes sense to see all collective action staged in the public spaces of cities as involving *an urban element*. In connection with this, Håkan Thörn (2012) has suggested that movements staging collective action in urban public space engage in a *place politics of open space*. This notion draws on the concept of the politics of place, referring to locality-based urban representations (Keith & Pile, 1993; Lefebvre, 1991), as well as to the discussion of 'open space' emerging out of the Social-Forum process (Mayer, 2013b; Pleyers, 2010; Smith et al 2008; Whitaker, 2007), and it theorises social movements in relation to urban public spaces and public spheres (Low & Smith, 2006; Mitchell, 2003; Thörn, 2007). Importantly, such politics involve a strong overlap between the occupation of a material public space and the formation of a (counter-) public sphere.

The different chapters in this book provide examples of place politics of open space that may be relatively temporary, such as in the case of Gezi Park (see Lelandais chapter) or 15M in Madrid's Puerta del Sol (see Martinez chapter); or more sustained, as with Rote Flora in Hamburg (see Birke chapter), Nørrebro in Copenhagen (see Lund Hansen and Karpantschof chapter), political squats in Warsaw (see Polanska chapter) or the district of Exarcheia in Athens (see Vradis chapter). While the place politics of open space has often been linked to centrality, as in the case of the 'Arab Spring' and the Occupy movement, the Stockholm uprising and the new urban social movement in Sweden (see Sernhede, Thörn and Thörn chapter) provide examples of how a place politics of open space *can be constructed in the urban periphery*, and be shaped as a

form of *territorial de-stigmatisation*. In the poor suburb of Husby, where the 2013 uprising started, a movement organisation based in the district, Megaphone, constructed a place-based public sphere involving popular education in the form of open lectures and study circles, combined with mobilisation and public debates around the municipality's plans for large-scale renovation of the area's housing estates. Similarly, in the poor suburb of Biskopsgården on Gothenburg's periphery, the Panthers for the Restoration of the Suburb have engaged in place politics, including an annual First of May Labour-Day Festival, with speakers who used to be active in the US Black Panther movement of the 1960s. This festival involved not only many suburban youth in First of May demonstrations for the first time, but also turned the attention of regular First of May demonstrators from the central city to the urban periphery.

To sum up our argument on place politics and its various relations to centrality as a defining element of the 'urbanness' of contemporary social movements: Movements do not merely use the city as a stage when they occupy particular places and/or buildings, turning them into material public spheres. Instead, *such acts can be understood as challenge to spatialised power structures and as (temporary or more sustained) attempts to redefine the dominant meanings of the city*, such as, for example, a hegemonic conception of the city's centrality. This is why collective actions such as those carried out by Occupy, which took over public spaces without articulating their agenda in urban terms, still, in an analytical sense, possess an urban element.

The various cases presented in this book demonstrate, however, that the place politics of open space, and the ways in which this may challenge 'hegemonic centrality', will look different depending on the particular form of collective action and the political geography of the city in which it takes place. The 'immediate' struggles that we have called 'urban uprisings', such as the ones discussed in the chapters on Paris, London and Stockholm, involve a place politics of the life-world; they take place in the streets and squares where (most of) those who participate in collective action live or spend their daily lives. When Megaphone created a temporary place-based public sphere in Husby in connection with the Stockholm uprising, it challenged hegemonic centrality by making world media migrate to a poor suburb in the urban periphery. The cases of Rote

Flora in Hamburg and the Youth House in Copenhagen were immediate struggles taking place *within* the space of hegemonic centrality. In both cases, the struggles against evictions of centrally located premises could be understood in terms of resistance against the intensified gentrification defining contemporary cities in Europe. While occupying a central space, such a place politics is very different from the occupation of Syntagma Square in Athens or Puerta del Sol in Madrid, both highly symbolic of place politics of open space defined by demands for social and political change by anti-austerity and other progressive movements.

Urban Movements and the Production of the City

One of the key demands of the (sub)urban Swedish movement, the improvement or restoration of social infrastructure in impoverished out-lying areas, set forth in reaction to the roll-back of social services and institutions particularly evident in the urban periphery, links this movement with other anti-austerity movements across Europe. Demands for urban public services were also termed a key dimension of what defines a movement as 'urban' according to Castells. In *The City*, he conceptualised such demands in terms of 'collective consumption trade unionism', a 'theoretical type' that played a central role in his theorising of urban social movements. More specifically, the concept refers to 'demands for improved collective consumption, in contradiction to the notion of a city for profit in which the desirability for space and urban services are distributed according to levels of income' (Castells, 1983, p. 319). In his analysis of urban movements in post-war Western countries, which constituted the first wave of urban social movements in the Global North (Mayer, 2009), he linked collective-consumption trade unionism to the crisis of the welfare state, and globally, to the crisis of capitalism in the early 1970s:

> When the economic crisis of the 1970s expressed the structural limits of the contradiction of the capitalist economy relying increasingly on an ever-expanding state sector of service distribution, the urban fiscal crisis in America and the austerity policies in Europe had to meet the popular

> demands for collective means of consumption that had become the material basis for everyday life. The recommodification of the city had to challenge the collective demand for a good city as a social service to which all citizens were entitled. (Castells, 1983, p. 316)

This quote from *The City* demonstrates how Castells, while having left behind the stricter Althusserian approach of *The Urban Question: A Marxist Approach* (1977), still based his analysis of urban movements on a Marxist framework. Castells belonged to the group of scholars that, in analysing new social movements along the lines of Marxist thinking, distanced themselves from the tendency to privilege the conflict between labour and capital, and argued instead that urban movements, too, address exploitative relations that were important for capital accumulation and the reproduction of the capitalist system.

This view goes back to Marx's argument that the spatial concentration of capitalist production in cities made urban infrastructure a significant part of the reproduction of labour. The more the means of production were concentrated in cities, and the higher the speed of capital accumulation, the more overcrowded and miserable the housing conditions of the working class became (Marx, 1867/1887, pp. 452–453). This was elaborated by Harvey, in his effort to identify that 'something about the urban process and the urban experience under capitalism that, *in itself*, has the potential to ground and better organize global anti-capitalist struggles' (Harvey, 2012, p. 119; cf. Harvey, 1982). In order to bolster his view that struggles within and over the city should be seen as fundamental to anti-capitalist politics, he invokes the 'economies of dispossession and of predatory practices … with respect to housing markets', explaining how these secondary forms of exploitation are 'primarily organized by merchants, landlords, and the financiers; and their effects are primarily felt in the living space, not in the factory' (Harvey, 2012, p. 129).

In Europe, a (temporary) solution to these endemic problems was inscribed into the social contract of welfare capitalism, involving an active state that through different means of intervention improved housing conditions, reduced housing costs for the lower classes, and took a firm grip on urban planning. This also meant that the state took overall responsibility for other means of reproduction of labour, i.e., the 'collective consumption'

that was not profitable for private capital. It did so either by creating the conditions of a risk-free market, or by assuming direct responsibility for services that became social rights included in urban citizenship: schools, hospitals, cultural amenities. Compared to the early phase of industrial capitalism in Europe, the city thus became de-commodified, or, in Castells' words: 'The conditions of living in the city became a crucial part of the social wage' (1983, p. 316).

Since the crisis of this Fordist mode of governance (Mayer, 2009), these key elements of the political response to the capitalist crisis of the 1970s (Harvey, 2005) have been withdrawn. But not only have urban services been curtailed and the city been recommmodified: In addition, an important part of the response to the crisis has been a technological shift, laying the ground for a new mode of capitalism, and a new form of capitalist city: the informational city. This has involved a new, highly globalised form of capitalism, which fundamentally alters the forms through which social relations are spatialised.

While this new form of capitalism is strongly based on the power and control of the flows of capital, labour, commodities and symbols, it does *not* imply a decreasing significance of 'the urban' or the material production of the city. Cities are material nodes in the new global system of capital accumulation, because the elites are concentrated here: the capitalists, managers and bureaucrats in command of this hierarchical system, in which governing at a distance (Miller & Rose, 2008) is increasingly facilitated by densely integrated informational networks. Cities are sites of the headquarters of transnational companies in command of global production chains, as well as of the political and cultural institutions that need to be in place for them to function (Harvey, 2012; Sassen, 2006). Furthermore, the world's major cities are sites of an enormous amount of capital stock in fixed assets, created during industrial capitalism (Castells, 1983). As Marx argued (1867/1887/1954, p. 452) the response to the urban contradictions produced in the process of accelerated capital accumulation is *urban renewal*—its rationale being to adapt the city to new needs of the elites. In the current phase, urban renewal has taken the shape of a *globalised* gentrification, designed to provide insulated spaces for residence, work, and leisure for the upper classes. In the Global North, the low-paid labour supporting these spaces involves

continuing and even intensifying exploitation of immigrants (Dancygier & Laitin, 2014; Sassen, 2006; Talani, Clarkson, & Pardo, 2013; Texeira & Li, 2015), making immigrants a key sub-category of the new class that Standing (2011) defines as the 'precariat'. This has effects on the geography of cities and the shape of conflicts and uprisings. Finally this new significance of cities has involved an acceleration of urbanisation worldwide, with a number of social consequences, including major housing problems, especially for the poor in the mega-cities of the Global South (Davis, 2006), but, in the wake of the 2008 crisis, also for those in the Global North (Meek, 2014).

These developments today define the social geography of major European cities from Stockholm to Madrid and Istanbul. The major features of 'neoliberal urbanism' defining urban processes in the 2000s (Künkel & Mayer, 2012) were thus already in the making in 1980, clearly visible to scholars paying close attention to urban processes, such as Castells. It was not only rigorous empirical research that led these scholars to these conclusions, but also their Marxist understanding of urban processes and conflicts as *constitutive* of capitalism. Drawing on Marx, Harvey has also highlighted that those who engage in *producing* the city are 'contributing to value and surplus value producing investment in the physical infrastructures that make our cities what they are' (Harvey, 2011, p. 27). Since the production and reproduction of urban life is socially necessary, part of the 'faux frais' of the reproduction of the class relations between capital and labour (ibid., p. 28), those workers—if organized—have 'the power to strangle the metabolism of the city' (ibid., p. 29). In other words, urban social movements are at the core of the contradictions of capitalism, and will be highly visible in moments of crisis.

A Thematic Overview of the Chapters

To sum up, two major arguments define the analyses presented in this book. First, that the wave of urban collective action sweeping across Europe in the course of the last decade needs to be analysed in connection with neoliberal urbanism and its contradictions; and second, that we need

to problematise the conventional distinction between, on the one hand, those collective acts that are often referred to as 'riots' (i.e., urban collective action involving violence as a defining element) and, on the other, those collective acts that come with explicit political demands (often referred to as social movement protest), examining instead whether and how these two forms of collective action are related. These two themes overlap, as we have argued that links between the different forms of urban collective action can be made through an analysis that identifies similarities in the (different) ways they address the deepening spatialised social inequalities that are a defining aspect of contemporary neoliberal urbanism.

In *Chap. 2*, Margit Mayer completes this introductory framework by outlining the overall characteristic features of neoliberal urbanism and their impacts on urban resistance. We see in the neoliberalisation of cities the crucial structural factors that affect how collective action has evolved and been transformed in recent decades. The chapter first explains the concept of neoliberalisation, and then specifies this perspective for neoliberal urbanism and, in particular, its increasingly predominant form of austerity urbanism. The tensions and conflicts generated by these regimes have brought forth new forms of resistance, while strengthening and/or weakening pre-existing older urban movements. The chapter suggests distinguishing different modes among the contemporary urban forms of collective action, while also identifying overlaps between them. It concludes by highlighting some of the common challenges confronted, challenges which will be described in more nuanced and specific ways in the case studies making up the bulk of the book.

While Mayer's chapter focuses on the general tendencies that define an increasingly globalised neoliberal urbanism, the other chapters demonstrate how neoliberal urbanism varies in different Europeans cities, depending on the specific national and local articulations of neoliberal policies. The different cases also vary with regard to the extent to which they are related (if at all) to the 2008 global economic crisis and its aftermath. Obviously, the Paris and Copenhagen cases precede the crisis, occurring in 2005 and 2007 respectively. Nevertheless, both chapters show how urban collective action in Paris and Copenhagen may be understood as indication of a legitimacy crisis of the neoliberal urban project in France and Denmark. In *Chap. 3*, Mustafa Dikeç focuses on

how the French urban uprising, beginning in the Paris *banlieue* Clichy-sous-Bois, needs to be understood in relation to the 'repressive turn' that is part and parcel of neoliberal urbanism. In France, this in turn needs to be seen in the context of the restructuring of the French state along authoritarian lines since the 1980s, which is also, as Dikeç discusses, the time when the first major *banlieue* uprisings began in France (the 'hot summer' of 1981). These developments built on the strong state tradition in France, linked to the idea of the 'Republican state', resulting in what Dikeç calls the 'republican penal state'. This echoes Wacquant's (2001) notion of the 'European penal state', relating to the strong state tradition in Europe that involves, as a defining element, regulation through both social *and* penal policy-making. In its neoliberal version, the 'left hand' of the state does not cease to act, but it is its 'right hand' that becomes increasingly active through intensified use of the police, courts and prison system, governing through a 'panoptic logic' that involves the criminalisation of the poor and close surveillance of 'problematic' populations. Dikeç's chapter demonstrates how the French state has been in the forefront of the development of this increasingly repressive side of the European neoliberal state through the creation of the special *banlieue* section of the French Intelligence Service, and Sarkozy's laws criminalising *banlieue* youth. The latter developments are crucial for an understanding of what the 2005 uprising reacted to, and how the French state responded to it, fuelling its spread from *banlieue* to *banlieue* and from city to city. While the participants in the French 2005 uprising did not unite in articulating a political agenda or even a set of shared political demands, Dikeç argues that the forms of collective action that constituted the French uprising are 'episodic mobilisations that expose injustices and grievances, stage public appeals to justice, and raise claims about equality and accountability'. Hence, they should be understood as 'unarticulated justice movements' instead of intrinsic acts of violence. Such an interpretation of the Paris uprising is also supported by the fact that it was followed by attempts at political mobilisation and articulation. Among these, the Social Forum of Popular Neighbourhoods created fora for discussion and political engagement in the *banlieue*.

As previously noted, there are many similarities between the French 2005 uprising and the 2011 London and 2013 Stockholm uprisings,

in addition to igniting events involving deaths, which were perceived as expressions of routinised and racialised daily police violence by inhabitants of the poor districts where the uprisings took place. *In Chap. 4*, Tom Slater demonstrates how the 2011 uprising is productively analysed in relation to 'the neoliberal revolution' pioneered by Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s. As in France, the more punitive side of these developments was manifested at an early stage of this revolution—in 'the hot summer' of urban uprisings that shook England in 1981. Drawing on Paul Gilroy, Slater however focuses on an important difference between 1981 and 2011: The relationship between information and power is unique in each case. Slater considers this assertion in connection with the establishing of the neoliberal discourse of 'the broken family' in the 2000s, characterised by 'a heightening stigmatisation of working-class people and the places where they live'. This discourse ultimately works to legitimise the authoritarian and punitive measures taken by the government, which have been expanded since the financial crisis of 2008. This discourse was in full force during and after the 2011 uprising, legitimating extraordinarily harsh sentences for those convicted for taking part in that action, most of whom belonged to the lower end of the class spectrum. Using Gilroy's concept of a 'poverty of the imagination' characteristic of the dominant discourses addressing urban and social problems, Slater's analysis demonstrates that the main issue to be confronted is not a 'broken society' but rather a broken state; or more precisely, and particularly post-2008, a broader neoliberal reengineering of the state 'that articulates social welfare reduction and penal expansion at the bottom, in contrast to a laissez-faire attitude towards those at the top'. Slater's characterization of the collective action of the uprising is similar to Dikeç's: It was unarticulated in the sense that it 'lacked collective organization', but addressed profound inequalities in the urban context, especially in London, where the uprising began. Slater, however, also points out an important difference: The London uprising took place within the context of a wave of post-2008, anti-austerity movement action in Britain. Two important events served as precedents for the uprising: the student protest of late 2010, culminating with the storming of Conservative Party headquarters in London; and, a month before the uprising, the J30 (30 June) public-sector strike of 750 000 workers protesting cuts in their pensions. And,

in the aftermath of the 2011 uprising, the group FOCUS E15 emerged with the demand 'Social Housing, Not Social Cleansing' , addressing the fact that social housing across Britain is being bought up by private developers, while working-class wages no longer cover even social rents. The uprising in London did not begin until *after* an organised and peaceful protest against the shooting of Mark Duggan had taken place, which was followed by the police beating a 16-year-old girl who had voiced her anger.

In a similar chain of events, the Stockholm uprising was preceded by a peaceful meeting in Husby organised by the movement organisation Megaphone, based in poor Stockholm suburbs, to protest against the lack of information regarding the police shooting of a man with immigrant background. In *Chap. 5*, Ove Sernhede, Catharina Thörn and Håkan Thörn, however, emphasise that the broader, but nevertheless immediate, context for the uprising was provided by the structural social inequalities, territorial stigmatisation and the lack of democratic influence in urban development that define contemporary neoliberal urbanism in Sweden. These developments are a result of 'the slow and deliberate dismantling of the Swedish welfare state', which most severely hit the poor suburbs, today more or less abandoned by the state. This has involved as important elements re-regulations to support the privatisation and marketisation of the public sector and new forms of disciplinary power, including increased surveillance and new strategies for policing urban protest and suburban youth. Starting with the dismantling of the Ministry of Housing in 1991 and culminating with the new housing law of 2011, the urban reforms that were implemented in response to the demands made by the 1930s' and 1970s' waves of urban collective action were almost completely rolled back. In the 2010s, this has resulted in a restructuring of the spatial and social relations of the city, dramatically deepening social inequalities. As a consequence, Swedish big cities have been among the most segregated in Europe ever since the 1990s, with 50 % of children in the poorest neighborhoods in the metropolitan districts growing up in poverty. While the Stockholm uprising is similar to the Paris and London cases, in that it did not involve collective organisation or political articulation by its participants, it did take place in a context of movement mobilisation. In contrast to the British case, however, it has so far

not involved major demonstrations or strikes, nor has it been defined by collective action in central parts of the major cities. Instead, mobilisation has taken the shape of an emerging urban social movement based in the suburbs, centred on two key movement organizations, Megaphone and The Panthers. As spokespersons for these two organisations stepped forth in the media during the course of the uprising, connecting it to a critique of urban segregation, Sernhede, Thörn and Thörn argue that this articulation *made it* a social movement event.

In *Chap. 6*, Anders Lund Hansen and René Karpantschof show how the 2007 Copenhagen urban uprising provides another example of how an increasingly repressive state apparatus ignited an urban uprising. On 1 March 2007, helicopter-borne elite units landed on the rooftop of the squatted Youth House, which, during the following hour, was subjected to water-cannon jets, exploding tear-gas grenades, and an increasing number of elite units storming into the building through bulldozer-made holes in the outer walls. An important difference from the Paris and Stockholm cases is that the uprising that followed took place in the central parts of the Danish capital, and Lund Hansen and Karpantschof's analysis focuses on explaining this in relation to the latest phase of the long-lasting urban restructuring and gentrification of Copenhagen. Nørrebro, the district in which the Youth House was located, is one of the central working-class districts that have undergone profound changes, beginning with the evictions of dilapidated buildings in the 1970s, followed by 'urban renewal' (defined in terms of 'sanitation') during the 1980s, and neoliberal gentrification in the 1990s, all the way to what Lund Hansen and Karpantschof describe as 'hipsterfication' in the 2000s. Early in this process, youth began to squat abandoned buildings, and the Youth House in Nørrebro in 1982 was a result of such activity. According to Lund Hansen and Karpantschof, Denmark embraced the neoliberal growth-oriented agenda in the late 1980s: Copenhagen was turned into an engine of growth for all of Denmark and an important node within the European urban economic system. Starting in the 1990s, Nørrebro became an example of an urban landscape dramatically changed by global finance capital, the 'creative class', and accommodation of urban policies. Referring to Neil Smith's notion of 'generalized gentrification' generated by public policy (Smith, 2002), Lund Hansen and Karpantschof show

how this involved the displacement of marginalised inner-city residents, including large groups of squatters. While Nørrebro had been the centre of the BZ Danish Squatter movement throughout the 1980s, few buildings were left to squat when 'slum clearance of Nørrebro was completed around 1990'. When squatting did occur, it was immediately dealt with by a rearmed police force much less tolerant of squatting than before. In this sense, the 2007 urban uprising was a culmination of a decades-long fight between youth activists and police in central Copenhagen. Lund Hansen and Karpantschof, however, also show that it contained new elements, in the sense that it was articulated as a struggle against gentrification and global neoliberal urbanism. Unlike in the Paris, London and Stockholm uprisings, the elements of violent collective action during the 2007 Copenhagen uprising were, to a large extent, part of an established social movement repertoire; fighting violent street battles with the police had, on a smaller scale, been an almost regular part of BZ movement action since the early 1980s.

In this sense, the Copenhagen events have certain similarities with, as well as connections to, the urban social movements emerging in Hamburg since the 1980s. Not only have Hamburg urban activists been in frequent interaction with the Copenhagen squatters, but the Hamburg movements have also emerged in connection with, and in resistance against, gentrification processes. In *Chap. 7*, Peter Birke focuses on developments in the inner-city quarter of St. Pauli, a key movement space in Hamburg, in order to analyse the prospects and limitations of the different conjectures about struggles against the upgrading of central areas of Hamburg since the 1980s. A defining element of the Hamburg case is that it has involved a strong emphasis on movement coalition-building. According to Birke, 'Hamburg is maybe the most spectacular example of the constitution of a Right to the City network that has emerged on the basis of countless conflicts brought about by the neoliberalization of governmental politics', a network that in recent years has involved new alliances among the urban poor, refugees from the European peripheries and beyond, activists from the middle classes and squatter communities. This has not occurred without friction. Birke examines different perceptions of the struggle that can be traced to the social and spatial composition of the activists. He relates the emergence of the Right to the City movement in Hamburg to four

conditions: (1) *The significance of images in city marketing* (city branding), as manifested in the aggressive marketing of *HafenCity*, *Elbphilharmonie*, and the *leap across the river* (the gentrification of the former working-class neighbourhood of Wilhelmsburg), providing opportunities for various forms of *subvertising*, such as the fake issue of *Hamburg Marketing*; (2) after the Green Party joined the conservative-led governing coalition, *the new emphasis on sustainable development and the creative class* provoked some activists to publish a manifesto titled 'Not in our Name' and others, mostly artists and precariously placed workers, to occupy twelve buildings in the city centre—the *Gängeviertel* project; (3) as *gentrification proceeded*, rents skyrocketed, making housing activism a key theme of the movement; and (4) *the limitations of neoliberal policies* that became obvious in the wake of the financial crisis of 2008 provided a window of opportunity for the *Gängeviertel*, as the investor who had originally bought the building complex from the city of Hamburg went bankrupt during the crisis. While the Right to the City movement was in the forefront of the resistance to neoliberal urbanism, particularly between 2009–2012 and during the organisation of an international RTC conference in 2011, its decline did not mean the end of urban collective action in Hamburg. Birke points to two moments of such action that took place in the winter of 2013–2014: First, solidarity events with 300 'Lampedusa' refugees included mass demonstrations of more than 10,000; and second, the social centre of the autonomous movement in Hamburg, Rote Flora, issued a nationwide call for a demonstration against its feared eviction. When the 7000 demonstrators were violently attacked before the demonstration got under way, an urban uprising followed that lasted for weeks. Just like in Copenhagen, the elements of violent urban resistance in this context were largely a strategic element within a social movement repertoire developed by squatting activists since the 1980s.

Violent resistance in the context of the recent wave of urban uprisings in Greece, beginning in 2008, has to an even larger extent been part of the established social movement repertoire. While the uprising in December 2008, similar to the London, Paris and Stockholm cases, began as an expression of outrage against a police killing, in the case of Athens, it was a young student who was shot, and the killing took place in Exarcheia, which for decades had been a key movement space. In *Chap.*

8, Antonis Vradis focuses on Exarcheia in his analysis of urban uprisings and the emergence of a major urban anti-austerity movement in Greece in the wake of the 2008 global financial crisis. In contrast to the cases discussed in the other chapters, the urban uprisings in Athens are part of the emergence of a nationwide social movement attacking neoliberal developments in national, European and global contexts in general, and their austerity implications in Greece in particular. Vradis analyses this by applying the concept of 'spatial contract', referring to the articulation of power, sovereignty and territory. As Greece entered its neoliberal era, this also implied a reformulation of its spatial contract. Vradis shows how before 2008, the role of Exarcheia was 'a space of exception, of exceptional unrest'; the Greek spatial contract involved an unspoken 'understanding' that allowed unrest in certain parts of the country, Exarcheia in particular, in return for a high level of consensus across the national territory as a whole. When Greece became an exercise for applying the neoliberal doctrine, this spatial contract, along with its consensus, was terminated, and domestic dissent no longer tolerated. But in the process, new potentialities for dissent opened up. In this context, the 2008 uprising marks an important shift in the spatiality of urban uprisings in Athens: Rather than remaining contained within Exarcheia, it turned into a generalised uprising against sovereignty. Moving on to examine the 'squares movement' that started with Syntagma in 2011 and the uprising of February 2012, Vradis argues that the three uprisings point to a way of understanding 'how the disjuncture between sovereignty and territory is articulated in the context of (neoliberal) globalization'.

A key aspect in the Greek case is the neoliberalisation of Athens, which, with an important prelude provided by the Olympics of 2004, saw the city's 'historical, social and political particularities tramped under the neoliberal doctrines of crises and fiscal adjustments'. In this context the spatial contract was replaced by a neoliberal 'omni-present', a phase in which global capitalism has become boundless: It is everywhere. This implies an urban condition where the power struggle between sovereignty and its subjects is also boundless. The absence of the form of power represented by the spatial contract in the neoliberal city means that urban marginality has ceased to exist, according to Vradis. He emphasises that this also means that the 'safety margins' of the neoliberal political order

are gone. Referring to the other major uprisings analysed in this book, Vradis suggests that they have been made possible by the imploded boundaries of the spatial contract, its vanishing 'safety' zones of urban marginality, and its consensus-based exercise of sovereignty, concluding that the 'omni-present' that at first sight might have appeared as the ultimate victory for global capitalism may in fact have created the opening for its fundamental crisis.

The Spanish urban uprisings beginning in 2011 have many similarities with the Greek case. They form part of a nation-wide anti-austerity movement—the Indignados or 15M movement—closely related to the 2008 financial crisis. There are, however, also differences, the most important perhaps being that the Spanish anti-austerity movement has a stronger urban dimension, intrinsically connected to the fact that in the 2008 crisis in Spain, as in the USA, property speculation played an important role. In *Chap. 9*, Miguel A. Martínez Lopez argues that urban movements, and in particular the urban struggle against the evictions of foreclosed homes (*PAH*), played a key role in the wave of uprisings unleashed by the 15M movement. Focusing on Madrid, Martinez argues that urban neoliberalism has been the main political direction of the metropolitan region of the Spanish capital since the late 1980s, through the four main strands identified by Mayer in Chap. 2, p. 1) *Growth first* started in the early 1990s with mega-projects dedicated to promote the European Capital of Culture, followed by new infrastructure developed to compete for the Olympics; 2) *entrepreneurial forms of governance* were backed by the continuing conservative rule of the Popular Party (in local government since 1989, which made profitable concessions to private developers in many urban regions; 3) *privatisation* has been implemented in such fields as housing, public administration (tax management, information, welfare services, etc.) and waste collection. Regarding public housing, the privatisation process has entailed a dramatic increase in rents and the eviction of thousands of families, which became a major factor behind; 4) *social polarisation*, as unaffordable housing prices were the major cause of socio-spatial segregation. Evictions, demolitions and authoritarian urban policies regarding marginalised groups living in the area of *La Cañada Real* underlined the role of the municipality in the deepening of social polarisation. Martinez then argues that urban movements, such as those

against the evictions of foreclosed houses (*PAH*), played a key role in the wave of uprisings unleashed by the 15M movement. This primary role is linked to their specific 'hybrid autonomy', a key concept in Martinez's analysis, which refers to the various ways in which autonomous and institutional practices have been combined, and the mutual networks they formed. In contrast to the Greek case, violent resistance was rare in the Spanish uprisings. According to Martinez, the vast majority of those who participated in the 15M movement shared a commitment to peaceful means of protest, making violent acts of resistance rare, if not completely absent. On the other hand, Martinez notes that 'institutional violence and repression of activists escalated to a considerable degree' as the movement sustained its collective action. This repression continued even after the enactment of new criminal legislation aimed at punishing activism. Perhaps this contributed to making the violent uprising at the end of the Marches for Dignity in March 2014 less controversial than previous ones among 15M supporters.

Martinez also suggests that 'international precedents such as the confrontations in Istanbul around Gezi Park and those in Rio de Janeiro (*Movimento Passe Livre*) might have provided justification for the groups of young people who fought back the police, set up barricades and smashed the windows of banks'. This observation underscores the significance of links between the urban uprisings and movements analysed in this book, particularly in the wake of the 2008 crisis. Again, it should be emphasised that while this book is limited to collective action staged in (mainly West) European cities, the post-2008 mobilisations occurred world-wide, with the Occupy movement, the Right to the City movement and the Arab Spring as key transnationally networked forms of collective action and sources of inspiration. The latter two were undoubtedly significant for the 2013 Turkish uprising, beginning in Gezi Park in Istanbul. In *Chap. 10*, Gülçin Erci Lelandais emphasises the role of transnational influences on the Gezi Park uprising. In 2010, the European Social Forum took place in Istanbul, with a number of panels on the right to the city, bringing together activists and residents from different Istanbul neighbourhoods that either had been destroyed or were under threat of demolition. Out of this, an Istanbul Right to the City movement emerged, initiating the action that started the Gezi Park uprising

and involving a number of established urban social movement networks in Turkey. As the uprising grew, including violent resistance provoked by harsh police repression, and became nationwide, it moved beyond its urban dimension and turned into a broad-based anti-government surge of collective action, and, in the words of Lelandais, 'one of the broadest and enduring revolts of its recent political history'. In her attempts to explain why this occurred even though Turkey, unlike Greece and Spain, had not experienced an economic crisis, Lelandais nevertheless emphasises the significance of the urban element in the start of the uprising. This was an act of resistance to state-led gentrification as manifested in the planned replacement of the centrally located Gezi Park with a reproduction of a historic military barracks, which was also to house a shopping mall. According to Lelandais, the uprising was an expression of resistance to a new kind of spatial neoliberalism in Turkey, driven by the authoritarian and religious power strategies that became dominant in the 2000s. This specific articulation of neoliberal urbanism links an authoritarian government, polished by Islamic motifs, to an individualistic consumer culture, manifested in the construction of hundreds of shopping malls in cities across the country, and the dissemination of credit cards and mortgage systems. It further involves, as a fundamental element, the promotion of large-scale urban development projects causing massive gentrification and displacing poor and marginalised populations. Similar to the Greek and Spanish cases, the Turkish uprising was driven by a network of social movements, but unlike the former cases, it was not sustained over time in order to produce a new movement of movements.

In this respect, the emergence of a Polish urban social movement coalition provides a contrast to the Turkish case, as well as to many of the other cases presented in this book. On the one hand, urban uprisings of the kind we have defined have been absent in Poland, On the other, Polish cities have seen sustained urban collective action, developing into an urban movement coalition that addresses the particular Polish articulation of neoliberal urbanism in the 2000s. As in other Eastern European countries, neoliberal developments in Poland have been defined by post-socialist conditions. In *Chap. 11*, Dominika Polanska analyses the emergence of two urban social movements, the squatting and tenants movements. Polanska distinguishes three major phases in the movements' develop-

ment, intrinsically linked to different phases of neoliberal urbanism in Poland after 1989: (1) *The emergence and adaptation of the neoliberal logic in the first decade of transformation*: In the context of urban governance, the shock therapy ('Balcerowicz Plan') introduced in Poland after the fall of state socialism involved a shift of power from the national state to municipalities and from 'government to governance', as urban planning became co-governed by local governments and private actors. Urban legislation concentrated on strengthening and attracting private investment. Planning was, however, largely neglected as a result of prioritising market-led regulation characterised by terms such as 'competitiveness', 'sustainable development' and 'economic growth'. In this context, both the tenants and the squatting movements emerged and developed independently of, and even in opposition to, each other. The former focused on national housing issues, and largely supported the neoliberal logic of urban policies. The latter emerged on the basis of anti-systemic and anti-state ideology that was a remnant of the 1980s ethos, but also criticised capitalism's expression in the urban context, such as high vacancy rates as a result of land- and housing-speculation practices, and reprivatisation processes. (2) *The redefinition of adversaries and goals* during the years preceding Poland's accession to the European Union in 2004 was linked to the fact that 'joining the Union entailed serious implications for Poland', which in the urban context meant that private investments in the built environment became more manifest, and the contrasts between the privately and the publicly owned parts of cities became sharper. Reprivatization involved gentrification and evictions, in some cases resulting in homelessness. This caused a reactivation of the tenants movement and a fundamental redefinition of their 'enemy' and repertoire of action, its aim now defined in terms of a resistance to urban neoliberalism. The squatters movement shifted its rhetoric towards a stronger emphasis on anti-capitalism. This paved the way for forging links between the two movements, eventually leading to: (3) *the maturing of and cooperation between the movements* over the last five years, as the intensity and scope of neoliberal changes in the urban context, coupled with the global financial crisis, triggered a sharper critique of neoliberalisation in both movements. Noting the absence of urban uprisings involving violent resistance, Polanska argues that, in contrast to the Western-European context, the political culture in Poland is strongly guided by the tradition

of non-violence, since the emergence of the non-violent protests of the 1980s, linked to what has been termed a 'self-implied moderation' of the working classes, reinforced by neoliberal rhetoric.

In our brief *Afterword*, we return to the analytical perspective developed in this introductory chapter, to underline how the different forms of collective action analysed in this book share the fundamental dimension of addressing the deepened spatialised social inequalities that have been brought about by the latest phase of neoliberal urbanism. Further, we argue that while urban uprisings undoubtedly have politicising and mobilising effects, it is an empirical question as to what extent this becomes translated into more prolonged and sustained collective action in the form of a social movement. While the Polish case demonstrates that urban social movements can emerge in a context where moments of urban uprisings are absent, and the London case provides an example of how an uprising may be empirically rather unconnected (but not irrelevant) to a surrounding movement context, we stress that the other cases demonstrate how empirical relationships between urban uprisings and more sustained forms of urban collective action can appear in different forms. Sometimes urban uprisings occur in the context of, or are even a part or a product of, an urban social movement (Copenhagen, Hamburg); sometimes a new movement may develop in the process of urban uprisings (Greece, Spain); sometimes an urban uprising can become linked to social movements in the context of a struggle over their meaning (Stockholm); or attempts to sustain collective action, initiated during the urban uprising in order to construct a major social movement, may fail (Paris, Istanbul).

As with previous urban crises, social movements play key roles in proposing, designing and pushing for remedies and solutions. It remains, however, a task for politics to address and resolve the underlying causes of the urban uprisings, whether they come in the form of articulate and organised movements or as more or less riotous expressions in the 'languages of the unheard'. Either way, they articulate the grievances of those disenfranchised, harmed, displaced or robbed in the ongoing processes of neoliberal urbanisation.

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2

Neoliberal Urbanism and Uprisings Across Europe

Margit Mayer

This chapter explores the impact neoliberal urbanism has had on the conflicts and contestations that have erupted across European cities over the last decade. After presenting the concept of neoliberalization and its uneven implementation within Europe, it delineates the characteristic features of neoliberal urbanism, highlighting in particular the strategies with which cities respond to global pressures and crisis developments. City managers have intensified and innovated regeneration and upgrading policies, deliberately valorizing real estate and public space, and politicians have turned, especially since the 2008 financial crisis, to more austere policies and new strategies to displace undesired uses and groups from vibrant parts of the city. As tensions and conflicts have emerged around all of these strategies, different forms of urban resistance have

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emerged, which themselves have been shaped by the very restructuring processes and policies that the contestations—to varying degrees and in more and less articulate forms—oppose. The third section of the chapter deepens some observations about the contestations around neoliberal urbanism: first, how the field of urban activism has become both larger and more heterogeneous in response to the particularities of urban neo-liberalization; second, how struggles against urban upgrading have taken on a variety of forms, covering the spectrum from Right to the City net-works and their well-organized campaigns all the way to violent uprisings; and, finally, how the massive societal upheaval that erupted in Greece and Spain provided a context for new grassroots solidarity initiatives to build 'another city'. The concluding section resituates these findings, particu-larly the challenge thrown up by the heterogeneity of the contemporary forms of urban resistance, within the conceptual framework of neoliber-alization and its being overcome by 'deep societalization.'

Conceptualizing Neoliberalization

As we showed in our introduction, there are strong reasons for highlight-ing the role of structural factors for analysing the wave of uprisings that has swept through European cities. The structural factors at work here are neoliberalization processes that have deeply transformed what used to be 'Fordist' or 'Keynesian cities', and have thereby also transformed the conditions for urban resistance movements. Particularly, the latest round of the neoliberalization of the urban, which has intensified austerity to new levels, lies behind the recent contestations and uprisings. Therefore, understanding the dynamic of neoliberal urbanism and its latest incar-nation, austerity urbanism, will help to shed light on different types of urban resistance and the increasingly fuzzy boundaries between them.

   In our conceptualization of neoliberalism, we are building on a long debate involving political-economic accounts and Foucauldian perspec-tives, which together go a long way towards explaining how the neo-liberal project is continually reworked and contested in various spheres of life (cf. Mayer & Künkel, 2012). We draw in particular on authors such as David Harvey, as well as Peck, Brenner and Theodore, who have

highlighted the instability and evolving nature of the neoliberal regime of accumulation (Harvey, 2006, pp. 28–29) and the relational interconnections between neoliberalizing spaces—from neighbourhoods, cities and regions all the way to nation states and multinational zones—within a transnational governance system (Brenner, Peck, & Theodore, 2010; Peck, Theodore, & Brenner, 2012). Such a conceptualization is helpful for bringing the neoliberalization of the urban into view.[1] Harvey, who views neoliberalism as a class project, emphasizes that it entails, in addition to accumulation through the expansion of wage labour in industry, accumulation by dispossession, i.e., the predatory appropriation of surplus, via commodification and privatization of land, the conversion of collective and common forms of property rights into exclusive private-property rights, including the erosion of property rights that have been won through class struggle, such as state pensions, welfare, education and health care, through financialization, expanded use of the credit system and speculative raiding, as well as the extraction of rents from patents and intellectual property rights.

While Harvey's perspective focuses on the neoliberal system as a whole, the perspective suggested by Peck, Brenner and Theodore focuses more directly on the political dimension of 'regulatory restructuring' with respect to the increasing marketization and commodification of all realms of social life.[2] Their concept of neoliberalization emphasizes its process character, the path-dependency of concrete neoliberal projects, the role of strategies and that of the state. Therefore, they prefer to speak of neoliberalization instead of neoliberalism, signalling that we are not dealing with a fixed state or condition, but rather with a *process* of market-oriented regulatory restructuring. This process does not entail a 'convergence' of regulatory outcomes. Rather, neoliberalization projects assume contextually specific forms as they collide

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[1] Competing conceptualizations, such as, e.g., those presented by Joseph Stiglitz, who equates neoliberalization with a world-wide homogenization of regulatory systems, or by Elmar Altvater (2009) and Brand and Sekler (2009), who see neoliberalism as having come to an end in August 2008, are less helpful in this regard.

[2] They conceive neoliberalization as one among several tendencies of regulatory change that have been unleashed across the global capitalist system since the 1970s, and describe its three major features as follows: (1) It prioritizes market-based, market-oriented or market-disciplinary responses to regulatory problems; (2) it strives to intensify commodification in all realms of social life; and (3) it often mobilizes financial instruments to open up new arenas for capitalist profit-making.

with diverse regulatory landscapes inherited from earlier rounds of regulatory formation, such as Fordism or national developmentalism or state socialism. They view neoliberalization as a contradictory process of state-authorized market transformation (Peck & Theodore, 2012, p. 178), and as pushing endlessly for marketization and privatization, and, knowing no limits, never able to produce an equilibrium (Peck et al., 2012, p. 277). Because of its focus on the state, this neo-Marxist perspective is productively complemented by Foucauldian approaches focusing on neoliberal governmentalities, which highlight the ways in which state and corporate actors create and promote particular subjectivities (cf. Mayer & Künkel, 2012). Governmentality approaches, by focusing on state intervention in subject formation, can sharpen our understanding of neoliberal urbanism and the evolving relations between different kinds of uprisings and political institutions and discourses on all scales.

Rather than seeing a rolling-back of state power, both of these conceptualizations of the neoliberal project or regime—the neo-Marxist/regulationist and the Foucauldian—highlight the active mobilization of state institutions to extend commodification and promote market rule, as well as the (self-)technologies of identification and responsibilization through which state programs and discourses work. Further, these perspectives imply that there is no single 'pure' form or 'ism', because any neoliberal formation hinges upon contextually specific *strategies* of regulatory reorganization. Therefore Brenner et al. (2010) have spoken of 'variegated neoliberalism' to suggest that the systemically uneven character of neoliberal hegemony is best understood by analysing the ways in which a political project is embedded in different contexts, which political and power structures facilitate the spread of market rule to more and more arenas of social life, and which concessions to local culture and/or protest movements have been shaping the neoliberal project in various 'local third ways' (see Mayer & Künkel, 2012, pp. 10–11).

In this perspective, cities and urban regions are seen as key arenas in and through which processes of regulatory creative destruction occur (Brenner & Theodore, 2002): They are: sites of regulatory 'problems' (such as poverty, crime, joblessness, etc.); sites of putative regulatory 'solutions' (where new policy prototypes are developed and experimented with, which, if effective, will travel around the world); and sites of contra-

dictions, conflicts and opposition to such projects. While western states in the course of globalization have fostered competition among cities, they have handed more and more tasks pertaining to economic development as well as social infrastructure to municipalities. In spite of this pervasive trend, there is also no such thing as *the* neoliberal city, just as there is no pure 'neoliberalism'. Instead, diverse place- and territory-specific patterns of neoliberalization have emerged as the search for urban policy models and forms of governance has intensified. Such contextually specific patterns have emerged wherever global, national, regional, and local alliances promote market-oriented solutions to regulatory problems: in housing, transportation, economic development, labour, the environment and so forth. The outcomes are not only contextually specific, as they depend on local institutional and political legacies and struggles, but are also always partial and impure forms and messy hybrids.

The different case studies in this volume are set in different countries, each representing its own 'messy hybrid' of neoliberalizing national and local politics, representing a broad spectrum, from authoritarian neoliberalism in Turkey, with its brutal clampdown on the Gezi Park protests, to the austere statism of Germany that so far has succeeded in preventing the spread of 'crisis consciousness,' not to mention mass movements involving broad sectors of society. Some case studies focus more, others less, on the specific 'reengineering of the state according to a neoliberal blueprint of austerity' (Slater in this volume). Across these contextually specific cases, one significant pattern stands out: There is a 'two-speed' Europe in terms of the implementation of neoliberal austerity strategies, a split between 'core' countries such as Britain, Germany and France, on the one hand, which have seen incremental neoliberalization starting as early as the 1970s, and countries on the European periphery, on the other, where austerity was imposed much later by the EU, IMF and the German government, in sudden and draconian ways, inflicting severe hardship on broad sectors of society.[3]

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[3] When Spain, Portugal and Greece joined the Eurozone, their industries lost competitiveness, the effects of which didn't make themselves felt as long as real estate booms made up for the losses. This credit- and speculation-driven development led to vastly expanding corruption, which seriously impaired the respective governments' capacity to act, and EU policies exacerbated these structural problems by supporting traditional elites.

Scandinavian governments were also comparatively late in jumping on the neoliberalization bandwagon, doing so on their own terms, For instance, Sweden became a 'world champion in liberalization', liberalizing faster than any country in the west (Clark, 2014). The resulting country-specific patterns of neoliberalization go some way in explaining differences in urban unrest across European cities, as will be shown in more detail in the second section of this chapter.

The German government began already after the fiscal crisis of 1974-75 to pass laws that aimed to consolidate the public debt, roll back public spending, and increase public revenue through tax cuts. This rollback neoliberalization, designed to stop the 'inflation of entitlements of the working class', was reinforced in the 1990s by the Maastricht Treaty, (a supranational national-political framework of financial politics, and the Stability and Growth Pact, which made sure that Eurozone member states would adhere to austerity measures after the introduction of the euro. The dismantling of the welfare state, which was achieved through the welfare/workfare reforms of the early 2000s, effectively lowered wages. The 2000 tax reform decreased Germany's state revenues, and by 2010, the state had lost €50 billion annually as a result (Truger & Teichmann, 2010, p. 15). In 2009, the German government locked structurally balanced budgets into law on a national scale, a move that secured the 'automation' of restrictive fiscal-governance regimes and the authoritarian constitutionalization of austerity policies through law and the state (Petzold, 2015).

While German workers, as a result of this gradual normalization of austere statism, have experienced hardly any wage increases since 1999, workers in the rest of the Eurozone have been undercut by the wage freeze in Europe's centre. Still, based on its strong export economy, and profiting from the euro vis-à-vis other EU countries, the German government has been able to garner broad support from its citizens and pass off its austerity politics as good governance (Belina, 2013). Thus, in spite of wage stagnation and large budgetary cutbacks, broad majorities, including marginalized groups, did not develop a sense of crisis (cf. Lill, 2015; Schmitt-Beck, 2013). Such conditions are not conducive to mass mobilization.

By contrast, the societies of Europe's southern periphery that have been harshly affected by structural adjustment and austerity programs imposed by the EU crisis regime have seen very high rates of strikes, participation in demonstrations, public square protests and neighbourhood assemblies, coupled with all kinds of civil disobedience actions, from encircling parliaments and land squats to supermarket raids. Thus, we have a two-speed Europe with regard to the scope and intensity of protest. In most Northern European countries, where governments installed austerity measures in more incremental and less visible ways than was the case in Southern or Eastern Europe, without justifying their cuts to social and public infrastructures in terms of the crisis, neither crisis consciousness nor resistance became as widespread as in Southern Europe. What anti-austerity protests have flared up in Germany, France, Britain, the Scandinavian countries and Italy, they remained far from gaining majority support comparable to that received by the *Indignados* and *Aganaktismenoi*. And the mobilizations that did take place have rarely been able to reach the unorganized, unrepresented and impoverished working and middle classes, or the new poor, some of whom, instead, seem to flock to growing right-wing organizations and parties.[4]

On the eastern periphery, the post-socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), where hyper versions of neoliberal urbanism have triumphed, for a variety of reasons protests have not been as massive as in Southern Europe, but diverse and novel grassroots mobilizations have taken place there as well (Jacobsson, 2015; Pleyers & Sava, 2015; Polanska in this volume). The effects of the legacy of state socialism, coupled with the ongoing processes of rapid neoliberalization, have led to a widespread mistrust of collective action and preferences for individualist problem-solving strategies.

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[4] Participants of the early anti-austerity demonstrations in Northern European countries, according to various surveys, came mainly from 'the usual suspects', such as unions, leftists, anti-globalization, ESF, anti-racist organizations, Occupy and Blockupy, and the Left Party (della Porta, 2015; Peterson, Wahlström, & Wennerhag, 2013).

Neoliberal Urbanism

After several rounds of neoliberalization, urban conditions and urban politics have transformed in fundamental ways. First, a roll-back of Fordist institutions and redistributive policies during the 1980s aimed to address the limits of the Keynesian city. In the succeeding roll-out phase during the 1990s, policy makers sought to ameliorate some of the destructive effects of the dismantling of the Fordist compromise. This was followed by a third round, in which, after the dot-com crash of 2001, urbanization became a global phenomenon, thanks to the integration of financial markets to debt-finance urban development around the world. Currently we are in a 'post-crisis' round of austerity urbanism,[5] and the Keynesian city, along with its norms, its functional zoning and its particular form of urban renewal and suburbanization, have been replaced by a rather different formation (Mayer, 2012). Urban policy-making hinges no longer primarily on the institutions of the local elected state and its bureaucrats, but ever more on business, real estate and developer interests, all of which are increasingly global. The point of urban policy has become to facilitate the unfettered operation of 'the market'. Urban services, what is left of them, have become increasingly privatized, and city governments purchasers rather than providers of services, the goal of which has become to activate and entrepreneurialize 'clients'. The latest round of neoliberalization, in which the neoliberal project has been discredited but still not weakened by the 2008 crash and stagnant growth rates, as well as delegitimized by social movements, is characterized by a devolved form of extreme fiscal constraint, which in the northern countries is projected largely on to sub-national scales. In so-called Peripheral Europe,[6] this manifests on national scales as well, thanks to EU and IMF politics. Everywhere municipalities are adversely affected, and many have developed an advanced form of austerity politics, which now not only dismantles Fordist social welfare infrastructures, as during the first roll-

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[5] These phases, which roughly, but not everywhere, correspond to the decades indicated, are well described in Peck, Theodore, and Brenner (2009), and austerity urbanism in Peck (2012). The correspondences between these phases and the respective urban movements are presented in Mayer (2012, pp. 65–69) and Mayer (2013, pp. 6–10).

[6] Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Greece, Spain.

back phase, but grinds away at what has survived repeated rounds of cut-backs and neoliberal restructuring.

Neoliberal urbanism thus denotes a complex configuration involving the local adaptation of neoliberal regulations, such as the enforcing of low wages and insecure working conditions, restrictions of tenant's as well as worker's rights debt as a disciplinary technique and specifically spatial adaptations of neoliberal tenets, such as increasingly uneven spatial development: While central areas are ever more spiffed up with expensive, glitzy and securitized developments, poor neighbourhoods are suffering even more cutbacks and surveillance. The politics of neoliberal urbanism have been characterized by the deliberate valorization of real estate and public space, creative city policies and punitive austerity policies. Both the spatial-polarization and the social-precarization aspects of neoliberal urbanism were only intensified through the measures by which policy managers have sought to cope with the fall-out of the 2008 crisis. The following list of these characteristic policies highlights how each of them has contributed to the effect of exacerbating social imbalances and conflicts, which in turn has transformed the urban polity, available resources and the space available for urban residents. This also means that when, in the wake of the financial crisis at the end of the 2000s, austerity policies became more dominant across Europe, the material conditions for urban resistance movements began to shift in the following ways:

1. The overarching political strategy continues to be what it has been since the beginning of the neoliberal turn: the pursuit of *growth first*. Festivalization, urban spectacles and signature events have always been measures widely applied by urban managers seeking to accelerate investment flows into the city and to improve their position in inter-urban rivalry. Cities that come out on top in this global competition include those whose real estate markets appear as safe havens to foot-loose global capital, such as London, New York or Shanghai, or cities whose credit-fuelled construction boom (e.g., Istanbul) or whose tourism industry (e.g., Barcelona) have driven real estate surges. An effect of the success in this interurban competition is exploding property prices, which in turn have led to a surge in evictions, social displacement and a new homeless crisis borne out of an affordable housing

crisis, rather than out of the subprime mortgage crisis, as was the case in Spain. In most other cities, shrinking budgets now prevent urban managers from implementing the type of big projects and urban spectacles they used to employ to radiate the message of success to investors and tourists alike. Cash-strapped cities—and not merely in the more heavily indebted European South—now turn to forms of locational politics that rely more on symbolic, low-cost ways to attract 'creative classes' to help in culturally upgrading their brand, i.e., innovative low-budget and especially culture-led efforts to mobilize city space for growth.

Such cultural branding strategies sometimes benefit, in ambiguous ways, alternative and sub-cultural movements, particularly those movements that can be fitted into *creative city* projects (cf. the chapters by Birke on Hamburg and Lund Hansen and Karpantschof on Copenhagen in this volume). But as such strategies tend to upgrade and valorize the spaces made attractive by artists, squatters and alternative or (sub-)cultural interim users, they lead to further displacing or marginalizing groups that lack symbolic cultural resources, thus triggering the protest of these outcast groups. (cf. Mayer, 2016)

2. Secondly, neoliberalization has led cities to adopt *entrepreneurial forms of governance* in ever-more policy areas, where they make more and more use of presumably more efficient business models and privatized forms of governance. This has involved a proliferation of out-contracting and a shift towards task- and project-driven initiatives, such as developing a particular part of town (e.g., new upscale uses for waterfronts, 'science cities', etc.), or competing for mega-events such as the Olympics, World Cups, International Building Exhibits, or Garden Shows—though municipal treasurers have become increasingly wary of failed projects and speculative ruin, and increasingly favour smaller-scale regeneration efforts instead. In any case, with these supposedly more efficient entrepreneurial modes of governance, mayors and their partners from the business sector, often bypassing council chambers, have set up special agencies to deliver target-driven initiatives that focus on specific, concrete objectives. In contrast to previous Keynesian modes of governance, which secured the consent of the governed through tripartite, corporate and long-term designs,

these novel modes of regulation, while less transparent and often not democratically legitimized do produce hegemony, but they do so via the small-scale involvement of different segments off society: We now see flexible, small and constantly changing concessions to shifting particular groups, primarily middle class-based and upwardly mobile ones. In this ad-hoc and informalized political process, *global* developers and *international* investors have come to play even more leading roles—though it is local politics that allows them this role. These entrepreneurial strategies and their lack of public transparency have given rise to all kinds of struggles over (the erosion of) representative democracy. They have been behind the 'real democracy' demands of Madrid's *Indignados* and the resistance against the plans for Gezi Park (see Martinez and Lelandais in this volume), as well as countless urban campaigns against the undemocratic ways in which large urban infrastructure projects get pushed through (cf., for example, Dragojlo, 2015; Peters & Novy, 2012; Watt, 2013). Besides those citizens protesting against non-transparent decision-making that expedites projects favoured by global developers or corporations, those who do not conform to the standards of international investors now shaping the urban environment have also taken to protest against being excluded from their 'right to the city' (cf. Birke in this volume; Brenner, Marcuse and Mayer, 2012).

3. Intensified *privatization* of public infrastructures and services is another key feature of neoliberal urbanism, which keeps being pushed to new levels. This has not only transformed the traditional relation between the public and the private, as it involves not just the rolling-back and reorganization of the socially oriented institutions of the public sector, but, as everything from public transport and utilities to social housing is now exposed to the market, privatization has actually turned into financialization (cf. Hodkinson, 2012; Rolnik, 2013). In this raiding of public coffers, often by government-sponsored private companies, urban resources and public infrastructure and services are turned into options for expanded capital accumulation by dispossession (cf. Merrifield, 2013). Where the public sector has not yet been fully privatized, where, for example, health care, child care, schools or universities are still in the public sector, tight city budgets have been

used as justification for keeping public employees' wages stagnant. Municipalities and provincial governments have frozen or cut back expenditures and wages, which has triggered unexpectedly strong waves of strikes in Germany, and led to the formation of the *tides* movements in Spain (Streeck, 2015; Martinez in this volume). Intensification of privatization has equally pertained to land: The extortion of maximal land rent works best through dedicating more and more private spaces to elite consumption, while the privatization of other (public) areas, such as shopping malls or train stations, has meant limiting access to and/or making the use of collective infrastructures more expensive. Whole urban centres from Paris, Manhattan and London to Singapore and Hong Kong are becoming, in the words of the *Financial Times*, no less, 'exclusive citadels of the elites.' '[T]he middle classes and small companies are falling victim to class-cleansing. Global cities are becoming patrician ghettos' (Kuper, 2013). These enclosure strategies have triggered a variety of contestations, from protests against rent increases and cutbacks of public infrastructures, services, schools and universities, to occupations of social centres (see, for example, the tenants and squatters movements in Poland, described by Polanska, and the struggles over social centres such as Hamburg's Rota Flora, described by Birke, or Copenhagen's Youth House, detailed by Lund and Karpantschof, in this volume). Social cutbacks also underlie the uprisings that have erupted in deprived city areas, whether the suburbs of Paris and Stockholm, or inner-city neighbourhoods in London and other British cities, as described in the respective chapters in this volume. Furthermore, situationist-inspired guerrilla and other actions in the semi-public, privatized spaces of surveillance and consumption have responded to privatization processes impinging on public spaces (cf. Belina, 2010; Eick & Briken, 2014). Intensification of privatization is also behind the urban restructuring that triggered the massive uprisings in Spanish cities, as well as the Gezi Park contestation analyzed in this volume. Finally, movements have forced municipalities to re-communalize water and/or energy utilities with popular referenda, but this has occurred only sporadically (cf. Becker, Beveridge, & Naumann, 2015). Where deprivation and exclusion that have deepened through these enclosure strategies are coupled with punitive state

measures and police brutality, which manifest as part of a further, fourth characteristic feature of neoliberal urbanism, combustible situations are generated.

4. The earlier neoliberal tool kit for dealing with *social polarization* has been replaced. During the roll-out phase of neoliberalism, this tool kit consisted of area-based programs, i.e., some mix of neighbourhood, revitalization and activation programs that were to stop the presumed downward spiral of 'blighted' or so-called 'problem' neighbourhoods ('neoliberalism with a human face'). These programs have meanwhile been severely curtailed and superseded by a two-pronged policy. These prongs consist, on the one hand, of attrition and displacement policies, and, on the other, of more benign programs designed to incorporate select impoverished groups and areas into upgrading efforts. For example, decaying social housing districts or (ex-)industrial areas that are deemed to have some development potential increasingly become locations for urban spectacles and development projects, and city managers claim that these strategies will upgrade existing populations. While not displacing poor residents with immediate force, such programs still tend to work as vehicles not only to upgrade and revitalize such neighbourhoods, but also to induce a gradual residential shift. This, too, often creates controversial effects that may trigger resistance.

But the prong that in many cities has lately been gaining more strength and significance, and seems to be outpacing the more 'benign' one, consists of punitive, repressive and criminalizing measures and instruments. It entails attrition and displacement policies that are pushing the poor to further outskirts or into invisible interstices of blight within the urban perimeter, as well as punitive strategies that tend to criminalize unwanted behaviours and groups. The intricate causal relationship between these processes—the gentrification-led restructuring of city centres and inner-city housing markets through new and often gated development projects, the clearance of public housing, the elimination of tenant protections and the exacerbated exclusion of disadvantaged places, milieus and social groups—is everywhere obfuscated in new discourses of (in-)securitization and self-responsibilization (cf. Slater, 2011; Smith, 2002). Underlying the

expansion of these vulnerable groups and of their grievances are macro processes such as the deregulation and flexibilization of labour markets, welfare retrenchment and the increase of low-wage and informal sectors that employ growing sections of the (racialized) 'precariat' and growing numbers of migrants, i.e., growing and differentiating sets of precarious, often paperless, workers (cf. Mayer, 2010; McNevin, 2006; Wacquant, 2009).

Many communities of colour, informal workers, homeless people, the undocumented and, increasingly, victims of the new austerity, as well as protest movements and urban 'rioters', confront this repressive side of neoliberal politics: increasingly strict laws, tougher policing and more disenfranchisement. As precious central-urban space plays such a key role in interurban competition, urban policy-makers seek to cleanse it of whatever might diminish its exchange value or disrupt the exclusive commerce and consumption or tourism that is supposed to take place here (cf. Beckett & Herbert, 2010; Eick & Briken, 2014, esp. Section III: Policing the Urban Battleground).

Thus, both traditionally vulnerable groups, the ones Wacquant (2008) labelled 'urban outcasts', as well as new-austerity victims, are increasingly losing out, whether in labour or housing markets. They confront more extensive surveillance, more aggressive policing and generally more stigmatizing, repressive and expelling treatment. Feher (2015) describes increasingly brutal ways of 'disposing of the discredited' that have become characteristic of neoliberal governance. These measures to 'disappear' people without assets, who are of no use to austere neoliberalism, range from making them statistically invisible, via harassing them 'to death', all the way to pushing them out of or not letting them into gated Europe.

In some ways, ailing municipalities and cities teetering on the brink of bankruptcy are at the forefront of systemic austerity, as they engage in the most drastic cutbacks in public infrastructure. Not just in debt-ridden Southern Europe, but also in presumably still-stable Germany, the number of heavily indebted cities has exploded, and some municipalities have gone broke (AKP, 2011; Holtkamp & Kuhlmann, 2012; Müllender, 2013). Municipal fiscal crises are used to install (unelected) so-called 'emergency managers', who can rule with unrestricted author-

ity over the urban region for which fiscal emergency has been declared. These state-imposed managers pass laws and decrees that suspend essential political and social rights (Peck, 2013; Schipper & Schöning, 2016).

Rather than receiving support from supra-local levels of government, ailing cities are requested to shoulder even more burdens, responsibilities and deficits, which higher levels of government are shifting downward. Given shrinking room to manoeuvre, most of these cities attempt to tackle the offloaded social and ecological 'externalities' with the very same methods of marketization, outsourcing, deregulation and privatization of public services and social supports which have already proven to incapacitate the state, thereby burdening those at the bottom and compounding their economic marginalization by means of state abandonment (Peck, 2012, pp. 650–651).

All of these currently popular instruments and policies have implications for the ways in which urban resistance forms, and they structure oppositional groups' ability to manoeuvre. While creative city policies may open up new space and resources for action, and sustain some initiatives, expanded austerity and criminalization policies not only exacerbate social polarization, but also restrict and suffocate (protest) movements of more vulnerable urban residents. The expansion of stop-and-frisk measures, identity controls and surveillance technologies has particularly affected migrant groups, especially youth. But this disciplinary, repressive side is also looming larger in authorities' response to radical, militant and riotous behaviour (cf. Slater, Dikeç, Sernhede et al., as well as Birke, Martinez, and Lelandais in this volume).

In sum, neoliberal urbanism—the ground and target within and against which a broad spectrum of urban collective actions, from well-organized campaigns and social movement actions to violent eruptions, have co-evolved—is complexly configured. While it manifests in different nationally and locally specific forms, it contrasts markedly with previous urban constellations, and thus exerts rather different influences and constraints on contemporary contestations. The next section explores the dynamics and mutual influences of neoliberal urbanism and resistance to it.

Neoliberal Urbanism and Resistance

As indicated, the delineated manifestations of neoliberal urbanism have had implications for collective action: some triggering protest directly, others affecting resistance through the way they shape political opportunity structures. Anti-austerity protests have flared up both on the left and the right, and new middle class-based activism has also emerged to attempt to maintain accustomed ways of life (e.g., Poulios, 2014). Advocacy and solidarity movements for and by austerity victims have expanded—from soup kitchens to anti-eviction networks and campaigns to defend the rights of the homeless or the rights of refugees—and many other urban movements, even if not directed against austerity, have been affected or transformed by the changing urban context. For example, countercultural and anarchist movements that used to, and in some ways still, benefit from creative city policies are themselves increasingly precarized (Mayer, 2016; see also Birke, Polanska, Martinez and the chapter by Lund Hansen and Karpantschof in this volume).

This section cannot provide a systematic analysis of the complex and contradictory forms of urban resistance that have arisen in this latest round of neoliberalization, which would also need to include regressive, right-wing, and not only progressive, emancipatory, variants of resistance against neoliberal urbanism. As the chapter's purpose is to shed light on the relations between the dynamics of urban neoliberalization and the urban uprisings of recent decades motivated by social justice, rather than by ideals of blood or national purity or by religious fundamentalism, it focuses on those types of urban resistance and moments of uprising that are or can become part of progressive social movements seeking to dismantle and replace neoliberal-rule regimes in order to realize justice and equality for all urban residents.[7]

This section highlights three correspondences between neoliberal urbanism and its resistance: First, it shows how the dynamics and tensions inherent to neoliberal urbanism have generated greater conflict and

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[7] It would require a different analysis to account for the significance of right-wing, populist and xenophobic movements, which have also expanded in the context of, and are sometimes directed against, neoliberal austerity.

contestation involving a more heterogeneous group of affected subjects; second, it illustrates just how variegated collective actions in response to urban upgrading policies can be; and third, it explores how, in the context of the massive upheaval that has swept across Greece and Spain, Oxford University Pressrassroots efforts to rebuild another city from below have evolved.

A Larger and More Heterogeneous Field of Urban Activism

The increasingly austere form of neoliberal urbanism sketched above has redefined the ground for progressive urban collective action, particularly for existing urban movements. For one thing, existing movements confront additional targets and adversaries beyond city politicians, such as

Fig. 2.1 Wem gehört die strasse. (Who does the street belong to?) Photo: Bruce Spear

unelected technocrats, especially financial technocrats, as well as global investors and developers, who are behind the financialization of housing markets and push for big development projects. For another, movements now mobilize around a panoply of new issues, such as privatizations and cuts to education, child care, social services and pension), evictions, rising poverty and homelessness, and racist anti-refugee populism and media campaigns against 'others' who are painted as 'living beyond their means'. In addition, they face more and new forms of repression, and witness de-democratization in many spheres, as well as suspension of civil rights, which increasingly affects their own practices.[8] Many suffer from shrinking resources, opportunities and open spaces for their activities, for example, as they lose state funding or legal status as recognized associations, or lose public support by being criminalized. The movement terrain has been further altered as it has been expanded by new actors entering the stage, mobilizing around such restrictive measures and drawing public attention to the deprivation of rights and resources imposed on unwanted or 'disposable' groups. Human rights groups, solidarity initiatives and scores of more or less spontaneous actions have drawn on populations that used to be uninvolved in urban activism.

As recent austerity cuts have hit not only the traditionally disadvantaged, but, increasingly, youth, students, creatives and other, middle class segments, more and more people experience the punitive side of neoliberal urbanism. And this is not only the case for Southern European cities, but, as the chapters on Paris, London, Copenhagen and Stockholm in this book reveal, also for cities in Northern Europe. Primarily, though, it is vulnerable and marginalized social groups that are confronted with this side of the neoliberalizing city.

Wherever those who are denied their right to the city fight back and confront the political system with their demands, they face—if not merely deaf ears—more restrictions, surveillance and more aggressive policing than their (potential) allies in the alternative and countercul-

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[8] Cf. the new draconian Spanish safety law, which was passed in June 2015 in direct response to some of the anti-austerity protests sweeping across Spanish cities. Now, demonstrators participating in unauthorized protest near 'sensitive' locations can face fines of as much as €600,000 (Minder, 2015; Streck, 2015).

tural scenes, who possess assets that are potentially marketable in the context of interurban rivalry over cultural branding. While the latter may receive concessions and offers for incorporation, 'urban outcasts' usually experience stigmatizing and repressive treatment which exacerbates their disenfranchisement and deepens the divides and oppositions among the different groups locked out of or exploited by the neoliberal city and dispossessed through its crisis management.

Local authorities frequently exacerbate the distance and alienation between, on the one hand, groups that possess certain leverage within the neoliberal city, and those that are stigmatized and 'othered'. But even before any differential forms of state repression produce or intensify these distances, very real differences in terms of cultural and everyday experience between comparatively privileged movement groups and 'outcasts' already exist. And, also, within the various groups that make up the latter, different positions and thus different interests exist. For example, the homeless, the undocumented, the welfare-dependent, workers in informal economies and migrant youth have extremely divergent experiences and face widely different challenges. These different positions and interests often make it difficult to join together in a common struggle, as the cases of Paris or London indicate. The existence of these very real hurdles in the increasingly heterogeneous field of urban activism makes the conjoining of forces, when it does occur, the more remarkable. The assemblies held on Greek and Spanish plazas that brought forth joint actions of evicted homeowners and M15 activists, or Gezi Park's defenders bringing established urban social movements, environmentalists and government critics together in a powerful battle against the Turkish politics neoliberalizing the city, and also alliances between working-class immigrant youth and middle-class inner-city activists, such as were formed in Swedish suburbs, illustrate ways in which, despite cultural and social differences, new and old movements have managed to struggle jointly. For this reason, these, as well as many smaller struggles, that managed to bridge stark positional distances in building joint movements against neoliberal urban policies deserve particular attention.

Variegated Forms of Resistance Against Urban Upgrading

As David Harvey (2006, p. 28) has observed for the movement landscape in the neoliberal age in general, social activists have increasingly shifted to 'rights discourses'. In cities from Brazil to Turkey and Germany, the slogans of urban movements have adapted this general shift to social justice discourses by invoking the 'Right to the City'. While all Right to the City (RttC) initiatives and networks refer back to Henri Lefebvre's original definition that 'the right to the city (is) like a cry and a demand' (1967, p. 158), movements under this banner in fact comprise a huge variety of practices and goals. On one end of the spectrum, groups and organizations are working to get charters passed that seek to protect *specific* rights (plural) in order to secure participation for all in the city (*as it exists*).[9] On the other end of the spectrum, more radical movements seek to create *the* right to a (*more open, genuinely democratic*) city through social and political agency (cf. Birke, 2010 in this volume).

As highlighted in the chapters on Hamburg and Istanbul in this volume, it has been primarily in Germany and Turkey where protest networks and alliances have coalesced under the banner of the 'Right to the City'.[10] But also, those not explicitly invoking this motto have recently brought together a greater number of different groups than the earlier waves of urban movements in the 1970s and 1980s (cf. Mayer, 2013).

Typically, these contemporary networks of urban activism in Europe, from Greece and Spain in the south, to France, Germany and Scandinavia in the north, and all the way to Turkey and the post-socialist countries in the east, consist of some combination of the following social groupings:

- radical autonomous, anarchist and alternative groups and various leftist organizations;

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[9] This strand of RttC activism has rather depoliticizing effects, as explained in Mayer (2012).

[10] Cities in Poland, Croatia and some other CEE regions have also seen Right to the City alliances gain broad support and even enter municipal councils and governments (Poblocki, 2012; Saric, 2012).

- middle-class urbanites who seek to defend their accustomed quality of life;
- residents in poor urban areas, often with heterogeneous histories of migration;
- other disparate groups that share a precarious existence, whether in the informal sector, in the creative industries or among college students;
- artists and other creative professionals, many of whom are also precarized; and
- frequently, local environmental groups that fight harmful energy, climate or development policies.

While recent uprisings against neoliberal urbanism in Southern European cities have generally been inclusive of marginalized and 'disposable' groups within Northern European activist networks, including Right to the City networks, the marginalized, people of colour and groups deemed 'disposable' have rarely played major active roles so far, a fact which many political activists regard as a strategic problem, and a reason why alliances involving immigrant youth that have emerged in Swedish suburbs are so interesting (see chapter by Sernhede et al. in this volume).

Thus, the differences within two-speed Europe, between 'core' and 'peripheral' European countries, need to be explored, and appear to underlie the contrast between broad popular alliances (as manifested in the *Indignados* and *Aganaktismenoi*) and comparatively narrower protest against neoliberal urbanism in the 'core'. However, we also need to explore the conditions that have allowed new urban movements to evolve in Northern European cities, which unite the marginalized working class, frequently with migrant backgrounds, with more or less precarized middle-class groups, and have also brought forth new urban political actors articulating a clear rejection of the ways in which austerity urbanism has harmed their neighbourhoods and living conditions. The rest of this section thus focuses on some cases that represent and illustrate the dynamic between neoliberal urban restructuring, on the one hand, and different types of mobilization and alliances, on the other.

One of the most best-known RttC networks is Hamburg's, which emerged in 2009, based on the dense history of social protests described by Birke in this volume. It joined together a variety of local groups active

against the city's housing policies and location marketing. The network enjoyed enormous visibility through its large parades composed of 'squatters, tenants, artists', and because it managed to seize on the crisis-induced bankruptcy of an investor who had bought up the historic Gängeviertel. While the Hamburg case well illustrates the powerful leverage that (cultural) activists can exert in the context of an urban politics that seeks to compete on the basis of branding a city as a cultural-creative capital, it also reveals the relative exclusivity of the network, in spite of its heterogeneity.

When some RttC activists attempted to broaden the scope of the network by tackling another feature of Hamburg's neoliberal urbanism, namely strategies to upgrade deindustrialized districts south of the River Elbe in Wilhelmsburg, they foregrounded the rights of local residents, such as low-income tenants and immigrants, in downgraded housing. As described above, such formerly stigmatized neighbourhoods are increasingly targeted for upscale valorization processes. Because local residents usually have a strong interest in stopping the downward spiral their neighbourhoods are caught in, they tend to put up little resistance to such upscaling strategies. Typically, the housing stock has been neglected for decades, and the socioeconomic situation is characterized by job losses due to deindustrialization, shipyard closures and lack of investment in public and social infrastructures. As the city went about upgrading parts of this area, using urban-development corporations to implement a garden show and an international building exhibit, and pioneers and gentrifiers began to enter simultaneously, an activist group operating within Hamburg's RttC network set out to politicize the conflicts triggered by these upgrading processes and to support low-income social-housing residents. Activist-researchers Birke, Hohenstatt, and Rinn (2015) describe how difficult it has been to generate broad mobilization, highlighting 'the hierarchies of visibility and spaces of articulation available' to different groups in the city (Birke et al., 2015, p. 216, 217).

Similar to Hamburg's growth pressures, which made city politicians choose the impoverished area of Wilhelmsburg for upgrading, Stockholm's growth pressures have affected the suburb of Husby. Since Husby is located next to Sweden's Silicon Valley, 'Kista Science City', Stockholm politicians wanted Kista to expand across Husby. They planned for demolitions of large housing complexes, for out-contracting

and privatizing public infrastructure such as public health and care services, for housing renovations implying huge rent increases, and to shut down the social centre, Husby Träff. But the immigrant-dominated suburb has a history of strong social struggles, and local movement organizations such as Megaphone, founded in 2008, protested the 'renovictions' and succeeded in preventing some of these policies from being implemented. They also occupied the centre against closure.

As in many other Swedish peripheral poor neighbourhoods, populated by many different ethnicities, tensions have risen not only because more than half a million poorly maintained apartments risk being upgraded with rent increases of up to 65%, but also due to intensified policing practices: Police have implemented a zero-tolerance strategy in the suburbs as well as programs against political 'radicalization', thereby increasing resentment. The resistance put up by residents on the outskirts of cities such as Gothenburg, Malmö and Stockholm has thus been directed not merely against the deterioration of their neighbourhoods and the threat of gentrification, but also always against racism and harassment by police (see Sernhede et al. in this volume).

Unlike the cases of Paris in 2005 and London in 2011, deeply rooted social movement organizations had been in place when the 'riots' broke out in the impoverished suburbs of Stockholm in 2013. Thus, this case illustrates how violent uprisings and social movement organizations may be intricately connected. In spite of some successes of these new popular-justice movements, particularly with regard to the public framing of car burnings—which in Sweden turned more to social explanations and corresponding reforms, where in Britain harsher punishments and more police were the widely shared response—polarization between central cities and suburban peripheries continues to widen, with the latter persistently impacted by structural racism, institutional discrimination and territorial stigmatization (cf. Schierup, Ålund, & Kings, 2014).

Another novel alliance is epitomized by urban movements in CEE countries, which also developed in response to neoliberalization policies.[11]

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[11] Both anti-capitalist and conservative groups are concerned with the protection of public space and national heritage against what they perceive as exploitative neoliberal interests. Jacobsson (2015, p. 281) shows that this oscillation between progressive and regressive claims among urban movements reflects the ambivalence that characterizes the 'post-socialist condition'.

In Poland, where tenant and squatting movements had initially developed in opposition to each other, the tenant movement shifted to resist neoliberalization as accession to the EU made the detrimental effects of privatization in the housing sector more manifest. Simultaneously, anarchist squatters shifted their emphasis from anti-statism to anti-capitalism, opening the way to cooperation between both movements, as the intensifying neoliberalization of urban development sharpened resistance in both camps, as is traced in Polanska's chapter. This alliance is interesting, as it allows us to see the essentializing move so characteristic of much social movement research that pitches institutionalized against non-institutionalized action. The Polish case demonstrates that the difference between such forms of action becomes minimal in a context where—as is the case in the CEE region—movement organisations have a short history and limited resources, and where formal structures are often embedded in a high level of informality (Jacobsson, 2015, p. 277).

Rebuilding the City from the Grassroots—In the Context of Massive Societal Upheaval

The Greek and Spanish public-square movements have brought together broadly heterogeneous resistance against austerity on a far more massive scale than any of the Northern European movements. The harsh austerity programs imposed by the EU crisis regime affected societies suddenly and drastically, which has translated into higher rates of participation in strikes and demonstrations, square protests and neighbourhood assemblies. The Southern European countries provide rich illustrations of how new as well as pre-existing urban social movements have seized on growing anti-austerity sentiments, and managed to broaden their bases and create new alliances, as well as new action forms and practices.

In Greece, where the most severe austerity measures have been implemented, unemployment rose from 7.8 %, in 2008 to 28 % in November 2013, and the poverty level reached 40 %, the scale of protest mobilizations and revolts has been unprecedented. Starting with the revolt of December 2008 (Leontidou, 2010; Sotiris, 2010; Vradis & Dalakoglou, 2011), Greece has seen hundreds of massive demonstrations, occupa-

tions, widespread mobilizations and more than 25 general strikes. In May 2010, when the Greek government entered into the first loan agreement with the *troika* of the EU, ECB and IMF, an unprecedented move for an EU member state, huge demonstrations flooded Thessaloniki and Athens, and a national strike on 5 May protested the bail-out terms, spending cuts and tax increases.[12] When the Greek parliament approved the Second Memorandum and the reduction of the minimum wage on 12 February 2012, 500,000 protesters again surrounded parliament and 'riots' broke out across the city, with at least 100,000 people battling the police for hours late into the night. This was not the only instance when militant, 'non-peaceful' forms of action occurred embedded in broadbased social movements.

After the 2012–2014 period of depression, many movements made a strategic choice to reinforce their neighbourhood-oriented, day-today work of mutual support and solidarity. They work in food kitchens, farmers markets, free markets for exchanging clothing and other essentials, solidarity clinics, alternative schools, schooling for immigrants, and legal support to help people at risk of losing their homes, electricity and water—not only to organize much-needed help and satisfy collective needs, but also to build self-managed spaces for public resistance against neoliberal politics and relations for changing the balance of forces against the existing exploitative structures (Henley, 2015)

While disillusionment with electoral politics after Syriza's policy U-turn in June 2015 has been widespread (the abstention rate in the September 2015 election was 45%),[13] solidarity infrastructures have continued to grow. For example, there are now over 50 solidarity clinics in Greece, and 15 in Athens alone.[14] Besides providing much-needed medical services, these self-organized clinics continue to pressure the government to provide better medical and health care for all, including the

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[12] Almost a third of the adult Greek population took part in the 2010 anti-austerity protests (Rüdig & Karyotis, 2013).

[13] Both this record-high abstention rate and the extraordinary number of blank ballots (2.5%) reveal the enormous disappointment with and rejection of party politics among broad layers of the Greek population questioning neoliberal policies.

[14] Most are full-service clinics, and all are run entirely by volunteers, from doctors and nurses to pharmacists and technical support. Each treats anywhere from a few thousand to over 12,000 people a year.

undocumented.[15] Besides fighting against privatization of the health sector, they are also engaged in action against racism and xenophobia, and in various refugee-support activities. as well as in campaigns for Kobane and Palestine. While locally organized in assembly structures, they are also networked with similar organizations nationally and across Europe.

Because Spain's extreme housing and foreclosure crisis created an enormous pool of *Afectados*, and because many of the movements making up the *Indignados* shared a particularly autonomous, party-sceptical stance, urban movements in Spain have faced even more conducive conditions for building sustainable structures of solidarity in urban neighbourhoods. When the housing bubble burst, beginning in 2007, Spain's foreclosure rates were exploding, along with unemployment rates,[16] and the number of evictions of people unable to pay their mortgages began to skyrocket. In response, the *Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca* (PAH) was created in 2009 in Madrid. In 2011, PAH joined the coalition *Democracia Real Ya*! in its call for a 15 May demonstration (see Martínez in this volume). The squares movement that unfolded in its wake made visible how many people stood behind the 15 M movement's demand for a more participatory democracy no longer controlled by the two-party PSOE-PP system. In order to defend the openness of the situation, 15 M activists explicitly distanced themselves from all political parties as well as unions of the left, thus redefining the meaning of political action. Though leftist organizations were excluded, the 15 M developed not merely a sharp critique of the established political system, but also of the neoliberal regime, austerity politics and the power of corporations, thus going beyond the liberal conception of democracy. And, through the prefigurative practices developed in the collective organization of everyday life on the squares and plazas, as well as the countless direct actions planned and carried out from the encampments, such as occupying party offices, blockading the parliament, protests at detention centres, and rebuilding cleared

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[15] The minister of health has now prepared legislation to permit access to health care for the uninsured, to be voted on in parliament in December 2015. In case the *troika* prevents passage, solidarity clinics are planning nationwide actions.

[16] Spanish unemployment was 27 % at the peak of the economic crisis in early 2013. It has since come down to 23.8 % of the active population in July 2015, but the rate for the under-25-year-olds continues to be around 50 %.

squares, which were frequently met with violent police action, the movement gained cohesiveness and legitimacy. Within weeks of the 15 May demonstrations, the movement had become a new political subject, and polls noted that 80 % of the population shared its political goals: radical democratization, an end to the politics of austerity, saving people before banks (Zelik, 2015, p. 102).

By late summer 2011, the assemblies of the 15 M decided to move their activities to the neighbourhoods, which, however, did not mean an end of the uprisings.[17] Since then, the 15 M protests have begun to mingle more and more with struggles carried out by unions, social coalitions, and groups of the political left, against cuts in health and education, labour-market reforms and police brutality. Other new groupssuch as the *tides*[18] have emerged in different sectors.

In spite of the huge, sustained support 15 M has mobilized throughout Spanish society, the movement's capacity to influence national policies has remained limited. However, it did provide some opportunities to new parties and electoral platforms at the municipal level.

As a way to carry 'the spirit of the 15 M' into institutions, local electoral platforms were founded: In 2014, a group forming around PAH spokesperson Ada Colau presented *Guanyem* (Catalan for 'Let's win'), a grassroots initiative to develop a joint municipal program for Barcelona. The municipal elections in May 2015 brought a landslide, not only in Barcelona, where *BarcelonaEnComú* (the new name of *Guanyem*) won 25.2 %, but also in Madrid, where *Ahora Madrid* won 31.9 %), and in Valencia, A Coruna, Santiago, Ferrol, Zaragoza, and Cádiz, where alternative electoral platforms saw significant victories, gaining mayoralties and city council seats.[19]

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[17] PAH called for demonstrations against evictions in 41 cities in late September, and in mid-October, after the Occupy movement has taken off in the USA, a global day of action of the 'outraged' took place:, includingdemonstrations in more than 900 cities in 80 countries.

[18] *Marea Blanca*, the white *tide*, emerged at the end of 2012 against cutbacks in public health, as well as the green *tide* in education.

[19] The three female mayors elected in Barcelona, Madrid and Valencia immediately took similar measures in child welfare, housing and poverty alleviation, and also began to put movement-network strategies of solidarity and cooperation into practice (Flesher Fominaya, 2015; Zelik, 2015).

Fig. 2.2 Protest by university students in Madrid, 2012. The main banner says 'Public education is not on sale. We defend it. No Cuts. Minister of Education—Resign!'. Photo: Miguel Martinez López

The success of these municipal lists clearly rests on the broad mobilizations that people engaged in when they sensed that they can co-determine the politics to be implemented within their city. At the same time, these local successes risk falling into the 'local trap' if they do not manage to link via horizontal networks and scale up to higher governmental levels.

Overcoming Neoliberal Urbanism

The specific challenge, then, thrown up by neoliberal urbanism to its contestants has two sides: On the one side, it has created unique opportunities for broad-based and cross-class mobilizations, especially, but not only, in Southern European cities. On the other, the distances and rifts between the heterogeneously affected and mobilized groups are very

real and not automatically overcome by fighting the same adversary. In fact, they often impede the coming-together of distinct groups in joint struggles, and their local particularities often make a scaling-up of struggles difficult. This final section therefore returns to what the conceptual frameworks invoked in the beginning of this chapter entail in terms of their implications for the weakening, dismantling or overcoming of neoliberal urbanism.

With regard to opposition against neoliberalism, Harvey distinguishes between *immanent opposition* and *class movements*. The former, which tends to accept many of the basic propositions of neoliberalism, is far more widespread than the latter. Such oppositional movements mostly articulate contradictions immanent to neoliberalism by taking the promises of individual rights and freedoms seriously and opposing them to the authoritarianism of political, economic and class power. Human-rights movements and other individual-rights activism that have grown exponentially since the 1980s are seen as manifestations of this immanent opposition. Rights and justice discourses have accompanied and expanded with each wave of neoliberalization. Harvey sees them caught in the neoliberal trap, because a focus on these rights does not (re)create substantive and open democratic-governance structures (Harvey, 2006, pp. 50–51). In contrast to those, he identifies two types of observable class movements: (1) movements that mobilize around expanded reproduction, in which the exploitation of wage labour and conditions defining the social wage are still central issues; and (2) movements around accumulation by dispossession, in which everything from classic forms of primitive accumulation to the depredations wrought by contemporary forms of finance capital are the focus of resistance. Harvey sees it as an urgent practical and theoretical task to find the organic link between both of these forms of class movements (65) and suggests some ways in which this might occur in his book *Rebel Cities* (2012).

However, today's extraordinarily heterogeneous spectrum of urban collective actors calls into question the clear-cut distinction Harvey has drawn between immanent opposition and class movements against neoliberalization, as even campaigns seizing on the rights and freedoms promised by neoliberal elites often evolve into and ally with movements for substantive change around issues of the social wage and accumulation by dispossession

(Harvey, 2006, pp. 50–51). While we can identify analytic distinctions between different types of struggle and differently positioned actors, 'real existing' boundaries between them become increasingly porous, as organic links are emerging between well-structured social movement organizations, articulating clear demands, and spontaneous eruptions of marginalized and othered (sub)urban residents; between, on the one hand, middle class-based but increasingly precarious cultural workers and political activists and, on the other, downgraded workers made redundant by deindustrialization and waves of neoliberalization, who find themselves relegated to disadvantaged peripheral neighbourhoods, and so forth The fact that such links emerge on the basis of the shared experience of being dispossessed and disenfranchised by accelerated urban neoliberalization and the political responses to its crises,[20] does not mean, however, that very real distances, tensions and conflicts, even between those who participate in urban collective action, don't continue to exist or need to be addressed.

Aside from the massive mobilizations that erupted across Greece and Spain, bringing many first-time demonstrators to the occupied squares and assemblies, and where, after the dismantling of the protest camps, popular assemblies were set up throughout urban neighbourhoods involving thousands of people who had never before been part of urban-resistance movements, such cross-class involvement of different milieus and demographics in joint actions have been rare. While in Greece and Spain the marginalized and racialized participated in urban-resistance movements from early on (see the chapters by Vradis and Martinez), comparably marginalized groups in Northern European cities are either at risk of falling for nationalist ideologies, or may form the core of violent uprisings such as took place in Paris and London in response to increasing social inequalities, racialized territorial stigmatization and the absence of democracy in urban-restructuring processes (cf. chapters by Dikec and Slater). While the underlying causes everywhere have to do with

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[20] For example, the political responses to the foreclosure and banking crisis have been massive bank bailouts and central banks around the world making cheap credit available, with the ECB embarking on quantitative easing only in 2014. These cheap interest rates meant that enormous amounts of fresh liquidity flooded the global financial system, which, while subsidizing private investors out of bankruptcy, produced a tide of surplus capital, most of which has turned to speculative investment in stocks, bonds and, once again, real estate.

dismantled welfare services and the other features of neoliberal urbanism highlighted in section two of this chapter, the case studies presented in this volume's following chapters show that conditions for the emergence of urban social movements and their claim-making depend very much on local circumstances.

These varied localized joint struggles will need, however, to multiply beyond the sum of their parts. This, in any case, is the implication of the conceptualization Brenner et al. (2010) have developed about the rise, as well as the overcoming, of neoliberalization. Setting up a 'moving map of neoliberalization,' the authors distinguish three dimensions of neo-liberalization processes, corresponding roughly to the decades in which neoliberalization shifted from 'disarticulated' to 'deep(ening)': regulatory experiments (1970), mechanisms for inter-jurisdictional policy trans-fer (1980s), and finally trans-national rule regimes (1990s). Counter-neoliberal pathways and scenarios are conceived as following parallel dimensions of regulatory restructuring, progressively pushing back and replacing the neoliberal rule regimes, from experiments across dispersed, disarticulated contexts at local, regional and national scales, via a thicken-ing of networks of policy transfer based upon alternatives to market rule, all the way to 'deep socialization': dismantling and replacing neoliberal-rule regimes by constructing alternative, market-restraining, socializing frameworks for macro-spatial regulatory organization, characterized by radical democratization of decision-making and allocation capacities at all spatial scales (Brenner et al., 2010, pp. 333–342).

Building on this analysis, Peck et al. (2012) conclude '[t]hat the con-struction of counterneoliberalizing systems of policy transfer, whether among social movements, cities, regions or states, represents a major step forward for progressive activists and policy makers. But in the absence of a plausible vision for an alternative global rule regime, such networks are likely to remain interstitial, mere irritants to the global machinery of neoliberalization, rather than transformative threats to its hegemonic influence' (Peck et al., 2012, p. 285).

Thus, not until we build new forms of interurban politics, not until we join forces across two-speed Europe, will there be a chance to break with the pattern of neoliberal austerity. Breaking with this pattern will require that 'networking *across* local alternatives become much more effectively

articulated with a strategic fight for new rules of the extra-local game' (Peck, 2013, p. 24, italics by MM).

If this should be the pathway on which anti-austerity movements operate, their success would have to be measured not only by their local victories, but also by their contribution towards building those new rules of the supra-local game. This clearly would have to be a multi-scalar struggle, requiring us to simultaneously sort out how to turn local solidarity practices into counter-neoliberal struggles *while* building movement-to-movement solidarity across the uneven European landscape, and how to politicize anti-eviction and other emergency support *while* pushing the state, on all scales, to protect rather than punish society with austerity policies.

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Part II

Challenging Neoliberal Urbanism in Europe

3

Rage and Fire in the French *Banlieues*

Mustafa Dikeç

Introduction

What has been enthusiastically heralded as the 'urban age' has turned out to be an era of 'urban rage' as well (Dikeç, forthcoming 2017). Since at least the turn of the century, a wave of urban anger has taken a global dimension: From Cairo to Baltimore, London to Istanbul, one city after another experienced uprisings, leaving in their wake even more rage which seems unquenchable either by the extent of destruction or the severity of oppression. If this is what our urban futures hold for us, then I believe we need to take these incidents seriously, because their geographical expansion and increased intensity suggest a deepening of problems, perhaps most sharply manifest in cities where inequalities have been widening.

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Yet, as the editors of this volume observe in their introduction, such incidents have not been on the research agendas of urban social-movements scholars. True, not all urban uprisings are social movements in a conventional sense, if we understand the latter as 'intentional, collective efforts to transform social order' (Buechler, 2000, p. 213). However, they are not mindless violence, either. They erupt as expressions of rage built up by perceived injustices and grievances over the years. Unarticulated as they may be, urban uprisings are mobilisations with a demand for justice. It is in this sense that they can be seen as 'unarticulated justice movements' (Dikeç, 2007), rather than as acts of intrinsic violence. Urban uprisings, I argue in this chapter, are political events because they are episodic mobilisations that expose injustices and grievances, stage public appeals to justice, and raise claims about equality and accountability. I start first with some observations about the principal framings of urban uprisings, and about the broader context that sets the stage for what I call 'urban rage'. I then focus on French *banlieue* revolts, with an emphasis on their geographies of grievances, and draw some conclusions on their political significance.

Rage in the Era of Urban Age[1]

Urban-age enthusiasts are right to point out that the concentration and intensity of social interactions that cities allow have many advantages. The flip side of this phenomenon, however, is that those excluded from the rights and privileges that others enjoy are reminded of their deprivation on a daily basis as part of their urban lives. Urban rage builds up from such exclusions—from good jobs (or simply jobs), desirable social positions, decent housing, good schools, pleasant neighbourhoods—especially if these exclusions are perceived to be arbitrary and hence unfair, and if they remain unaddressed by authorities, not to mention cases when they are the consequences of specific actions by authorities. This is different from rioting hooligans, raging neo-Nazis, or other forms

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[1] This section draws on Dikeç (forthcoming 2017), which focuses on urban uprisings in the liberal democracies of the west, a focus I maintain in this chapter as well.

of rage motivated by an ideal of purity (of blood, nation, fandom, etc.).[2] Urban uprisings carry with them a call for equality and justice, concerning in particular police violence, although these calls are not always articulated explicitly.

Nineteenth-century observers thought that such incidents carried no political significance. Seen from a pathological framework, for them riots were more signs of human pathology than symptoms of social problems (Laclau, 2005). Rioting crowds signified irrationality, uncontrolled, violent emotions, and lack of moral sense. This pathological framework was flawed not only empirically but logically. As the historian Rudé (2005 [1964]) showed through a series of studies on eighteenth-century British and French uprisings, rioters were far from mad or marginal individuals engaged in mindless violence. They were socially active individuals addressing, collectively, specific grievances. Rudé's findings were confirmed in studies of the 1960s uprisings in US cities, which undermined the stereotypical image of the rioter as unemployed, marginalised, criminal, or vagrant. Many rioters held jobs, and they were socially active in their communities. They were moved to this violent form of protest by the built-up rage that had to do with the injustices suffered by blacks in US society (Haas, 1986; Marx, 1970; Wilkinson, 2009).

The pathological framework that sought to explain riots in terms of human behaviour was not flawed merely in empirical terms, however; it also led to an ethical and logical dead end. It left little or no room for redemption, as the focus on the flawed nature of human behaviour implied locking people up as practically the only solution. Furthermore, attributing the source of riots to human nature failed to explain the where and when of such eruptions. If the source of riots is the flawed nature of some individuals who deviate from social norms, however defined, and given that such individuals will always be present in any society, the logical extension of the pathological framework implies that we could potentially have riots anytime and anywhere. This, obviously, is not the

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[2] I realise that problems such as high unemployment are also mobilised by right-wing groups as grievances. If it could be shown that these groups suffer disproportionately from such problems because of who they are or where they live, and also that their mobilisations are based on a principle of equality rather than on the privileging of 'natives', then they would fall within the remit of my focus on urban uprisings as politics.

case. Although riots are impossible to predict, there are patterns that suggest that specific conditions are more prone to eruption, as we will see. These eruptions are not signs of criminality or irrationality, but outbursts of rage for which economic, social, and political dynamics provide the conditions.

Some readers may think this pathological framework is now a thing of the past, a century-old sociological fallacy that can no longer find any purchase. I am afraid, however, that the pathological framework is still very much alive, and has come back with a vengeance during the urban uprisings of the twenty-first century. References to 'scum', 'criminals', 'feral youth', 'people with a twisted moral code', and 'marauders and marginals' were repeatedly made by politicians in power during the recent uprisings in France, the USA, the UK, and Turkey. This pathological framework needs to be resisted, because it is empirically and logically flawed, and replaced with a societal one. The latter is precisely what politicians are at pains to avoid, because a shift from a pathological to a societal framework implies that these riots are political.

I am not trying to suggest that all rioting is intrinsically political. However, the urban uprisings of the past decades, in distinction to those motivated by racist, xenophobic, sexist, or religious hatred, were political events, despite the fact that they rarely proposed a political project or programme. As furious outbursts of rage produced by societal dynamics, urban riots are protests against such dynamics, and acts of defiance against the established order of things. They expose grievances, patterns, and dynamics of inequality and oppression: Just think about what the Ferguson riots of 2014 exposed in terms of dodgy, and likely illegal, police practices exploiting, criminalising, and oppressing blacks in poor areas. The occurrence of burning and looting does not make them less political or non-political. As outrage about the unequal treatment of groups, and other forms of injustice, riots are calls for justice and equality, even if these are not always articulated explicitly.

Focusing on burning and looting is to confound the unfolding of an event with its causes. Riots very rarely, if ever, start as burning and looting. They start as expressions of accumulated resentment turned into rage, triggered by a specific, usually tragic, incident that symbolises the perceived injustices of certain groups, such as, for example, police harass-

ment and killings. These triggering incidents, however, are not one-off occurrences, but part of repeated oppressive practices. The political element in urban riots is the exposure of grievances and the dynamics that systematically produce them. Once they start unfolding, they take on a dynamic of their own. The fury of the moment, the sense of empowerment that comes from occupying space and defying order, usually leads to violence and destruction. These are, after all, acts of defiance. But this does not imply, as nineteenth-century thinkers believed, that the rioters are irrational people with a broken moral compass. The sense of fury and empowerment make some do things that they would not do in other circumstances, and some benefit from the cover of rioting to do things that they would have done anyway. However, what gives rise to these incidents is the rage built up by injustice and oppression. It takes real resentment and conviction to expose oneself to assault rifles, dogs, water cannons, gas, batons, and the risk of prison. Urban riots, then, are not just mere fooling around by irrational individuals and criminals, but outbursts of rage that manifest accumulated grievances.

The broader context for urban rage in the twenty-first century was set by the inter-related economic, political, and urban transformations taking place since the Second World War, and, in particular, since the 1970s. The degree and form of these transformations vary between different countries, but it seems to me that the following five general headings capture their nature.

The first transformation involves economic restructuring and rising inequality. Many heavily industrialised countries, including France, have gone through a process of deindustrialisation, and their economies shifted from manufacturing to finance and services. This restructuring hit the working classes particularly hard, but also left many middle-class families in difficulty, especially if they belonged to historically disadvantaged minorities. The urban manifestations of this restructuring initially took the form of 'inner-city problems' in the USA and the UK, although, more recently, in the USA, we observe a suburbanisation of poverty as seen, for example, in Ferguson, the site uprisings in 2014 (Kneebone & Berube, 2014; O'Connor, 2003). In France and Sweden, however, this problem was confined mainly to working class neighbourhoods in the peripheral areas of cities that became the equivalents of US and UK inner

cities, suffering from the same kinds of economic problems and similar kinds of stereotyping and stigmatisation.

Related to this is a second transformation that involves the changing priorities of urban policies. Forced to seek other revenue sources because of the changing nature of urban economies, many cities have turned to urban-development projects with the hope of attracting revenue through commercial and housing development. This shift, which increasingly commodified urban space and displaced disadvantaged groups, is well documented in the literature on urban neoliberalism. We should note, however, that the manifestations of neoliberal urbanism vary in different contexts (Dikeç, 2007; Karaman, 2013), so the limits of this generalisation should be noted. I will say more on this below, when talking about the transformations of French urban policy.

A third transformation is the increasing stigmatisation of certain minority groups. This is not a new phenomenon, but in the past couple of decades, certain minorities in the western world have become particularly stigmatised. This intensification partly owes to western military intervention and the series of dreadful events associated with the rise of Islamist terrorism. The implications are not the same everywhere, but, as we will see, in a country like France, where the *banlieues* are stereotypically associated with Arab, black, and Muslim populations, such intensification of stigmatisation has detrimental effects.

A fourth transformation, not unrelated to the third just mentioned, is the steady erosion of civil liberties, increasing surveillance, and the normalisation of authoritarian forms of state response to dissent. Although state responses to dissent have never involved open arms and flowers, what we observe is even more heavy-handed state repression of protests and demonstrations, not unrelated to the rise of what Stephen Graham (2010) called 'the new military urbanism'.

The fifth transformation involves a crisis of legitimacy. This is about decreasing confidence in the political elite and liberal-democratic systems of representation. This is not an entirely new phenomenon, but, more recently, the financial crisis of 2008 and government responses to it have made this issue even more prominent. In France, this crisis of political legitimacy has a longer history as far as the popular *banlieues* are concerned, going back to the arrival of the Socialists to power in 1981.

For ordinary citizens, particularly if they belong to historically stigmatised or deprived groups, the context set by these transformations is one of economic hardship, social tension, and political disenfranchisement. The prospect of an 'urban age' is marked by widening inequalities, decreasing civil liberties, increased material hardship, and, to top it all, more repression.

I am painting a bleak picture, and one may wonder why urban uprisings do not occur all the time. Such incidents erupt spontaneously in a context of accumulated resentment. They are destructive, and those who participate take enormous risks. Therefore, it would be best not to trivialise such events by assuming that people will simply revolt when the conditions are difficult. Many people live in conditions of material difficulty and suffer daily discrimination, but none of this automatically leads to revolts. At some point, however, something will 'overflow the unimaginably bitter cup', as James Baldwin wrote of the uprisings of the 1960s in US cities, and lead to a destructive outburst of rage (Baldwin, 1966). As we will see with the French case, there is usually a pattern around where the revolts occur. This is what I call 'geographies of grievances', marked by high levels of unemployment, discrimination, stigmatisation, police violence, and surveillance.

Banlieues, Not Ghettos

In the autumn of 2005, the tensions in the French *banlieues* were once again exposed by spectacular uprisings. Not all the *banlieues* rioted, of course. The term *banlieue*, even though it is commonly used to refer to a certain form of housing associated with certain kinds of populations (immigrants or 'darker' French citizens), does in fact refer to a territory designating the area surrounding a city, over which the power of the centre extends. Originally, it was an administrative concept designating a geographical area, and is not necessarily negative, although its peripheral status easily evokes an image of exclusion or banishment. There is a rich variety of *banlieues* in France today, including, for example, Neuilly-sur-Seine, a wealthy and exclusive *banlieue* to the west of Paris, which is also the political base of Nicolas Sarkozy.

The dominant and stereotypical image of a *banlieue* today is one of a peripheral area with concentrations of social-housing estates, and the problems associated with North American and English inner cities. In its contemporary usage, the term does not refer simply to an administrative territory, but more commonly to 'alterity, deviance and disadvantage' (Hargreaves, 1996, p. 607). The contemporary image of *banlieues* and the fear they evoke are fed by dystopian images of American ghettos and urban unrest, the UK 'race' riots, and France's colonial history. This is a long-standing fear which has been associated with people of North African origin and blacks, and later, from the 1990s onwards, with Islam. It is this image, owing to France's colonial past, that haunts the Republic, leading to claims about the formation of 'ethnic communities' and ghettos in the *banlieues*, which is seen as incompatible with the 'one and indivisible' Republic. Even though by this definition the formation of ethnic communities might be stronger in Neuilly-sur-Seine than elsewhere, of course the use of 'ethnic' is usually a code word for 'Arab' and 'black'.

The characterisation of *banlieues* as ghettos has become common in the media and political discourse, even though this is a misleading image. The *banlieues* referred to as ghettos are not ethnically homogeneous, immigrants still remain a minority, and they are not large and institutionalised enough to function as self-contained areas apart from central cities (Wacquant, 1999). Many of the *banlieues* referred to as ghettos today are the products of France's period of intense industrialisation, urbanisation, and economic growth: the so-called *trente glorieuses*, the 30-year period from the end of the Second World War to the economic crisis of the 1970s. They were built mainly in the 1960s as a quick and cheap response to the housing problem that emerged in a period of rapid urbanisation. This is why large-scale housing estates (*grands ensembles*) were the preferred form, and this is also why the peripheral areas, where land was available and cheap, were used. These housing estates improved the lives of many by eradicating shantytowns, and even though they were conceived mainly for lower-income populations, they initially had also large numbers of middle-class families. Problems soon emerged, however, ranging from physical degradation to lack of amenities and adequate transportation. Following the housing-finance reform of 1977 that sought to encourage owner-occupied housing, many dissatisfied middle-

class families left these estates. They were replaced by economically and socially more disadvantaged populations, who were pushed out of city centres because of prices or housing-market discrimination.

The history of *banlieues* and *banlieue* revolts is inseparable from the history of France's post-war and post-1970 economic and political transformations, and from the injuries inflicted by France's colonial past. Rather than seeing the *banlieues* as timeless 'badlands' and *banlieue* uprisings as mindless rioting, it seems to me imperative to set them in the broader context of economic and political transformations, and of France's colonial past and post-colonial present.

Injuries, Hardship, and Anxieties

Although the occurrence of revolts usually involves a triggering incident, and although they mostly take place in economically deprived areas, it is best not to reduce them to this alone. The underlying reasons for *banlieue* revolts involve a combination of injuries from the past, difficulties of the present, and anxieties about the future. Keeping these in perspective allows us to see their political significance. The growing resentment of the inhabitants of deprived *banlieues*, caused by structural problems ranging from mass unemployment to territorial stigmatisation, from discrimination to police violence, has been noted by many researchers (Belaïd, 2006; Le Goaziou & Mucchielli, 2006; Wacquant, 2006) in the wake of the 2005 uprisings. However, these problems were not a novelty; they 'have been staring French politicians in the face for the past twenty years', as Hargreaves (2005) wrote. The failure to address them aggravated these problems and created a deep feeling of injustice among inhabitants suffering from them. This feeling of injustice was only exacerbated by the illusions of the French republican model, with its alleged commitment to equality, and by the French state's failure, or unwillingness, to come to terms with its colonial past and post-colonial present. All of these fed the resentment that then turned into rage with a triggering incident. The signs of this explosive resentment were already present in the late 1970s.

The so-called 'hot summer' of 1981 in Lyon's working class *banlieues* east of the city remains a reference point of *banlieue* disorders, even

though there had been incidents in these *banlieues* in the 1970s as well (Bachmann & Le Guennec, 1996; Daoud, 1993; Mucchielli, 2001). In the summer of 1981, however, the images of cars stolen for joyrides and then set on fire put these areas onto the public agenda. A social-housing neighbourhood called Les Minguettes, in the *banlieue* of Vénissieux to the east of Lyon, became the symbol of these incidents. The fact that most of these incidents took place in the working class *banlieues* in the east Lyon region—the so-called '3Vs': Vénissieux, Villeurbanne, and Vaulx-en-Velin—is significant. The negative effects of economic restructuring were severely felt in the working class *banlieues* of the east Lyon region. Between 1975 and 1982, seven firms were closed in Vénissieux (Belbahri, 1984). In the same period, the number of unemployed people in Vénissieux more than doubled, from 1253 to 3287, which corresponded to a dramatic rise in unemployment rate, which almost tripled from 3.8 % in 1975 to 10.8 % in 1982. The *banlieue* also lost 10,000 of its inhabitants in less than a decade, with the population dropping from 74,417 to 64,848. This population loss raises a question about the degree the unemployment rate increased, but even if the part of the active population that left the *banlieue* in this period had remained, the unemployment rate in 1982 would still have been 10.1 %, higher than the departmental (7.6 %), regional (7.7 %), and national (8.9 %) rates.

There are relatively few detailed accounts of what happened in Les Minguettes in the summer of 1981. Apparently no specific incident triggered the activity, which consisted of joyrides and confrontations between the police and youth. Jazouli (1992) argues that, although no explicit claims were made by the young people, the incidents were provoked by a 'feeling of exclusion' generated by economic difficulties, failure at school, and tensions with the police. This suggests that the incidents in Les Minguettes did not emerge from thin air. Indeed, there were already signs of such problems before then, as recalled by Sylvie Harburger, a researcher at the Ministry of Public Works at the time, who then joined the urban-policy commission created after the incidents. Here is how she remembers the impact of the 'hot summer' of 1981:

Well, you know, they were received in a way … even worse than the riots in November last year [2005] … because it was the first time, you know. It

was the first time and nobody had … no one in the general public had anticipated them … and it was a conflict, which incidentally is … strange, looking back. The conflict in 1981 was between the youth and the police. So in a way it's the very same conflict that hasn't been solved to this day…. You know, it was the first demonstration that got wide media coverage. I guess it wasn't any worse than what went before, but cars were burned down (interview, Sylvie Harburger).[3]

The particular context in which the incidents took place gave them additional urgency. The Left was in power for the first time in the Fifth Republic, had a contentious political agenda, and was criticised for its 'soft' take on the question of immigration. Furthermore, the Brixton riots had just occurred on the other side of the Channel, and they were, seen from France, 'race riots', something that could only happen because of the wrong-headed 'Anglo-Saxon' approach to multiculturalism, but unimaginable under the one and indivisible Republic. Incidentally, detailed studies of Brixton and other English riots of 1981 show that they were not race riots, but involved, as did the 2011 English riots, ethnically heterogeneous participants. The image of race riots, fed by dystopian images of US and UK inner cities, however, was a powerful one that summoned the ghosts haunting the French Republic.

The incidents of 1981 were not limited to the Lyon *banlieues*. By the end of the summer, similar incidents had occurred in the working class *banlieues* of Marseille, Roubaix, Nancy, and Paris. Though a bit perplexed, the new government nevertheless saw these as expressions of discontent, and initiated an urban policy programme which was unprecedented in many ways (for an account of this programme, see Dikeç, 2007). As Dominique Figeat, who participated in the programme, put it:

[T]he left-wing government was very uneasy about this [i.e., the incidents of 1981]. So I think it had a crucial effect on the will of the Prime Minister at the time, Pierre Mauroy, to engage into, in actions of such importance, in the sense that, faced with those riots there could have been a purely securitarian or police-oriented response, but there was also a response that

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[3] Cited in *Badlands*, p. 46.

was urban, social, more political, more general, which was clearly what Pierre Mauroy wished for (interview, Dominique Figeat).[4]

I do not mean to glorify the old days: the urban policy programme put in place was far from addressing the core problems arising from structural dynamics. Inspired by Lefebvre's writings, the programme sought to create a political dynamic in deprived areas with such political ideals as 'democratisation of the management of the city', 'appropriation of space by inhabitants', and 'right to the city'. But it did not have the means to confront the increasing unemployment problem. The tension with the police and youth only continued to increase, and France's centralised, bureaucratic, and technocratic political tradition left little room for the involvement of inhabitants in the production of their spaces. Despite these shortcomings, however, the government was careful not to demonise *banlieue* inhabitants, an attitude which, as we will see below, is in sharp contrast to the government response to the 2005 uprisings.

The 1980s closed with five large-scale revolts in the French *banlieues*. The start of the 1990s, however, gave a sign of the shape of things to come. Again, a Lyon *banlieue*, Vaulx-en-Velin this time, erupted in flames in 1990, following the death of a young inhabitant in an accident that involved a police car. The Vaulx-en-Velin uprising came as a big surprise, not only because this *banlieue* was seen as one of the exemplary sites of the urban-policy programme initiated after the 1981 incidents, but also because the intensity of the incidents was unprecedented, involving about 300 young inhabitants, and lasting for five days. There was looting, and the newly built shopping centre was set on fire.

Vaulx-en-Velin is characteristic of many of the social-housing neighbourhoods constructed in the peripheral areas of large cities during the post-war growth era: designation of a priority-urbanisation area in order to respond to housing shortages, construction of social housing mostly in the form of *grands ensembles*, sudden demographic expansion, major job losses following the crisis in the 1970s and economic restructuring in the 1980s, and gradual degradation of the housing stock due to poor building quality and poor maintenance. The effects of the crisis and economic

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[4] Cited in *Badlands*, p. 48.

restructuring had been severe for Vaulx-en-Velin, much more than for other municipalities in the region: In departmental rankings, Vaulx-en-Velin was the poorest commune with respect to per-capita income in 1992 and 1993. Its unemployment rate went from 4.5 % in 1975 up to 16 % in 1990, and to 23 % in 1999. The unemployment rates in its social-housing neighbourhoods, where the revolts erupted, were even higher: 18 % in 1990 and 28 % in 1999. And the unemployment rates among its youth, who participated more widely in the events, were even higher, with one out of four unemployed in 1990, and two out of five unemployed in 1999.

Although unemployment rates rose throughout France following the crisis of the 1970s, the priority neighbourhoods for urban policy were hit particularly hard. The economic crisis following the oil crisis in the 1970s was influential in increasing unemployment rates. The major change, however, was brought about by the economic restructuring processes of the 1980s and 1990s, which translated into sharp declines in the manufacturing sector after the relocation of firms to parts of the world that were economically more profitable. There were 4.6 million people employed in the manufacturing sector (construction not included) in France in 1989, and half a million of these jobs were lost between 1989 and 1994. This trend was aggravated even further with technological advances and the development of new service sectors, increasing the demand for more skilled labour than was readily available following the losses in the manufacturing sector. Many working class neighbourhoods, most of which today are urban policy's priority neighbourhoods, were hit severely by unemployment ensuing largely from plant closures in the manufacturing and industrial sectors, and the restructuring of demand for relatively more skilled labour (OECD, 1998).

These figures indicate two issues that concern not only Vaulx-en-Velin, but social-housing neighbourhoods in *banlieues* in general. First, despite having been included in urban-policy programmes for years, such neighbourhoods suffer from an aggravating unemployment problem, leading to severe conditions in the worst affected neighbourhoods where one in four workers—almost one in two among young people—is out of a job. Second, the transformations of such neighbourhoods are closely linked to

restructuring processes, that is, to dynamics that well exceed the perimeters of designated urban-policy intervention areas.

The government responded by creating a city ministry, and a special section on *banlieues* at the French Intelligence Service. The 1990s were something of a turning point, where there was an observed shift from prevention to repression (Bonelli & Sainati, 2000). This orientation only intensified in the aftermath of September 11. The right-wing government set up by President Jacques Chirac, who had promised 'zero tolerance' and 'zero impunity' during the presidential campaign of 2002, passed a series of repressive measures targeting, among others, *banlieues* and *banlieue* youth (Bonelli, 2003; Wacquant, 2003). Led by then-minister of the interior Nicolas Sarkozy, these laws were aimed at one of his main targets, what he referred to as 'sensitive neighbourhoods' and 'outlaw areas'. One of his immediate measures was the distribution of flash-ball guns to 'proximity police' modelled on community policing, working in 'sensitive neighbourhoods', although the measure was criticised by many human-rights associations as a provocation of the *banlieue* youth and a departure from the main mission of the proximity police, which was originally prevention. Thus began Sarkozy's offensive, with his stated conviction that 'repression is the best of preventions' (*Libération*, 11 July 2002, p. 2). For Michel Tubiana, the president of the League of Human Rights, these developments were '[t]he worst step back for human rights since Algeria' (*Libération*, 25 May 2004b). In the 2004 annual report of the League of Human Rights, the actions of the government were interpreted as follows:

> 2003 was a dark year for liberties. Seldom in the history of the Republic did any government as rapidly after its accession of power set up, to accompany its regressive social policies, a system as efficient to restrict the citizens' guarantees. (Leclerc, 2004, p. 27)

It is in this context that the revolts of 2005 must be situated. The signs of this repressive turn had been announced earlier, with the restructuring since the 1980s of the French state along increasingly authoritarian lines. That this restructuring involved a commitment to some form of neolib-

eralism has been observed by many scholars (Levy, 2001; Schmidt, 2002; Wacquant, 2001). However, as I have argued elsewhere (Dikeç, 2007), this restructuring also carried the signs of the strong state tradition in France, influenced by a certain idea of the 'Republican state' and its social obligations towards its citizens, resulting in what I call the 'republican penal state'. This is similar to what Wacquant identified as the 'European penal state', which follows the strong state tradition in Europe, and intensifies regulation through both social *and* penal policy-making. The 'left hand' of the state is still active, but is increasingly accompanied by its 'right hand', with intensified use of the police, courts, and prison system, and with a form of regulation following a 'panoptic logic' that involves the criminalisation of the poor and the close surveillance of populations deemed problematic (Wacquant, 2001). The creation of the special *banlieue* section at the French Intelligence Service, and Sarkozy's new laws criminalising *banlieue* youth are exemplary for the French case.

The European penal state, however, varies with different political traditions, deploying different containment strategies and legitimising discourses. The 'new penal commonsense' (Peck, 2003) came to France with a republican twist, and shifted emphasis from prevention to repression through a legitimising discourse organised around 'the Republic' under threat by allegedly incompatible cultural differences and the formation of 'communities' unacceptable under the 'one and indivisible' Republic. The French state has been present in deprived areas through its urban policy, among others, for years, including the 1980s. However, from the 1980s to the 1990s, there was a remarkable change in the modes of intervention and discursive articulations of such spaces, which is clearly illustrated by the differences in government responses to *banlieue* revolts. This was accompanied by steady cuts in social provisions since the arrival of the Right to power in 2002. As the daily *Libération* wrote: 'Brutal cuts in youth employment schemes, severe cuts in subsidies, disappearance of neighbourhood associations.... In terms of urban policy, the right-wing governments since 2002 have been a disaster'. Indeed, then-prime minister de Villepin explicitly admitted the government's responsibility for the decline of the associative sector, which has seen its funds disappear since 2002 (*Libération*, 8 November 2005b).

Geographies of Grievances

On 27 October 2005, three young men in Clichy-sous-Bois, a *banlieue* to the north-east of Paris, were electrocuted after having taken refuge in an electricity substation in order to escape identity checks by the police. Two of them died, and one survived with injuries. That the police were chasing them was officially denied, although the surviving young man stated the contrary. This was the triggering incident for two days of intense revolt. Just when things seemed to be calming down a bit, on 30 October, a riot-police tear-gas grenade ended up in a mosque in Clichy, which was seen as a deliberate provocation, as no immediate official explanation was given. Incidents only escalated after that point, with two weeks of uprisings in some 300 towns, the worst France had ever seen in its *banlieues*.

This expanding geography of *banlieue* revolts—five large-scale ones in the 1980s, 48 in the 1990s, and intense rioting for two weeks touching about 300 communes in 2005—suggests that problems in the social-housing neighbourhoods of *banlieue* have been getting worse. With a few exceptions, all the 48 large-scale revolts of the 1990s shared two features in terms of their geographies. First, all but two occurred in priority neighbourhoods of urban policy. Out of the social-housing neighbourhoods of 38 communes where such incidents occurred, four had been included since the policy's inception in 1982, three since 1983, 13 since 1984, and another 13 since 1989. All of these priority neighbourhoods experienced revolts following the so-called 'return of the state' in the early 1990s. Three were included in 1996, after having experienced revolts, while two have never been priority neighbourhoods.

Second, all the large-scale revolts of the 1990s took place in social-housing neighbourhoods, nearly all of them in *banlieues*. These neighbourhoods and the communes where they are located followed a similar pattern in terms of constantly increasing levels of unemployment following the economic crisis of the 1970s, and the ensuing processes of economic restructuring described above. This suggests that there is an embedded unemployment problem, constantly aggravating and hitting, more severely than any other place, the priority neighbourhoods of urban policy in the *banlieues*, which were once working class neighbourhoods with low levels of unemployment. Furthermore, the spatial designation

of such areas does not facilitate matters. Spatial stigmatisation is part of the daily lives of the inhabitants, youth in particular, of *banlieues*, and negatively affects relations with employers and police.

The revolts of 2005 basically shared the same geographical features, but dramatically expanded the geographies of revolt, touching some 300 communes. One geographical difference was that some of the *banlieues* that were the principal sites of revolts in the 1980s and 1990s either experienced revolts belatedly in autumn 2005 (such as the *banlieues* of eastern Lyon) or stayed relatively 'calm' during the incidents (notably the notorious northern neighbourhoods of Marseille). Other than this, however, they followed a very similar geographical pattern: They occurred again in the social-housing neighbourhoods of *banlieues*, most of which were the designated spaces of intervention under urban policy. Only 15 % of the neighbourhoods where revolts occurred were not classified as ZUS (*zones urbaines sensibles*; sensitive urban zones). The remaining 85 % were neighbourhoods of urban policy (Lagrange, 2006a, 2006b). From 1990 to 1999, unemployment rates in the neighbourhoods of urban policy increased almost by 50 %. In 1999, one-fourth of the active population in these neighbourhoods was unemployed. Among youth, the unemployment rate was even higher, with two out of five young people unemployed.

The revolts of autumn 2005 touched two-thirds of the communes within designated urban-policy areas. This ratio was even higher in the case of communes which had signed conventions for a demolition-reconstruction programme initiated in 2003: 85 % of the communes with designated demolition-reconstruction sites experienced revolts (Lagrange & Oberti, 2006). Lagrange (2006b) argues that these programmes might have created further tensions in social-housing neighbourhoods. Demolition-reconstruction means, first, the expulsion of inhabitants, and there is evidence that this process does not always take place with the involvement of inhabitants concerned, thus aggravating tensions (see, for example, Kipfer, 2009; *Libération*, 24 February 2005a, p. 7).

There is another layer to the overlapping geographies of unemployment, stigmatisation, urban policy, and revolts: geographies of repression. The triggering incidents are the third common feature shared by the revolts of the 1990s and 2005. The majority of the large-scale revolts of the 1990s (34 out of 48) were provoked by the killing, accidental or

not, of a young person, a second- or third-generation immigrant, who was an inhabitant the neighbourhood in question. In at least more than half of the triggering incidents of revolts (29 out of 48), the police were implicated in terms of questioning, wounding, or killing.

A year before Clichy-sous-Bois, the *banlieues* of Strasbourg revolted, following the 'accidental' killing of a person of North African origin by the police with a bullet in the head during a routine police road check (*Libération*, 22 March 2004a)—a form of casualty not uncommon as the triggering incident of unrest in the *banlieues*. In a book entitled *La police et la peine de mort* (*The police and capital punishment*), Rajsfus (2002) documents 196 deaths between 1977 and 2001, the majority of which were of youths of African or North African origin in the *banlieues*. Furthermore, the perpetrators of such killings are usually acquitted or given very light sentences, which aggravates hostility among the *banlieue* youth towards the police, who are seen to be immune. Police violence and impunity has long been observed (Baaloudj et al., 2014; Cyran, 2003; Rajsfus, 2002), and was also criticised openly by Amnesty International in a report on the effective impunity of the police in France. The report, among other issues, highlighted racist police attitudes and these same geographies of repression:

> The lack of public confidence in even-handed policing is seen particularly in the 'sensitive areas' ('*quartiers sensibles*') from which many of the victims of police ill-treatment and excessive use of force originate. Such tensions between the police and these communities have also been exacerbated when cases brought by alleged victims of police violence, or their families, eventually came to court, and resulted in highly controversial acquittals of, or token sentences for, police officers. The courtrooms, on these occasions, have been packed with friends and relatives on one side, and with police officers on the other, and scenes of violence within the court precinct have not been unknown, reinforcing the sense of 'us against them' on both sides. (Amnesty International, 2005, pp. 1–2)

Part of the youths' resentment stems from the apparent impunity of the police, with a perception of the police as being 'above the law' (Amnesty International, 2009). For example, the policeman who killed a youth of

North African origin in Mantes-la-Jolie in 1991 was only tried in 2001, which contradicted the government's stated commitment to 'swift, firm and tough response' in the domain of justice (Tévanian, 2003, p. 114), and consolidated the already-established perception of impunity. Indeed, the case was eventually dismissed. The two police officers implicated in the death of two adolescents, one of North African origin, the other black, in Clichy-sous-Bois, which was the triggering incident for the 2005 revolts, also benefited from a similar decision six years after the incidents (*Libération*, 27 April 2011). The case, however, was pursued, and despite resistance by the prosecutors to bringing a case against the two police officers involved for failing to assist someone in danger, the officers were tried ten years after the incidents, and acquitted in May 2015. The five young people arrested after the 2007 Villiers-le-Bel revolts, however, were less lucky: They have received a 'swift, firm and tough response' of three to 15 years in prison, announced in 2010, despite great concern about lack of solid proof, since the accusations were based on anonymous and paid denunciations, and statements by the captured youth made during their four-day police custody (see, for example, *Libération*, 21 June 2010).

Despite such a pattern of structural problems affecting the *banlieue* youth, then-minister of the interior Sarkozy chose to use inflammatory language towards the *banlieue* youth, which definitely did not help to calm things down, and denied the political significance of the uprisings by confining them to a pathological framework. Three months before the revolts, on a visit to an emblematic *banlieue*, the *cité des 4000* in La Courneuve, Sarkozy had talked about 'cleaning the *cité* with Kärcher'—a well-known brand of power hose for cleaning surfaces through sand- or water-blasting. During the revolts, he referred to the revolting youth as '*racaille*'—a pejorative term usually translated as 'scum' or 'rabble'—and proposed the expulsion of foreigners, including those with residency permits, implicated in the incidents. The insults did not end there. On 10 November, while the revolts still continued, Sarkozy was invited on a TV programme on France 2 about the *banlieues*: 'They are thugs [*voyous*] and scum [*racaille*], I'll stick to my guns'. Once the revolts were over, he would regret using the term '*racaille*', but not because it was overly

pejorative—on the contrary, it was too 'weak' a term to characterise the revolting youth:

> And honestly, if I regret one thing, it's to have used the term *racaille*, which is way too lenient if you look at the judicial pedigree of some of the individuals arrested during the riots. It's the law of the Republic and not the law of the gangs that prevailed. (*Libération*, 21 November 2005c, p. 13)

The use of this kind of inflammatory language is not new, but Sarkozy definitely raised the bar, adding to the stigmatisation of the *banlieue* youth. I have tried to show some of the problems the inhabitants of *banlieues*, youth in particular, have to face on a daily basis—unemployment, discrimination, stigmatisation, police violence, surveillance, and an increasingly hard-line, even insulting, official discourse against them—and how this geography of grievances overlaps with geographies of revolts. The unprecedented spread and magnitude of the 2005 uprising showed that these geographies were expanding. The measures used to repress them were unprecedented as well, including the declaration of a state of emergency and allowing curfews to be imposed, on 8 November 2005, just when calm was returning to the *banlieues*. And the fact that the state of emergency was based on a 1955 law dating from the Algerian war only added insult to injury. But not all revolts receive the same treatment; some escape the pathological framework that strips them of all political significance. Here Sarkozy's speech to rioting Breton fishermen is exemplary:

> Fishermen don't cheat. When people here demonstrate, when they use violence, it's not to have fun, it's never to harm anybody, it's because they're desperate, because they no longer have any option, and they feel condemned to economic and social death. (Sarkozy in Lorient, 3 April 2007; cited in *Le Canard enchaîné*, 2007, p. 8)

This is quite different from calling the rioters 'scum' or 'hoodlums', which reduces *banlieue* revolts to acts of pointless violence committed by delinquents. The revolts of fishermen are instead elevated to a legitimate manifestation of discontent by honest people. This kind of delegitimisation

obscures the geography of grievances by highlighting only the acts of violence involved in revolts, and hides from view forms of violence from which *banlieue* inhabitants disproportionately suffer.

The Political Element in Urban Revolts

Attention to the geographies of grievances and the expanding geography of revolts suggests that the pathological framework used to delegitimise urban revolts is implausible. Urban revolts are political events in the sense that they expose fractures, patterns of oppression, and dynamics of inequality in urban societies. These problems do not originate from pathological disorders of individuals, but from economic, social, and political dynamics, which usually involve what Tom Slater has called 'a broken state' (2011; see also Slater in this volume). Therefore, even though they are marked by elements of violence, urban revolts connect with and speak to broader dynamics, including injuries of the past, difficulties of the present, and anxieties about the future. They are not just lootings and burnings. They are outbursts of rage built up by an accumulation of grievances, including structural unemployment, discrimination, police violence, stigmatisation, and inequality.

Urban revolts are the ultimate form of dissent by citizens who are not recognised as legitimate or equal political interlocutors in the processes that affect their everyday lives. It is the grievances that build up over time because of material difficulties and an increasing sense of political exclusion that erupt when a dramatic episode sparks revolt. And when an eruption resonates with the bitter experience of people in other places, we witness—as we have in France in 2005, Greece in 2008, the UK in 2011, Sweden and Turkey in 2013, and the USA in 2014—a rapidly expanding geography of revolt, which is less a sign of reckless imitation than of the expansion of geographies of grievances.

There were attempts in the aftermath of the 2005 uprisings to keep up momentum and put in place a political structure involving *banlieue* youth and resisting the demonisation of *banlieues* and their inhabitants. The Social Forum of Popular Neighbourhoods was at the forefront of this attempt, trying to channel the rage and energy unleashed by the uprisings

into the creation of fora for discussion and political engagement (Kipfer, 2009). However, such movements find it hard to survive, let alone flourish, in the absence of funds, in a context of material difficulties, and in a political climate of hostility. Even if there are no follow-up initiatives like the Forum, even when there are no explicit demands or immediate political programmes, urban revolts are political events. They involve the bodily presence of citizens asserting themselves as equals in urban space, questioning established practices and the order of things. As a graffiti in Athens put it following the December 2008 uprisings: 'December was not an answer. It was a question.'[5]

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[5] See the excellent essays in Vradis and Dalakoglou (2011).

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4

The Neoliberal State and the 2011 English Riots: A Class Analysis

Tom Slater

The Left has allowed the Right to get away with the lie that, because there is no longer an industrial working class, socialism is irrelevant. That's a stupid argument. There is a working class; it just looks very different. We need to know what it looks like and we haven't been very good at doing that. One of the greatest successes of neoliberal capitalism in Europe and North America has been to dis-educate people about class.... People have lost the language to talk about themselves as working class, but not totally. For those of us who work through the word, it's very important to talk about the 'working class' because it connects to people's experiences under austerity, budget cuts, fiscal crisis, and so on. These measures are all aimed at the working class. Neil Smith (2011)

On 11 August 2011 in Camberwell Green Magistrates Court, a 23-year-old student with no criminal record was sentenced to a prison term of six months for stealing a pack of bottled water worth £3.50. This extraordi-

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narily harsh sentence would normally be cause for widespread denunciation of judicial abuse but, following five nights of fiery rioting across a dozen English cities from 6 to 10 August, the extraordinary turned ordinary for the courts. Whereas the rampant financial criminality at the top of the class structure leading to the near-collapse of the banking system in the autumn of 2008 saw no reactions from criminal justice, even as it sent the UK economy into a tailspin, overturning millions of lives and causing hundreds of billions of pounds in damage,[1] a street fracas at the bottom, estimated to have cost around 300 million pounds, triggered a lightning-fast and brutal response from the penal wing of the state. Those convicted at the Crown Court of robbery (that is, looting, however minor) during these nocturnal disturbances were sentenced with stunning celerity to an average of 29.8 months in prison, nearly treble the usual rate of 10.8 months. Culprits of violent disorder reaped 30.6 months compared with the standard fare of 9.9 months, while those nabbed for theft received sentences nearly twice as long (10.1 months as against 6.6 months).[2] After the riots stopped, the police deployed munificent resources and manifold schemes to track down and round up the looters, mining television footage and web postings, setting up phone lines for snitching, running "Shop A Moron" posters on buses, while politicians promised to cut welfare and housing benefits to the families of the culprits.

Set against the political backdrop of steep state retrenchment and relentless invocation of personal responsibility, dramatic scenes of burning buildings, of bands of hooded and masked youths pillaging stores, and of thousands of police patrolling major streets in riot gear, were bound to trigger rash statements and kneejerk government reaction. At the height of the riots as well as in their immediate aftermath, anyone attempting to formulate an explanation of the disorders other than a behavioural one was stridently denounced as effectively condoning or supporting rioting.[3] Boris Johnson, Mayor of London, embodied this posture when,

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[1] A damning account of the contribution of systematic illegal behavior to the financial bubble-burst of 2008 is Charles H. Ferguson's award-winning documentary, *The Inside Job* (2010). The main reaction of the British government was to roll out a rescue package topping 500 billion pounds, lest the banking system disintegrate.

[2] These figures come from Ministry of Justice (2012).

[3] One illustration: The BBC was forced to issue an apology following its 9 August interrogation of the veteran broadcaster Darcus Howe. When Howe stated that he was not shocked by the riots,

upon being heckled by angry shopkeepers and frightened residents on the streets of Clapham, he responded: "It's time we heard a little bit less about the sociological justifications for what is in my view nothing less than wanton criminality." As incidents spread to several London districts, and then to other cities of England, "criminality," of either the "pure" or the "copycat" variety, quickly became the common sense reason given for their occurrence, one that circulated freely amongst police chiefs, politicians across party divides, and the mainstream media.

This essay starts from the opposite premise to that of Boris Johnson's, in that we need not less but more social science to shed light on the riots of 2011, and elucidate their political import. To do this, I trace a double nexus. First, I re-place the swift deployment of punitive action and discourses in response to the riots within *the broader re-engineering of the state* according to a neoliberal blueprint of austerity, especially social-welfare reduction, and penal expansion. Second, I connect these eruptions to urban marginality in British society and pay close attention to the *symbolic defamation* of urban dwellers at the bottom of the class structure and of the places where they live.

The Structural Violence of Austerity

The urban unrest of the summer of 2011 began on August 6, following a peaceful evening protest outside a police station on Tottenham High Road in London against the 4 August police killing of Mark Duggan, a father of four, aged 29.[4] Duggan grew up and lived on the Broadwater

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which in his view were an "insurrection" reflecting "the nature of the historical moment," the interviewer immediately accused him of being a rioter with a criminal past.

[4] The exact circumstances of Duggan's death remain unclear, but on 12 August 2011 the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC), with customary obliquity, announced that it "may" have given misleading information to journalists that shots were fired between Duggan and the police—significantly fanning the flames of that week. The official verdict, months later, was that Duggan was armed at the time he was stopped by the police, but never once fired his gun and in fact discarded it well before he was fatally shot in the back. After numerous delays, a public inquest took place from late 2013 to early 2014, and on 8 January a jury delivered its conclusion (an eight to two majority) that Duggan's death was a "lawful killing" by the police, even though the judge in the case instructed the jury as follows: "If you are sure that he did not have a gun in his hand, then tick the box 'unlawful killing'" (Press Association, 2013).

Farm housing estate in Tottenham, a place deeply stigmatized since a serious outbreak of rioting in 1985 in response to the death of a woman whose home was being searched by the police, and still a place where young black people are "eight times more likely to be stopped and searched [by the police] than their white counterparts" (Connolly, 2011). Not long after the protest at Duggan's death concluded, a 16-year-old girl approached police officers to voice her anger, and was allegedly beaten back with batons (Eddo-Lodge, 2011). Two police cars, a bus and several shops were then attacked, looted and set ablaze in Tottenham, and the anger soon spread to nearby Wood Green. In the three nights that followed, rioting occurred across Greater London, in (*inter alia*) Enfield, Brixton, Hackney, Peckham, Clapham, Ealing and Croydon. Outside the capital, rioting occurred first in Birmingham (8 August), and later in Leeds, Bristol, Manchester, Salford, Nottingham, Gloucester and Liverpool, with smaller disturbances in several other cities. In the end, 3103 people were brought before the courts, of whom 2138 were convicted and sentenced. Court data show that a majority of those tried were young (74% aged no older than 24), male (89%), and with a previous caution/conviction (73%). A majority live in areas classified in government databases as "multiply deprived," and 66% of those areas became even more deprived between 2007 and 2010.[5]

Numerous commentaries from high-profile intellectuals were penned in the immediate aftermath of the uprising. Many were helpful in the context of the ludicrous political bleating of "criminality" as the cause, of swirling mythology and of numerous preposterous explanations, such as the assertion that *BlackBerry Messenger* was somehow *responsible* for what happened. One that received wide circulation and attention was Zygmunt Bauman's (2011) characterization of rioters as "defective and disqualified consumers" seeking prized items (electrical goods, smartphones, trainers) to avoid "the wrath, humiliation, spite and grudge aroused by not having them."[6] Bauman argued that *social dignity* is the most prized possession of

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[5] Data from http://www.newstatesman.com/voices/2014/08/danny-dorling-mapping-august-2011-riots

[6] http://beinghumanthesedays.com/zygmunt-bauman-on-the-london-riotszygmunt-bauman-on-the-london-riots/

all, and that a life of "non-shopping is the jarring and festering stigma of a life unfulfilled." However, as Sutterluty (2014) has since reminded us:

> The fact that a large number of public buildings – police stations, sport centers, municipal institutions and in a few cases schools – were attacked by the rioters was somewhat ignored by media reports, which tended to focus on the looting of businesses…. [T]he reference to a culture of consumption can hardly explain why the riots began and why the first and ongoing targets of attack were the police and their institutions. (p. 40, p. 45)

Slavoj Žižek (2011) was much more simplistic than Bauman when he described what happened as "abstract negativity" and "meaningless violence," echoing comments made by conservative politicians and right wing tabloid journalists. Richard Sennett and Saskia Sassen (2011) also echoed such a perspective:

> An old-fashioned Marxist might imagine that the broken windows and burning houses expressed a raging political reaction to government spending cuts—but this time that explanation would be too facile…. Today, the rioters seem motivated by a more diffuse anger, behaving like crazed shoppers on a spree; while some of the shops looted are big chains, many more are small local businesses run by people who are themselves struggling through Britain's economic slump. There has been a change in national temperament that has affected decent citizens as well as criminals. The country's mood has turned sour. Indeed, the flip side of Britons' famed politeness is the sort of hooliganism that appears at soccer matches and in town centers on weekend nights - an unfocused hostility that is usually fueled by vast quantities of alcohol.

To be sure, rioters looted stores, but they also directly targeted the institutions and symbols of the state. These were not, contrary to what many believe, and what has arguably become hegemonic thought about August 2011, "issueless riots" (see Sutterluty, 2014, p. 44 for a piercing critique of this notion).

Since the late 1970s, Britain has been subjected to an extraordinary, and apparently unfinished, neoliberal revolution, and the British ruling

class has been at the centre of the neoliberal revolution that has swept unevenly throughout the globe. This is very well documented in an extensive international literature. But what began as a radical series of policy shifts towards privatization, a systematic assault on the Keynesian welfare state and labour unions, has mutated into what Tickell and Peck (2003) helpfully call "the mobilization of state power in the contradictory extension and reproduction of market (–like) rule" (p. 166). An ugly triad of economic deregulation, welfare state retraction and penal expansion—laissez-faire in the economic register at the top, and anything but laissez-faire on the social register at the bottom—produced by continuous statecraft (i.e., the state as a political process in motion, not a lumbering bureaucratic monolith) has fundamentally reshaped social relations from above, and led many to believe and defend passionately the myth that economic growth is all that matters to a society, as wealth will "trickle-down" and benefit everyone. In the 1990s, this logic was embraced by numerous political parties across Europe with roots in social democratic and/or left-wing movements and positions. With very little room for manoeuvre after the free-market, low-taxation, inflation-busting fanaticism of the 1980s, these parties all turned neoliberal. The prime illustration of such a party is the UK Labour Party, in power from 1997–2010 under the masterful spin-capacity for populist reform demonstrated by Tony Blair and his senior advisors. Among the many destructive legacies of this period is a truly abysmal record of income inequality (Dorling, 2010): Every available measure on almost every possible indicator shows that the rich became much richer and the poor became poorer during these 13 years. Even some of the Labour Party's strongest supporters felt cheated, and in Scotland, historically a Labour stronghold, they simply deserted it for the Scottish National Party, adding significant momentum to the recently failed Scottish independence movement, which, of course, is another story.

The 2011 English riots took place just one year after a Coalition government came to power in Britain following an election which did not yield a clear majority for any party. That Coalition is a skewed alliance between the dominant Conservative Party, which campaigned using the language of compassion and social progress to shield the electorate from its rabidly right-wing, ruling-class and corporate ethos, and

the subordinate Liberal Democrats, a small set of centre-right political lightweights without a coherent message or set of policies. The new Prime Minister, David Cameron, and his Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne, both members of the British aristocracy with substantial family fortunes, who have surrounded themselves with many more such people, arrived in office during a global financial crisis, and were confronted by a substantial budget deficit which they argued was a consequence of reckless and irresponsible public spending by the previous Labour government. (They even at any opportunity attribute the entire global financial crisis to the actions of that Labour government.) For Cameron and Osborne, two archdeacons of low taxation and low public spending, there was only one way to deal with this budget deficit: a vicious austerity package, which, conveniently, was also an opportunity to destroy the welfare state that "Thatcher's children" of the Conservative Party so despise, and replace it with their dream of a thoroughly privatized and individualized society which would protect the sanctity of private property rights and a free market. Symbols of the Fordist-Keynesian era such as the welfare state are viewed by the Conservative Party as "dangerous impediments to the advancement of financialisation" (Observatorio Metropolitano, 2013, p. 20). To continue the relentless pace of expanding global accumulation, British ruling elites have set out to monitor and monetize more and more of those human needs that were not commodified in previous rounds of financialization. Pensions, healthcare, education and especially housing have been more aggressively appropriated, colonized and financialized (Meek, 2014). For Conservatives, the redistributive path—increasing taxation of corporations, land and property (London in particular is known as a tax haven for foreign investors in land and property)—is not a matter for public discussion, and an entire cadre of cultural-technical experts, chief among them economists, lawyers, think-tank researchers and communications professionals, is in place to make sure the conversation does not head in that direction. This ensures that it is largely unknown that an estimated £120 billion a year is lost in the UK due to corporate tax avoidance, evasion and collection errors. The money lost through tax avoidance alone could pay for 25,000 nurses on a £24,000 a year salary for 20 years, could put 129,000 children ages

5–18 through school, and would allow the government to give every single pensioner in the UK an extra £65 a year.[7]

If we take a closer look at the systematic assault on the welfare state in Britain, we can move a step closer towards understanding the shared indignity and dishonour among people who feel abandoned and betrayed. Table 4.1 presents a summary of the welfare reforms and cuts that have taken place in Britain since 2011. (That these cuts were all being mooted by politicians with such enthusiasm that year goes some way towards explaining the anger of that summer.) After even a quick glance at these cuts, it becomes difficult to avoid the conclusion that austerity is, as Neil Smith argues in the quote that began this chapter, structural violence against the working class.

The remarkable Guardian-LSE research project *Reading the Riots* contains interview data which supports the argument that violence "from below" in the form of rioting was a response to structural violence "from above" (cf. Wacquant, 2008, p. 24). 270 people who participated in the rioting were interviewed, and some of the quotations in the final report are telling:

> You see the rioting yeah? Everything the police have done to us, was in our heads. That's what gave everyone their adrenaline to want to fight the police… It was because of the way they treated us.
>
> I became involved in the riots in Salford because it was a chance to tell the police, tell the government, and tell everyone else for that matter that we get fucking hacked off around here and we won't stand for it.
>
> I think some people were there for justice for that boy who got killed. And the rest of them because of what's happening. The cuts, the government not doing the right thing. No job, no money. And the young these days needs to be heard. It's got to be justice for them.
>
> When no one cares about you you're gonna eventually make them care, you're gonna cause a disturbance.
>
> I've gone past caring. Just think there's no point in me wishing, wanting things to happen.

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[7] http://leftfootforward.org/2013/09/another-crackdown-on-benefit-fraud-yet-it-accounts-for-just-0-7-per-cent-of-welfare-budget/

Table 4.1 A summary of welfare reforms and cuts

The cuts affect all aspects of government expenditure including education, health, legal aid and welfare services. This is a summary of the cuts most likely to affect low-income households:

BENEFIT CAP trialled from 15 April 2013, introduced to Scotland 15 July 2013
– Saving: £275 million in 2013–2014
– 56,000 households affected at an average loss of £93/week
– Cap on the total amount of benefit that working-age people (16–64) can receive (approximately £350 per week for a single adult, and £500 per week for a couple or lone parent regardless of the number of children they have)
– Set at the average earnings of a UK working household, the cap will mean that people of working age will receive up to a maximum amount, even if their full entitlement is higher.

SPARE ROOM SUBSIDY ("BEDROOM TAX") introduced 1 April 2013
– Saving £409 million in 2013–2014
– 660,000 claimants to be affected, at an average loss of £14/week
– Those with one spare bedroom will lose 14 % of their housing benefit
– Those with two or more spare bedrooms will lose 25 %.
– Up to two children (of the same gender) under the age of 16 are expected to share
– Families with severely disabled children, foster carers and families of armed services personnel will be exempt.
– A year on, only 6 % of social housing tenants affected have moved home, whilst 28 % of affected tenants have fallen into rent arrears.

UNIVERSAL CREDIT trialled from April 2013, initially intended to be rolled-out in three phases between 2013 and 2017
– Initial cost estimates totalled £100 million; due to delays and setbacks, more recent estimates stand at £2.4bn
– 3.1 million households will be entitled to more benefits, at an average gain of £16/month
– While 2.8 million households will be entitled to less
– It will combine: Income support; Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA); Income-related Employment Support Allowance (ESA); Housing Benefit; Child Tax Credit; Working tax Credit
– Roll-out has been severely delayed due to major IT problems and internal government friction.
– As of December 2013, more than £40 m has been written off on software and computing costs. Whilst, roll out to at least 700,000 ESA claimants is due to be delayed beyond the 2017 schedule.

REPLACING DISABILITY ALLOWANCE (DLA) WITH PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE PAYMENTS (PIP)
– Saving: £2240 million.
– Introduction of more stringent medical test and regular retesting.

(continued)

Table 4.1 (continued)

– Reduction in number of payment categories.
– 170,000 claimants, one fifth of current DLA claimants, expected to be ineligible for PIP. By 2018, 500,000 will be ineligible.
– 150,000 will get a higher award, according to the DWP. By 2018, 780,000 will receive the same or more than they do currently.

REPLACING INCAPACITY BENEFITS WITH EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT ALLOWANCE (ESA)
– Introduction of ESA for new claimants from October 2008. Existing incapacity claimants to be assessed from autumn 2010.
– A new, tougher medical test: the Work Capability Assessment (WCA).
– New conditionality for ESA Work Related Activity Group—claimants are subject to sanctioning

BENEFIT RISES CAPPED AT 1 %, below-inflation
– 4.1 million households affected by an average loss of £0.90 a week
– 9.6 million households will be affected by 2014–2015 losing on average of £3 a week

COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT,
– Replacing it with an alternative fund at 90 % of the previous budget, from April 2013
– Is likely to affect 3.1 million English households with an average loss of £138 per year.
– In Scotland and Wales, devolved administrations have prevented the reduction from falling on claimants

CHANGES TO ELIBILITY CRITERIA TO RECEIVE LEGAL AID
– **Eligibility** to claim legal aid was capped at a household income of £32,000
– Those earning between £14,000 and £32,000 will have to take a means test.
– Family law cases including divorce, child custody, immigration and employment cases were expected to be badly affected.
– **Savings: a minimum £350 m from £2.2bn legal aid bill.**

Source: Roberts (2014)

Paul Gilroy (2013) dissected the verdict of "mindless violence" as follows:

> The depth of the neoliberal revolution that Britain had undergone during the three intervening decades was conveyed above all by the way that the new norms specified by generalized individuation and privatization were able to reframe the disorders as a brisk sequence of criminal events and transgressions that could be intelligible only when seen on the scale of personal conduct. (p. 555)

As Imogen Tyler (2013a) has summarized, "Contrary to claims that these riots were 'senseless', many of those participants interviewed described the riots as an opportunity to air grievances (against the police and the government). However misguided their actions, they wanted their experiences of unemployment, poverty, inequality and injustice to be recognized." (p. 7) Sutterluty (2014) draws the same conclusion when he argues that the riots were in large part "a reaction to the violation of civic claims to equality" from young people with almost no political representation, a product of the collapse and disappearance of traditional workers' parties. He continues that it was ultimately because of this violation that state institutions such as the police and the school system—through their routine functioning—generated such massive rage and disappointment and were targeted for attack. This does not, of course, explain the looting of stores, but to a considerable degree it accounts for why so many young people took to the streets. The looting scenes of August 2011 made it all too easy for many across the political spectrum to make conclusions in the "mindless violence" register, and even easier to forget two hugely important precedents for the riots. Anger among youth was still simmering following the significant student protests in late 2010 at the tripling of tuition fees in England. The first of these culminated in the storming of the Conservative Party headquarters in central London, but the two subsequent protests carried less symbolic power due to merciless, and still deeply controversial, "kettling" (corralling) by the police. The second precedent was the massive J30 (30 June 2011) public-sector strike across Britain, involving in excess of 750,000 public-sector workers. The cause of J30 was the raising of the retirement age from 60 to 66, and the replacement of final-salary pension schemes with a career-average system. However, J30 also included calls for an end to freezes in remuneration, an end to exhausting working hours, and the reversal of the steady privatization of almost every imaginable aspect of the sector.

On 15 August, Gilroy spoke with poignant eloquence about the riots at a community meeting in Tottenham.[8] He reflected upon the 1981 riots in several British cities, and identified several contrasts to the situation three decades later (now extended and elaborated in Gilroy, 2013).

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[8] http://dreamofsafety.blogspot.com/2011/08/paul-gilroy-speaks-on-riots-august-2011.html

Arguably, his most useful analytical assertion was that "the difference between 1981 and now is that the relationship between *information* and *power* has been changed, and our tactics for understanding our defence of our communities have to take those changes into account." It is instructive to consider this assertion in light of the heightening stigmatization of working-class people and the places where they live, to which I now turn.

Symbolic Defamation: The Myth of the 'Broken Society'

On the same day that Gilroy spoke in Tottenham, David Cameron visited a youth centre in his rural Witney constituency to deliver a speech outlining his Coalition government's response to the riots.[9] He began by arguing that "these riots were not about poverty" but rather "about behaviour. People showing indifference to right and wrong. People with a twisted moral code. People with a complete absence of self-restraint." To confront what he sees as a "slow-motion moral collapse that has taken place in parts of our country these past few generations," he outlined his "personal priority" in politics: "to mend our broken society." Particular emphasis was placed on "turning around the lives of the 120,000[10] most troubled families in the country":

> I don't doubt that many of the rioters out last week have no father at home. Perhaps they come from one of the neighbourhoods where it's standard for children to have a mum and not a dad, where it's normal for young men to grow up without a male role model, looking to the streets for their father figures, filled up with rage and anger.

He went on to outline that a "social fightback" should be centered around fixing a welfare system that "encourages the worst in people":

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[9] http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/pms-speech-on-the-fightback-after-the-riots/

[10] Quite where this figure came from is still a mystery. For a very detailed catalogue of the eugenic mentality of civil servants who think they can fix Britain's "troubled families," and of the abuse of statistics and general skulduggery that underpins the entire troubled families agenda, see the excellent work of Stephen Crossley at https://akindoftrouble.wordpress.com/

[There] is a moral hazard in our welfare system - people thinking they can be as irresponsible as they like because the state will always bail them out…. I want us to look at toughening up the conditions for those who are out of work and receiving benefits and speeding up our efforts to get all those who can work back to work. Work is at the heart of a responsible society.

The story behind the rhetoric of a "broken society" full of troubled families is a pure exemplar of the truncation and distortion of public understanding in respect to the ongoing articulation of poverty, social class and space in British society. The rhetoric did not begin with Cameron, but rather with the publications of a right-wing think tank, the *Centre for Social Justice* (CSJ), the brainchild of his Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the self-proclaimed "quiet man" Iain Duncan-Smith.

During his tortured tenure (2001–2003) as Conservative Party leader, Duncan-Smith visited one of the poorest urban areas of the UK, Easterhouse in Glasgow, which he described as "a wrecked and dreadful set up … with families locked into generational breakdown" (quoted in Derbyshire, 2010).[11] In 2004, in an effort to get the "modernising" Conservatives to enter the electorally significant *terra incognita* of poverty and welfare, Duncan-Smith established the CSJ with this mission statement:

To put social justice at the heart of British politics and to build an alliance of poverty fighting organisations in order to see a reversal of social breakdown in the UK.

Whilst a brief visit to its website leaves one bombarded by two words, "breakdown" and "broken," nowhere on it or in any of its publications can a definition of "social justice" be found. Only in a 2010 interview in the *New Statesman* does Duncan-Smith attempt to define it: "I mean to improve the quality of people's lives, which gives people the opportunity to improve their lives. In other words, so people's quality of life is improved" (quoted in Derbyshire, 2010).

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[11] He has on many occasions spoken of this visit a life-changing experience, "a sort of Damascene point" (ibid.).

In 2006 the CSJ produced a voluminous document entitled *Breakdown Britain*,[12] the end-product of Duncan-Smith's being invited by Cameron "to consider how an incoming Conservative Government could tackle Britain's most acute social problems" (p. 13). Duncan-Smith convened five working groups to conduct surveys and report back on five "pathways to poverty"[13]: "family breakdown, educational failure, economic dependency and worklessness, severe personal debt and addiction to drugs and alcohol" for "if the drivers of poverty are not addressed an ever-growing underclass will be created" (ibid.). Considerable attention was given to "family breakdown" in particular, and the central tenets of the infamous "underclass" thesis lie in the CSJ's definition of familial strife:

> We have adopted an inclusive use of the term 'family breakdown' which can be summed up in three key words: dissolution, dysfunction, and 'dad-lessness'. (p. 29)

Peck (2006) notes how think-tank conservatives "portray themselves as lonely voices of reason, as principled outsiders in a corrupt, distracted, and wrongheaded world" (p. 682). This captures precisely the tenor of the *Breakdown Britain* report, especially on "family breakdown":

> The policy-making community (which includes politicians, policy-makers and academics) has been markedly reluctant to grasp the nettle of family breakdown by being clear about the benefits of marriage and committed relationships, and the merits of supporting and encouraging them. (p. 29)

In a series of papers, Gerry Mooney and colleagues (Gray & Mooney, 2011; Mooney, 2009; Mooney & Hancock, 2010; Mooney & Neal, 2010) have provided an insightful interrogation of "Broken Britain" rhetoric, from its roots in stigmatized eastern Glasgow, to its electoral

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[12] It was later followed by a package of "policy recommendations" entitled "Breakthrough Britain," with numerous sub-reports focusing on particular cities: Breakthrough Manchester, Breakthrough Glasgow, Breakthrough Birmingham, etc.

[13] These "pathways" are notable for how they reverse social causation in pushing behavioural explanations for poverty. For example, never mind that a massive literature on financial exclusion confirms that poverty is a pathway to "serious personal debt," the Centre for Social Justice is desperate to show that it is the other way around.

significance—"Broken Britain" was pivotal to the Conservatives' 2010 General Election campaign, propped up by the Rupert Murdoch tabloids—and now to its contemporary public-policy undercurrent, where "marriage and a stable two-parent family life are key to mending Broken Britain and thereby reducing levels of poverty" (Mooney & Neal, 2010, p. 145). For the CSJ, there is no social problem for which promoting marriage is not the solution. It is desperate to guard against any views to the contrary. For example, when a distinguished welfare historian argued that the CSJ present a misleading and empirically inaccurate portrait of a British past filled with "happy families" (Thane, 2010), the CSJ responded quickly with an aggrieved 24-page rebuttal (Probert & Callan, 2010). Over two decades ago, Charles Murray (1990, p. 41) visited London and recommended to policy elites, journalists and think-tank officials that the "civilising force of marriage" be the treatment for the "spreading disease" of an "underclass" of single mothers and absent fathers ("essentially barbarians") (see Wacquant, 2009a, pp. 7–54). The CSJ has revived this much-derided perspective, which influenced David Cameron's choice of Father's Day in 2011 to write a column in *The Sunday Telegraph* that made the following argument:

> I also think we need to make Britain a genuinely hostile place for fathers who go AWOL. It's high time runaway dads were stigmatised, and the full force of shame was heaped upon them. They should be looked at like drink drivers, people who are beyond the pale. (Cameron, 2011)

The notions of a broken society full of dysfunctional or troubled families heavily influenced the government's Welfare Reform Bill, which had a rocky road[14] through parliament before reaching Royal Assent in March 2012. The hallmark of the Bill was *conditionality*: punitive sanctions

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[14]Peers and bishops in the House of Lords defeated eight parts of the Welfare Reform Bill, especially its proposal that, regardless of circumstances (disability, family size, etc.), no household should receive more than £26,000 a year in welfare benefits. The Bill then "ping-ponged" (the official language) for several weeks between the House of Lords and the House of Commons, but in the end MPs overturned the concerns and the votes of the Lords and passed the Bill, principally because they managed to turn specific amendments encouraged by the House of Lords into vague ministerial commitments to undertake some form of 'review.'

applied to claimants.[15] Now that the Bill has passed into legislation, unemployed people lose benefits for three months if they refuse the offer of a job for the first time, six months if they refuse an offer twice, and three years if they refuse an offer three times. Given that the CSJ "Economic Dependency" working group "went to the United States to talk to the architects of American welfare reform," and that Lawrence Mead[16] was invited to Downing Street to advise the Coalition government on work policies immediately after it was formed in May 2010, it is unsurprising that Duncan-Smith commented thus on the launch of the Bill: "play ball or it's going to be difficult" (quoted in Porter & Riddell, 2010).

Think tanks have mastered the craft of *decision-based evidence-making* tailored to the needs of policy elites and politicians on the lookout for accessible catchphrases to woo a jaded electorate. As Tyler (2013b) has argued in a remarkable analysis of social abjection in neoliberal Britain, stigmatization, particularly via discourses on the "underclass," has become a device to *procure consent* for punitive policies directed at those living at the bottom of the class structure. Politicians rarely consult published social-science research unless it supports the policies they want to pursue: Not a single social scientist was a member of any of the CSJ working groups studying the five "pathways to poverty." Instead, they depend on neat sound bites from surveys that measure little more than the world-view of the institute that commissions them, where policy "researchers" set out to resolve false problems, even though they have already been settled in the way the survey questions were formulated. Paul Gilroy is correct that the relationship between information and power has changed since the 1980s: Think tanks are now critically important in how state power is mobilized in the extension of conservative, market-rule dogma (Peck & Tickell, 2007). They have "irrevocably altered the institutional matrix through which policy knowledge percolates" (Wacquant, 2010, p. 442). Think tanks actively manufacture ignorance to appease their

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[15] In one of the more depressing outcomes of the riots, an e-petition calling for convicted rioters to have their benefits permanently removed attracted well over 100,000 signatures. At the time, very few made the point that plans to remove benefits are already underway for those living at the bottom of the class structure.

[16] Mead was arguably the most influential scholarly voice behind 1990s welfare-to-work legislation in the USA, consistently arguing that paid employment is an obligation of citizenship.

funders (Monbiot, 2011), buffering politicians and their audiences from viable alternatives and inoculating them against the critique of autonomous scholarship.

In an absorbing recent discussion, Hancock and Mooney (2013) argue that the "classed" narrative of the broken society centres on "irresponsibility" and "disorderly behaviour," and semantic battering rams of "worklessness," "criminality" and "underclass" are key instruments in the Conservative drive to convince people that "welfare dependency" is the underlying cause of civic unrest. Notably, Hancock and Mooney are alert to the relationship between the symbolic and the spatial:

> A specific geography is at work in this broken society narrative…. [P]articular representations of urban places as problematic on a number of different levels are mobilized. While the 2011 disorders were largely confined to inner urban areas with a significant degree of tenure mix, social housing estates (or areas where these dominate) and the populations therein are frequently highlighted and represented as being not only vulnerable, but as particular locales where social pathologies and problems flourish. (p. 48)

The protest at the killing of Mark Duggan drew most of its participants from where he lived, the Broadwater Farm housing estate. It is not by happenstance that many of the ensuing riots occurred in city districts frequently labeled as "no-go areas." The potency of the stigma attached to certain districts such as Handsworth (Birmingham), St. Paul's (Bristol) and Toxteth (Liverpool) should not be underestimated in any analysis of these events. As Wacquant (2007) has pointed out, the sense of personal indignity territorial stigmatization carries is a highly salient dimension of everyday life that negatively affects opportunities in social circles, education and the labour market. The stigmatized districts of dispossession in the postindustrial city elicit overwhelmingly negative emotions and stern corrective political reactions driven by fright, revulsion and condemnation, which in turn foster the growth and glorification of the penal wing of the state in order to penalize urban marginality. Long gone are the ambivalent fascination and lurid attraction that political and cultural elites felt for the sordid *bas-fonds* of the emerging industrial city, which made them upper-class playgrounds for excitement, mysterious sites of social

voyeurism, moral transgression, sexual fantasy and artistic inspiration, as demonstrated by the conjoint invention of "slumming" and "undercover" journalism centered on the derelict districts of the metropolis (Kalifa, 2012). When persons of power and eminence visit such districts nowadays, it is usually in *martial mode*, to announce measures designated to root out rot, restore order and punish miscreants. (Indeed, Easterhouse is *repeatedly* visited by Tory politicians in their efforts to corroborate the need and elicit support for regressive welfare reforms.) What is more, many of the youth involved in the 2011 riots reside in pockets of deep poverty surrounded by highly gentrified or elite enclaves, particularly in London (Watt, 2006). Their families have been relegated to stigmatized neighbourhoods "in which public and private resources diminish just as the social fall of working-class households and the settlement of immigrant populations intensify competition for access to scarce public goods" (Wacquant, 2008, p. 25). It is therefore unsurprising that, for many of the rioters, "it was their sense of being invisible, of being stigmatized, of having no future prospects, which motivated their disorderly behavior" (Tyler, 2013b, p. 204).

Transcending the "Poverty of the Imagination" via the Housing Question

In his speech in Tottenham, Paul Gilroy argued that "one of the worst forms of poverty that's shaped our situation is *poverty of the imagination*" in how social issues are addressed by politicians, particularly when considering what they see to be the future: the supposed lessons to be learned from the USA. One illustration: Cameron's 11 August emergency statement to parliament:

> I also believe we should be looking beyond our shores to learn the lessons from others who have faced similar problems. That is why I will be discussing how we can go further in getting to grips with gangs with people like Bill Bratton, former Commissioner of Police in New York and Los Angeles.

That organized street gangs were not a major factor in the riots (Guardian/ LSE, 2011) did not seem to matter: Bill Bratton immediately found

himself being touted by journalists as a Dick Tracy figure, a "super-cop: who could come and sort out the problem of English street crime once and for all[17] because of his apparent successes in New York and Los Angeles. Although Bratton arguably helped rebuild police morale in both New York and Los Angeles, the drop in crime in both those cities had nothing to do with his stewardship. In New York, where he was in charge for only two years, he applied "zero tolerance" in a city where crime was already dropping for several other reasons (Bowling, 1999; Harcourt, 2001). In Los Angeles, he applied "community policing," the exact opposite tactic, and crime dipped for other reasons (Goldberger & Rosenfeld, 2009). Proof of Bratton's ineffectiveness is that he failed miserably in impacting crime in Latin America, where he sold his "expertise" through his private security firm (Mountz & Curran, 2009; Swanson, 2013). The irony is that UK policy elites invited Bratton to come to England and consult on "zero tolerance" after Bratton saw the failure of that model and switched to "community policing"—which is patterned after UK policing! In the USA, Bratton's expertise is with cleaning up police-department corruption at the bottom and facing lethal street violence. In urban England, the problem is police corruption at the top, as evidenced by the phone-hacking scandal, and low-level, predominantly non-lethal street disorders. These are very different issues, and Bratton as a consultant adds nothing progressive to the debate about how to address the issue of street crime sensitively and humanely.

The structural reasons for the English riots are not issues that a US police chief can resolve, yet the climate of "fast" international policy-transfer that has become so embedded in the institutional apparatus of neoliberal statecraft (McCann & Ward, 2011) ensures that the causes of advanced urban marginality—state retrenchment, economic deregulation, wage labour fragmentation—are ignored in favour of expanding the penal wing of the state (Wacquant, 2009b). Again the role of think tanks is critically important: Bratton's status as a "super-cop" is less a media construct and more a think-tank fabrication: The Manhattan Institute in New York City played a pivotal role in (re)packaging and validating the "broken windows theory" in the USA, even as it was repeatedly refuted by

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[17] Bratton was attracted to the vacant post of Chief Commissioner of the London Metropolitan Police until it was realized that, as a non-UK citizen, he could not apply.

that country's respected criminologists, and in the international dissemination, via like-minded think tanks in London, of the strategy of "zero-tolerance" policing allegedly derived from it (Mitchell, 2010). If we are to challenge the poverty of the imagination that shields the public from examples of progressive policies in countries other than the USA, it is essential to expose the practices and funding of think tanks, to scrutinize their glossy and authoritative pseudo-scientific publications and dispel the myths propagated by their speechwriters and backroom "researchers."

Gilroy concluded his Tottenham speech by pointing out that the reaction to the riots is a valuable "primer" in class solidarity, where ruling elites are "telling us something":

> [T]hey think and act and conduct themselves like a class. They chat to each other, they marry each other, they go to the same places…. And if we want to act as a body, if we want to act in concert, we have to learn something from the way they conduct themselves, even as we challenge what they do.

In terms of class solidarity, there are glimmers of hope in relation to the housing question. There is no space here to provide a detailed history of the now acute housing crisis in Britain, but in sum, it is a depressing story of the privatization of social housing that began under Margaret Thatcher, together with a dire lack of new social-housing provisions, the demolition of social-housing estates, the erosion of housing assistance and especially the grotesquely inflated sales and rental prices that have resulted from greed and speculation in the finance industries (Meek, 2014). This has led to a completely unsustainable situation where adequate housing is out of reach for an ever-increasing number of people, even some earning above-average wages. Politicians of all stripes, in the pockets of the banks and house-building industry, now lament a "housing shortage" and attempt to score points off each other regarding who can get local governments to release land to build the most new family homes, with "affordability" criteria bearing no relation to actual affordability. Yet they, perhaps judiciously, ignore the existence of nearly one million empty homes across Britain, not to mention all the empty second homes purchased in scenic rural areas by wealthy people in the southeast. The empty-homes question, together with the pressing issue of just how

many people have to be unable to afford shelter before it becomes a political problem, is becoming a major basis for political mobilization, not least in London, the city most affected by obscene housing costs. In the autumn of 2014, an important struggle known as FOCUS E15 erupted on the Carpenters Estate in the east London borough of Newham. Two mothers, Sam Middleton and Jasmine Stone, both under the age of 25, occupied an empty flat on the Estate in late September. They were soon joined by several other young mothers who had all experienced the same trauma: being served eviction notices by an emergency hostel (or "sheltered accommodation," as it is known in Britain) after the funding stream to that council-run hostel was cut. The Carpenters Estate is right next to the 2012 Olympic Park, and four years ago it was cleared of its residents as Newham Council tried to sell the land to cash in on the mega-event rentier capitalist bonanza. The last deal fell through, leaving more than 600 council homes empty for four years, and the council wanted to send the families it displaced to hostels to Birmingham or Manchester, where rents are considerably cheaper.

The FOCUS E15 protest armed itself with a very simple message: "Social Housing, Not Social Cleansing." The context for the protest is that social housing all over Britain is being bought out by private developers, councils are trying to divest themselves of what sparse stock they have left, wages do not even cover social rents, and, most galling of all, thousands of homes lie empty in preparation for the billions their destruction will bring in. On 2 October, Newham Council failed in its attempt to use the draconian power of an "interim possession order" to evict and silence the mothers, who then left the home they occupied on their own terms. This movement has generated massive attention, helped by celebrity support, especially on social media, and it has inspired similar occupations in other cities. In December 2014, there was a massive victory for residents of another east London housing estate, New Era, when they successfully fought plans by US land investors to evict dozens of families and more than double rents. Westbrook Partners, under huge public pressure because of a campaign against its profiteering motives, again led by mothers on the estate, sold the land upon which New Era sits to the Dolphin Square Charitable Foundation, an affordable-housing charity committed to delivering low-cost rents to Londoners on low to

middle incomes. Housing is—and always has been—a class struggle over the rights to social reproduction, over the rights to make a life. It appears to be around the housing question that pathways towards an alternative urban future are opening up.

Conclusion: On Inequality

Imogen Tyler (2013b) was astute in noting that the 2011 riots did not lead to an "alternative aesthetics." Rather, the venom directed towards the rioters via myriad representations ensured that "the rioters became the abjects they had been told they were" (p. 204). However, as Tyler continued, what did become apparent to many people, possibly for the first time, was the sheer extent of inequality in England, especially as August 2011 happened in the aftermath of revelations of grotesque pay packets in financial industries, and of parliamentarians who stole from the public coffers with illegal reimbursements. "Inequality" is always a word that makes right-wing politicians feel deeply uncomfortable. This is partly because addressing and arresting widening inequality invokes what they see as the fearsome spectre of "equality," which has redistributive and socialist connotations offensive to free-market ideology. Although the *Centre for Social Justice* has tried to change the very meaning of social justice, conservatives in the UK are most concerned with avoiding social (family) breakdown, not achieving an abstraction like "justice," and this has always underpinned their view of the welfare state. Conservative politicians, historically, only take an interest in such matters only insofar as it assists social cohesion to do so, and doesn't ferment revolt where the wealthy might be required to relinquish their private-property rights. Therefore, recent interventions by Danny Dorling presenting simple evidence of inequality are instructive, one of which included this graphic by Duncan Rickleton (see Dorling, 2012) (Fig. 4.1):

Ruling elites invariably panic when pressed on the inequality problem:

What I think we shouldn't do is say, as some seem to on the left: "Well, we can't really do anything about the problem of the riots and criminality that we saw until we have dealt with selfishness and greed elsewhere." Some

Fig. 4.1 If pounds were pixels. Image: Duncan Rickelton

> people almost say that until we deal with the problem of inequality in our society, there is nothing you can do to deal with rioting. (David Cameron, interviewed on Radio 4, 2 September 2011)

British politicians are highly authoritarian and punitive when it comes to dealing with the destructive consequences of economic deregulation for those at the lower end of the class and status spectrum. The state has responded to the marginality *it has created*—manifested in the existence of unemployment, homelessness, addiction, poor schools, youth rage and so on—by *containing* it and inducing the expanding precariat (Standing, 2011) to accept the unstable and underpaid jobs of the deregulated service economy via workfarist reforms. But at the same time, those politicians exhibit a strikingly laissez-faire ethos toward the causal agents of inequality at the top end: powerful corporations and the "overclass" (for example, media tycoons, heads of financial and banking corporations, consultant economists and politicians). It speaks volumes on the civic unaccountability and personal immorality of ruling elites over the past decade that the phrase "copycat criminality," which they used to diagnose the spreading of riots in 2011, has not been applied to the financial

institutions of the London square mile and the politicians who count on donations from those institutions, and that the massive crime and commotion that triggered the 2007–2008 financial collapse has *still* gone unpunished, whilst the state reacts with diligence and virulence against street crime. The fact that all political parties appear to dance to the same (neo)liberal-paternalist anthem not only reveals the evaporation of legitimacy that they have inflicted upon themselves; it reveals the PRESCIENCE of Colin Leys' (1990) warning that "for an ideology to be hegemonic, it is not necessary that it be loved. It is merely necessary that it have no serious rival" (p. 127).

The neoliberal revolution that has swept through England since the early 1980s, pioneered by Margaret Thatcher, modified and carried forward so enthusiastically by New Labour, and ending up in the hands of politicians significantly positioned within English aristocracy, has generated considerable turbulence at the bottom of the class structure. I have shown in this chapter that, under those neoliberal conditions, it is essential to look well beyond rhetorical ranting and lazy depictions of "looting" and "hooliganism" to understand how and why indignity is visited upon the dispossessed youth of English cities. According to an interpretation of interview data gathered by sociologists embedded in communities affected by rioting, the looting of 2011 was not "mindless violence" but rather "a response to repeated stop-and-search, racist policing, deprivation, poverty, unemployment, cuts to the educational maintenance allowance (EMA), anger, and inequalities between the haves and the have-nots" (James, 2011). Furthermore, those interviews revealed that young people believed that "getting an education was the key to the golden gate, but a year after graduation they were still struggling to find work" (ibid.). Escalating youth unemployment, especially between the ages of 16 and 21, and particularly affecting males, has become a major issue over the last decade, and, given the demographic involved, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that angry youths torching and looting their own communities are best understood as a response to the compassion fatigue displayed by the state.[18] The institutional failures that have ham-

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[18] Prominent political figures were at pains to show their annoyance at having to cancel their foreign holidays and return to England to deal with the crisis.

mered youth in recent times have produced a response that should have been expected, given youths' perceived lack of any alternative: direct confrontation with authorities and the disruption of civil life, a response to "massive structural violence unleashed upon them" (Wacquant, 2008, p. 24). Recent European history, from the *banlieues* of France (Dikec, 2007) to the sidewalks of Athens (Sotiris, 2010), shows that if young people are robbed of a sense that they have a dignified future awaiting them, they will take to the streets in collective rage. Put another way, the 2011 riots in urban England taught ruling elites and the often apolitical middle classes a lesson they ignore at their peril: the more that is taken away from young people, the less they have to lose.

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5

The Stockholm Uprising in Context: Urban Social Movements in the Rise and Demise of the Swedish Welfare-State City

Ove Sernhede, Catharina Thörn, and Håkan Thörn

Introduction

In May 2013, an urban uprising shook Sweden and took the whole world by surprise, as reports from international news agencies and news channels such as CNN, BBC World, Al-Jazeera and Sky News reported live from poor suburbs in Stockholm, putting in question the image of Sweden as a calm and prosperous society. Following local mobilization demanding the public investigation of a police killing, the uprisings started on the evening of 19 May in the suburb of Husby, with 12,000 inhabitants, in northern Stockholm, where approximately 100 cars were burnt on the first night. The uprising went on for five more nights, spreading to other poor Stockholm suburbs. The magnitude of attention these events received in the media throughout the week of turmoil contributed to their spread to eight smaller cities around Sweden.

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A recurring theme in global media was an explanation of the events as having been caused by immigration and the failure of multiculturalism. For example, a report in the conservative British *Express* (26 May 2013) stated that 'Sweden's great multicultural experiment is in jeopardy' and even the *New York Times* (26 May 2013) framed the events in terms of 'immigration':

> The disturbances, with echoes of urban eruptions in France in 2005 and Britain in 2011, have pushed Sweden to the center of a heated debate across Europe about immigration and the tensions it causes in a time of deep economic malaise.

It is a fact that a large majority of the poor population in Swedish suburbs has an immigrant background. However, this chapter will show that any de-politicized framing of the events in terms of 'immigration problems' is deeply misguided. We argue that the Stockholm uprising can better be understood in relation to neoliberal urbanism in the European context. We also argue that it is important to examine and analyze the specific Swedish political articulation of neoliberal urbanism and the historical context in which it emerged. Further, we take a look at possible links between the Stockholm uprising and the emergence of a new urban social movement primarily based in the poor suburbs of Sweden's major cities. This movement is based on local struggles, but has claims that transcend the local to form a call for a more radical transformation of the interests and values embedded in the Swedish neoliberal city. We argue that while the uprising was not a 'movement protest' in the sense of being planned, organized or initiated by activists or social movement organizations (SMOs), it took place in the context of a movement mobilization. Further, as leading movement spokespersons stepped forward publicly to establish their interpretation of the uprising and its causes, it became articulated, in the course of this process, as a movement event.

We define a social movement *analytically* as a field of collective action that challenges a social order (Thörn, 2007). It further involves processes of articulation that unify elements of a given social field (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). Most importantly, it involves the articulation of social conflicts and collective identities, of 'us', and 'others', i.e., antagonistic

actors or 'enemies'. *Empirically*, it is constituted by various practices, such as different forms of public action (e.g., demonstrations, direct actions); production and dissemination of knowledge, information and symbolic practices, and mobilization of various forms of resources, which may include SMOs, networks and campaigns. More specifically, in the terms of Castells' analysis (Castells, 1983, p. xvi), an *urban* social movement signifies collective action 'consciously aimed at the transformation of the social interests and values embedded in the forms and functions of a historically given city'. Such an approach to the analysis of social movements implies that a social movement is not treated as an empirical entity that can be captured through empirical generalization. Rather, it involves an analytical operation that links empirical 'movement phenomena' (such as various forms of organization and protest, including 'riots') to a structural and historical context (see the introductory chapter in this volume). In our case, this means that we will show how the articulations of three urban social movements in Sweden are intrinsically linked with three historical and structural urban formations: the industrial capitalist city, the welfare city and the neoliberal city.

In our particular case, a historical perspective is needed for two major reasons. First, contemporary neoliberal urbanism has brought some of the latent contradictions of the Swedish model's welfare capitalism to the surface. Second, we think that a brief recollection of urban social movement mobilization in connection with the rise and crisis of the Swedish welfare state can shed further light on the relationship between structural transformation, urban uprisings and urban social movements in the contemporary situation. In order to do so, we need to expand our analytical scope to include Sweden's second city, Gothenburg. Here two waves of urban social movement mobilization with national significance occurred in the twentieth century, and contributed to make the city's urban conditions a key reference point in the formulation of Swedish urban policy reform in two different historical phases, the 1930–1940s and the 1970–1980s (Thörn, 2012b).

This chapter has two main parts. In the first, we briefly account for the two major waves of urban social movements in twentieth-century Sweden, focusing on Gothenburg as a key space of urban mobilization and conflict. The first wave emerged in the beginning of the twentieth

century and challenged the interests embedded in Swedish industrial cities in the 1920s and 1930s. The second wave aimed at a transformation of the Swedish welfare state city around 1970, at a moment when the New Left movement's critique of welfare-state capitalism coincided with its first deep economic crisis. In the second part, we return to the contemporary context of the Stockholm uprising, relating it to the dismantling of the Swedish welfare state since the 1990s, including an almost complete roll-back of welfare-state housing policies that had emerged in the wake of previous waves of urban mobilization. We show how dramatically increasing social inequality, a highly racialized territorial stigmatization and a 'democratic deficit' in the context of urban transformation define the Swedish version of neoliberal urbanism. Finally, we take a look at the urban mobilization in poor Swedish suburbs, understanding this in terms of a new urban social movement aiming at a transformation of the social interests and values embedded in the neoliberal city. In this connection, we address the following questions: In what sense, and how, could the new urban social movement be understood as a reaction to, as well as an attempt to transform, the social interests and values embedded in the neoliberal city? How does it relate to recent urban uprisings in Sweden? To what extent does it represent continuity and discontinuity in relation to twentieth-century urban social movements?

Urban Mobilization in the Rise of the Swedish Model

Challenging the City of Industrial Capitalism: the Struggle for 'Housing for All'

The urban planning projects and housing policies that were part of the foundation of the Swedish welfare state were preceded both by urban uprisings and the formation of an urban social movement. Some of the largest and historically most significant urban protests in the twentieth century took place in the working class-dominated harbour

city Gothenburg. In the spring of 1917, approximately 300,000 people took part in a wave of urban uprisings in Sweden known as 'the hunger riots', starting in February and sweeping through 23 Swedish cities during the following months. The largest of these uprisings occurred on 5 May 1917, when 40,000 hungry women and men marched through the centrally located working-class district Haga in Gothenburg, where shop windows were smashed and police attacks with sables and batons were met with bricks, in a battle that went on throughout a day and a night (Nyström, 1994; Thörn, 2010). In a deeply segregated city, Haga was the largest of a cluster of over-populated and poor working-class districts on the opposite sides of the bourgeois seventeenth-century inner city, which was surrounded by a moat. The uprising should be seen in connection with the war-related rationing of food supplies and capitalist speculation that further contributed to the food shortage. It was also ignited by socialist agitation inspired by the Russian Revolution in February. There was, however, also the element of the policing of urban class boundaries, often provided as one of the factors explaining the outbreak of urban uprisings (Schneider, 2008), as historical documents testify that constant everyday tension between police and working-class youth was a salient feature of everyday life in the poor districts in Gothenburg at the time (Karlsson, 1993).

More important, this uprising should be seen in connection with the workers' movement's emergence as a major political force in Sweden. In the urban context, the sometimes militant Tenants' Association (TA) played a key role in the Social Democratic Party's prioritization of the housing question, making 'good housing for all' the slogan for the party's housing policies in the 1940s (Thörn, 2012b). Even after the Social Democrats in 1932 had begun their 44-year-long unbroken reign as the leading government party, the mobilization of tenants continued. In particular, a major rent strike in the district of Olskroken in Gothenburg in 1936–1937 played a significant role in establishing the relatively strong position of the Tenants' Association in rent negotiations in post-war Sweden (Schönbeck, 1994). Further, the major goal of the TA, affordable and good housing, became an integral part of urban planning projects in

the post-war era. Social control of land use was favored and the following reforms were made to secure 'good housing for all':

- municipal housing companies were set up to lead the construction of affordable housing on a large scale, facilitated by the state through a guarantee of favourable loans;
- municipalities were prevented from exploiting these loans to fund other expenditures through housing legislation stipulating that these companies must be non-profit;
- the rents negotiated between the TA and the municipal-housing companies set the cap for rents in privately owned housing as well;
- means-tested housing allowances were introduced for households that could not afford rents; and
- certain housing regulations in the form of 'building norms' were introduced to secure a 'minimum standard' and to prevent over-crowding.

In the shift from industrial to welfare capitalism, the TA changed its identity. Formed as an SMO to challenge and transform the interests and values of the industrial-capitalist city, it now became an institutionalized interest organization, its major function being the representation of tenants' interests in rent negotiations with landlords. The TA thus now embodied the interests and values of the welfare city, seeing its major task as upholding and defending the housing-market position it had achieved through earlier struggles. Its position corresponded to the one held by labour unions in the labour market. In both cases, membership was significant but largely passive. The strength of the TA should also be seen in relation to the fact that a majority of the Swedish population live in rental apartments.[1] In the Swedish welfare state, similar regulations, characteristic of the post-war Swedish 'political culture of consensus' (Thörn, 2012a), thus defined the relations between major institutionalized interests based in the spheres of both production and civil society. As a further sign of its institutionalization, the TA centralized heavily in 1964–1965,

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[1] The share of rental apartments has decreased since the 1990s, but is still significant. Today there are 4.5 million apartments in Sweden, which has a population of nine million, of which 69 % were rental apartments in 2007, compared to 75 % in 1990 (Boverket, 2008).

when 194 local tenant associations were merged into 22 regional associations (Schönbeck, 1994, p. 328).

Challenging the Welfare City: the Struggle for Urban Democracy

The major material manifestation of the Swedish welfare state's housing policies was the Million Program in the 1960s.[2] In response to housing shortages, a million dwellings were built within 10 years in order to realise the goal of 'good housing for all' through large-scale industrialized production. This program was also linked to a project of large-scale demolition of old working-class districts in the central parts of the cities, through the major national 'Sanitation Program' (Thörn, 2012a). As a consequence, most of the working-class inhabitants moved from the city's centre to Million-Program high-rise dwellings located in the urban periphery: today, poor suburbs and the spaces of the urban uprisings discussed in the next section of this chapter. To begin with, however, inhabitants with an immigrant background were in the minority. It was only from the 1990s on that the Million Program changed status from 'low income areas' to spaces of urban poverty, with class and racialized segregation beginning to overlap in a fundamental way, culminating in the current situation, where the majority of the population has an immigrant background (Andersson, 2013; Molina, 1997; Sernhede, 2011).

The Sanitation Program of the 1960s ignited a new urban social movement that emerged in Stockholm and Gothenburg around 1970 (Franzén, 2005; Stahre, 1999; Thörn, 2012a), culminating at the time of the first crisis of the Swedish welfare state, which was linked to the global economic crisis of 1973. The defence of the old districts was coupled with demands for democratic influence on urban planning and an

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[2] The Million Program was an ambitious political housing program realized in 1965–1974. One million apartments were built and the project represented the biggest political venture of both the Social Democratic Party and the Swedish welfare state. Today these apartments in the urban periphery harbor the poor, immigrant part of the Swedish population.

internationally linked critique of the large-scale modernist urban restruc-turing programs manifested in the architecture of the Million Program.[3]

Again, the old working-class district Haga in Gothenburg became a national centre for urban activism, as well as the major Swedish space for urban alternative culture for more than two decades. As a result of the protest against the demolition of the district, a 'careful renovation' began in the 1980s, right at the moment when a new urban squatters' move-ment emerged in Sweden, (linked to the European BZ squatters' move-ment (see Lund Hansen and Karpantschof in this volume and Thörn, 2012a). The squatters articulated Sweden's first anti-gentrification protest through the slogan 'stop yuppification of Haga', as they witnessed how rents rose for apartments in renovated and newly built buildings.

This second wave of urban mobilization should be seen in the broader context of new social movements (Melucci, 1989). As in the cases of a number of other struggles around anti-apartheid, nuclear energy and environmental issues, its critique of welfare-state capitalism brought it into antagonistic relations with the workers' movement. Particularly in Gothenburg, where the struggle around Haga went on for two decades, relationships between young urban activists and the TA, which fiercely defended the Sanitation Program, were highly conflictual.[4] Nevertheless, the Social Democratic government introduced new housing legislation, addressing two of the major demands made by the urban social move-ment of the 1970s and 1980s. Regarding the first of these two laws, dem-ocratic influence was tied to the TA:

- the 1974 Housing Sanitation Law guaranteed TA influence on hous-ing sanitation and renovation; and
- the 1987 Swedish Plan and Building Law entailed that consultation with civil society be an obligatory element in planning processes.

Symbolically, the last major confrontation between squatters and police in Haga occurred in 1990, the year before a new centre-right

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[3] Such links were clearly made when Swedish urban movement intellectuals interviewed Henri Lefvebre in 1974 (Lefebvre, Bergman, & Mannheimer, 1974).

[4] The situation was different in Stockholm, where the TA joined new social movement activists in the struggle to defend the old working class district Söder (Franzén, 2005).

government introduced what it called its 'system shift'. In the urban context, this shift immediately speeded up the gentrification processes that, as a consequence of the Sanitation Program, had defined Sweden's three major cities, Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö, since the 1970s (Clark, 1992).

The Stockholm Uprising in Contemporary Context

The Demise of the Welfare-State City

International media surprise that a major 'urban riot' could happen in Stockholm, the supposedly prosperous 'capital of Scandinavia', reflects ignorance of the developments of the Swedish welfare state over the last 30 years. Behind the urban uprising that set Stockholm on fire lies another, albeit less visible, revolution: the slow and deliberate dismantling of the Swedish welfare state. The neoliberal ideology underlying this shift had already begun to inspire the leadership of the Social Democratic Party in the 1980s, in its failing attempts to find ways out of the 1970s economic crisis (Larsson, Letell, & Thörn, 2012). Not until after the national financial crisis of 1990–1993 were neoliberal policies introduced full-scale by the new centre-right government, which announced a major welfare roll-back program legitimized by a rhetoric of 'The Only Way' and a 'System Shift', and by the government-leading Conservative Party re-naming itself the New Labour Party. The editors of the book *Transformations of the Swedish Welfare State* summarize the elements of Sweden's neoliberal shift as follows (Thörn & Larsson, 2012):

- re-regulations to support the privatization and marketization of the public sector;
- responsibilization—citizens remade as customers and co-producers;
- new forms of disciplinary power, such as increased surveillance and new strategies for policing urban protest;
- new forms of governance, including public-private partnerships; and
- a move from full employment to 'standby-ability'.

Within the urban context, where a restructuring of spatial and social relations into a class-based remake of the city took place, all of the above dimensions have played out and created major inequalities. Political reforms are now clearly visible on the ground, vividly written into the starkly contrasting streets and buildings of the urban landscape, which is sharply divided into wealthy, corporate, bureaucratic central-city districts and impoverished outskirts. In combination with a municipal urban-growth politics with 'growth first' on the agenda, these developments have been fuelled by a re-regulation of Swedish housing policies as an important part of the system shift. The abolition of the Ministry of Housing in 1991 signalled an almost complete roll-back of the urban reforms made in connection with the two waves of twentieth-century urban mobilization in Sweden, and was accompanied by measures supporting privatization and marketization of the public-housing sector (Christophers, 2013; Hedin et al 2012; Clark & Johnson, 2009):

- concessions to municipal housing companies were abolished;
- restrictions on profit-making by municipal housing companies were removed; a later housing law no longer allowed them to be non-profit; instead, they had to be managed according to 'business principles';
- restrictions on selling municipal housing were removed;
- the law stating that municipal housing companies also set the cap for rents in privately owned housing was abolished;
- the Housing Sanitation Law that guaranteed TA influence on housing sanitation and renovation was removed;
- re-regulations and tax reforms strongly supporting home ownership were introduced, as well as highly regressive property taxes, state credit guarantees for first-time buyers, and owner-occupation in multi-dwelling buildings as a new form of tenure;
- subsidies to investment in rental housing were abolished; and
- means-tested housing allowances were dramatically slashed; between 1995 and 2009 there was a 70 % decrease in households entitled to and claiming allowances (Christophers, 2013, p. 895).

As a result, Swedish big cities have become among the most segregated in Europe since the 1990s. According to a government report, more that 40 % of young people between 20 and 25 in the poor suburbs neither study

nor work (Government Offices of Sweden, 2012). According to the 2012 annual report of the Swedish branch of Save the Children (2012), more than 50 % of children in the poorest neighborhoods in metropolitan districts grow up in poverty. A 2013 OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) report shows that Sweden has the fastest-growing income gap of all 34 countries surveyed. The welfare state has more or less abandoned the poor suburbs. These areas are most severely hit by cutbacks in the public sector. In the case of schools, a combination of cutbacks and a free-school reform has had disastrous effects, with Swedish pupils' school performance dropping from the top to the bottom of OECD ranking (OECD 2013). In many of these suburbs, fewer than 50 % make it to upper secondary school (Sernhede, 2014a, 2014b; Skolverket, 2012). While social workers and youth centers have become increasingly rare, police presence has become more prominent. This is the Swedish version of the political shift from Keynesian 'welfare' to neoliberal 'workfare' (Vis, 2007; Wacquant, 2009). On the one hand, this means more freedom for those who belong to the privileged in the city's gentrified, but isolated and security-obsessed, centres. On the other, it means less freedom for those in the peripheries, who have become subject to new disciplinary measures and receive diminished subsidies. In Sweden, the liberal-conservative government has named this policy 'the work line', as it is said to strengthen individuals' motivations and economic incentives to work (Larsson et al., 2012).

Supported by the new legislation, a significant proportion of the previously non-profit municipal housing companies have been privatized (Christophers, 2013; Hedin et al 2012; Clark & Johnson, 2009). As a consequence, the number of evictions from municipal housing has increased, as has the number of homeless (Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare, 2011).[5] Further, a decline in production has led to overcrowded housing and a serious housing shortage, resulting in demand for more housing in urban areas. At the same time, the Million-Program housing built in 1965–1974 has, partly as an effect of systematic

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[5] According to the Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare (2011), there were 34,000 homeless people in Sweden in May 2011, among them 400 children. The number of homeless has doubled since 2005 and only part of that can be explained by a broadened definition of homelessness.

disinvestment, become in urgent need of renovation in the 2000s. Taken together, this has laid the ground for the most recent phase of gentrification through 'renoviction', to employ the term coined by Seafield tenants in Canada now being used in Sweden (Molina & Westin, 2012; Westin, 2011). Starting with the relatively small share of Million-Program houses located near city centres, renovations have been made, with rent increases of up to 65 % (H. Thörn, 2013). So far, it is tenants who have to pay for these renovations—an issue on the agenda of the emerging new urban social movement discussed further below. Gentrification and disinvestment are thus part of the same process, which causes one part of the Swedish city to prosper and another to decay. To be sure, capital flows in and out of Stockholm, but it is rarely redistributed. There are no 'trickle-down effects'. Rather, accumulation occurs, in the words of David Harvey (2005), by dispossession. This is the other side of prosperous Stockholm: Beyond the seductive theatre of consumption that characterizes the central city, people struggle for a decent life, or just to get by, while common resources are continually snatched away and privatized.

Finally, the introduction of neoliberal urbanism has also affected the legislation pertaining to consultation with civil society as an obligatory element in planning processes, which was passed in the aftermath of the mobilization of the urban social movement of the 1970s and 1980s. This law has become something completely different from the democratic influence imagined by movement intellectuals in the 1970s, as 'de-centralized planning' primarily has come to mean more influence for business through public-private partnerships and 'consortium planning' (Thörn, 2012a). While this approach has also involved citizen-participation projects packaged as 'local democracy', it has basically represented a 'post-political' mode of participation (Granberg & Åström, 2010; Thörn, 2008).

Structural Racism and Territorial Stigmatization—A Stockholm Version

Urbanization in its current form is deeply racialized. Stockholm's city center has become a thoroughly gentrified enclave for the white middle and upper classes, whilst its poorest suburbs are increasingly non-

white. The stigmata of place and othering overlap with profound effects on the lives of residents. Six months before the Stockholm uprising, in December 2012, a debate on racism, language and culture was played out in Swedish media. It was fought between, on the one hand, people of immigrant background voicing experiences of everyday racism in the education system, the labor market, culture and the urban landscape, and, on the other, those who trivialized these experiences, claiming that it was ridiculous to imply that Sweden is a racist society. The latter associated racism narrowly with the growing nationalist movements in Sweden, refusing to acknowledge that white middle-class dominance in Swedish media, politics and academia had anything to do with structural racism.

At the beginning of 2013, the REVA project was implemented. Part of an EU-funded collaboration that intensified the deportation of undocumented immigrants, REVA gave the police authority to perform internal border control. [6] Numerous non-white Swedish citizens testified to the media that they had been stopped in the streets and subways by the police on no other grounds than 'looking foreign'. Such controls were mainly made in the Stockholm underground. Public demonstrations in major Swedish cities, denouncing this, followed.

The stigmata of place and racism also contributes to such discrimination. Wacquant (1999) calls this place-related discrimination 'territorial stigmatization'. This social-psychological dimension of segregation can also shed some light on the event that triggered the uprisings. The spark that set the suburbs of Stockholm alight was, as in several of the urban uprisings discussed in this book, a fatal police shooting of a man of immigrant background. According to a press statement made by the police, the man died from his injuries in a hospital. Husby inhabitants had, however, witnessed the removal of a body in a black plastic bag in the middle of the night. Some of them took pictures and sent them to the media. This was followed by a locally organized meeting to express demands for a

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[6] REVA (Rättssäkert och effektivt verkställighetsarbete: Legal and efficient enforcement) refers to a collaboration between the Department of Migration, the Criminal Justice Department and the police, aiming to ensure that the return of persons, who have received a decision of expulsion or been denied a residence permit, is enforced in a way that is both legal and 'efficient'. It was sponsored by the European Return Fund (ERF), which ran for five years (2008–2013). This 'collaboration' is actually a delegation, by which the police are given the task of carrying out the return procedure.

public investigation of the police action. Six days after the shooting, the uprising started.

When the police shoot a resident in a stigmatized area, it may be experienced as an officially sanctioned violation that also symbolizes all of the violations that the residents have suffered for years and in silence, a reminder of the violence that is performed in daily frisking and police controls in connection with the policing of the intersecting class and racialized boundaries of a poor suburb, with which especially young people in Husby are so familiar. Such experiences of police violence and racism were articulated publicly by the movement organization Megaphone, based in the poor Stockholm suburbs, in connection with the uprising, implying that the shooting was like gasoline poured on embers that had been glowing for some time:

> From our side, we see a government whose answer to social problems is more police. We see police brutality and harassment in our neighborhoods. We see verbal racist abuse, fists smashing faces, aggravated assault with batons. We see the police aiming their service weapons at youths and shouting: 'I'll shoot!' (*Aftonbladet*, 26 May 2013, our translation)

Unsurprisingly, the immediate response to the Stockholm uprising by the Swedish centre-right government framed it as an immigrant problem, as the first minister who commented on the events in public was the minister of integration, Erik Ullenhag. In the manner of the discourse of neoliberal urbanism, he called for harsher disciplinary measures:

> It is not my car burning in Husby, it is the residents' cars and they have the right to feel safe…. The government's responsibility is to ensure the rule of law and the presence of more police in the area…. (*Expressen TV*, 20 May 2013, our translation)

When Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt commented on the events a day later (*Expressen*, 21 May 2013), he linked up with the discourse of responsibilization by defining the events as individual and local prob-

lems, the main responsibility for solving them thus residing with the local community.[7]

A New Urban Social Movement

Contrary to reports in the national and international media, we argue that the Stockholm uprising should be interpreted in the context of the inseparable structural processes of *rapidly increasing social inequalities*, *racialized territorial stigmatization* and *lack of democracy in urban-restructuring processes*. Analyzing the 2005 revolts in Paris, geographer Mustafa Dikeç (2007) wrote that we need to understand them not as 'mindless' looting and burning but as *unarticulated justice movements*. That point is also valid in the case of Sweden (Schierup, Ålund, & Kings, 2014), although the Stockholm uprising took place in the context of an emerging new urban social movement, which was claiming both space and voice. In the following, we will take a closer look at this movement and how it relates both to structural processes and the Stockholm uprising. [8]

Much of the discussion and research on the deprived multi-ethnic areas of European metropoles have argued that these areas, in contrast to traditional working-class areas, suffer from a lack of solidarity and community (e.g., Kawalerowicz & Biggs, 2015). However, what we may observe in major Swedish cities is that they produce new forms of collective identities as well as new forms of strategies for dignified living (Sernhede, 2009). This applies primarily to those young people who in their everyday lives encounter each other in the streets, in schools, youth clubs, etc. They develop communities and friendship relations through which the ethnic boundaries enclosing their parents are transgressed.

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[7] The Social Democrats opposed his position, with the argument that the government should add more money to deal with 'problematic youth'. They argued that cutbacks had made it impossible for municipal authorities to get the violent young men off the streets, i.e., this position also included a framing of the events as an issue of crime prevention (*Dagens Nyheter*, 21 May 2013).

[8] This section is primarily based on preliminary results of Ove Sernhede's ongoing research project 'Suburbs and the renaissance for public education: Youths´ self-controlled communities of practices, for learning and social mobilization in poor neighborhoods in Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö'.

Ethnographic studies from the second half of the 1990s, as well as more recent studies, have shown how hip-hop culture in these areas provides a basis for multi-ethnic encounters that the youth themselves describe as 'ethnic alliances', a social configuration closely related to what in cultural studies is conceptualized as 'new ethnicities' (Back, 1996; Hall, 1992). Local youth culture in these areas has also, since the second half of the 1990s, regularly been in confrontation with the police (Sernhede, 2005, 2011). In some of the areas where new forms of social mobilization are emerging today, we can find identification with African-American ghetto culture and a history of strong local hip-hop environments that often have taken on the role of representing the suburbs in which they are located.

The emergence of this new social mobilization in territorially stigmatized suburban areas is also related to the financial crisis of 2008. The uneducated youth that in many cases were sacked when the big industries pulled back from production lived in these areas. Spokespeople for the new movement were among those that became unemployed, and as a way out they turned to local 'Folk High Schools' ('folkhögskolor'—a form of adult education, often run by old popular-movement organizations), where they got in touch with discussions of the role of the old popular movements in Swedish history, post-colonialism and contemporary politics. This also explains the movement's unexpected domestic-historical dimension. Just as the labour movement once created cultural and educational organizations in order to instil courage through knowledge in connection with demands for universal suffrage and access to social rights, so do young suburbanites today engage in mobilizing via seminars, study circles, lectures, homework assistance, creative-writing circles and cultural events. Their own cultural expressions enable the acquisition of relevant knowledge required for developing self-confidence and authority.

One of the best-known and best-organized organizations of the youth-based new social movement emerging in the poor suburbs is *Megaphone* (Megafonen). It was formed after the murder of Ahmed Ibrahim Ali in the suburb of Kista in Stockholm in 2008. Under the slogan 'A united suburb can never be defeated', Megaphone has since been organizing young people in the suburbs in a political grass-roots mobilization. It has also arranged demonstrations against social cuts in Husby and other suburbs

in metropolitan Stockholm. Its main task is to mobilize local civil society, and hence its home page states that 'the improvement and the exchange of knowledge, insight and inspiration' will be the basis for 'engagement and change' (Megaphone, 2014).

Megaphone has also been a key actor in the struggle around the so-called Järva investment (Järva-lyftet). This was announced as a large-scale investment in the major poor suburban areas in Stockholm, including Husby, based on citizen dialogue and the improvement of housing conditions (Westin, 2011). The residents of Husby soon realized that the 'dialogue' was more about form than content as it did not amount to real participation. The mobilization that grew out of this demanded democratization of urban planning, importantly including giving voice to the marginalized. Exactly one year before the Stockholm uprising, Megaphone wrote about the Järva investment in an opinion article published in one of Sweden's largest dailies:

> When the Järva investment was initiated, many residents hoped that it would be a forceful response to the politics that had neglected Järva since it was built in the 1960s and 1970s. Instead, we see how Järva continues to be in society's shadow and how segregation in Stockholm is perpetuated. (*Svenska Dagbladet*, 4 May 2012, our translation)

As part of this struggle, Megaphone squatted the local municipal cultural facility when the city wanted to close it down. The occupation, which went on for two weeks, took the form of a forum for debate about, and protest against, the dismantling of the welfare state in general and the Järva investment in particular. The action created a lot of publicity and was crucial for social mobilization in Husby.

During the Stockholm uprising, Megaphone took a publicly active position. Before the uprising started, its members organized a local meeting demanding an independent investigation of the shooting (see above). They also organized a press conference shortly after the uprising began, stating that while they were not behind the uprising, they could understand the anger it expressed, considering how the shooting must be perceived by youth subjected to daily harassment. Further, in addition to the shooting, the events must also be interpreted in relation to decades of social exclusion and cutbacks in the welfare system. Megaphone

also pointed to the broader context of the roll-back of the Swedish welfare state, a theme which it further developed in an article published in Sweden's largest daily, relating the ongoing events to the effects of the 'system shift' as experienced in the poor suburbs:

> We see a school system being 'reformed' over and over again, where we, our friends, and our brothers and sisters struggle to cope in schools that lack resources. We see that they [white working- and middle-class families] can send their children to other schools. We see housing policies that create housing shortages. The human right to a home tossed aside for luxury condominiums. We see our rent increase steeply on the pretext that our building is being renovated when only the façade has been repainted. Now everyone is on the side of the suburbs and competing to propose solutions. Where were you before everything set off? We were here and arranged homework help, lectures and concerts. We fought for our community centers and homes. Now we continue to stand up for our neighborhoods and our city. (*Aftonbladet*, 26 May 2013)

Taking this position made Megaphone an obvious target. Newspaper editorials and national television blamed the organization for having organized the uprising (e.g., on Swedish Television's 'Debatt' program on 23 May 2013, titled 'Why is Husby burning?'). At this point, another movement organization, the Panthers, based in the poor suburb Biskopsgården in Gothenburg, stepped forward to support Megaphone. In an article in *Aftonbladet*, titled 'A Nation on Fire', members of the Panthers responded to government claims that the Husby events brought to the fore a need for stronger police in poor suburbs:

> If you insist on reducing every single political question to a police matter, then maybe we just should start electing police instead of politicians. Yet another part of society died in that Husby apartment. That's why there are fires. But you already knew that. (*Aftonbladet*, 23 May 2013)[9]

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[9] The article was translated and published on libcom.org (http://libcom.org/news/sweden-open-letter-nation-fire-25052013). Members of the Panthers also appeared as 'spokespersons' for Megaphone in the above-mentioned 'Debatt' on national television. Megaphone declined to participate in the program, referring to the widespread allegations in the media that it had organized the uprising.

Fig. 5.1 Demonstration by *The Panthers for the Restoration of the Suburb*. Photo: The Panthers for the Restoration of the Suburb

The Panthers for the Restoration of the Suburb (Pantrarna för upprustning av förorten) was formed by suburban youth in Gothenburg in 2011. The organization is strongly influenced by the Black Panther Party and the long history of African-American struggle on the North American continent. Beginning with a publicly voiced and pointed critique of the policing of Biskopsgården, the organization rapidly made some spectacular gains in relation to local media. Partly through their appearances in the media in connection with the Stockholm uprising, they became well-known nationally as a key SMO in the emerging new urban social movement.

Addressing issues of segregation, stigmatization and systematic housing disinvestment in poor suburbs, this new urban social movement's more explicit goals are to acquire knowledge and to dialogue with politicians and other power-holders. A common denominator of the major SMOs in the poor suburbs is that their points of departure are taken from narratives with significant historical and global references. The Panthers find inspiration in the black civil-rights movement in North America,

and Megaphone in the Arab Spring. This reflects a specific dimension of Swedish suburbs: the extreme ethnic heterogeneity, giving rise to constant processes of hybridization, which we argue is a condition facilitating the current mobilization. While these neighborhoods often do not contain more than 10,000 people, more than one hundred different languages are spoken there. Residents have roots that extend across the entire globe. No one ethnic group dominates, as no group encompasses more than 10 % of the total population of the area. In their demands for the recognition and rehabilitation of those who have been forced out to the urban periphery over the past few decades, they explicitly draw on the traditional ethos inherent in early twentieth-century Swedish popular movements, first and foremost the workers' movement, such as worker adult education, but also the religious-reform and temperance movement with roots in the nineteenth century. This involves actual cooperation with sections of the old popular movements, such as the Workers Educational Association (ABF). As a result, some of the activists refer to links between the contemporary suburban struggle and the 'hunger riots' a hundred years ago.

This new urban social movement, of which Megaphone and the Panthers are key nodes, has grown rapidly in the poor suburbs of Million-Program areas in the 2010s, becoming increasingly national. For example, in Alby, Stockholm, residents fight the privatization of municipal housing stock under the banner 'Alby is not for sale—we are not for sale'. In Gränby (Uppsala), Skarpan (Linköping) and Pennygången (Gothenburg), tenants have resisted 'renoviction' plans. In 2014, two national meetings named 'The Housing Roar', gatherings of activists from across the country, were held, the first in Stockholm, the second in Gothenburg. Part of this network is also an 'old' SMO: the TA. Facing a new housing policy that has fundamentally undermined its previous position as a relatively powerful interest organization, the TA has begun to re-define its identity and to politicize its activities.[10]

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[10] The TA's membership has decreased dramatically since the re-regulation of the housing market began in the 1990s; between 1997 and 2011, the number of member households decreased from 620,000 to 528,000 (*Hem och Hyra*, 21 January 2011, www.hemhyra.se)

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have pointed to two major urban uprisings occurring in Swedish cities, the first in 1917, the second in 2013. Both were defined by deep class segregation and urban poverty, rising out of an urban geography of grievances and despair, their anger and violence primarily targeting shops and vehicles in their own neighborhoods, as well as the police—the representatives of the state with which the participants in the uprisings were in daily contact. The 1917 uprising occurred approximately 15 years before the political party brought to power by the workers' movement had declared that it would construct a 'Peoples' Home' (Folkhemmet), a welfare state founded on the political redistribution of resources. The 2013 uprising occurred approximately 15 years after a Conservative-led government had declared a 'system shift' and begun a rapid dismantling of the Swedish welfare state.

Contrary to popular belief, modern Swedish democracy was not built by politicians, but by social movements. We have shown how an urban social movement played a part in the construction of the Swedish welfare-state city. The major rent strike in the 1930s contributed to making the Tenants' Association a powerful agent in the emergence of a housing politics where 'good housing for all' served for an extended period as a central goal of political reform. But the Swedish welfare state mutated via a political culture of consensus that is most accurately interpreted as a technocratic decision-making practice balancing demands from business and civil society. Responding to this, a second urban social movement mobilized for further democratization of urban development, and against gentrification, in the moment of the welfare state's first deep crisis in the 1970s. State responses to this second movement involved reforms which, rather than furthering urban democratization, fed into the deeper structural transformation bringing the neoliberal city to Sweden.

We have argued that the urban uprising that exploded in Stockholm in 2013 needs to be understood in relation to the structural social inequalities, territorial stigmatization and the lack of democratic influence in urban development that define contemporary neoliberal urbanism in Sweden. We have also argued that they must be seen in the context of an emerging urban social movement based in the Million-Program poor

suburbs, centred on two key movement organizations. Such an analysis is supported by the experiences publicly voiced by movement spokespersons in connection with the Stockholm uprising that explicitly linked the uprisings to the context of social movement mobilization. Through these appearances, immigrant youth made themselves spokespersons not only for young people in Husby, but also in other similar poor suburbs across Sweden. As a member of Megaphone reflected in retrospect: 'we gave ourselves the right to interpret the situation, and we said that the uprisings were due to structural and political problems' (*Aftonbladet*, 20 July 2013).

The clashes between police and youth who burned hundreds of cars, which we have called 'the Stockholm uprising', cannot be interpreted as a social movement protest event in the sense of being planned and organized by activists. However, through Megaphone's and the Panthers' articulation of these events in the public sphere, the Stockholm uprising *became*, in the course of the process of the public debate on the ongoing uprising, a social movement event.

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6

Last Stand or Renewed Urban Activism? The Copenhagen Youth House Uprising, 2007

Anders Lund Hansen and René Karpantschof

Introduction

In the annual Freedom House report on the status of democracy around the world, Denmark, as usual, scored a clean 1.0, the highest possible rating for the year 2007. However, the Freedom House also noted 'during the year, the demolition of a youth center in Copenhagen's Nørrebro district sparked a series of riots leading to hundreds of arrests' (Freedom House, 2008). The center was the so-called Youth House that since 1982 had been an important *free space* for the autonomous squatter movement and other alternative milieus in the city. In the early morning of 1 March 2007 the

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Youth House was besieged by a large police force, including helicopter-borne elite units that landed on the rooftop of the squatted and well-barricaded building. After 57 minutes of fighting from floor to floor, the last of the 36 defenders of the Youth House succumbed to water-cannon jets, exploding teargas grenades, and the increasing number of elite units who flocked into the building through bulldozer-made holes in the outer walls. Soon, numerous Youth House followers, alarmed by the *breaking news*-casts from all the important Danish TV stations, began to gather and build barricades in the streets throughout the district. When the rioting ebbed three days later, thousands of outraged people had taken part in protests, the burning of scores of cars, and clashes with the nationwide police force that had resorted to repeated rounds of teargas, more than 800 arrests, and even a temporary curfew. This was, in the words of the Ritzau news agency,' some of the worst unrest in Copenhagen ever'.[1] As a consequence, the March 2007 events in Copenhagen can be seen as a temporary form of *urban uprising*. For a short while, the unrest challenged the prevailing social order, suggesting, 'there is something political in the city air struggling to be expressed' (Harvey, 2012, p. 117).

Such drama is perhaps not what one would expect from a welfare society often praised as among the most democratic and socio-economically equal societies in the world. Yet, as this chapter suggests, the rebellious events in Copenhagen manifest grave social and political tensions. Indeed, the very district of Nørrebro, where the Youth House was situated, is famed and feared as a leading scene of radical activism, including some of the most serious Danish riots over the last four decades. The Youth House campaign has an important background in the history of urban movements and the fight for what Lefebvre designated 'the right to the city' (1969) that has influenced the Nørrebro district since the 1970s. In all this, squatting has been a common practice for people who have challenged the (petty-) 'bourgeois conquest' (Harvey, 2012, p. 17) of central Copenhagen in general, and the Nørrebro district in particular.

In this chapter, we explore the Copenhagen Youth House struggle as an example of current urban uprisings. The case concerns the general question of the relation between politically and economically driven

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[1] Ritzau Bureau telegram: København i brand, 2.3.2007, 07:01.

restructuring of urban space and citizens' reactions to such changes in their surroundings. More specifically, it tells us about an urban struggle in a late phase of a long-lasting transformation of the city of Copenhagen. In this transformation, the once working-class-dominated district of Nørrebro has undergone profound changes, beginning with the evacuation of worn-out buildings in the 1970s, followed by urban renewal ('sanitation') during the 1980s, neoliberal gentrification in the 1990s, all the way to what we describe as 'hipsterfication' in the 2000s. Early in this process, citizens, especially youth, began to squat abandoned buildings and outdoor areas and otherwise claim their right to influence the development of their city. The establishment of the Youth House at Jagtvej 69 in 1982 was a result of such activity.

What, then, made the situation around the Youth House explode in 2007? What was the connection between general urban transformation and the struggle over this particular building on Jagtvej, and why did this at-first-glance local dispute in one Copenhagen district provoke sympathy protests in 22 other countries?

To answer these questions, this chapter outlines the historical background, with special attention to urban planning and development in the preceding decades, alongside contemporary movements that have shaped the scene of the 2007 uprising. Yet, before all this, we introduce some theoretical and analytical insights from urban studies and social movement research that will guide our elaboration of the Copenhagen Youth House case.

Relations between Squatting, Transnational Communities, and Urban Politics in Copenhagen

When police units forced their way into the Youth House on 1 March 2007, they were entering a *squat*. In an urban context, squatting is commonly understood as: a group of people occupying a vacant urban space (building or outdoor area) without the approval of the (private or public) owner, with the intent to use, and usually also to reshape, the space in

Fig. 6.1 Youth House followers march through Copenhagen, 23 September 2006. Photo: Hans Jørgensen

accordance with their self-defined purposes. The kind of squatting that we are dealing with in this chapter is inseparably linked to the type of left-libertarian autonomous movements that have appeared in European cities in the wake of the Youth Rebellion of the 1960s. Here, squatting refers to the occupation of urban space as a way to establish so-called free space for alternative living, characterized by collectivity, self-management, anti-commercialism, and oppositional politics in a broad sense (Pruijt, 2013). By nature, this kind of somewhat politically motivated squatting is highly conflictual, due to its direct challenge of two cornerstones of the ruling system of liberal democracy: the capitalistic notion of private ownership and the authorities' right to govern and control the society within their jurisdiction with respect to the right to regulate the urban space.

The Copenhagen Youth House served as a so-called social center, which is a common and important constituent in many larger squatter milieus around Europe. Like other such centers, the Youth House functioned as a scene for alternative music, experimental theatre, a peoples' kitchen, political meetings, etc., organized by the users of the house themselves in

accordance with their anti-capitalistic ideas, direct democracy, and Do-It-Yourself (DIY) principles. And like other squatting projects, the Youth House should be comprehended as a relational spatial phenomenon. We understand space as 'relational' and thus a product of social relations and interactions at all scales (Harvey, 2008; Katz, 2004; Lefebvre, 2003; Smith, 2008). A specific place, such as Jagtvej 69 in Copenhagen, is thus seen as 'a local articulation within a wider whole' (Massey, 1994, p. 4).

In an overall perspective, the model in Fig. 6.2 accentuates how empirical squatting projects are contingent and context-dependent phenomena (cf. also Table 6.1 below), but, in turn, also that the practice and activities of the squatters influence their own situations and surroundings. In an analytical respect, it emphasizes the multi-scalar dynamic of urban development (e.g., Brenner, Marcuse, & Mayer, 2012) and the relations between urban politics, groups, and collective action.

Thus, the model comprises a set of factors grouped under the headline of *Urban Politics*. This suggests that the establishment, formation, and life-course of a specific squatted space depends on the distribution of political power and regulative regimes as regards urban resources like buildings and outdoor space in the city in question. Furthermore, social movement theory emphasizes that activism should be understood as peoples' reaction to the political environment, such as threats against their

Urban uprising: squatting

Urban politics / political economy ←→ Transnational communities
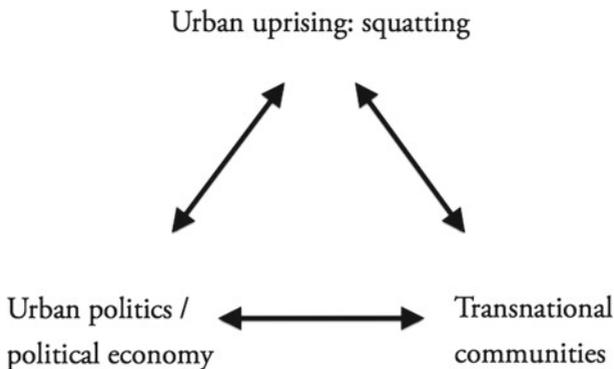
Fig. 6.2 Relations between squatting, urban politics and political economy, and transnational communities and inspiration

Table 6.1 Urban development and squatting in the Nørrebro district, 1970–2015

	Urban development	Squatter movement	International inspiration
1st phase: 1970–1980	Social-democratic city I: 'sanitation': demolition of worn out buildings	Hippies, new (marxist) left, offensive squatters	Youth rebellion
2nd phase: 1980–1990	Social-democratic city II: 'sanitation' cont.	BZ-militants, antiimperialists, offensive/defensive squatters	European autonomous, overseas liberation movements
3rd phase: 1990–2015	The entrepreneurial city: neoliberalism, gentrification/ hipsterfication	Reclaim the city activism, defensive squatters	Global justice movement

interests or favorable opportunities to realize their claims in an effective way (Tarrow, 2011). Applied to our subject, this means that *squatting* projects, among other things, depend on: the kind and amount of buildings and outdoor sites accessible to occupation; the authorities' attitude toward such activity; and the existence of potential allies like local political groups, tenant movements, and others who accentuate the question of housing deprivation and other needs for space. Finally, the way activists organize, frame, and legitimize their squats, and the kind of political protest that emanates from squatter milieus, results not only from local processes. On the contrary, the last set of factors in the model, *transnational communities and inspiration*, points to the fact that, notwithstanding their roots in the local urban territory, many squatter milieus in post-war Europe have been significantly influenced by an international diffusion of ideas, strong transnational ties with like-minded groups, and a general global outlook (López, 2013).

Urban Politics: Conflict and Neoliberal Urban Transformation

Lefebvre (1991) saw the emancipatory potential associated with the creative destruction of the three-dimensional (material, ideological-institutional, symbolic-affective) multi-scalar processes behind *the production of space*.

Furthermore, he identifies *the urban revolution* (1970/2003) as both a diagnostic of how urbanization has become a world-wide process, and an analysis of how the processes of urban transformation offer opportunities for marginalized social groups to claim 'the right to the city' (1996). Lefebvre, thus, discusses how revolutionary claims can be made for social surplus and political decision-making through struggles over space. Urban transformation remains marked by conflicts: from grand Haussmann-style projects, such as slum clearance and 'sustainable' urban planning of Expo 2015 in Milan, to the gentrification associated with state-led neighborhood 'sanitation', 'renewal', 'regeneration', 'revitalization', 'uplift', etc. of places like Nørrebro in Copenhagen. Sometimes this takes the form of a deliberate, explicit, and systematic 'creative destruction' (Harvey, 2003) to make way for 'modernity', 'development', or 'the creative city'; at other times, the instruments and mechanisms are subtle and the pass unnoticed, at least for people not directly affected. Responses from social movements, or the lack thereof, are often a result of the character of the changing urban environment.

Changing urban environments are, however, not only a product of specific urban-development 'projects', but also of the capitalist-space economy's value-in-motion and associated 'spatial fixes' (Harvey, 1982). This entails the making and taking of 'rent gaps' (Clark & Gullberg, 1997; Smith, 1979, 1996), struggles over which generate gentrification and urban change. Investors, financiers, real estate agents, developers, local politicians, the state and social movements are thus all combatants in the struggles over urban space (Lund Hansen, 2006). The outcome of these battles is often-uneven geographical and social development. According to Neil Smith (2002a, p. 13), uneven development today is 'increasingly organized around the nexus of global and local'. The rhythms of capitalism, gentrification, and urban governance formed by competition between cities translate into uneven development: segregation, exclusion, and space wars, 'sometimes erupting into the public spectacle of inner-city riots…but waged daily just beneath the surface of the public (publicized), official version of the routine urban order' (Bauman, 1998, p. 22). Specific battles among specific actors over concrete places lead to specific outcomes or urban 'topographies' (Katz, 2004). To comprehend the events in Copenhagen during early March 2007, we need to recognize these relationships.

Urban political coalitions and institutional setups are temporally and spatially particular. However, responses to the challenges of 'globalization' and post-Fordist structural and spatial transformations have been rather uniform across space. The contours of a major shift in urban governance, which is part and parcel of the concomitant rise of neoliberalization, were outlined in Harvey's (1989) much-cited article 'From managerialism to entrepreneurialism; the transformation of urban governance in late capitalism'. An entrepreneurial, neoliberal urban politics, more accommodating towards investors and developers, has been replacing the classic social-democratic, Keynesian 'managerialism' of most western cities. Copenhagen also embraced the neoliberal growth-oriented agenda in the late 1980s, often referred to as neoliberal urban politics. Margaret Thatcher led the way when she made London the engine of growth for the United Kingdom in the 1980s through neoliberal reforms (Harvey, 2005). Denmark followed this example, and during the past decades, central actors on the urban political scene have, thus, increasingly perceived Copenhagen as a node in the European urban system and as an engine of growth for all of Denmark. (For a more detailed analysis, see Lund Hansen et al., 2001, 2015.)

Post-war urban development in Copenhagen was a result of the political and administrative construction of the welfare state. Economic growth in the 1960s led to increased welfare, population growth, expansion of automobilism, and the construction of increasingly distant suburbs. State, county, and municipal authorities regulated this rapid development of the built environment in the suburbs. Growth culminated in the late 1960s, with the period's well-known pattern of uneven development: investments in the suburbs and disinvestment in the inner city (Smith, 2008). In this period, Nørrebro was characterized by urban decay and disinvestment, which took the form of derelict industrial and neglected residential buildings. It was against this background that the social-democratic-led municipality in the 1970s and 1980s launched a 'sanitation' scheme, or slum-clearance policy, for the area (Andersen, 2001). What the politicians did not know was that this policy created a field for many coming battles between the Copenhagen authorities and citizens about 'the right to the city'.

Urban Struggle in the Nørrebro District, 1970–1990

During the 1970s, squatting projects and tenants' movements flourished in Nørrebro. Like elsewhere in Copenhagen, the first generation of squatters, known as 'Slum Stormers' (Slumstormere), took over unused apartments and whole buildings that were abandoned due to the slum clearance. Some of this activity represented a political tendency to address tenants' interests and housing deprivation, and could be interpreted as a reflection of a broader class struggle for social justice (Harvey, 1973). Some Nørrebro squatting projects also represented utopian elements in continuation of the international Youth Rebellion, such as attempts to establish urban space for alternative, radical-left, and hippie-inspired communities and lifestyles. Initially, the surprised authorities met the new squatters with tolerance and amenability. But in the late 1970s, tensions in Nørrebro rose, as Slumstormere collectives and other squatting projects stood in the way of the urban renewal that should have followed slum clearance. One of these projects was Byggeren, which was a popular self-managed playground and recreational area that had been squatted in 1973. In 1980, Byggeren stood in the way of the planned construction of new residential complexes, and the clearance of Byggeren became the decisive showdown between ruling social-democrats in the city council and the leftist Nørrebro squatters and tenant movements. For two weeks, thousands of citizens struggled in Nørrebro streets against a heretofore unseen mobilization of police forces, but when the smoke cleared the mayor had his will and the once vivacious Copenhagen squatter movement appeared broken (Karpantschof, 2011, 2014; Karpantschof & Mikkelsen, 2014; Lund Hansen, 2010).

Some of the youth who had participated in the *Battle of Byggeren 1980*, were among the initiators of the next generation of Copenhagen squatters, the so-called BZs ('bz' is a phonetic abridgement of the Danish word for squatting). The BZs started out in Nørrebro in 1981 with a self-managed youth center as their primary demand. They soon expanded their goals to include self-managed housing collectives, which they established themselves by squatting some of the many houses that were still empty

due to ongoing slum clearance. Unlike the preceding Slumstormere, the new BZ movement was immediately faced with political rejection and heavy-handed police intervention. Then, after their first half-year of campaigning, the youth, who had started out with flower-painted faces and non-violent sit-downs, began to defend their occupied houses with stones and regular riots, which in turn provoked widespread public attention and criticism of the municipality's handling of the issue. In October 1982, just one week after their hitherto most violent riot, the squatters achieved their first political victory. The mayor of Copenhagen, who had previously denied the group any recognition, gave in to the demand for a youth center, and handed over the building at Jagtvej 69 that later became known as the Youth House (Karpantschof, 2014; Karpantschof & Mikkelsen, 2014).

The BZs' core vision was to establish free space for their self-determined and emancipative living, separated from what they saw as the malicious surrounding society. Still, they were far from escapist political introverts. Quite the contrary, the BZs engaged in numerous national and international struggles. In the second half of the 1980s, after a series of capsized negotiations on the status of BZ houses, the BZs strengthened their international orientation and developed an understanding of their own situation in relation to a global fight for freedom and resistance against transnational capitalism and imperialism. Thus, in 1986, a BZ pamphlet sent out during a nine-day-long barricade uprising claimed that the:

> Occupied houses in Copenhagen are free spaces in a city otherwise transfixed by lack of life and opportunities. The objective behind the municipality's demolition and urban planning policy is to transform the entire city center into a desert-like landscape, dominated by fancy office and commercial buildings. The living environments are deliberately smashed and replaced by expensive housing for good taxpayers or 'office palaces' for multinational companies…. The repression is taking place globally, and it is the same multinational pigs that are behind this development everywhere. A corollary of our lives as squatters is to fight against the United States, South Africa and so on, together with the liberation movements in other countries.[2]

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[2] The pamphlet is reproduced in Petersen (ed.) 1986: p. 116.

After 1990, much of the BZ framing, like anti-imperialistic slogans, lost relevance in the new world order. But one strong rhetorical figure survived the BZ years: the *politicians only listen when we make trouble* argument. The way the BZs had won the Youth House in 1982, by changing a situation of political rejection through disruptive protests, turned out to be the first of what Karpantschof (2015) names the *no talks–violence–renewed talks* sequences that characterized the relation between the BZ movement and the Copenhagen authorities throughout the 1980s. Based on such experiences, the *politicians only listen* argument found broad support internally and became an important ideological heirloom that was taken up again by the next generation of Youth House followers in the twenty-first century.

Neoliberal Urbanism and Hipsterfication, 1990–2015

As both Lefebvre (2003), Bauman (1998) and Brenner et al. (2012) remind us, struggles over space do not only take the form of violent street battles, but are also fought through more or less subtle means. This has also been the case in Nørrebro, where global finance capital, culture, and accommodating urban politics are changing the urban landscape. Neoliberal urbanism emphasizes inter-city competition and the necessity of strategic policies to invest in becoming, or in creating an image of being, attractive locations for capital investment and 'the creative class' in the financialized economy. The material manifestations of this entrepreneurial neoliberal politics also include, in Copenhagen, new built environments for the main actors in the 'new economy' (the IT and FIRE—Finance, Insurance, Real Estate—sectors), including luxury hotels, restaurants, conference centers, and shopping malls. To this must be added investments in housing and publicly financed renewal of inner-city housing to attract the 'new middle class' to the globalized 'creative city' (Lund Hansen et al., 2001, 2015). These 'generalized' processes of gentrification (Smith, 2002b), generated by public policy, entail the displacement of marginalized inner city residents who do not fit into the 'creative class'.

A recent study of the consequences of the urban renewal of the neighborhood of Vesterbro, next to Nørrebro, suggests that the municipality changed strategy in the 1990s. The top-down authoritarian demolition scheme of the 1970s and 1980s in Inner Nørrebro was replaced by rhetoric of 'participation' and 'inclusion', and renovation of existing buildings (Larsen & Lund Hansen, 2008). The study, however, shows that the urban renewal policy can be seen as a smooth, even stealthy, tactics to make way for gentrification, harvest huge land rents (development gains), attract the 'economically sustainable' (Copenhagen Municipality, 2005) population, and displace the socio-economically weak population: the 'trash,' as the former head of planning in Copenhagen called this group, with revanchist poetry.[3] During the 1990s and 2000s, several 'next-generation' urban renewal schemes were launched in Nørrebro: e.g., Kvarterløft Nørrebro Park (Nørrebro Park Neighborhood Uplift) and Områdefornyelse (area renewal) around Mimersgade, including Superkilen (The Super Wedge), 100 mill DDK, a park/bicycle path designed by BIG Architects and financed by a public-private partnership between Copenhagen municipality and Realdania. Furthermore, the construction of Cityringen, the Metro circle-line, started in 2011 at several locations in Nørrebro, eventually connecting the area more closely to the city center. All in all, this urban development has changed the image of the area. The changes triggered a critique of neoliberal urbanism, most vividly exemplified by the events connected to a 'reclaim the street' party in August 2015. The party developed into a demonstration and protest action where banks, real estate shops, and the police were attacked by cobblestones and Molotov cocktails. Activists explained their action as follows:

> Recent urban changes in Nørrebro have not been beneficial for everyone; the winners are the creative class with their parents' millions as back up…. Many young people are unemployed and have uncertain prospects after the recent economic crisis. It [the conflict] was not started by us, but by greedy speculators in the banking sector and among real estate agents. It is therefore only natural that dissatisfaction and protest occurs. We do not want

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[3] Interview with Holger Bisgaard, Head of Planning for Copenhagen municipality. Copenhagen, 26.01.2000.

them here; they only have an interest in being here for as long as there is profit to be made.[4]

Looking at the call for this year's Danish real estate conference, COPSUM, on 'Nørrebro and Northwest: development and investments 2015–2025', confirms that change is coming. The areas have changed character:

> from being run-down industrial districts to become new and trendy parts of the town…. The districts hold opportunities for development. The development will be boosted due to the municipality's area renewal schemes…. The area renewal schemes will kick-start a positive development…. Cityringen (the Metro circle-line) will make the areas more attractive…. The many opportunities will promote a new urban mentality in the two areas, and thus make them as attractive as the inner city…. We look at the areas as investment objects and provide investors and developers with a solid overview of plans and perspectives.[5]

Just a few blocks from Jagtvej 69, we find 'Copenhagen's no. 1 hipster street' Jægersborggade.[6] The street used to be a notorious biker-gang hangout and center for drug-dealing. It was built as speculative working-class housing at the end of the nineteenth century (Hansen, 2004). As a result of failed speculation, it became possible for inhabitants to buy the apartment buildings as co-ops in 1993, and since then the co-operative has been a driving force in transforming the neighborhood. This is how the street presents itself on its homepage: 'The working class and the downright poor primarily inhabited this neighborhood. Today Jægersborggade is alive with small independent shops providing the best in coffee, fashion, food, and arts and crafts. Welcome to Jægersborggade…a small street

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[4] Activists quoted in a newspaper article in *Dagbladet Information* entitled 'Paving for cohesion' ('Brosten for sammenhængskraft') (Róin, 2015, p. 6) (our translation).

[5] COPSUM, Nørrebro and Northwest: development and investments 2015–2025, web: http://byensejendom.dk/conference/Nørrebro-og-nordvest-udvikling-og-investeringer-2015-2025-653 (31.05.2015) (our translation).

[6] Porridge in Jægersborggade, web: http://sharingcopenhagen.blogspot.se/2012/02/porridge-in-jgersborggade.html (31.05.2015).

in Nørrebro where quality and innovation go hand in hand'.[7] Strong real estate interests push for change in the area, and gentrification/hipsterfication is sweeping through.

Chief of The Knowledge Centre for Housing Economics Curt Liliegreen evaluates urban renewal/state-led gentrification in Copenhagen and Nørrebro, from the late 1980s onwards as follows:

> I saw it as if there was an agenda to gentrify Copenhagen, but it was not necessarily announced publicly…. [I]t has contributed to pushing the socioeconomically weak groups out of the area.[8]

The Youth House Revolt in 2007

The Youth House revolt that erupted in Nørrebro in 2007 thus happened in a context very different from that of the 1970s and 1980s, when the Copenhagen squatters had been on the offensive and continuously able to establish new free spaces around the city. When the slum clearance of Nørrebro was completed around 1990, and was succeeded by neoliberal urbanism, the result was a situation that left few buildings unused and available for occupation. Even if squatters did find a suitable site, they would immediately have to deal with a rearmed police force that was less tolerant of squatting in the city. Consequently, illegal occupation of urban space as a form of action lost significance. For example, in the ten-year period 1996–2005, just four houses are reported to have been squatted in the area surrounding the Youth House. None of them mobilized the amount of followers that the BZs did in the 1980s, and only one of them, Det Blå Hus (The Blue House, 2002–2003), lasted more than a few weeks. Still, the struggle about 'the right to the city' was not quite a closed chapter. While it had become difficult to establish new free spaces, the fight to preserve old ones continued, sometimes successfully, as when activists in 1996 managed to

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[7] All about the street, web: http://jaegersborggade.com/wpAB/en/jaegersborggade-2/ (01.06.2015)
[8] Quoted in Róin, 2015, pp. 6–7 (our translation).

defend the People's Park in Nørrebro against a planned construction project by scaring the city council with the prospect of comprehensive unrest. Another issue was attempts to obstruct the gentrification of Nørrebro through vandalization of McDonalds and 7-Elevens and window-smashing of some of the many new latte cafés that accompanied arriving middle-class people who bought their way into the restored and expensive apartments in the district. But these attempts remained scattered and without much effect (Karpantschof, 2014; Karpantschof & Mikkelsen, 2009, 2014).

Additionally, the kind of leftist radicalism that the Copenhagen squatters had represented since the youth revolt of the 1960s was weakened by the crisis of leftist vision in the wake of the 1989 Fall of the Wall, and the subsequent triumph of liberalism and the western model of democracy. In the process, the former BZ movement disintegrated in the beginning of the 1990s, and was transformed into a loose network of activist groups in which the ideas of free space and urban struggle in general, at least for some time, were displaced by themes such as anti-racism and environmentalism. For the Youth House at Jagtvej 69, this meant the loss of the supportive milieu that BZ had created. This was also noted by its political enemies, who presumed that the risk of strong reaction in the event of a police action against Jagtvej 69 had now diminished. By the mid-1990s, the Youth House was still owned by the municipality, and in spite of a decrease in activity, it still functioned as a self-managed free space for alternative milieus. An accidental fire that damaged parts of the Youth House in 1996 triggered a discussion in the Copenhagen city council about the future of the house, and, in 1999, a majority of social democrats and right-wing politicians reached an agreement to close the youth center by putting Jagtvej 69 on the market. Two years later, in 2001, the Youth House was sold to the Christian sect Faderhuset (the Fatherhouse), which of course demanded the activists leave its new property. For complex juridical and political reasons, it took another six years before the police cleared the Youth House in March 2007 (Karpantschof, 2009; Karpantschof & Mikkelsen, 2014).

Obviously, the users of Jagtvej 69 resisted the idea of closing down their youth center and started a counter-mobilization to preserve it. When the politicians first began to debate the issue in 1996, Youth

House users responded with minor rallies at city hall, and after the 1999 decision, they took the case to court, claiming that the 1982 agreement between the city council and the BZs had promised the house to Copenhagen youth forever. Between 1996 and 2005, when there was still no definite conclusion to the case, the number of Youth House demonstrations and happenings fluctuated around just six protests annually. The city council generally refused to hold discussions with the Youth House users, and when a court decision on 28 August 2006 went against the activists, all political and juridical doors closed. Following this, in September 2006, the conflict that had smoldered for 10 years literally burst into flames and escalated into frequent, continued, and occasionally quite violent protests that would mobilize thousands and occupy the Danish public for the rest of that year, and most of 2007 as well. By 2006, the radical-left milieus had regained some strength and visionary power due, for example, to the rising Global Justice Movement that also mobilized Copenhagen activists. Thus, many of these activists were familiar with new strategies of open-network mobilization with non-violent mass protest, and with the core beliefs of the global movement, like the need for cultural diversity, ecological sustainability, and criticism of neoliberal urbanism, such as gentrification, all of which became important aspects of the Youth House mobilization (Karpantschof, 2009, 2015).

With Fig. 6.3, we can follow the events on a monthly basis during the two most crucial years, 2006–2007. The figures reveal the overall pattern of the Youth House campaign with regard to the frequency of protests and a rough distinction between the categories of peaceful and violent actions. (For more detail on these actions, see the note at the bottom of Fig. 6.3.) The first serious riot involving many arrests occurred in September 2006, and the fact that it happened shortly after the final 'death sentence' for the Youth House in late August offers a clue. On 23 September, thousands of sympathizers participated in a peaceful march against the now-palpable threat of a police raid on the Youth House. The following day, the activists arranged a so-called *reclaim the streets* action that was precisely one of the new forms of protest inspired by the just-mentioned Global Justice Movement. During a 'reclaim the streets'
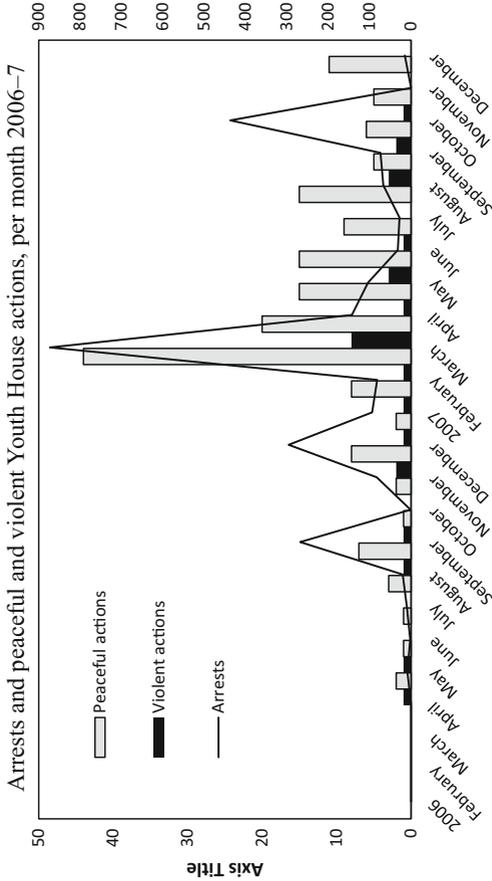
Fig. 6.3 Arrests and peaceful and violent Youth House actions monthly 2006–2007. *Note:* The category of "peaceful actions" comprises 138 entirely peaceful parades, happenings, etc., and 42 protests involving minor scuffles. "Violent actions" comprises eight incidents of targeted vandalism like window smashing and paint bombs (including one case of arson) against political institutions and private companies, nine events involving violent but short clashes, and 11 regular riots with comprehensive unrest, stone-throwing, teargas, massive arrests, etc. *Source:* Youth-House dataset 1996–2007 (cf. Karpantschof, 2009)

action, a crowd will temporarily take over a public space to recreate its use, typically by turning it into a zone for non-commercial partying and alternative lifestyles, and in that sense this form of action connects to the wider urban struggle about space. On 24 September 2006, the disorderly reclamation action of the Youth House followers provoked the police to interfere, which escalated into scenes of burning barricades and baton-swinging police officers (Karpantschof, 2009).

As many times before, numerous opinion-makers concluded that the squatters had 'lost the last remnant of sympathy', but the Youth House supporters gathered behind the old BZ argument *politicians only listen when we make trouble*. Following the incident, the otherwise uncompromising city council in fact called an extraordinary assembly to find a solution to the crisis. However, due to right-wing warnings against concessions to 'political terrorism', the assembly failed to reach a decision. As an announced December eviction approached, the Copenhagen activists organized an 'International Brigade' of like-minded foreigners, themselves armed with helmets, batons, etc., and engaged the police in a confrontation so savage that the officers retreated and hid behind their armored vehicles. Once again, the politicians reopened the case, but failed to reach a solution. The final such *no talks–violence–renewed talks* sequence occurred in October 2007. On 6 October, a so-called civil-disobedience action, another tactic copied from the global movement, in which 5000 Youth House followers forced their way through police lines to squat an empty building, ended in shrouds of teargas and 436 arrests. Combined with the pressure on politicians from several months with at minimum two to three protests a week that had succeeded the uprising in March, the spectacular October event resulted in direct negotiations between the mayor of Copenhagen and activist representatives. Thereafter, the conflict continued in a quite undramatic manner (cf. Fig. 6.3), and was finally settled in June 2008, when the city council granted the activists a new house as compensation for the old Youth House from which they had been evicted, and which was demolished in March 2007 (Karpantschof, 2009, 2015; Krøijer & Sjørslev, 2011).

The Youth House as a Frontline in a Bigger Struggle

The users of the Youth House explained their struggle with ideas similar to those promoted by their BZ predecessors, that is to say, radical ideas about urban free space as a room and base for anti-systemic, self-managed, and emancipatory activities. In 2007, such ideas still appealed to many Danish left-wing youth, like, for example, the ad-hoc group The Initiative for More Youth Houses, which, typically for leftist Youth House followers, pointed to the need for 'free spaces' in opposition to 'commercialization, profit-orientation, social uniformity, and discrimination'.[9] The Youth House activists also mobilized for international support, e.g., by referring to the Copenhagen struggle as 'an arrowhead example of the state's war on counterculture and alternative spaces.'[10] The call was heard, as is evident in the sympathy protests recorded in at least 46 cities in 22 countries, and by the fact that 38 out of 209 persons taken into custody during the March 2007 riots in Copenhagen were foreigners from squatter and autonomous milieus in Germany, Sweden, and elsewhere (Karpantschof, 2009). One of these internationalists, a German, explained her Copenhagen engagement with the understanding of the Youth House as an international 'symbol for free space…and fight against the neoliberal state' (Zeynep, 2007, p. 144, our translation).

Evidently, in radical-leftist and transnational milieus, the Youth House case mobilized many activists, who imagined the struggle to be a part of their revolutionary fight against capitalism and for radical alternatives. Such revolutionary imaginations usually do not affect wider circles in Denmark. So what made the struggle over a particular building in Copenhagen escalate to a genuine revolt that upset significant parts of the Danish nation? Apparently, the impressively dedicated and enduring Youth House campaign included thousands of freshly mobilized sympathizers, among them youth from other alternative urban milieus, such as reggae, hip-hop, and queer milieus (Karpantschof, 2009). Additionally,

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[9] Our translation, cited from press statement by Initiativet for flere Ungdomshuse, 16.3.2007.

[10] Cited from: International communiqué from Ungern (the Youth House), 27.2.2007.

the Youth House joined forces with the most famous of all Danish squatting projects: Freetown Christiania, which was squatted in 1971. In 2007, Christiania was threatened by a governmental plan to 'normalize' the politically disputed but very popular (among Copenhageners) hippie commune. Thus, on 31 March 2007, 10,000–15,000 people marched off from Christiania behind a banner calling for 'Free spaces for everybody! Defend Christiania! More Youth Houses now!' (Karpantschof, 2011).

According to police evidence, most of the 2500 arrests during the campaign were of people from the inner parts of Copenhagen, aged 15–30 years, and included students, public employees, craftsmen, unskilled workers, and the unemployed (Karpantschof, 2009). Many of them had never taken part in unrest before, and some had never even visited the Youth House, but were outraged by what they learned from the media (Ditlevsen, 2009). Clearly, the media and its public opinion-making played a crucial role in the broad mobilization.

First of all, activist groups like the initially minor Youth House milieu need the attention of others to move these others to take sides. One way to measure whether an issue has become an important item on the public agenda is its appearance in leading editorials of national newspapers. By that standard, the activists had overwhelming success. The Youth House was discussed in no fewer than 80 of the leading daily editorials in the six most prominent Danish newspapers in 2006–2007, and this, as Table 6.2 shows with a striking lack of ambiguity, is solely due to the violent events during the struggle. Peaceful protest had no effect at all in this particular regard. Even though all the editors condemned the violence, their editorials divided into 30 against, 27 neutral, and 29 supporting the political claims of the Youth House, depending on the ideological views of each paper. Regardless of the condemnation of the violence, the supportive editorials supplied the public with arguments against the responsible politicians and in favor of the political demands of the activists. According to a similar analysis, 81 in-depth articles likewise resulted from the violence on the streets. These articles included interviews with Youth House spokespersons, who diligently referred to the more good-humored protests as expressions of their non-belligerent intentions, thereby sending important signals to potential supporters and

Table 6.2 Regression model for explanation of newspaper editorials on the Youth House

Explaining variable	B	Std. error	Significance
Peaceful actions	0.035	0.0658	0.597
Violent actions	0.497	0.1535	0.001
Peaceful actions_lags1	0.001	0.0608	0.992
Violent actions_lags1	0.501	0.1678	0.003
Likelihood ratio chi-square = 53.772			

Dependent variable: number of newspaper editorials per week
Note: The model concerns weekly numbers of leading editorials in the six most important national Danish newspapers and weekly numbers of Youth House actions in Copenhagen, 2006–2007, $N = 103$ (one week missing due to lags-variables). Total numbers: editorials, 80; peaceful actions, 180; violent actions, 28. Detrended model. Poisson distribution with log link
Source: Karpantschof (2009, p. 84)

allies. Ironically, violence was the most effective way for the activists to tell the public about their (allegedly) peaceful nature.

This media behavior accounts for the high degree of support for the Youth House revealed in a series of opinion polls from 2006 to 2011 (Karpantschof, 2009). While few Danes agreed with the most radical aspects of the leftist free-space ideology, many could identify with some of the discursive figures and positions that evolved within the public debate on and framing of the Youth House dispute. One popular position derived from a specific understanding of the welfare state and participatory democracy, and stressed that Danish authorities are expected to provide facilities such as space for the citizens' personal development and diversity (Krøijer & Sjørslev, 2011). For instance, a petition in March 2007 complained that 'the Copenhagen municipality has let down the users of the Youth House by not taking full responsibility for their youth culture'. Another popular position stressed the social function of the Youth House, e.g., by arguing that the house had 'saved the Copenhagen municipality large sums of money' and 'functioned as a free space for many youth who the municipality was unable to take care of'.[11]

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[11] Statement by Forældre for flere fede Ungdomshuse (Parents for more cool Youth Houses), 1.3.2007 (our translation).

Other positions addressed more directly the question of 'the right to the city'. Thus, a supporter expressed a frequently mentioned motive for engaging in the Youth House campaign when he emphasized that the struggle was about more than a house, and that it was 'a conflict over what kind of city Copenhagen is' (Blennow, 2009, p. 14). The Youth House dispute became part of a frontline in a more general cultural struggle in which traditional leftist and social-liberal ideas collided with harsh right-wing attitudes represented by the Liberal-Conservative coalition government and its supporters from the Danish People's Party. As an important representative of the oppositional camp, the social-liberal newspaper *Politiken* took the position that 'It is a dull city, and in a wider sense a less creative society, that cannot see anything but problems in alternative communities like Christiania and the Youth House' and warned that 'the bourgeois plainness has gone too far.'[12] *Politiken* is considered a mouthpiece of 'the creative class' in Denmark, and as a matter of fact many individuals who can be described as belonging to that segment, such as musicians, actors, media people, etc., were among the Youth House supporters. It may be that middle-class people had a share in the gentrification and hipsterfication of Nørrebro, but, for their own reasons, some of them also felt that normalization of the city might go too far. Among these reasons was the vision of 'the creative city', a vision that for many creative and middle-class people legitimized the otherwise radical demand for self-governed free space. As a typical expression of this view, the left-wing deputy mayor for social affairs, Mikkel Warming, commented on the closure of the old Youth House in March 2007:

> As a city, we benefited from the creativity that emerged from the house. We got music and experiences that we otherwise would not get from the market-driven cultural sector, and the established culture was enriched by independent and talented musicians, organizers, sound technicians, etc.[13]

In January 2009, the head of the Danish Centre for Youth Research, J. C. Nielsen, suggested that the engagement in the Youth House dispute to

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[12] *Politiken*, editorial, 10.1.2007 (our translation).
[13] Press statement by deputy mayor Mikkel Warming, 26.3.2007 (our translation).

some degree is owing to the financial crisis of 2007–2008, which supposedly had changed the mentality among youth towards a stronger community orientation and participation in society.[14] But on the basis of our presentation of the unfolding of the Youth House conflict, we will first and foremost explain the 2007 uprising in Copenhagen within a political logic of struggle and interaction between free-space advocates and city governments.

Last Stand or Renewed Urban Activism?

In this chapter, we have studied the relations among squatting, urban politics, political economy, and transnational communities in relation to the history of the Youth House uprising in Copenhagen in 2007. The city is an integral part of the capitalist mode of production, and the urban landscape expresses the resulting uneven geographical development. However, this logic can be challenged through the politicization of urban issues and everyday battles for the right to the city. But after decades of neoliberal reforms, the right to the city has been turned into a narrow, individual right, reserved for a limited economic and political elite which largely focuses on their property rights to the city (e.g., Larner, 2003). This has, to varying extents, led to what David Harvey (2003) calls 'accumulation by dispossession'. In this process, public or shared goods are transferred into private property. A classic example is Margaret Thatcher's sale of social housing in England. In a Danish context, the Liberal-Conservative government tried the same with non-profit housing (almene boliger) in the 2000s (Larsen & Lund Hansen, 2015). This practice of 'accumulation by dispossession' is an integral part of how capitalist production operates, and this is basically what many of the new social movements implicitly question, whether they address homeless rights, climate justice, commodification of natural resources, human trafficking, or bank bailouts.

The activism related to the Youth House should also be seen in the following context. In *The urban revolution*, Lefebvre (2003) discusses how

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[14] J. C. Nielsen is interviewed in 'Unge bliver overrumplet af finanskrisen', *Information*, 2.1.2009.

architects and planners, through the use of tools of urbanism or 'class urbanism', facilitate a decline of 'the spontaneous city' (p. 160). He is, thus, deeply critical of the relations between capitalism, urban politics/ planning, and changing (urban) landscapes. Looking at the current plans revealed in the Danish real estate conference mentioned earlier (cf. note 3), it is quite clear that Lefebvre's diagnosis is not without resonance in the urban reality of Copenhagen. He does, however, also see possibilities in an alternative urbanism: 'Yet not everything about urbanism is negative…. Urbanism provides a presentiment of new scarcities and occasionally the opportunity to explore them: space, time, desire, the elements (water, air, earth, the sun)' (ibid., p. 161). This tendency can also, in Copenhagen, be recognized in the latest buzz around 'the sustainable city'. Taken seriously, of course, this would be a very important agenda, but often it takes the form of a green-washed neoliberal urbanism. As Lefebvre reminds us, 'urbanists tend to avoid the concrete and fundamental question of the (social) management of scarcities that replace older scarcities (in the so-called advanced countries)' (ibid.), an agenda taken up by urban political ecology: 'Re-naturing urban theory is … vital to urban analysis as well as to urban political activism' (Heynen, Kaika, & Swyngedouw, 2006, p. 2).

Looking at the recent history of 'Ground 69', where the uprising started in 2007, one can ponder whether the events of March 2007 were a 'last stand' of resistance, or whether a 'renewed urban activism' has developed out of the events. On 2 May 2014, under the headline 'Activists reoccupy Jagtvej 69', the newspaper *Arbejderen* reported: 'This weekend, activists plan to reconquer the empty Youth House plot, Jagtvej 69 with spades, soil and rakes. They convene a working weekend to build an urban garden'. The plot had for a long period been used as a dumping site, and the activists wanted, through guerilla gardening, to transform the space into a rallying point. The police did 'keep an eye' on the event, and there have been clashes between the 'gardeners' and authorities. 'Every revolution has its agora', as Merrifield (2014, 79) points out, and at least some of the heirs to Jagtvej 69 have been struggling to transform the place into a fertile ground, where old movements can strike roots, and the seeds of new movements can grow.

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7

Right to the City—and Beyond: The Topographies of Urban Social Movements in Hamburg

Peter Birke

Introduction

With its currently around 1.8 million inhabitants, Hamburg is the second-largest city in Germany and one of the few German cities with a growing population. While illustrating the sheer number of inhabitants, the term *growth* also has a career as a buzzword of neoliberal reform. Living in a "growing city" means your city government has the attraction of rich and well-educated citizens at the very top of its agenda. Not everybody is welcome—rather, new citizens are seen as more or less valuable depending on their formal qualifications and income. While the growing city never has been a good place for the urban poor or refugees from the global south, the shortage of affordable housing and the explosion of real estate prices do not make living easier for large parts of the middle classes, either. Therefore, urban social movements have built new alliances in recent years: Hamburg is perhaps the most spectacular example of the constitution of a Right-to-the-City network that has

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emerged on the basis of countless conflicts brought about by the neoliberalization of governmental politics. In this chapter, I will first introduce the specific forms neoliberal politics have taken in a city traditionally ruled by a social-democratic majority, while at the same time sketching how urban social protest was constituted in this context. Second, I turn to the adversaries of the waves of neoliberalization (Harvey, 2005) that followed the initial phase of the early 1980s. After sketching the short and unfinished history of the Right-to-the-City network, I will finally discuss the current situation, especially the protest movement against a threatened eviction of the social centre "Rote Flora" in the winter of 2013–2014, and the massive and currently ongoing movement supporting refugees' right to stay.

Neoliberalization: The Case of Hamburg

Hamburg's specific form of adapting neoliberal discourses in city politics has its roots in the economic recession in the early 1980s, which hit large port cities much harder than any other West German region, with the result of intense labour unrest in the first half of the 1980s. While the term "urban crisis" has a long history and defines a multifaceted process, including a wide range of phenomena from the crisis of urban modernism and urban planning to the crisis of housing and everyday life, both economic aspects and the specific form of governing a city with the special tradition of the "free town" might be worth noting in the case of Hamburg. The local dynamic of the global discourse is marked by the fact that Hamburg, as a result of the tradition that the city is not part of any German region, is both a municipality and a federal state. This implies that residents of the outskirts, including towns near the city, like Norderstedt, which developed during the third wave of industrialization after 1950, pay taxes to the authorities of other federal states. During the historic economic boom of the 1960s, this bias was reinforced by the mobilization of labour power, which extended the amount and duration of commuting, and changed its social composition.[1] The struc-

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[1] Thus, "urban sprawl" is more than a reflection of the growth of middle-class housing estates in the outskirts. It reflects a re-composition of the class structure as well, as it is for example connected to the "inner" side of migration. After 1989, for example, people living (and paying taxes) in the

Fig. 7.1 The International Building Exposition (IBA) promoted gentrification in Hamburg-Wilhelmsburg, a poor and working class quarter near the port of Hamburg, see Arbeitskreis Umstrukturierung Wilhelmsburg (2013). Photo: Catharina Thörn

tural and chronic budget deficit in both the municipalities ("Bezirksämter") and the federal state ("Land"), which already in the 1980s constituted the most important incentive of the neoliberal turn, has one of its permanent roots here.

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former GDR work in Hamburg—today slightly more than 100,000—the larger share under bad working conditions and low wages.

Contested Early Neoliberalization

While household deficits and austerity politics are enduring problems,[2] the historical breakthrough of the neoliberal *discourse* came with the economic crisis in the beginning of the 1980s. The nation- and world-wide recession of those years had stronger immediate consequences in Hamburg than in other big cities. The most visible effect was the closing of factories and industries related to the harbour. At the same time, a longer trend of a fundamental restructuring of harbour work and logistics culminated in a flexibilization of work-time and work-spaces (containerization, outsourcing, just-in-time) (Neumann, 2015). Working conditions changed radically, initially due to rapidly growing unemployment, later followed by mass precarization and flexibilization of work. Needless to say, although almost forgotten by historians, those processes resulted in and were results of class struggles. Like in many other West German regions, and especially the Ruhr district, the restructuring of traditional industries led to protests, especially within the printing and metal industries. Most notable, and connected to globalization, were the struggles within the shipyards in Hamburg and Bremen, where the economic crisis had led to global structural change.

The implementation of a neoliberal discourse in Hamburg was directly connected to the most spectacular factory occupation in Hamburg's post-war history, on the occasion of mass redundancies and a possible shutdown of the largest shipyard in the harbour of Hamburg. It was September 1983, and the plant occupation had its forerunners in a range of similar actions of workers in the steelworks and the mining industry of the Ruhr Valley, and was accompanied by the squatting of another shipyard, the AG Weser in Bremen. These actions were prompted by the threat to close the plants due to heightened transnational competition, in the case of the shipyard, by East Asian companies, and the generalized crisis of the sector. As for shipbuilding, there had been a history of unsuc-

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[2] The deficit of local households was accelerated by the central-state policy that re-distributed tax income in its favor, especially under the so-called red-green governments during the late 1990s and early 2000s. Austerity politics have continued to date on the basis of the nation-wide "debt-brake," enshrined in the constitution in 2009 (see Keller, 2014), meaning that local governments are forced to run a zero percent budget as of 2020.

cessful speculation and even major investment based on the assumption that the boom in tank ships would continue, a history linked to the shifting situation in the energy markets (Neumann, 2015; Schumann et al., 1982, pp. 99–101). Due to these developments, shipyards underwent, from the early 1970s onward, a wave of rationalization measures, which led to a second wave of Taylorization of skilled work such as that of the blacksmiths. Shortly before the occupation, another feature of "modernization" was introduced, namely the outsourcing of the canteen and the replacement of the previous workforce by a "cheaper" one.

The harbour is a part of the city that has been made invisible: It is on "the other side" of the river Elbe, where "nobody lives," a "waste land" (*eine Brache*) in the image-production of current urban development, fascinating, thrilling, and open for "development."[3] Historic social movements of harbour and shipyard workers tended to use the St. Pauli riverside as an urban stage or platform, staging and performing and making their unrest *visible* to the workers of St. Pauli and the citizens of Hamburg. This also applies to the HDW occupation. A major incentive for the beginning of the occupation was a three-day hunger strike by a couple of women, wives of shipyard workers, who were inspired and even "advised" by similar actions that had taken place at the famous Hoesch steelworks in Dortmund (Birke, 2011a; Heseler & Kröger, 1983). The action was seen as a *performance* by the women: interviews show that they hadn't the slightest inclination to *starve* (Woman and Revolution, 1984). The St. Pauli riverside was the ideal place for such an undertaking. It took place only a few meters from one of the possibly most frequented places of Hamburg, the *Landungsbrücken*, already a major tourist attraction at the time and a most important traffic-network junction used by harbour and shipyard workers when commuting to their workplaces. The occupation of the yard lasted nine days and "occupied" public opinion as well, with frequent demonstrations both in St. Pauli and the city centre. One of the demands was inspired by another transnational movement: to search for ways to develop "alternative production," with the aim of

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[3] It must be noted that the shutdown of the HDW and other industrial plants in the harbour most severely affected the poorest quarters of the town, especially Wilhelmsburg, which seen from the city center is located behind the harbour and thus has for a long time virtually been "invisible." For details, see, for example, Arbeiterpolitik (1984).

avoiding a "solution" of the crisis by extended state-financed production of submarines and other military items (Heseler & Kröger, 1983).[4]

At the same time, and only about 300 meters form the "stage" of the women's hunger strike, the most famous squat in Hamburg was established. At first glance, it pursued a completely different agenda. Instead of fighting for (seriously unhealthy) jobs like those of the shipyard workers, the *Hafenstraße* became a symbol of the *exit option*, proclaiming non-work, shoplifting, and a radical negation of the capitalist mode of production and consumerism (Hermann et al., 1988; Katzef, 2014). But at the same time, it was a proletarian movement and a movement against early gentrification. The people who lived in the by-far largest squat in Hamburg came overwhelmingly from the lower strata of the population of St. Pauli. The owner, SAGA, wanted to evict the tenants and demolish the houses, because the city council at that time was planning to "upgrade," i.e., enhance the value of the St. Pauli riverside. While some of the old tenants remained and remain in the *Hafenstraße*, in the first years of the 1980s, homeless people, youngsters, students and punks squatted the evicted flats in a so-called tacit occupation. When the "open" occupation was declared in 1984, the action was at the same time more and more seen to be connected to (1) the at-that-time vibrant international squatter movement, or more specifically, the urban centres of squatting in Western Europe: Copenhagen, Amsterdam, London, Berlin and Cologne, (2) transnational political movements like the fight against apartheid in South Africa or the hunger strikes of political prisoners in Germany (Karpantschof, 2007; Katzef, 2014). Like the HDW occupation, Hafenstraße was a part and a focal point of a broad range of social conflicts. In 1987, the conflict escalated when barricades were built to prevent eviction. After eight days, a contract was negotiated between the squatters and the city council, with the social-liberal mayor of Hamburg, Klaus von Dohnanyi, at the front of the stage.

As Rinn (2015) rightly stresses, the occupation of Hafenstraße began by staging a radical negation of the current society and by performing

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[4] The occupation ended when the works council of HDW compromised by agreeing to a severance plan, following the example established by the German mining and steel sector after the first economic downturn of the old industries in the late 1960s. The shipyard was finally closed in 1988.

alternative modes of living. Actually, *gentle urban renewal* and *sustained urban development* are strategies that were invented in the context of the squatter movement and, explicitly, as a reaction to it, especially in the case of Berlin-Kreuzberg. Thus in the 1980s, *non-normative* protests (Cloward & Piven, 1979) like squatting had far more *formative* power than any other social movement of the time. Thus, while both of these examples played a huge role in the media of the day, narratives on social movements in Hamburg of the 1980s always include the Hafenstraße, but only rarely the HDW occupation. This fact is obviously deeply related to the topographies of the protests. While the HDW and the quarters most affected by the shutdown are located on the "other side" of the harbour, the squatters entered the stage by occupying houses that were central to the gentrification strategies of local government and its housing company. Furthermore, the dialectics of remembering/forgetting might be marked not only by the narrations of the social movements, but also by an urban governmental regime which learned that the dynamism of non-normative protests could best be integrated by staging mostly symbolic and limited participation. In this sense, the idea of a delimitation of work, opposed to but also inspired by the staging of *non-work* by the squatters, might have been much easier to integrate into urban development strategies than the "alternative-production" stance of the HDW workers.

The Birth of "Hamburg Incorporated"

For the local social-democratic government, not the defence of standard employment, but "growth" in the sense of attracting new industries was the main strategy to counter the economic downturn and tax crisis. Therefore, its answer to the occupation of HDW was in no way the active promotion of alternative products. In fact, remaining yards still afterwards built and repaired ships for the German and international military. But at the same time, noticing that the times of heavy industry were over, the social-democratic government turned to other qualities of the urban landscape, and saw especially business service providers, logistics, tourism and knowledge-based work in general as crucial locational factors.

A speech by Klaus von Dohnanyi, Hamburg's mayor between 1981 and 1988, is generally seen as the founding moment of this shift. Dohnanyi, a politically and economically liberal Social-Democrat, announced in November 1983 the *Unternehmen Hamburg* ("enterprise Hamburg") (Dohnanyi, 1982; see Altrock & Schubert, 2004; Schubert, 2008 for a critical assessment). In the middle of the crisis, Dohnanyi appealed to the "entrepreneurial spirit" of the inhabitants and urged the reconfiguration of regulation to achieve "competitiveness." A discourse analysis of the speech shows how the term "growth" was re-configured, largely by connecting it to a set of terms such as "competitiveness," "creativity," "self-determination" and "human resources" (Rinn, 2014, p. 32). Shortly before leaving office, Dohnanyi evaluated the strategy, and stressed the progress made by securing crucial industries like aircraft manufacturing and attracting knowledge-based businesses to Hamburg (Dohnanyi, 1988). Actually, this was not Thatcherism; the association of "competitiveness" and "self-determination" shows rather the influence of current social movements (Neumann, 2015, p. 15), while the association of "competitiveness" and "human resources" played an important role in the social-liberal discourse of the 1970s and early 1980s. This re-interpretation might be one of the most important starting points of local neoliberalization, which occurred in a comparatively slow and often indirect form in the years to follow, with the local state as the most important *pioneering* player.

To give an example, the introduction of market logics in hospitals and other healthcare institutions was conducted step by step. After the outsourcing of infrastructural functions at the *Landesbetrieb Krankenhäuser*, hospitals were given "economic responsibility," meaning that the management had to administer its own budgets (Ries-Heidtke & Böhlke, 2009). In the context of an enduring budget crisis and austerity policies, these budgets got smaller, while healthcare work as such was under the generalized pressure of "accountability," which was just another word for the valorization and even Taylorization of almost all aspects of healthcare work. The use of "privatization," i.e., the introduction of private enterprises into the "healthcare market," was just *another incentive* within this multifaceted process, and it was not the first, but the second or third step. Roughly, one could say that the core strategy of privatization in the 1990s and 2000s was *outsourcing*, which was connected to the re-

composition of the workforce and the introduction of precarious work (Ries-Heidtke & Böhlke, 2009, 128f). The hospital sector was, in this sense, a model, although re-structuring in other sectors was conducted at different speeds.

Only when *wholesale* privatization gained speed, especially beginning in the late 1990s, was this more strongly contested by social movements, trade unions and the wider public. This was especially the case when the city administration began a reduction of the workforce accompanied by the introduction of public-private partnership projects in public services such as garbage collection and the maintenance of parks, streets, schools and public buildings. Notably, in the late 1990s and 2000s, public-owned real estate was privatized or handed to pseudo-state-owned "independent" societies, including a large number of school buildings. The consequence was disinvestment in large parts of the public infrastructure, notably in the public housing sector, which has been relatively greater than in other West German cities. In any event, compared to the Thatcherism of the 1980s, anti-privatization initiatives were late-comers in Hamburg. At first, they were largely unsuccessful, as, for example, the massive protests against the closing of the St. Pauli harbour hospital in 1997, when people from the neighbourhood squatted the hospital building after years of restructuring the hospital's work and a worsening of conditions for workers and the patients. In 2004, a strong majority in a plebiscite against full-scale privatization of hospitals was more or less completely disregarded by the conservative government of the time. A popular initiative against the privatization of the energy-supply networks has only lately been successful (Unser Hamburg—Unser Netz, 2013). In the same year, local government decided not to privatize water. In particular, the initiative for the re-communalization of the energy network was an offspring both of groups in the Right-to-the-City network and more traditional ecological movements in Hamburg.

A Topography of Segregation

The other topic central to the emergence of the Right-to-the-City network was a substantial shortage in affordable housing. The biggest actor

in the field of public housing, the state-owned SAGA GWG, owning some 130,000 flats with 300,000 inhabitants, was, since the fusion of the two companies SAGA and GWG, forced to produce profits that were again constantly used to close gaps in the public budget (Birke, 2010, 183f). In the 2000s, this produced a severe decline in construction activities of the by-far largest local housing company: From the mid-1990s to the mid-2000s, the number of "social-housing" units dropped from around 250,000 to less than 150,000, a number that would fall to under 100,000 by the end of 2014 (Recht auf Stadt, 2009). The parallel decrease of renovations, on the other hand, was laying the ground for the widening of a *rent gap*, which is an obvious factor in the accelerated gentrification, in the second half of the 2000s, of former working-class quarters like St. Pauli, St. Georg and Wilhelmsburg. This, combined with the appearance of transnationalized private real estate companies like the GAGFAH, which bought real estate especially in satellite towns like Kirchdorf-Süd or Steilshoop (see Hohenstatt & Rinn, 2013), produced a dramatic price hike. Some of the poorest neighbourhoods near the city centre were especially affected, like St. Pauli Süd, St. Pauli Nord, Altona Nord, Ottensen and later also Wilhelmsburg and other quarters on the city's periphery. For example, rent prices stipulated in new contracts rose by more than 30 % between 2004 and 2009 in St. Pauli and Wilhelmsburg (Hohenstatt & Rinn, 2013). This again must be seen in the context of stagnating and, in the precarious-work sector, even shrinking wages and a dramatic decline in social income, due to labour market reforms like the notorious "Hartz IV" program introduced in January 2005. By the end of the decade, the explosion of housing prices affected not only the widened sector of precarious workers and working poor, but to an ever-greater extent parts of the shrinking middle classes as well.

The processes and policies outlined resulted not only in income polarization as such, but have *three consequences* for the *topography of the city*. The *first* is a growing differentiation of "rich" and "poor" quarters.[5] Traditionally, there have been differences between the quarters east

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[5] The work of Jens Dangschat and his colleagues at the University of Hamburg (1992, 1994) is very important for the academic discussion on this topic. Unfortunately, statistical evidence, apart from the official data provided by *Statistisches Landesamt*, and continued research on this process is rare

and south of the harbour and those west and north of the city centre of Hamburg and Altona. For example, people living in Nienstedten, by the river west of the Altona railway station, earn annual wages ten times higher than those living on Veddel Island, east of the harbour, and the tendency is for this income gap to widen (Schleswig-Holstein, 2014). In Nienstedten, there is almost no unemployment or child poverty. On Veddel, more than 50 % of the children live in families with an income lower than half of the median, which is the criterion for child poverty. As for social infrastructure, in Wilhelmsburg, there is still an almost catastrophic scarcity of pediatricians, while the number of doctors is five times higher in Blankenese (west) than in Billstedt (east).

The map below shows the share of people who receive social benefits in Hamburg (deep red means "between 18 and 32 %"). Apart from the quarters east of the harbour, this applies to the satellite towns (Lurup/Osdorfer Born, Steilshoop) and poor quarters of the inner city (St. Pauli, Altona Nord) (Fig. 7.2).

Second, gentrification fosters another tendency: In inner-city quarters like St. Pauli, St. Georg, Altona-Nord, Ottensen and Eimsbüttel, poverty has statistically been *reduced* since the 1990s, but income differences within the population have dramatically *increased* (Schleswig-Holstein, 2014). Differences between old and new owners of real estate and/or the upper strata of workers in the new service sectors, on the one hand, and people working in sectors with low income and living in old public or cooperative housing, on the other, are far more visible in these quarters than elsewhere. The process was called *Kleinräumige Polarisierung* or *small-scale polarization* by Dangschat and colleagues, and it was rightly seen as a direct consequence of the new "entrepreneurial" governmentality (Dangschat & Oßenbrügge, 1990). Its visibility in the named quarters can't be underestimated when we turn to the question of why and how urban social movements deal with the challenge of gentrification.

Finally, a *third* form was added to these two forms of more or less deliberate urban engineering during the 1990s. Most important in terms of urban planning, HafenCity, a large project to change and upgrade

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because the research group around Dangschat left Hamburg University at the beginning of the 2000s.
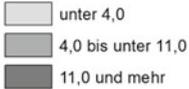
Fig. 7.2 Map showing share of people who receive social benefits in Hamburg. Source: Statistisches Landesamt Nord für Hamburg und Schleswig-Holstein

the old industrial harbour landscape adjacent to the city centre, provides housing, workplaces and leisure activities for the richer echelons of inhabitants, with the "indirect" result of gentrification of nearby quarters, including a quasi-programmed gentrification of large parts of the quarters on Wilhelmsburg Island east of the harbour (on "new-built gentrification," see Davidson & Lees, 2010; on HafenCity: tetrapak, 2003).

Neoliberalism as a hegemonic discourse is, in conclusion, a late-comer in Hamburg. Characteristic of all local governments since the mid-1980s is the devotion of their policies to a step-by-step *valorization* and *economization*, which form a broad consensus among the Social Democrats, the ruling party up until 2001, the coalition between the conservatives and right-wing populists (2001–2004), the coalition between the conservatives and the Green Party (2008–2011) and the majority government of the SPD (2011–2015).[6] All governments have shared the strategies I outlined, including the monstrous HafenCity and *Elbphilharmonie* project that have swallowed vast resources. Differences have been more ideological. The *Leitbild* (guiding principle) of the "growing city" (FHH, 2002, 2003) is an invention of the conservative government of the 2000s, including for the first time an explicitly neoliberal agenda, encompassing the idea that urban politics should do everything possible to attract young and highly skilled (as opposed to "old" and low-skilled) inhabitants. This idea was already mentioned in the 1983 speech by Dohnanyi, but it became the central argument under the conservative rule of the 2000s. By articulating what former governments actually had been doing, the conservatives and right-wing populists advanced an explicit program of demographic politics (*Bevölkerungspolitik*), thus legitimizing the expulsion and re-settlement of poorer echelons of the population with the assistance of the belief that systematic gentrification will produce the well-known but never seen "trickle-down" effect. The Greens, who came to power as a junior partner of the conservatives after the elections of

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[6] Local elections of 15 February were again won by the SPD, gaining around 46 % of the votes, but the party lost some votes and was forced to negotiate a coalition government. As this will certainly not include the left party, which gained about 8.5 % of the votes, there is no sign that the balance of power will change. An important, but in its implications somewhat unclear, feature of the election is that participation was historically low, with an average of just over 55 % and even lower participation in the poor quarters.

2008, extended this hegemonic discourse by adding two aspects: First, they used concepts like "sustainability" and "participation," thereby verbalizing the complicated process of innovations proposed and practiced by some of the social movements of the 1990s. Second, they introduced the ideology of the "creative class," which they saw as the core producer of both images and products that would be central for the competitiveness of the city. (For this concept, see FHH, 2010.)

Contested Neoliberalization

Social movements can be linked to urban developments and topographies in different ways. This is self-evident. What can be added to this banal observation is that a more interesting starting point in this case might be the widely discussed relationship between (urban) social movements and the neoliberalization of cities (Marcuse, 2009; Mayer, 2008, 2009). There is no clear-cut opposition here, but an ambivalent relation between the former and the latter, between protest and recuperation, definition and re-definition of the common usage of urban spaces. In the case of Hamburg, this examination starts with a problem which might reflect the fragmented narratives produced about and by social movements themselves. First, there is no single overarching and encompassing analysis of the history of local social protests and movements beginning in the 1980s. Second, while some aspects have been discussed in depth in at least some publications, such as recent work on the squatter movement,[7] others, such as strikes and factory occupations, have not been given any attention at all by the scientific community, although it certainly would have been interesting to compare them. As a result of the unequal distribution of research and publications/publicity, both scholarly and popular, the narrative of how social protests and movements have changed Hamburg is possibly biased. Its story may thus be strongly influenced by the *perception* of participants and histori-

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[7] For an overview, see Katzef (2014), Chap. 1.

ans, which again might be a reflection of their opportunities for gaining attention in mainstream media.[8] This chapter certainly can't compensate for that: Further research on the topic is definitely needed. But it might be useful at least to try to sketch how the interrelatedness of movements and the re-definition of urban space works.

Moving Cities

Håkan Thörn (2013, 19ff.) emphasizes that boundaries play an important role in the constitution of protests. In his introduction to *Stad i rörelse* (City in movement) he deals (or maybe plays) with different dimensions of the topic of *crossing the border*: the biographical (class journey), historical (change in the social composition of the urban landscape), and, of course, spatial dimensions. As to the latter, Thörn discusses the aspects of *centrality* and *difference. Both* play outstanding roles in the constitution of Haga as one of the melting pots of new social movements in Sweden since the early 1970s (see Sernhede, Thörn and Thörn in this volume). Notably, in his perspective, centrality/compression create opportunities: With the visualization of class relations, the possibility of their negation becomes tangible as well, and can be experienced in social struggles *and* day-to-day practices.

As I have shown, the crossing of borders played an important role, both in the history of squatting and in plant occupations, and of course in the more general diffusion of social movements. To put it in the terminology of urban planning, in post-Athens Charta urban planning, the separation of industry and housing has been a central theme. Of course, the invisibility of the plants and yards in the harbour territory was not an objective phenomenon; it was socially constructed. Naturally, industry *was* visible in a physical sense: Just go for a walk along the St. Pauli river-

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[8] Thus, the current fragmented narrative of the history and current relevance of social movements is at least partly a result of the mediatization and even eventization of the protests/movements. See, for example, the recent re-interpretation of "squatting" as "innovation," including the distinction between "good" (innovative) and "bad" (destructive) squatters in Hamburg's largest daily newspaper, *Hamburger Abendblatt* (HAB, 12.8.2014).

side and you will still see a huge logistical and industrial complex. But the citizens of Hamburg have always had contradictory feelings about "their" harbour, and have seen the lowlands on the other side of the river both as the "dark side" and as the "heart" and "engine" of the city. In particular, working conditions in the harbour industry were seldom discussed in mainstream media during pre-1968 Fordism and at the height of the post-war boom. Moreover, construing "work" and "family life" as separate spaces was an important aspect of the integration of (mainly male) skilled workers into the logic of capitalist accumulation, although this does not say anything about how this succeeded. Seen from this perspective, it is certainly no wonder that the previously mentioned women's hunger strike of September 1983 took place on the *visible side* of the river, and in that way crossed the river, urging male workers to resist the closures, and confronting the gendered constitution of the traditional workers' movement. At the same time, it addressed the nature of the harbour industry and its products, demanding a change from military to civil production.

In this sense, both the squatters' movement, which developed after the occupation of the *Hafenstraße*, and the labour unrest during the crisis of the early 1980s were situated at an intersection between two modes of urban planning and development (before and after "Athens," so to speak), and between two economic policies (before and after "Fordism"). But they were also literally situated between St. Pauli as a working-class quarter and the pre-gentrification harbour. The term gentrification itself has a dimension of transformation and metamorphosis; it starts with an "invasion," which means someone crosses the border. Just think of the famous definition by Ruth Glass (1964, 18f.): "Shabby, modest mews and cottages—two rooms up and two down—have been taken over, when their leases have expired, and have become elegant, expensive residences."

But the idea can be turned on its head as well. The changing urban landscape was not just a major dimension in social protests; protests also contributed their share to producing it. What industrial sociologists call the "delimitation of work" is made spatial in the process of gentrification: See, for example, the founding ideas of HafenCity, with its assemblage of work, leisure and residential spaces, obviously inspired by a critical assessment of the separations produced by modernist urban planning. The valorization of the idea simply wouldn't exist if there hadn't been a

movement that protested separation and alienation. And the story has continued: A lot of social protests in Hamburg since 1984 played with the same motif. For example, the occupation protesting the closure of the *Hafenkrankenhaus* (the St. Pauli hospital) in the spring of 1997, in its initial phase jointly conducted by inhabitants of the quarter and some employees, was both a protest against the economization of public services, the deterioration of working conditions and austerity policies, and an action against the valorization of real estate and the re-composition of the population of St. Pauli (Birke, 2011a). Or consider the protests against the eviction of the trailer park *Bambule* in late 2002, which were followed by a physical scattering of the trailers. In 2002–2003, the trailer park residents joined forces with students protesting the closure of a high school that has provided and still provides "adult education," as well as with thousands of social workers, clients of social institutions such as female refugees and immigration counsellors protesting austerity measures proposed by the conservative/right-wing populist government (Hauer & Rogalla, 2006). When "Recht auf Stadt" (RAS) started as a network in 2009, it connected itself to these concrete stories: Without the dense history of social protests around the St. Pauli riverside, the network would not have come into existence in the same way. Moreover, one major slogan was "The City Is Our Factory," which was partly inspired by initiatives that protested the precarization of work (Hamm & Suter, 2010). At the same time, *centrality* and *density* were maybe the most important tropes that circulated within RAS in its first years.

Right to the City

In the summer of 2011, the RAS network issued an invitation to take part in a conference in Hamburg. The text employs situationist language: "The Network Right to The City Hamburg invites to collective confusions, encounters and diversions. At different places spread over the city, on 2–5 June 2011 a lot of planned and unplanned activities will take place" (RAS, 2011). RAS quotes from the (actually pre-1968) work of Henri Lefebvre by using his definition (or rather disassociation) of the term urban as "a place where people walk around [and] entangle

situations in such a way that they engender unexpected situations." Nils Boeing, an activist from the network, likewise introduces RAS with the help of the French philosopher: "Lefebvre saw urbanisation as an inexorable, inevitable process which could be turned into something truly liberating by granting the 'right to the city' to all its denizens. By this Lefebvre meant the right to appropriation, access, difference and centrality" (Boeing, 2011, translation by PB). But Boeing describes another, more physical starting point as well:

> In April 2009 a memo of secret negotiations between local politicians and an investor was leaked that revealed plans to demolish period houses in a poor neighbourhood near the Hamburg port to make way for yet another apartment block. This was not just any old neighbourhood but one with a long history of urban resistance. And its residents reacted by making the plans public and mobilizing protest. Soon the area was fluttering with yellow No BNQ pennants (BNQ is the acronym of the investment project).

The *Bernard Nocht Quartier* was to be built just opposite the Hafenstraße squat. And a few meters away, newly built gentrification of the former hospital and brewery area was already accomplished, meaning that the "poor quarter" at this stage was both the most prominent and visible scene of the "invasion" of the rich, and that it actually was a stage where *alternative performances* (yellow pennants, posters in all colours, documentaries, radio features and last but not least the short occupation of the former Erotic Art Museum which was part of BNQ) made a lot of sense. In other words, the "founding moment" of RAS seems to be directly connected to the history of *this* place, which is also illustrated by the drawings of Christoph Schäfer from 2010, where the (few) movement places and their subterranean currents, with connections to the history of cities throughout space and time, but not throughout Hamburg, are strikingly characterized (Schäfer, 2010).

But before I outline the current diffusion of RAS, I'd like first to highlight some preconditions that made this possible. (For a detailed account of the movement's founding, see Birke, 2010; Füllner & Templin, 2011; Twickel, 2010).

1. As I have shown in Sect. 2 neoliberalization as an explicit concept, including the idea of a systematic and encompassing demographic policy, was introduced with mission statements like the "Leitbild Wachsende Stadt" in the period of conservative-led government between 2001 and 2011 (FHH, 2010). While *images* of course had been a dimension of Hamburg's city marketing for a long time, their importance within urban development increased with the aggressive marketing of *HafenCity*, *Elbphilharmonie*, and the *leap across the river* the gentrification of the former working class neighbourhood of Wilhelmsburg (see Arbeitskreis Umstrukturierung (AKU), 2013). This provided opportunities for different forms of *subvertizing* like the great, parody issue of *Hamburg Marketing* called "Unter Geiern" ("Among Vultures") (Fig. 7.3).

2. As the Green Party joined the conservative-led coalition, the discussion shifted and absorbed fragments of the discourse on sustainable development and the creative class. Artists and other precarious workers used this turn to oppose neoliberal urban development, as in the "Not in our Name" manifesto, and negotiate better conditions. The most important event within this context was the occupation of twelve buildings in the city centre by a group of artists and other precarious workers—the *Gängeviertel* project—which became by far the most famous RAS-related project (Gängeviertel, 2012).

3. *Housing* was the second important theme of the protests. As I have outlined, at the end of the last decade, rents actually sky-rocketed, and this was especially true in St. Pauli, which statistically had the highest increase of all the more than hundred quarters of Hamburg in the second half of the 2000s. Apart from localized protests like the ones against BNQ, the demolition of the ESSO houses or the protests against the GAGFAH in Hamburg-Wilhelmsburg, RAS protested the severe decline of social housing and the increasing generalization of shortages in the supply of housing all over the city. In this, RAS was supported by the obvious unrest within a large part of the population, including the middle class.

4. Not only was neoliberalization reinforced during the 2000s, but the limitations of neoliberal policies became obvious as well, especially after the financial crisis of 2008–2009. One of the reasons why the occupation of

Fig. 7.3 "Unter Geiern", 2009: "How Hamburg's politicians sell the city and how resistance against this grows." The journal looks like one of the products of *Hamburg Marketing*, regularly supplemented to *Süddeutsche Zeitung*

Gängeviertel provided a window of opportunity was the fact that the investor who had bought the quarter from the city of Hamburg went bankrupt during this crisis (Gängeviertel, 2012, 23f.). The *Gängeviertel* became, in fact, the first place that finally was able to avoid the *highest-bid procedure* that had defined the marketing of public real estate since the late 1990s. In 2009–2010, *deep neoliberalism* in Hamburg was reaching both its zenith and its first severe crisis almost at the same time.

RAS referred explicitly to the anti-austerity protests, the Arab Spring, and the Occupy movement. In this sense, it had a transnational dimension, but was also sensitive to the obvious differences between Hamburg and Southern European/Global South cities. As Boeing (2011) writes: "Certainly, the problems of cities in the global South are much direr than those of their Northern counterparts. But whether north or south, the dynamics of unhealthy trends remain the same." It is certainly no exaggeration to say that RAS between 2009 and 2012 had a large share in the diffusion of knowledge of protests and movements, and an even larger share in the organization of direct contact with them. But within the spectrum of movements in Hamburg, the relationship between RAS and protests against local austerity policies remained rather weak. The reason, or one reason, may be that in Hamburg such protests, including the Occupy movement, never gained a dynamic comparable to that in other German and European cities. In fact there was only one short and ephemeral mass protest, involving 10,000 people, against budget cuts in September 2010. This demonstration was marked by groups of workers who feared direct consequences of budget cuts in social services, theatres, and also the police, for example. RAS was part of the mobilization, but comprised only a small minority at the demonstration (see the press coverage in Hamburger Abendblatt, 30.9.2010). At its own demonstrations ("parades"), RAS focused mainly on the protest against high rents, the possible eviction of Rote Flora, the lack of "free spaces" and the general eventization and marketization of the urban landscape. Since the end of 2009 and until 2012, RAS parades regularly attracted thousands of participants. The "parades" were, in the perception of some of the activists, composed of "squatters, tenants, artists" (Boeing, 2011).

While the visibility of the network was promoted by the parades, and many other events such as a strong reception in established cultural institutions like the *Deutsches Schauspielhaus* or the *Kampnagel* theatre, the diffusion of the network was marked by an apparently ever-growing number of local initiatives, ranging from social centres, left-wing political groups and single-issue protests, such as those against the IKEA department store in Altona, to urban gardening groups. Compared to other organized networks of social protest, RAS was by far the most long-lived. It still exists, of course, but in 2015 was much weaker than in 2011.

There are several reasons for the problems the RAS network currently faces. First, the senate, as always, not very surprisingly applied a strategy of exclusion/inclusion. For example, the resurgence of squatting or other forms of appropriation of space as a protest strategy in a lot of European cities has been evident in Hamburg as well. Surprisingly, the city accepted the *creative* occupation of the *Gängeviertel* and gave the artist entrepreneurs of the Frappant, who for a short time tried to prevent the IKEA investment, receiving huge popular support, a large building not far away. But all squats that were, at least in the definition of the government, not in line with the promotion of the creative class were evicted, most of them after only a few hours, and accompanied by constantly escalating violence conducted both by the police and participants in the scene: See, for example, the several occupations of *Breite Straße*, most recently in August 2014 (Altona-Info, 2014). Nor did the strategy of copying the *Gängeviertel* squat, by playing with the creative-class motif, succeed, maybe because it was easier to tackle multinational real estate companies during the crisis of 2009 than after most of them had already somewhat recovered in 2011–2012.

Second, the crisis of Hamburg's urban policy produced a shift of the majority in parliament in 2011. The new social-democratic majority did two things to contain RAS. On the one hand, it returned to a more pragmatic and less ideological perception of neoliberal urban planning: For example, while it did not completely abandon the notion of the creative class, it no longer focused on it the way its predecessors had. On the other hand, the government introduced a huge initiative to build new housing. But instead of focusing on subsidized social housing, it used the prospects of profits within the segment of expensive, even luxury, flats to attract investors. In fact, two-thirds of the newly built flats will be in this segment. Currently, the intensified building activity mollifies some of the protests against the housing shortage and exploding rents, especially in the mainstream media, thus tending to further marginalize public protests. An additional reason for this tendency may be that renovations of the housing stock in some quarters result in gentrification by the middle classes: See, for example, the development of the *Weltquartier* in Hamburg-Wilhelmsburg (Birke, 2013). Moreover, the same example

shows how local initiatives against gentrification tend to vanish with the replacement of former tenants and the fragmentation of new ones.

Finally, the connection between current social movements and gentrification is a phenomenon that can both strengthen and weaken social protests. To return to the point of departure of RAS, the idea of the Right-to-the-City as a form by which to combine *centrality* and *difference* already characterizes the problem. What about the urban periphery? The focus on productivity (the city as a "factory") and urbanization (as the central stage of social movements) may both facilitate and hinder diffusion. Because *centrality* and *difference* are only characteristic of *one form* of class struggle, namely, that performed within the situation of small-scale or condensed polarization, and not of the other two situations I have outlined in Sect. 2. No wonder that the most important movement space in Hamburg is without doubt St. Pauli, based not only on the intense activity of activists, but also on the form of gentrification typical of this quarter. It is also no wonder that Wilhelmsburg, a place introduced into the landscape of gentrification by declaring a "state of emergency" (Hellweg), transformed some quarters of the island into a greenhouse of neoliberalization (Birke, 2013, p. 75). In fact, the discussion about the role of the periphery in RAS, although marked by a few groups from poorer eastern neighbourhoods like Mümmelmannsberg or Billstedt, who showed up at the network meetings, was mainly formed by discussion about the fate of Wilhelmsburg and the role of the International Building Exhibition, in the sense that experiences from the city centre can be useful when the aim is preventing others from having to undergo the same events.

And Crossing the Border

The decline of RAS was somewhat obfuscated in the winter of 2013–2014 by the outbreak of two conflicts. On the one hand, self-organization and solidarity with 300 "Lampedusa" refugees grew enormously in the second half of 2013, and included mass demonstrations with more than 10,000 participants. Some of the 300 were given shelter by the church, most importantly in the parish of St. Pauli near the Hafenstraße, where

the majority of the refugees lived. The demand to have the right to stay and work in Hamburg was staged here, and it was supported, at least when it comes to migration, by a heretofore unseen mobilization of thousands of citizens.[9] The other big movement was also staged, among other places, in St. Pauli: at the end of the month, Rote Flora, the most important social centre of the autonomous movement in Hamburg, started a nation-wide demonstration against its feared eviction (see Birke, 2014). The 7000 demonstrators were violently attacked before the demonstration even got under way. This attack was followed by riots that lasted for weeks, as well as by the introduction of a so-called visitation zone, giving the police extra-legal rights as, for example, in visitations of people without an explanation of motive, in large parts of Altona and St. Pauli. The violation of basic human rights by this measure led to a wave of protests during January 2014, with the result that the visitation zone and the immediate threat against Rote Flora were abolished. On the other hand, the refugees are still in an uncertain situation, and the general situation of refugees and migrants in Hamburg has been getting worse and worse since the beginning of 2014.

Both movements had a differentiated connection to historic urban social movements. The *Lampedusa* refugee group is primarily a self-organized structure with a global perspective. Most of the activists have a long migration history that started in Western African countries. The majority originally started their journey in Ghana, to work in different occupations in Libya, then were forced to leave that country during the war against the Gaddafi rule, heading for Europe and reaching Italy, from which the Italian state eventually allowed them to travel to Germany. During this journey, they were able to build up a network that provided everyday solidarity and made it possible to organize camps, squats and demonstrations for the right to stay. Such groups exist not only in Hamburg, but also in Berlin and a wide range of other German cities. Their struggle is, of course, related to anti-racist initiatives, but especially in Hamburg there was a broad mobilization in the form of solidarity from religious groups, schoolchildren and trade unionists, among many others. This solidarity included for many people the sharing of resources.

[9] An overview that gives an impression of the hundreds of smaller manifestations can be found at: Retrieved 20 January 2015, from http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lampedusa_in_Hamburg

The migrants, for example, nearly two years later, are still living partly in left-wing housing projects, this being one reason for the re-definition of the local urban social movement. In other words, while hundreds or even thousands of very young people became engaged in the solidarity movement, large numbers of former RAS activists also took part and spent their energy and resources in this specific cause. And they continue to do so in order to counter the strong right-wing anti-immigration movements that popped up, especially in some cities in the east of Germany, in recent months. Diffusion here is, in a way, organized by the city council, which has spread refugees to all parts of the city. In Hamburg, they are, at least at the moment of writing, only rarely confronted with open, collective and violent racist attacks, but rather welcomed by concrete solidarity from large sections of the local population.

During the high tide of the ultimately successful wave of protest at the beginning of 2014, the connection of such topics as the demolition of the ESSO houses, a high-rise building that provided affordable housing in the centre of St. Pauli, on the one hand, with the movement against the Flora eviction, on the other, was related explicitly to *Lampedusa*. In 2015, this connection was the basis for the campaign "Recht auf Stadt kennt keine Grenzen" ("Right to the City knows no borders"), which is more ephemeral in shape, but was at least able to mobilize around 6000 people in solidarity with the refugee protests in the framework of a May Day demonstration. And, like the women's hunger strike of 1983, the *Hafenstraße* riots and many RAS activities, these demonstration are, like so many before them, *staged* at the St. Pauli *Landungsbrücken*, still one of the most strategic places in Hamburg for becoming *visible*. Overall, these refugees are really crossing borders, also in the sense of their influence on current urban social movements. Is, then, the critical assessment of the "middle-class" orientation of RAS, advanced by Margit Mayer, among others, obsolete? Yes and no. On the one hand, protests against racist repressions have of course a very clear spatial dimension: The right to move freely not only through counties but also within the city is the main aim of this movement. On the other hand, the *staging* of the protest constitutes solidarity, but leaves the problem of the exclusive character of solidarity unresolved. Among the refugees and migrants from Eastern and Southern Europe, Asia and Africa, the *Lampedusa* group is only a

very small minority. Their actions gain a lot of visibility, while the fate of a Ghanaian woman living in the outskirts of Hamburg for more than 20 years with no secure status is still largely invisible. So is the situation of the thousands of female migrant household workers working for less than the minimum wage, or the fate of the illegalized African people who vanished with the gentrification of Wilhelmsburg. Nor should one forget the militant strike of some Romanian workers at a meat factory in the autumn of 2013. Overall, the visibility and media coverage that *some* of the migrant activists gained is a struggle against their invisibility, whereas within this struggle the centre-periphery bias that has been a main feature not only in RAS but in more or less all urban social movements in Hamburg since 1980 is *reproduced* in a paradoxical way.

The challenge to RAS and maybe other urban social movements, as well, is very much related to to the question of how to include otherness and intersections into one's own everyday practices. Of course, there is no guarantee that this constitutes a "strategy" or will be "successful," but it may be worth noting that it includes a broadening and a radicalization of the perspective employed by RAS, one that can perhaps be characterized as the *centrality of difference*. The "Right to the city *for everybody*," to which all these protests were explicitly committed, is deeply intertwined with the hope to be able to reshape the urban landscape and fight against the sad, rich and closed landscapes of the neoliberal city.

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8

Athens' Spatial Contract and the Neoliberal Omni-Present

Antonis Vradis

The Neoliberal Omni-present

> The greatest trick the Devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn't exist.
> —Keyser Soze, *The Usual Suspects*

To begin with a question: What is 'neo' about neoliberalism? Or, if 'capitalism' happens to be your term of preference, what in particular is 'late' about it? With no bloodthirsty revolutions, no spectacular historical events—at least, not spectacular enough to match the changes we are living through—it is difficult to draw the line. When, exactly, did we enter our present?

Many would point to 1989 as the ye that brought us here, the moment that changed the world—or perhaps more aptly, the year that saw only

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one of two 'worlds' survive. In the time that followed, Thatcher's statement '*There is No Alternative*' hinted, in all its arrogant certainty, that a discussion about whether or not there was an alternative was still ongoing. But today, in our extreme neoliberal moment, even the imaginary, the space for us to think about the very possibility of another way beyond capitalism is being extinguished. This might very well be what makes neoliberalism such: first, a movement away from being one of two global contesters, allowing no space for an alternative, and now, a transformation into an everyday reality that appears inevitable, a somehow supposedly self-evident, natural state of being.

The capacity of the neoliberal project to conceal itself under the veil of the 'natural', of the 'universal' (Lazzarato, 2012), is key. But this rests upon a prerequisite of doing away with any spaces that might lie outside, challenge or otherwise question the project itself. The capitalist order has suppressed its own evolution from previous systems of production and domination, and its historically inevitable succession by another system, to build an imaginary system by which it *was*, *is* and *always will be*. And if the neoliberal project obscures and eventually annihilates the past to assert itself in its ahistorical present, there may now ban equivalent process underway in spatial terms as well: global capital's 'annihilation of space' (Mitchell, 2003, p. 161). By this same logic, the defining characteristic of late neoliberalism now becomes its capacity to create an omni-present reality, one that exceeds a new normalcy and turns into a ubiquitous state of being.

In previous decades, the rampant neoliberal project's ancestor faced antagonism at the global level by the Second World throughout what Hobsbawm (1995) called the 'short 20th century', at the interstate level within the so-called First World by anti-capitalist political movements(Holloway, 2002), and at the level of the state in the idea of social welfare (Brown, 2005). But perhaps most crucially, such challenges also took place underneath this level, at the level of the everyday, by populations living at and beyond the fringes of the dominant order from necessity or choice. What we witness today is the meticulous, consistent attempt to annihilate the very spaces that have been antithetical to, or simply, divergent from, the neoliberal present now encroaching everywhere: the neoliberal omni-present. And never has this attempt become

more obvious than in the moment of the present capitalist crisis. At the moment, that is, when the injustices this order carries with it are at their bluntest, it becomes imperative for them to be concealed. Even more, it now becomes imperative for any previously existing dissenting voices or spaces to be eliminated, to disappear altogether.

This process of elimination of space for dissent and expansion of the neoliberal project is perhaps clearer in what had been the margins of the global capitalist world, and in particular its European heartlands. And so the case of the Greek territory offers itself as a perfect example: a territory where sovereignty had in the past few decades ruled with a certain degree of 'moderation', if the word can ever be used appropriately to describe a power relationship. And yet a territory that found itself in the eye of the storm during Europe's fiscal crisis of 2008–2009and ever since.

Just like that, Athens became both a testing site and harbinger for spatial reconfigurations reaching far beyond its confines. With the arrival of the International Monetary Fund (as one in the country's international troika of lenders) in May 2010, the Greek state offered itself up to an experiment whose importance in the neoliberal project may be matched perhaps only by the Chicago Boys' experiments at the expense of the people of Chile. And if only to remember that history does not lack dark irony, the Chilean story commenced exactly where the backdrop to Greece's current woes also began to unravel. The year when Pinochet bombed La Moneda and took over power in Chile, 1973, was also the year when the end of the Greek dictatorship came into sight.

This chapter introduces the spatial contract as a remnant of the student uprising in November 1973, and shows how this 'contract' was used to alleviate sovereignty's harshest blows. It traces the reformulation of the spatial contract as Greece prepared to and then entered its neoliberal era, by way of signing loans and memoranda with international lenders from 2010 onward. It examines three moments in redrawing Greece's spatial contract: the revolt of December 2008; the Syntagma 'squares movement' in 2011; and the riots of February 2012. It then moves on to discuss how the case of Exarcheia, as a space of exception and exceptional unrest, might be pointing to a particular way of understanding how the disjuncture between sovereignty and territory is articulated in the context of (neoliberal) globalization.

The chapter shows how Greece's spatial contract was terminated in the neoliberal period, as domestic dissent is no longer tolerated. But in the process, and this time at the European level and beyond, some great potentialities for dissent may be opening up. First, though, let's go back to that baleful November night.

A Protest, a Dictatorship and a Not-So-New Regime

In the early hours of 17 November 1973, the anti-dictatorial student occupation of Athens Polytechnic was quashed by forces of the dictatorial regime in place since 1967. It is not without some historic irony that the fall of the Polytechnic would soon enough be followed by the regime's own fall: In July 1974, the dictatorship would be succeeded by the Third Hellenic Republic. Note the word *succession*—not toppling or some otherwise violent rupture. Despite their historical proximity, the two events of the Polytechnic uprising and the fall of the dictatorship do not actually lie as close as they are positioned in the country's post-dictatorial, national imaginary. The student uprising was defeated utterly, and followed by an internal power reconfiguration within the dictatorial regime that hardened it further. And yet this defeat has been presented as a time-delayed victory. A convenient enough reading for the post-dictatorial regime: By associating itself with such a student 'victory', the regime projected itself as an outcome of a rupture from an illegitimate dictatorship, thereby legitimising itself in return. Still, what this official state discourse and narrative created on the ground, in a particular central Athenian neighbourhood, is remarkable.

Exarcheia, a small neighbourhood bordering the Polytechnic in central Athens, found itself in the eye of Greece's post-dictatorial storm. In the early years of the Third Hellenic Republic, an evident need existed for some new 'social contract' in a country recovering from the harsh divisions and mistrust of authority the dictatorial regime left as its legacy. At this time, the country's broad consensus for a liberal democracy became inscribed in its urban spatiality: In post-dictatorial Greece, street protests

became a central and most important form of political manifestation. From the dawn of the democratic era, Exarcheia found itself holding something of an exceptional status. In the years and decades that followed, this small Athenian neighbourhood would play host to unrest of all different shapes and sizes: commemorative/ritualistic riots on anniversaries of the student uprising, and at times weekly and perhaps even more frequent skirmishes between youth and the police that came hand-in-hand with the growth of a counter-culture also partly tracing itself back to the 1973 uprising.

As a political form of action, these protests were quintessentially public and visible, in stark contrast to the invisibility of the *junta's* dissidents, for example. They were ephemeral, again, in contrast to the fate of the previous regime's opponents, and they acted as barometers for any given political tendency or specific demand driving protests, which were then measured both by the protest's size and its character, for example, by how confrontational it might be. And yet, even the most confrontational of protests could not escape the ephemeral nature of their action. They were obliged to cease to exist only hours after they had first erupted. The disruption of order took an obligatory course that ended in some form, perhaps a new form, of order being restored. Taken together, these repeated, if ephemeral, appropriations of public space for political purposes became a series of clauses in Greek society's social contract.

Providing and allowing for a spatial articulation of dissent, in the case of Exarcheia, replaced an inability to reach social consent through welfare. Put simply, a social contract was unattainable, and this spatial contract came to the rescue. Just like a social contract, this one, too, was unwritten. And just the same, it was, though ostensibly reciprocal, largely uneven. Although it was centred around Exarcheia, it concerned a 'violence equilibrium' that spanned, precisely through the neighbourhood's concentration of unrest, the entire country. A turbulent Exarcheia translated into a largely peaceful Greece. And what an achievement this was, with much of the country's turbulent immediate past now subdued.

This became, let us recall, a Greek society rich in consensus in comparison to its immediate predecessor, and poor in resources in contrast in particular to its Western counterparts. State sovereignty in the European

West used the welfare state to counter the horrors of two world wars, thereby reinstating the minimum amount of trust required for its own survival and longevity. In the Greek territory's post-dictatorial landscape, things looked a bit more complicated: The affluent Western welfare-state model would have been impossible to replicate. Instead, a *spatial contract* appeared: Whether as a replacement for the absent welfare state or as a spatial projection of the mentioned post-dictatorial consensus, the outcome was nevertheless unique. During the Greek society's post-dictatorial era, the *Metapolitefsi*, Exarcheia concentrated and then contained the overwhelming majority of riots and contentious politics in the city of Athens as a whole. The following, then, may act as a working definition for Greece's spatial contract in the *Metapolitefsi*:

The spatial contract is a largely consensual and implicit agreement under which a certain level of rioting and other forms of street-based political contention became possible in Exarcheia during the *Metapolitefsi*, under a mutual but muted understanding that such contention would rarely, if at all, spill over to other parts of the city.

Three Moments in Redrawing Greece's Spatial Contract

Athens' spatial contract was one reason why up until the past decade or so it would have seemed strange to group it along with other cities under the spell of rampant capitalist evolution. Until that point, Athens would have had no place in a book challenging neoliberal urbanism in Europe. This was, after all, not a neoliberal city, and it most definitely looked like its trajectory could have diverged from those of cities lying to its west. What could the strange southern capital hold in common with the glitzy images of those metropoles, their rampant inequalities or their excruciating pace of life? This has always been quite a particular city, the argument would go, with its unique, Mediterranean-style development (Leontidou, 1990). It was a city with a very specific historical past, to be sure, licking its wounds after Nazi occupation, two dictatorships and a civil war (Charalampidis, 2014) in the past century alone. But a neoliberal rampage? Not in this corner of the world.

And then—who could have predicted this?—in came the neoliberal order. The 2004 Olympics appeared as a spectacular peak of the doctrine at the time, and ended up as nothing short of a prelude and opening to the ensuing nightmare. In the long decade that followed, Athens saw its historical, social and political particularities tramped under the neoliberal doctrines of crises and fiscal adjustments. It became the poster-child of austerity and fiscal restructuring in the core-periphery, with the mobilisations against these becoming a beacon of hope for those fighting the same struggles the world over.

The following pages trace their way through the opening act of this struggle, its pivotal moments and the ways in which the mobilisation patterns of Athens' residents both enhanced, but also at times halted, the dynamics of this struggle. We have already seen what formed Greece's spatial contract in the first place: an unspoken 'understanding' allowing unrest in certain parts of the country, Exarcheia in particular, in return for a high level of consensus across the national territory as a whole. As the Greek territory became an exercise field *par excellence* for the neoliberal doctrine, one by one the elements of the previous equation would drop away. This was no longer a consensual social dynamic, because it no longer concerned the Greek territory *alone*. Greece was by this point an extreme example of processes unfolding the world over. Athens was put under an international spotlight. It did so first even before the words 'fiscal crisis' were uttered. Its entering onto the stage of crisis had come a few years previously, in 2008 and, fittingly enough, with a bang.

The Revolt of December 2008

What happened in December 2008 in Greece is fairly well documented (Astrinaki, 2009; Kalianos, 2012; Leontidou, 2010; Sotiris, 2009; Vradis & Dalakoglou, 2011). But it is intriguing to look back at the events of those days in light of what has succeeded them. In essence, the revolt of December 2008 was the absolutely transitory event between Greece's consensual, post-dictatorial period, epitomised by the spatial contract, and the violent times that would follow. This hybrid condition marked the life of the revolt itself. It started from within Exarcheia, in response to the

killing of 15-year-old Grigoropoulos on 6 December. And yet its spread far beyond the neighbourhood showed this was no longer a game—or perhaps that another game was on. The December revolt's aspiration was to be a generalised uprising against sovereignty, not an expression of discontent contained within the Exarcheia safety margin.

Both a precursor and an opening act to the current economic crisis, the December revolt gave way to a period of violence that was diffused across much of Athens. This culminated in the widespread street violence in May 2010, in the summer of 2011 and on 12 February 2012. December 2008, for all its shortcomings, perfectly illuminated this already simmering diffusion of violence, a long-time-coming assault upon the spatial contract. The riots started in Exarcheia, as was the implicit and rigid understanding that they would time and time again. But this time, they extended way beyond the neighbourhood limits. That was not what had been agreed upon, and yet, within a splinter of historic time, sovereignty in the Greek territory would find itself in much more of a conundrum. In May 2010, the Greek government entered into a loan agreement with the 'troika' of the EU, ECB and IMF, an unprecedented intervention for a European Union member-state. The way in which this newly reformulated sovereignty plexus was challenged now mattered throughout Europe. The scale had shifted. What would the response be on the ground? With the dynamic of the rising movement against austerity having been near-squashed after the tragic death of three bank workers during a demonstration in central Athens,[1] it would now take until the summer of 2011 to find out.

The Syntagma 'Squares Movement' in 2011

The Syntagma Square occupation movement was, in many ways, a logical successor to December 2008 (Giovanopoulos & Mitropoulos, 2012). Both constituted forms of public presence that extended beyond previously agreed-upon notions of protest. If December 2008 was an outburst, a prelude, then the Syntagma Square occupation, along with the

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[1] See http://blog.occupiedlondon.org/tag/may-5th-deaths/ for background to this event.

occupation of tens of other central urban squares across the country, became the first attempt not to breach, but to eradicate, the spatial contract, to nullify it for good.

In the very first days of the square occupation, the mass of people freshly moved from the mobilisation outside the Spanish embassy in solidarity with the *Indignados* in Spain, I remember a familiar feeling lingering in the air. The camp had something of an 'anti-globalisation protest' sense about it, that is, that it was there for a very specific purpose, the overthrowing of the government in our case, and that it therefore had a very finite lifespan. In the same way that protest camps only last for as long as the objects of their protests, Syntagma appeared as if it would not quite outlive a government whose power already appeared to be crumbling. And yet, over the course of the days and weeks that followed, it became evident that neither the government nor this newly formed opposition on the ground would be leaving soon. The Syntagma occupation extended in duration not so much in face of the seemingly tenacious government stance, but more because it became increasingly clear that the government itself was becoming irrelevant. These general assemblies quickly showed that people understood the entire plexus of power, this neoliberal omni-present, as the problem they needed to do away with. This realisation was also evident in the spatial alignment of people present in the vicinity of Syntagma. I am referring to the by-now infamous division between the so-called *Lower Square* and *Upper Square*. In hindsight, it is no coincidence that the tendency of the *Upper Square*, where mostly nation-centric crowds would gather, was not so much an apolitical tendency, as it was accused of being, but rather political in the conventional understanding of the term up until that point. It primarily sought the overthrow of the current government and its replacement by another one. The so-called *Lower Square* quickly formed an epicentre for those seeking a radical shift in the system of government as a whole: a change in the way in which we understand and run our very lives.

Even if anger against the current administration was what brought people to the Square, what kept them there was the firm desire to change the entire systemic order. And so, this less ephemeral presence of people in public space, for weeks, not just hours, in turn made their protest less of a symbolic act and more of a tangible attempt to rewrite the rules

of the social contract. This contract was of course first breached from the side of sovereignty with the radical changes in welfare provision, in labour relationships, in the understanding of public space and, essentially, in the entire state/subject relationship, brought about by successive 'rescue deals'. The importance of this attempt is easier to grasp if we think of what the mobilisation of Syntagma symbolised, what it acted both as a prelude and a flashpoint for, namely, dozens of popular assemblies across Athens and across the country, the concrete attempt by thousands upon thousands to take control of their lives. Simply think of the anecdote that circulated on the e-mail lists co-ordinating the Syntagma mobilisations: Residents of a housing block in the northern suburb of Nea Philadelphia called for an assembly. In times of such hardship, some of the residents were still very concerned with the slogans that appeared on the building's façade and were willing, it seems, to allocate some of their tight budget to restore their building's image. A few minutes into the assembly, a new consensus emerged. The slogans should go, but the one reading 'all banks are thieves' should be spared, as it resonated with everyone. In a few more hours, the mood took a dramatic U-turn: all slogans should stay! The assembly reached an end, and its participants left with a new-found sense of pride over their building's credentials in the struggle. Gone was the convention that discontent is to be expressed in the streets, temporarily, or even that dissent is better left to the young. Think, in a similar manner, of the actions of some of the recently formed popular assemblies, such as the one in the western Athenian suburb of Egaleo. The picketing outside the local public power corporation offices quickly turned into a direct action through which people acquired the lists of all households that had, or were about to have, their electricity disconnected due to non-payment of property tax. In the days that followed, members of the assembly would go around to these households, reconnecting their electricity and explaining to people how to do so themselves in the future. It is difficult to imagine how any such action would have been possible without the empowerment of that summer's mobilisations.

Thanks to the Syntagma occupation, the spatiality of struggle was fundamentally altered: It was no longer about ritual-like street protests, about a litany of discontent that soon disappeared into the private sphere. This is what sovereignty was quick to realise, regrettably much more

quickly than segments of the anarchist and leftist movements, which were still trying to comprehend this reaction using their old analytical tools. The brute repression of Syntagma did not come about because of stone-pelting groups in the protestors' ranks. The level of violence exercised by the 'Square-ites' themselves was utterly irrelevant here. Rather, people were faced with sovereignty's merciless retribution simply because it swiftly comprehended the level of threat posed. This can also perhaps explain the level of intra-movement violence at one of the peak moments of the mobilisation, on 20 October 2011. This confrontation was essentially a struggle over the right of different blocks to line up in front of Parliament. In spatial terms, this followed perfectly from the logic of those who chose to chant in front of the empty parliament building during those summer days: the *Upper Square* crowd. These people, both in the summer and in October that year, tried to lay claim on a space that had already been rendered irrelevant by both sovereignty and a critical mass of the people. On the other hand, the eventual dissolution of the *Lower Square* might not have been a sign of defeat inasmuch as it was a sign of a realisation that sovereignty had openly declared war against society *as a whole*.

The Riots of February 2012

A few months later, city centres across Greece went up in flames. For the casual follower of Greek events, the array of images of destruction has become a series of near-unimportant blips. 'Athens is burning', somewhere, every so often. But on that night, Athens was burning everywhere. And this was no riot that had started in Exarcheia: No spatial contract was challenged or redrawn. As the power of sovereignty had shifted from the national to the international level, so the unrest of Athens shifted from a specific neighbourhood to the city as a whole, the city itself now having been assigned the role of the 'troublesome corner' of the territory of Europe as a whole.

This question of the territoriality of unrest is important. A spatial contract or social-violence equilibrium do not denote a mere clustering of unrest. This is not simply about pinning riots close to one another in

a map. The territoriality of unrest defines its social qualities and political value. For one thing, throughout Greece's post-dictatorial era, the violence equilibrium did not just imply a concentration of violence in Exarcheia. It saw a level and type of violence that was both conceivable and manageable by the regime that it was opposing. The often-encountered commemorative riots in Exarcheia essentially acted, for many, as a *rite of passage*, as an introduction to a turbulent national political life. The actors in the riot—and this is related to the previous point—were mostly homogeneous in their composition: young, male, white and Greek, just like Grigoropoulos in 2008. Until the split second of his shooting, the event fit perfectly into the existing equilibrium of violence. But in the very next split second, it exceeded and unbalanced that equilibrium. It is in precisely this way that the event was liminal. It exceeded the equilibrium of violence not only by breaking through the confines of the neighbourhood: There was also a liminality inscribed in the actors of the revolt, unprecedented as they were in the mixture of their social and class composition: migrants and school children, activists and sports hooligans, the usual and very unusual suspects.

On the night of 12 February, international news cameras rolled as building after building was engulfed in fire. For the distant observer, the spectacle may hardly have been captivating. Perhaps it even caused some yawning, after the riot-imagery overdose of recent years. But what happened that night was not merely unusual. It was literally groundbreaking, shaking the foundation of the spatial articulation of dissent in Greece terminating the spatial contract that had first been violated in the squares mobilisation the year before. The actors in this freshest of urban revolts had also gone long past the liminalities of December 2008. High-school students, migrants, anarchists and leftists (the usual suspects) found themselves in a sea of newcomers to the streets. With the spatial contract out of the way, the new questions ahead were not merely about *where* but also *who*, and *for what reason*. With neo-Nazi supporters of the Golden Dawn affirming their presence in the streets, instances of racially motivated violence had occurred daily. In a 'city-jungle' (Filippidis in Vradis & Dalakoglou, 2011), where 'war reigns and the social contract is buried', consent has also been buried and antagonisms beam naked in the urban terrain. An end of one era, an opening of another. As always,

history is unwritten, and what happens next is quite impossible to predict. Yet, in whatever follows, spatially demarcated antagonisms and consensual politics are bound to be absent. From this point on, options are truly wide open.

Neighbourhood Out-of-Bounds

The etymology of the word Exarcheia may plausibly have been derived, even if this is not actually the case, from *[ex]* (beyond)+*[archè]* (authority). During Greece's post-dictatorial and its pre-neoliberal era, Exarcheia was the neighbourhood that defied the rule and by doing so legitimised it, a *space* of exception not entirely unlike the state of exception in Schmitt (1985), later used by Agamben (2005). The early part of this chapter explained why this happened in the first place: why sovereignty would, however implicitly or partially, lift its rule from any part of its territory. Already, geographers have identified a disjuncture, or, in any case, a re-articulation, of the relationship between territory and sovereignty: Agnew (2009) shows how the process of globalisation occurs independently of state sovereignty, further complicating, rather than weakening, its relationship to territory. Elden (2009) explains how the relationship between the two is re-configured, particularly in face of the 'war on terror'. And there have been subsequent calls, as a result, for new conceptualisations of inter-state relationships whereby 'the defining principle … is the gradient (of power, influence or control), rather than the line' (Agnew, 1999, p. 503), and where, as a result, '*graduated* territories' are formed that 'can overlap' (Painter, 2006, p. 10).

But the case of Exarcheia might be pointing to another way in which this disjuncture is articulated: as a space of exception, of exceptional unrest, Exarcheia outlined the limits of the democratic regime, therefore proving that it does, indeed, have a limit. Gone were the days of the dictatorship, of the totalitarian regime, the days of the 'total'. The new regime knew how to show restraint and Exarcheia was its tangible proof. And furthermore, for the democratic regime to tolerate Exarcheia and the subsequent growth of a resistance movement there allowed it to claim a symbolic continuity with the dissidents against the dictatorship.

By extension, the widespread social legitimisation of post-dictatorial Greek democracy was built on this exact claim of continuity with the anti-dictatorial struggle. This is key, not least because the transition from dictatorship to democracy was, precisely, *transition* based more on the old regime handing over power, and less on the new one laying claim upon and affirming power through any kind of rupture. Still, a line of continuity in the social imaginary traced democracy to the dissidents against the *junta*. Thanks to the exceptional site of Exarcheia, it became possible for the continuities between the dictatorial and democratic regimes to be presented as ruptures, and by extension, it therefore became possible for the post-dictatorial regime to rule while holding the higher moral ground.

To rule *over its territory*: the Greek word for 'territory', '*epikrāteia*', presents an intriguing disparity between colloquial use and etymology. For someone to *epi-krātei*, when used as a verb, means for them to *actively* rule over, the *process* of winning over someone else. As a subject *epikrāteia* derives from the same words, *epi* (over) and *krātos* (force, but also the state). The *epikrāteia*, therefore, is the sum of the projection of state force onto space. In this chapter, I have discussed three pivotal moments in the challenging of this state force, moments where inverse spaces of exception were formed, however temporarily—spaces, as they could be named, of a 'power deficit'. Let us here recall Foucault's surplus power: this *'sur-pouvoir' (or a 'surplus power' analogous to surplus value)'* (Jessop, 2007, p. 39). This surplus power forms and translates into those emblematic, exceptional spaces by which sovereignty affirms its rule and reproduces itself: the school, the infirmary, the barracks, the prison. Geographers have been quick to realise that these two exceptional, excess volumes of power and territory are not mutually exclusive. Sites of exception such as the notorious Guantánamo Bay owe their existence precisely to such domestic and international 'interlocking spatialities' (Gregory, 2006, p. 405). This shifting relationship between sovereignty and its subjects *within* the territory controlled by the former has been articulated in terms of the 'effects of the territory' (Crampton, 2010, p. 97), effects that increasingly reach 'within the state with a concomitant need for internal surveillance' (2010, p. 97). Whether they look inward or outward, on the level of the nation-state, then, geographers have tended to look for *excess*,

for surpluses of power. They grapple with an exceptional excess of sovereignty, a *force majeure* (greater force), whether or not this excess succeeds in transcending sovereignty's territorial borders.

Exarcheia, in its post-dictatorial and pre-neoliberal era, had proved the existence of a spatial power deficit by way of the spatial contract. The contract is abolished, and along with it this deficit is to a large extent abolished, as well.

By Way of a Conclusion

In the neoliberal city, the spatial contract as we knew it has vanished. Think, for a moment, of the stakes involved in the vanishing of this contract. Think of the way it had existed in Exarcheia and much further beyond, such as, for example, in the relinquishment of some control in the case of legalised squatting (in post-unification German cities in the UK until very recently), or in the toleration of *favelas* and shanty towns in urban planning across the Global South, and in skid rows in North American cities. All were apparent concessions sovereignty strategically allowed for, in order to cement its prevalence over the sum of the territory under its control, over its territory *as a whole*. You might even call this a spatial mode of governance: urban marginality as a safety margin for sovereignty itself. What is to follow the extinguishing of this safety margin? This, of course, is impossible to predict. But the absence of one form of spatial governance, the spatial contract, is what gives shape to another: the neoliberal city, a city where no sphere of life, from the most public to the most private is any longer out of bounds in the power struggle between sovereignty and its subjects.

Now that the spatial contract is gone, and the bastions of exception are no more, the issue at hand is for us to discern what the post-consensual landscape might look like, what the diminishing of sovereignty's safety margin may signal for a world still seething with anger over neoliberal exploitation and injustice. In the broadest sense of the word, a 'contract' does of course still exist, even in these extreme conditions of power imbalance. An implicit understanding is still in place, safeguarding order. But this will not by any means remain largely consensual. If anything, the

essence of the present neoliberal condition, its enforced omni-present, fits into two simple words: *no space*. No space for difference, dissent, divergence. No physical space in which to enact any of these, and no cognitive space, either. This absence brings distant struggles that reach far beyond Exarcheia very close. 'We can't breathe', because there's no space for us to do so. In Ferguson, Missouri, or in Baltimore, people choke under the brute, physical force of police violence. How can you point at the flames of Husby without looking at the tinder slowly burning the welfare-state city away (Sernhede, Thörn and Thörn, this volume) and along with it— any space whatsoever or Stockholm's territorial stigmatisation? There is no space for you to survive, in the first case, and no cognitive space to move in, either. Gezi Park in Turkey was another forceful exercise in this cognitive/physical suffocation. Not only was it one of the few city parks of Istanbul to be eradicated, but it was replaced by a hybrid perfectly reflecting Turkey's neoliberal and totalitarian turn: a rebuilt military barracks, complete with a shopping mall (Lelandais, this volume). This is not even to mention the class-based gunpowder that set off the London riots (see Slater, this volume), the welfare cuts, here, quite literally cutting into the vital space allowed for those at the wrong end of the marginality stick.

In Athens, in early November 2014, the 21-year-old anarchist Nikos Romanos inspired a formidable mobilisation when he went on a hunger strike, calling this 'asphyxia for a breath of freedom'. The hunger strike culminated in the early days of December, and Exarcheia became something of a battleground once again. But there was something peculiar about the riots of December 2014. On the one hand, it became evident quickly enough on the day that the tolerance of the Greek police, having been, in general, far lower than in previous years, would increase somewhat. Riots then once again took place in Exarcheia, in a zone tightly controlled by the police, just like in the old days, it would seem. Only this time, some hardly believable mainstream media reporting of the events spoke of 'parkour practicing anarchists' and an 'anarchist airborne battalion'[2] stationed in Exarcheia, both in reference to the groups of demonstrators who had dodged police by reaching up onto the rooftops of the neighbourhood's buildings. As it turned out, this wording may have been not merely the outcome of journalistic over-enthusiasm. As reported by mainstream media

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[2] http://whenthecrisishitthefan.com/2014/12/09/the-airborne-battalion-of-anarchists/

outlets the following day, officials at the ministry of public order, which is in charge of the police, claimed that 'some residents were also responsible' [for the airborne riots],[3] which was apparently 'something that should be tackled by the organised state'. This was nothing short, in other words, of an assignment of collective responsibility, and an indication that a more widespread assault on the neighbourhood as a whole could follow, one where residents themselves would be treated as suspects. Exarcheia can no longer live in the margins, since those margins have been eaten away. There is no space for the neighbourhood. *No space*. The echoing of the two words is no coincidence. The space in which to live differently inside our neoliberal omni-present narrows down quickly. And it is this narrowing space that brings closer the squatters evicted and criminalised in the UK, the New Era estate residents in London, the E15 Mothers in the city, the *favela* residents forcefully evicted ahead of the Olympics and Turkey's dissidents using Gezi to protest for every reason in the world.

But I sense that this omni-present is going even one step further. This is no longer and not only about physical space alone. The neoliberal omni-present exists and excels at the level of discourse. The London rioters are thugs, we are told. Greeks fighting austerity are lazy, an obstacle to recovery and progress. So are the godless Gezi protesters and the Husby rioters, anathema to Sweden's increasingly xenophobic discourse. From mortar to mouthpiece, much of the base, the structure holding together social order as we have known it, dwindles. No doubt there will be another power relationship, a power structure to replace what is being lost. Neoliberal sovereignty does not seem to be leaving us at any historical moment soon, nor does our role as its subjects. But what is changing already, in this moment, is the position of visibility of the former to the latter.

The absolute power of the 'devil' in the opening epithet of the chapter was its ability to make people believe it did not exist. Neoliberalism has only too much in common with this cinematic devil. It is not only inevitable, not simply dominant, but is present everywhere and therefore naturalised to such a degree that we behave as if it isn't there, a perfectly normal, and therefore accepted, backdrop. The neoliberal devil presents itself as ubiquitous, omnipresent, to be found *everywhere*, and therefore

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[3] http://unfollow.com.gr/web-only/15794-ant1

something that cannot be contested *anywhere*, becoming, as it does, this newly 'naturalised' form, a state-of-being.

The neoliberal project, then, has taken a great step forward. Not only has it reached the end of history, the end of time, it has now maximised its capacity, its omni-presence, and has thereby reached the end of space, too. The neoliberal omni-present is a condition that has already striven to pose itself as ahistorical (hence the '-present'), the end of history that has supposedly arrived and passed, in direct replication of Christian teleology. And now, the Christian parallel is taken one step further, with the neoliberal presence becoming ubiquitous, going even beyond the panopticon state of *seeing* everything, everywhere, and entering into an omni-present state of *being* everything, everywhere. In edging toward the omni-present state, the neoliberal condition may seem to be achieving an overwhelming victory. But this could not be further from the truth. The great weakness of the neoliberal project, in its latest incarnation, might very well be that it is pushing itself everywhere, and by so doing, removes the safety margins that it had put in place for its own sake. What about its supposedly 'natural' or 'normal' condition? There is, of course, nothing natural or remotely normal about this asphyxiation, the enclosure of alternative spaces, physical and cognitive, in our lives. If there are high stakes, then, they would be about making ourselves visible again, flagging ourselves to the others who now find themselves equally enclosed in this neoliberal confine: to turn this condition of maximum confinement and asphyxiation to a potential for maximum visibility and freedom.

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9

Between Autonomy and Hybridity: Urban Struggles Within the 15M Movement in Spain

Miguel A. Martínez López

The 15M movement

The 15M or *Indignados* movement appeared on the public stage on 15 May 2011 with a massive demonstration that took place simultaneously in more than 57 Spanish cities after a call launched by a coalition of groups then named DRY (*Democracia Real Ya*, 'True Democracy Now'). Their first manifesto opposed the austerity and neoliberal policies implemented by the social-democratic government of the PSOE (*Partido Socialista Obrero Español*) in the last period of its term in power, after the global financial crisis of 2008. The conservative party, PP (*Partido Popular*), was implementing similar measures in the municipalities and regional governments under their control, so they were criticised as well. When the PP won the general election in November 2011 and intensified the austerity measures, the outrage increased. Since its inception, the

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15M movement gained wide social recognition and was able to mobilise thousands of activists and sympathisers, especially when dozens of squares in major city centres were occupied with tents, sit-ins, public assemblies and various improvised infrastructures.

The demands of 15M focused not only on problems stemming from neoliberalism and the economic crisis. The movement also criticised the de-democratisation of the political system. Widespread political corruption, the bailouts of banks, unemployment at rates of over 25 %, evictions of houses affected by foreclosures, cuts in public services and a rigid two-party system and electoral regulations unleashed the anger of the population. The 15M movement catalysed that underlying frustration, and started challenging both the political regime and its capitalist base. Claims for more participatory and direct-democratic mechanisms, the implementation of a universal basic income, the legalisation of undocumented immigrants, as well as a more radical call for a participatory drafting of a new constitution—the current one had been approved in 1978, three years after the dictator Franco's death—were put forth soon afterwards (MPD, 2014).

The various thematic working groups and regular assemblies that formed the most active core of the occupied squares at that time produced hundreds of additional specific demands: abolition of previous labour and pension reforms, measures to end unemployment, reduction of military expenditures, reform of the fiscal system, public control of the banks, a citizen audit of debt, provision of social housing and a guaranty of civil liberties (Adell, 2011; DRY, 2012; Pastor, 2011). From the initial cry for 'true democracy now', the 15M moved on to question the harsh austerity measures imposed by financial and European-Union power-holders. Furthermore, demands such as those heard in Argentina in 2001, '*que se vayan todos*' ('we want to oust all the politicians') or beloved by Italian autonomists of the 1960s and 1970s '*lo queremos todo y lo queremos ahora*' ('we want it all and we want it now') also resonated in the 15M from its first days onward (Díaz, 2011). Thus, the anti-austerity protests combined anti-capitalist and pro-radical-democracy perspectives.

This mobilisation was initially fuelled by demands on the state for both radical reform and preservation of basic welfare-state rights and benefits. At the same time, the 15M stressed its genuinely autonomous

nature, as no political party, labour union, private company or state institution was part of the pioneer coalition or protest camps (Abellán, 2015; Bonet, 2015). Flags and symbols of formal organisations associated with these or other social elites were banned from the squares and demonstrations, although they were not always successfully removed: In cases such as the *Marches for Dignity* in 2014, some were even explicitly accepted. This observation raises the question of whether the tension between institutional and autonomous orientations was fruitful or not. In addition, given the anti-systemic nature of 15M, it is worth asking what role the various urban struggles within it played. 'Within the 15M' means here the struggles that emerged from its core or were strongly influenced by the wave of uprisings, demonstrations and initiatives loosely identified with the umbrella of the 15M movement.

This chapter investigates the features of urban struggles in the context of the 15M movement: their opposition to neoliberal policies, the protest camps in public spaces, the occupations of houses, setting up community gardens, campaigning against the privatisation of hospitals and protesting against cuts to public education in the city of Madrid. I argue that these urban movements have been crucial to the development of the 15M due to the specific 'hybrid autonomy' to which they have contributed. This key analytical concept is presented and elaborated in the next section, which discusses social movements and social change with particular focus on relations between movements and state institutions. In the following section, I focus on features of neoliberal urbanism in Spain, in particular the case of Madrid. In the third and fourth sections, I show how the 15M triggered hybrid mobilizations and discuss the role and character of urban mobilizations in that context, discerning six types of urban struggle and identifying the various ways in which autonomous and institutional practices have been combined in these urban movements.

Thereafter, I discuss the role of urban violence and riots in the context of the 15M movement. While there was a broad commitment to peaceful means of protest in the 15M movement, I argue that there were three events of particular relevance with respect to the role of violence for the legitimacy of the 15M. Finally, in the conclusion, I highlight the achievements of the 15M movement with a particular emphasis on the concept of 'hybrid autonomy'.

Capitalism, the State and Democracy: Tensions between Neoliberalism, Institutions and Autonomy

In a recent interview, John Holloway (Fernández-Savater, 2014) reflected on the dilemma faced by autonomous movements once they are absorbed by political parties, state institutions and progressive governments that claim to represent them or, at least, to channel or satisfy many of their demands. He considers autonomous movements in particular, and autonomous politics in general, as capable of opening up and widening cracks within capitalism by creating social relationships and practices that differ from the logic of profit:

> The rejection of alienated and alienating labour entails, at the same time, a critique of the institutional and organizational structures, and the mindset that springs from it. This is how we can explain the rejection of trade unions, parties, and the state that we observe in so many contemporary movements, from the Zapatistas to the Greek or Spanish *indignados*. (Holloway in Fernández-Savater, 2014)

According to Holloway, then, not even leftist governments such as the ones in Bolivia and Venezuela can get rid of the contradictions of capitalism. The same applies to the hopes conveyed by electoral successes of *Syriza* in Greece or *Podemos* in Spain. Such governments might improve people's lives, but could not create a fundamental and sustainable alternative to the exploitation of labour and reproduction of capital. Thus, taking over the state is not the tactic Holloway prefers, as he sees an irreconcilable opposition between autonomous and institutional politics:

> Whilst not considering parties of the left as enemies, since for me this is certainly not the case, I would say that the answer has to be thought of in terms of deepening the cracks. If we're not going to accept the annihilation of humanity, which, to me, seems to be on capitalism's agenda as a real possibility, then the only alternative is to think that our movements are the birth of another world. We have to keep building cracks and finding ways

of recognizing them, strengthening them, expanding them, connecting them; seeking the confluence or, preferably, the commoning of the cracks.… We must work to reach a point where we can say 'we don't care if global capital isn't investing in Spain, because we've built a mutual support network that's strong enough to enable us to live with dignity. (Holloway in Fernández-Savater, 2014)

However, instead of merely advocating for and praising the revolutionary capacities of autonomous movements, Holloway argues that the chasm between both types of politics should not be eliminated, but bridged through constructive dialogue and by experimenting with temporary practices of emancipation:

> We need to keep a constant and respectful debate going without suppressing the differences and the contradictions. I think the basis for a dialogue could be this: no one has the solution. (Holloway in Fernández-Savater, 2014)

The plan to achieve state power, or to keep a foot inside state institutions in case of the failure of more ambitious aspirations to govern, conjures up the Weberian law of the iron cage. State bureaucracies mirror the intensifying rationalisation, discipline and control over individuals that have enabled capitalist companies to conquer the most productive hubs of the world. Classic divisions between Marxists and anarchists have emerged around this key issue. (See Fig. 9.1 below for a simplified schema of the classic oppositions between reformist-institutional struggles and revolutionary-autonomist ones.) Once a revolution takes place, what kind of new institutions, regulations and rationality might organise social life if not a state, even a transitional one?

Not only were fears of becoming trapped inside the state-capitalist iron cage criticised by anarchists, Trotskyists and autonomists, but also the risks of falling into the extreme individualist, misanthropic, mystical and anti-organisational trends which autonomist and libertarian options would face. In a celebrated, polemical essay, Murray Bookchin (1998) attacked 'primitivist lifestyle anarchism' as a reification of the autonomous individual mainly in terms of desire, imagination and nature.
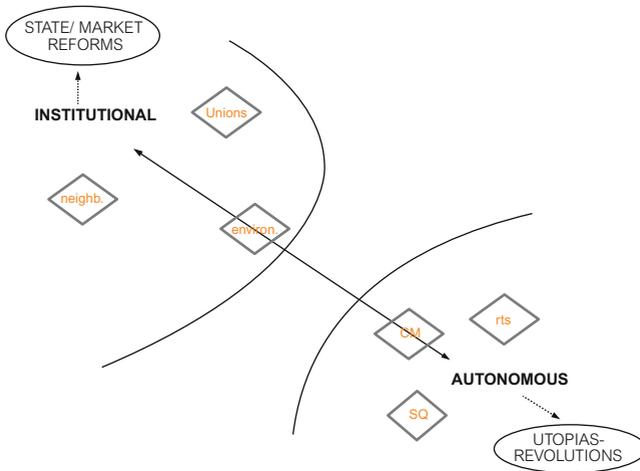
Fig. 9.1 Classic opposition between 'institutional' and 'autonomous' struggles. [Examples: Neighb.: neighbourhood associations; Unions: labour unions; Environ: environmental organisations; CM: Critical Mass of bicyclists; RTS: Reclaim the Streets; SQ: squatting.]

His was a theoretical critique that even aimed at some 'practical cracks' which libertarian subcultures had developed. For Bookchin:

> all claims to autonomy notwithstanding, this middle-class 'rebel', with or without a brick in hand, is entirely captive to the subterranean market forces that occupy all the allegedly 'free' terrains of modern social life, from food cooperatives to rural communes. (Bookchin, 1998, ch. 8)

This critique also evokes the perils of co-optation of movement leaders, critical discourses and productivity by elites (Piven & Cloward, 1979; Souza, 2006) and neoliberal rulers of urban governance (Mayer, 2012). Both Holloway and Bookchin advocate an escalation of some autonomous initiatives (such as 'libertarian municipalism' by the latter) in order to tackle the threshold of a revolution, but two crucial questions arise in the meantime: (1) How to connect or con-federate the archipelago of autonomous initiatives, organisations and movements in order to strengthen their potential to build an alternative society and rational-

ity? (2) What kind of ties should they establish and maintain with existing (state or market) institutions in order to consolidate their alternative projects while, simultaneously, diminishing the power of capitalism to self-reproduce?

Obviously, these are not new challenges for radical activists, and there is abundant literature that examines them (Alford & Friedland, 1985; Katsiaficas, 2006). However, once these premises and frames are made explicit, we can move forward and explore a territory not so often brought into the picture. Thus, what I consider a more nuanced intellectual puzzle to be solved is the conception and analysis of the hybrid forms which autonomous projects or anomalous institutions entail (Martínez, 2014). A hybrid autonomous initiative is one whose members do not accept the fate of remaining isolated alternatives to the dominant forces. Rather, they actively engage in creating strong or pragmatic bonds both with other autonomous *islands*, and, eventually, with state and even market institutions, all the while facing the contradictions and unintended consequences that may likely occur.

Neoliberal Urbanism in Spain: The Case of Madrid

There is abundant evidence that urban neoliberalism has been the main political direction of the city and the metropolitan region of Madrid since the late 1980s (Alguacil, DelaFuente, Martínez, Ubrich, & Velasco, 2011; Díaz, 2007; Rodríguez, García, & Muñoz, 2013; Walliser, 2013). I will follow Mayer's distinctions in this volume regarding the four main strands of urban neoliberalism in summarising the analyses provided by the authors mentioned above.

1. *Growth first* started symbolically in 1992 with the mega-projects dedicated to promoting the European Capital of Culture and state-centralised high-speed train, first to Seville and later to other cities. These were followed by new infrastructures developed in order to compete for the Olympics, which involved failure after failure, expensive

campaigns of city branding and public-private partnerships. The incorporation of Spain into European institutions in 1986 had opened up very profitable opportunities for massive urban construction and speculation by national and foreign capital—and subsequent housing bubbles and bursts, already occurring prior to 2008. In parallel, an intense flow of international immigration of cheap labour went into the major Spanish cities, Madrid being the main hub of reception and distribution. In the meanwhile, most of the biggest corporations who turned to global investment were located in a few avenues of Madrid or even developed their own private cities within the city (e.g., Telefónica and Banco Santander). The gentrification and beautification of large parts of the city centre, by promoting museums, hotels, tourism and cultural events, such as the 'White Night', contributed to enhancing the global image of Madrid and its lure for the *creative classes*, in addition to the intense transformation and commodification of the whole metropolitan area.

2. *Entrepreneurial forms of governance* prevailed also in Madrid, backed by the continuing conservative rule of the Popular Party in local government since 1989. In accordance with its neoliberal ideology, the PP used urban policies to showcase how the market might lead economic growth. Public infrastructures, such as the extensions of the subway and airport, or the underground reconstruction of a major road (M-30) were based on *crony capitalism* and highly contested by urban movements. The PP also made profitable concessions to private developers in many urban plans (the Four Towers in Paseo de la Castellana, Triball in the historic centre, the more than 200,000 new houses in the PAUs of the peripheral areas, 800,000 newly built houses in the region between 1995 and 2008, etc.), instead of opening up public debates and consensual decisions. Private schools, universities and hospitals bloomed due to the generous transfers of public monies to their assets. Since 2007, public bodies such as Global Madrid led the creation of private-public partnerships in order to sell the city as a never-ending source of profit for private capital. Cuts to all the municipal services and citizens' initiatives have accelerated since 2008.

3. *Privatisation* has been implemented in fields such as housing, public administration (tax management, information, welfare services, etc.)

and waste collection. Regarding municipal and regional stocks of public housing, the privatisation process has entailed a dramatic increase in rents and the eviction of thousands of families. The main public company in charge of the water supply (*Canal de Isabel II*) has been continuously threatened with privatisation, although the process has been partially delayed because of strong popular contestation. The same goes for the most serious and for-now failed attempt to privatise public hospitals (see below), although eight newly built public hospitals with full private management and subcontracting of many medical services were green-lighted after 2004. Most municipal kindergartens were also dismantled or out-sourced. Some high-speed roads from and to Madrid were privatised and, when shown not to be profitable, bought back by the state. The private-public company re-constructing the M-30 road engendered the highest, possibly unbearable, municipal debt up to that point and for the next several decades, while contributing to private urban-renovation projects in the surrounding areas.

4. *Social polarisation* is not just a common effect of capitalist cities, but a purposive neoliberal policy usually hidden under the rubrics of 'urban regeneration', the upgrade of popular neighbourhoods and the like. The unemployed, migrants, women, poor, elderly and precarious, not only young, workers tend to be the main targets of residential displacement, harassment, overcrowding and peripheral location. Increasingly unaffordable housing prices up until 2008 point to the major cause of socio-spatial segregation, although the absence of sufficient public housing exacerbated the problem. Local and regional authorities also favoured urban sprawl, gated communities and the rehabilitation of central areas (*Justicia*, *Cortes*, *Universidad*, *Palacio* and *Embajadores*, above all) with the same effects. Evictions, demolitions and authoritarian urban policies regarding marginalised groups living in the area of *La Cañada Real* illustrate the active role of the municipality in the reproduction and deepening of social polarisation. 77 % of migrant students are concentrated in the region's public schools, while 46 % of schools are privately owned and highly subsidised. Just to name another example at the opposite extreme of the social structure, the renewal of the old market of *San Miguel* close to *Puerta del Sol* turned

a traditionally accessible place for fresh food and groceries into an exclusive, luxury destination for tourists and the upper and *global* classes. The same dynamic applies to the recent pedestrianisation of central streets such as *Fuencarral*.

The Triggering of Hybrid Mobilisations

The historical origins of the 15M take us back to the autonomist and global justice movements of the previous cycle of protests (Flesher Fominaya, 2014; Romanos, 2013). Many lessons regarding goals, skills, communicative resources and repertoires of civil disobedience were learnt from the preceding cycle of anti-war campaigns, student protests, housing struggles and so forth. Many of the claims made by the 15M activists were deeply rooted in previous local and transnational movements. The 2008 financial crisis provoked immediate social unrest transnationally, first in Iceland, then in Greece, France, the UK, Portugal and some Arab countries (Metropolitano, 2011). All became inspirational references for the 15M, and none were pure cases of either autonomism or institutionalism.

As DRY was immediately overwhelmed by all the groups that mushroomed in and around the protest camps, no strong leading social-movement organization (SMO) emerged. Thus, the so-called 'spirit of the 15M' pervaded most of the mobilisations between 2011 and 2014. This was due to the diverse set of claims described above, as well as horizontal assemblies, their inclusiveness and autonomy from formal organisations, abundant digital communication and prevailing civil disobedience, in combination with institutional actions that many found acceptable.

The practical side of the 15M was more autonomous than many of its institutional and anti-austerity claims. Thus, the latter co-existed with a rising interest in the development of self-managed and autonomous projects, campaigns, cooperatives, independent media and squats. Popular assemblies in the neighbourhoods were the most visible alternative institutions: They were set up after the protest camps were dismantled, although many of them declined only a few months later. A new wave of occupations of buildings enjoyed more legitimacy than ever before

(Martínez & García, 2015), and many calls to civil disobedience were heeded by high turnouts as well as positive media coverage. New sectoral mobilisations, calling themselves *tides*, emerged in the public education and public health systems, which represented the most direct contestations of specific neoliberal measures (Sánchez, 2013). In the general and sectoral strikes called during those three years, labour unions worked alongside 15M working groups, assemblies and *tides*.

As a consequence, the 15M was able to inaugurate a new wave of nation-wide contention, which integrated a wide array of autonomous and hybrid groups, and sustained its challenge to the elites with a constant flow of demonstrations, campaigns and protest actions. (For a graphic representation of all the collectives and initiatives under the umbrella of the 15M, see: www.autoconsulta.org.) However, for many, the failures of those ambitious aspirations overshadowed the limited success of a few initiatives and the pervasive politicisation of everyday life (Fernández-Savater, 2013). This can explain the huge popular support given to new political parties and electoral platforms at the municipal level in 2014 and 2015. In particular, a significant shift has occurred since the European elections of May 2014. One of the new-born political parties, *Podemos*, won five seats in the European Parliament by articulating a straightforward opposition to austerity and neoliberal policies. In other words, the realm of institutional politics has again come to the foreground, and this recent scenario signals either the closing of the protest cycle of the autonomous orientation propagated by the 15M, or the entry of state institutions into the implementation of some15M demands. Given these developments, it is worth asking how the urban movements shared this hybrid identity and practice, as well as to what extent they were able to defy the urban neoliberal order in the metropolitan region of Madrid.

Urban Spaces and Struggles Within the 15M

Across Europe, with neoliberalisation and the hegemony of global capital intensifying over the last three decades, urban movements have transformed significantly (Mayer, 2012). Many urban organisations became entangled or neutralised in public-private partnerships, constrained by

Fig. 9.2 One of the multiple horizontal and self-managed meetings that took place at the one-month occupation of *Puerta del Sol*. Madrid, June 2011. Photo: Miguel A. Martínez

local austerity policies and limited funding aimed more at the control of 'dangerous' and marginalised classes than at their inclusion. Autonomous and radical movements still persisted in some areas (cf. Martínez, 2013; Shepard & Smithsimon, 2011), but the scope and outcomes of their contention were far from challenging to the powers that be. The alter-globalisation or Global Justice Movement at the beginning of the 2000s was loosely connected to some urban movements, and its counter-summits would regularly take over urban spaces, but mainly as a possible battleground scenario (Scholl, 2012).

In the aftermath of the financial crisis of 2008, popular unrest initially followed a similar path with the occupation of landmark urban squares. However, cities and urban problems now re-entered the core agenda of grassroots politics. Just as 15M as a whole developed 'hybrid autonomy' as outlined above, so did local initiatives associated with the 15M. Scholars

have adopted two major approaches to hybridisation, seeing it either as a mixture of global and local perspectives (Dhaliwal, 2012) or as a merger of digital and spatial networks (Díaz & Candón, 2014; Walliser, 2013). Less attention has been paid to the hybridisation of the autonomous and institutional dimensions of urban movements (Souza, 2006).

Six types of urban struggles are present within the 15M, all of them in Madrid, and many in other cities as well: (1) the occupation of public spaces, streets and central squares (OPS); (2) the organisation of local assemblies in neighbourhoods (LAS); (3) the development of community gardens (CG); (4) new types of squatted houses and social centres (SQ); (5) a housing movement led by the Platform of People Affected by Mortgages (PAH); (6) the so-called '*tides*' for the defence of public services and *commons* (TIDES). I will focus on the features of each that relate to their autonomy and institutional hybridisation. Fig. 9.3 offers a synthesis of their differences and similarities.
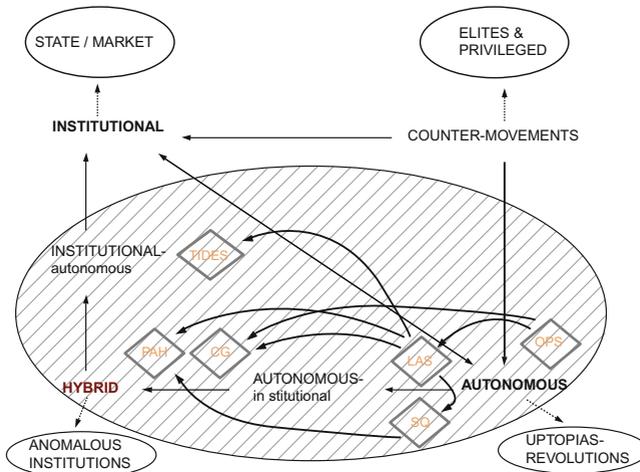
Fig. 9.3   Location and ties of six urban movements within the hybrid political space of the 15M. [OPS: Occupation of Public Spaces; LAS: Local Assemblies; CG: Community Gardens; SQ: Squatting of buildings; PAH: People Affected by Mortgages; TIDES: sectoral '*tides*' in public services. 'AUTONOMOUS-institutional' means that primary practice, identity, and outcomes fall closer to the autonomous orientation while the 'INSTITUTIONAL-autonomous' category emphasises the opposite, a closeness to an institutional orientation.]

1. OPS [Occupations of Public Spaces]. These were the starting point and spark of the entire 15M movement. Their radical autonomy exerted a strong influence on the groups and campaigns that subsequently formed. The occupied squares showed no evidence of state institutions' interference in their internal development. Assemblies, committees and working groups were able to self-manage most of their issues, although sometimes the police and municipal services interrupted or cancelled their activities. Their (infra)structures lasted for several weeks, far longer than initially expected. Their performance consisted of the creation of a counter-power or an anomalous institution, which was understood not intended to last forever. At the same time, they were not intended to be mere 'temporal zones', since the activists wanted to make an impact in the political sphere at large, beyond particular occupied spaces.

   In Madrid, a few, poorly attended calls to depart from the square and go to demonstrate in front of the parliamentary buildings were made, but this cannot be considered an institutional dimension of the OPS. The occupations of *Puerta del Sol* (Madrid) and other central squares in different Spanish cities represented a successful defiance of the authorities. They also spread the message of the feasibility and legitimacy of civil-disobedience tactics for creating deliberative fora in public spaces. While assemblies as a form of direct democracy and deliberation were widely practiced in the Transition period (1975–1978), the technique has been very much enhanced, and manipulation attempted by political parties and partisan militants proved difficult (Corsín & Estalella, 2013; Moreno, 2013).

   Between spring and fall 2011, many *illegal* demonstrations took place, in the sense that the organisers neither informed the authorities of their intentions nor did they ask for permission, an additional sign of autonomous orientation. This was not the case in most of the large marches, where due institutional arrangements were met. Police repression was harsh, though, in both cases, often ending with the beating and arrest of numerous individuals. Except for a few cases where demonstrators actively participated in clashes with the police, in general the great majority of participants in 15M events resisted peacefully in situations of police-driven violence. The eviction of Plaça

Catalunya in Barcelona was the most obvious example of this contentious interaction, in which the police used extreme force and abused occupants.

2. LAS [Local Assemblies]. Once the squares were voluntarily or forcibly evicted, the movement re-emerged in different neighbourhoods and municipalities. LAS also tended to meet in public squares and to install some infrastructures or information points, but not to camp or stay overnight. Many of these LAS-created connective and alliance structures declined after their first year, as happened in Madrid. Attendance decreased over the months and years, but many LAS remained active for more than three years. On the one hand, the OPS combined the centrality of the people's assemblies with the creative appropriation and transformation of a usually commercial or touristy public space. On the other hand, LAS focused more on local problems of the neighbourhood or city, without being tied to a strong identity associated with the particular spot or area in which they met.

   LAS again constituted an example of autonomous institutions which possessed an even stronger counter-power outlook compared to the OPS, because the former tended to mirror district institutional powers. In some cases, the LAS started to interact with the local authorities. This widened their institutional hybridity, although most of the LAS avoided co-optation and tried to stay away from political parties, with the exception of those that approached *Podemos* after 2014. LAS were also key actors in the support for PAH and the sectoral *tides* as well as in the launching of CG and SQs initiated by their members. In other words, LAS evolved from their beginnings in radical autonomy to share many of the features of the other struggles in which they were involved as members of the 15M network of alliances.

3. CG [Community Gardens]. The case of the CG is a very special one in cities like Madrid, because its sudden rise closely paralleled the 15M, and many CG members participated simultaneously in both movements. Before the 15M, there were just a few autonomous CGs. In spite of many differences between them—not all CGs were squatted by taking over vacant land, for example—their horizontality, self-management and social inclusivity connected immediately with the

15M call to autonomous politics. The interesting feature here is that most of the CG activists rapidly co-ordinated with and approached municipal authorities in order to obtain recognition, stability and a regulatory frame. Their close connection with city hall, while preserving their spaces of autonomy, distinguishes them from other 15M groups and campaigns (Hernández, 2014).

4. SQ [Squatting]. The squatters' movement has a long history of more than three decades in a number of Spanish cities (Adell & Martínez, 2004). With just a few cases of legalisation (Martínez, 2014), usually squats remained radically autonomous and outside the law. However, the long duration and social acceptance of many squats played in favour of their *anomalous* institutionalisation. They also became central hubs for wider networks of social movements. These observations apply more to squatted social centres than to squatted houses, although these often coexisted in the same buildings and projects.

Fig. 9.4 Demonstration that culminated in the occupation of a building by the recently evicted squatters of the Patio Maravillas. Madrid, June 2015. Photo: Miguel A. Martínez

The OPS in the 15M obtained immediate support from many SQ activists. Active participants in the OPS and the LAS also launched their own SQ initiatives in many neighbourhoods and cities. These were not limited to Madrid and Barcelona, although most were concentrated there. Many rejected the imaginary and stigma prevailing in the media about squatting and shared the *transversal* politics of the 15M. For instance, many new SQ called press conferences to which mass media were invited, and activists expressed their will to negotiate and reach agreements with the local authorities. While most squatting of housing occurred by stealth, the new housing movement led by PAH also became involved in the public occupation of houses. Poor families, bank-owned properties, supportive media coverage and the demand for affordable rent in case negotiations opened up, all signalled a drastic turning-point from the previous squatters' movement (see, for example, the case of the *Corrala Utopia* in Seville: Granado, 2014; Stelfox, 2013). The squatting of buildings, especially of those owned by banks, was widely applauded and sparked regular media attention, which in many cases facilitated negotiations with the authorities, quite unlike the quick and violent evictions which had previously been the trend. Even formerly radical-autonomous SQ respected the attitudes of the new squats and helped them to resist evictions. Therefore, a trend towards increasing hybrid institutionalisation within the squatters' movement was also the tool that released these protest actions from their previously marginal identities (Martínez & García, 2015).

5. People affected by Mortgages [PAH]. The PAH has not only been involved in the squatting of buildings for housing purposes. Due to its many diverse initiatives, it represents a new housing struggle, and is one of the most significant public voices within the 15M. In its origins (2009), PAH was a self-help organisation aiming at halting evictions of people unable to pay their mortgages. They gathered crowds in order to peacefully prevent the police and judicial officers from kicking people out of their homes. These dramatic moments of civil disobedience were portrayed by the mass media in a way that tended to legitimize those actions. However, in parallel, the PAH also tried to avoid that last resort of solidarity and opposition to legal procedures by enrolling activists in negotiations with municipal governments and banks. The organisation also offered legal aid. One of its most massive

campaigns consisted of launching a citizen-initiated legislation that obtained 1.5 million signatures, although it was finally rejected by the parliamentary process (Colau & Alemany, 2012; Delclós, 2013).

More than 200 PAH groups were formed across Spain. Their campaign promoting the squatting of buildings owned by banks or state agencies, while making clear their intention to pay affordable rents, turned into a strong challenge to governments and judges, especially given the soaring rates of unemployed and impoverished people. The success of many of PAH's radical-autonomous, as well as institutional, actions turned it into the most salient and effective organisation within the 15M. Even though PAH was not initially a pure 15M group, as it was created independently in 2009, it joined DRY in its call for the first demonstration (Colau & Alemany, 2012). Similar to the squatters' movement, PAH experienced an intense and fruitful convergence with the 15M movement.

Compared to other urban struggles, PAH has stood out for its ability to establish completely novel and strong networks of solidarity among people threatened by evictions and activists of many different backgrounds. It linked, for instance, migrants' associations, neighbourhood activism, political parties, squatters, students, lawyers, accountants and psychologists. PAH differs from other manifestations of leaderless political culture, disseminated by the more autonomous groups within 15M, in that its celebrated leadership and official spokesperson became the most visible head of two new electoral platforms, first *Guanyem Barcelona* and, later, *Barcelona en Comú*. In January 2015, PAH showed a banner on its website counting the numbers of prevented evictions (1135) and people re-housed (1180), many in more than 20 squatted buildings (Colau & Alemany, 2014).

6. *TIDES* [Sectoral *Tides*]. The defence of public services under threat of being privatised or already commodified and deteriorated in various ways engendered many revolts from inside state institutions and public companies, and quickly gained outside public support. These services started to be redefined as 'urban commons' in order to emphasise both the essential rights that should shape them institutionally and the required involvement of citizens in their management, rather than in only using them in the role of clients or consumers.

The so-called 'white *tide*' within the public health system has been the most successful with its legal opposition to the privatisation of hospitals in Madrid and elsewhere. The highest regional authority, the Secretary of Health, stepped down when his plan was defeated in court (Sánchez, 2013). Broad coalitions were formed in all the *tides* (workers and professionals in different ranks, labour unions, workers' assemblies, external associations and residents, 15M groups and activists), which often entailed a very unstable balance of power. The autonomy of each *tide* was always under strong pressure, especially with regard to which banners, flags and organisational allegiances would be shown at their continuous demonstrations, as well as at the institutional settings for negotiation with the authorities. Some labour unions in particular tried to lead the assemblies, the pace of the mobilisations and meetings with the authorities.

In terms of repertoires, two 'illegal' public consultations, against the privatisation of the water supply and of six hospitals in Madrid, represented extraordinary examples of how determined the activists were to create alternative political institutions and autonomous mechanisms to influence the municipal and regional authorities. Both were very successful in terms of signatures collected (165,000 and 1,082,300 *voters*, respectively) and they were also combined with many other actions, both institutional (legal trials, meetings with political representatives, participation in municipal plenums, etc.) and non-institutional (demonstrations, sit-ins on public roads, human chains around hospitals, organised disobedience to facilitate health services for undocumented migrants, etc.).

The 'green *tides*' in primary and secondary schools, and similar initiatives by university and research institutes' staff, as well as the 'black *tide*' attempted by workers in public administration, had more modest trajectories less impact and more fragile connection to the 15M, in spite of the efforts of many LAS and 15M activists.

What Responses to Neoliberal Violence?

In general, all who claim to be part of or inspired by the 15M shared a broad commitment to peaceful means of protest. Over the last decades in the Spanish context, every direct action of protest involving riots, clashes

with the police or the destruction of urban facilities has immediately been framed by the political and media elites as either straightforward or low-intensity 'terrorism'. The conflict between the Spanish state and the Basque separatist armed group ETA provided grounds for dividing the whole arena of politics into 'violent militants', labelled 'terrorists', and 'non-violent demonstrators', labelled 'democrats'. Both social-democratic and conservative governments enacted strict anti-terrorist laws and harsh police procedures, which were often applied to the repression of all kinds of social movements and, above all, to radical and autonomous ones (Fernández, 2009; Fernández & Ubasart, 2008). Police repression and arrests at demonstrations have thus been very common whenever disruption of traffic or exceeding the time licensed to demonstrate were involved.

The highly polarised views around legitimate violence held by protesters remarkably constrained the movements' options, even though ETA declared a cease-fire in 2010, which it confirmed in 2011. In this context, 15M gained wide social support, recognition and legitimacy on the basis of its explicit embrace of non-violent means of protest, which was not always the case in some autonomist traditions. And, conversely, this contrasted with the widespread anger that increasing police violence generated. The latter was a typical reaction and legacy of the most veteran autonomists, and therefore strong anti-repressive alert campaigns were also effectively conducted within the 15M.

Three events were of particular relevance with respect to the role of violence for the legitimacy of the 15M:

1. In Barcelona, on 15 June 2011, some politicians, while walking in the Catalonian Parliament, were insulted, spat on and jostled by activists. In spite of strong criminalisation by the media, the activists were acquitted three years later.
2. On 29 March 2012, many 15M groups were involved in a nationwide general strike. The strike was launched jointly by the two major and

most of the minor labour unions. The pickets, sabotages and riots that occurred in many places were partially attributed to the 15M. Dozens of activists were detained and some even sentenced to jail terms.

3. A call to demonstrate in front of the Central Parliament in Madrid on 25 September 2012 warned potential participants that violent confrontations with the police might occur since some groups threatened to get access to the Parliament by any means possible. Police violently dissolved the demonstration after a few hours.

These and other violent episodes involved 15M activists as apparent promoters. The so-called '*escraches*' are another example. This is a method whereby individual politicians who opposed reforming the Spanish mortgage law have been identified and publicly shamed (PAH, 2014). Such actions engendered some internal splits and slightly undermined the public legitimacy of the movement. However, they remained isolated cases, so the movement did not lose the broad support already gained. Moreover, given continuing abuses by the police, especially in some dramatic cases of evictions of residents from their homes (see: http://afecta-dosporlahipoteca.com), and the rapid decline of the terrorism frame, the public was more prone to back intense and risky forms of direct action, including violent resistance to the police. This was evident in the street battles that occurred in January 2014 in the city of Burgos. The spark that set off these riots was ignited by the urban renewal of a street in a working-class neighbourhood within a context of local corruption and severe cuts in social programmes. Instead of radical youngsters, residents of different age and political backgrounds took part in the mobilisations, as well as in the wave of solidarity with those arrested. A progressive current of public opinion thus justified the residents' violent resistance beyond the local boundaries of the conflict (López, 2014).

The riots that occurred at the end of the Marches for Dignity in March 2014 were somewhat less controversial among 15M supporters than previous ones had been (Al-khimiya, 2014). Some international precedents, such as the confrontations in Istanbul around Gezi Park and those in Rio de Janeiro (*Movimento Passe Livre*), might have provided justification for the groups of young people who fought back against the police, set up barricades and smashed the windows of banks. The political authorities

were also accused of abusive intervention in and disruption of a highly successful and peaceful demonstration, with the sole purpose of labelling protesters as violent (DISO, 2014).

My analysis thus indicates that physical violence has not been absent from the responses performed by the 15M to the neoliberal order, although riots and clashes have hardly been frequent or significant in the development of this wave of protest. On the contrary, the intense state repression of 15M activists has notoriously backed the imposition of austerity measures. In spite of their continuation at the level of the central state, urban movements within 15M have been able to disclose and contest some of their local manifestations by resorting mostly to peaceful means of protest.

Conclusions

The most visible effect of a movement's collective action is its capability to sustain itself over time and to make its claims visible to the surrounding society. The attraction of participants to its activities of protest, mobilisation and organisation, and, not least, the social support obtained and the reputation achieved among bystander publics may also be seen as important achievements. Moreover, the persistent challenge to social forms of domination and inequality is, in my view, the most crucial benefit provided by those movements that aspire to achieve political influence without taking state power (Scott, 1990, 2012; Viejo, 2007, p. 34).

Most state and social institutions are in fact the result of historic anti-institutional and institutionalising social movement forces. Thus, we can assume that autonomous and radical movements of the past played a creative role in the origin of present institutions. However, what my perspective on social movements provides is less a focus on the key role of the state and the interactions between the state and movements, than a focus on all the interactions, actors and contexts involved in institutional creation. This implies bringing hybrid dynamics, i.e., a combination of autonomous and institutional practices, into the picture.

Are autonomous and radical urban movements old-fashioned and ineffective unless they become more like hybrids in terms of organisa-

tional coalitions, protest repertoires and institutional capacities? I do not believe so. Rather, my analysis of the urban movements within the 15M has revealed a relatively virtuous political space for both autonomous and hybrid movements in which they can feed back to each other in a fruitful manner. That is to say, in being able to develop antagonist politics, empowering those at the bottom of the social structure, spreading a critical politicisation of the private everyday as well as public aspects of social life, they effectively challenge the reproduction of the dominant elites and achieve substantial changes in the capitalist regimes of production, consumption and governance. Instead of just counter-posing autonomous with institutional ways of action, mirroring old disputes between reform and revolution, the distinction of hybrid forms urges us to focus on the relationships between hybrids and state institutions, on the one hand, and hybrids and autonomous struggles, on the other. Hybrid organisations, campaigns and means of protest may be desirable and attainable ways of materialising many of the autonomous counter-powers, anomalous institutions and movement inter-faces upheld by autonomous activists—not only in the absence of a revolution, but also in post-revolutionary contexts in dealing with unavoidable conflicts.

The term 'hybridity' conveys meanings of mixture, mutual contamination, interdependence and flexibility. It can be applied to multiple dimensions of social movements, such as double-tracking the local and global scales of their manifestation, and the physical and electronic spheres of communication, for example. My approach to the urban struggles within the 15M reveals more specific characteristics. First, the most autonomous cases, such as the OPS, LAS and SQ have either been *origins* of ulterior forms of the movement, or continuous sources of identity and symbolic reference followed by other struggles, movements and even new political parties. In terms of 'origin', the creation of LAS alongside many working groups and independent committees and campaigns was decided and often organised first by the OPS or in close engagement with the activists running the OPS. More than SQ itself, the fight against the evictions of houses and the underlying neoliberal policies became a core claim in the critical discourses about national politics that followed. The advanced techniques of conducting assemblies, deliberation and other organisational and protest skills, which were adopted by all 15M movements, can

easily be traced back to the long experience developed within the SQ and other autonomous movements.

Second, the occasional or tactical institutional orientation of two of the most autonomous forms (LAS and SQ) was due to their close connection to wider urban movements (such as PAH, the *TIDES* and CG). The shifts that the former experienced were helpful in amplifying their own struggles for legitimacy, recruitment and self-reproduction, and not least in achieving some of their goals and creating durable local impact in urban affairs. None of these organisations forced others to participate on equal terms in the urban movements they were renewing thanks to the 15M. Their respective autonomy, and also their mutual respect and aid, gave birth to the strong hybridity that we saw at the very core of the 15M.

Third, a deep institutional involvement does not necessarily lead to higher impact. The green *tide* (education) emerged from a similar institutional cradle as the white *tide* (health), but they performed very differently in terms of outcomes. The neoliberal attacks on public services in the metropolitan region of Madrid were more successfully halted by the white *tide* than the green *tide*. While both relied on massive mobilisations and increasing hybridity, the green *tide* was weaker and less innovative when facing a low-intensity process of cuts and privatisations, compared to the astonishing plan to immediately privatise most of hospitals. The CG learned from the experience of the squatters' movement and very quickly opted for institutional agreements, as they were helped by the more institutionalised federation of neighbourhood associations that guaranteed them longer duration and legal protection for their projects. During the process of those negotiations, most of the CGs autonomously self-managed their lots, resisted and had a significant impact in the daily lives of the communities where they settled. Their consistent, unified and well-planned institutional strategy also gained unexpected concessions from the municipality. Although they directly questioned the city-growth model and the speculation in urban land, real estate developers and authorities might not feel so threatened by them in a period of declining profits in the construction business. The PAH was born as an autonomous organisation as well, even before the 15M. However, its struggle was initially more in direct opposition to institutions, and less dedicated to creating new institutions, though this also forced them to face state

institutions creatively. Pushing for alternative legislation, exhausting negotiations with all kinds of stakeholders and, finally, building communities in the occupied buildings for hosting evicted families paved an exemplary hybrid path for the rest of the 15M. Their contestation of neoliberal housing policies and the public bailout of banks that owned many of the squatted buildings was more direct, although it met with ebbs and flows of success.

Civil disobedience thus became a strong connecting thread among all the 15M initiatives, even for those with a more institutional outlook, such as the *tides* in hospitals and schools. While riots were not significant in the development of 15M, institutional violence and repression of activists escalated to a considerable degree, and even included the enactment of new criminal legislation aimed at punishing activism. This can be interpreted as the elites' counter-response to the challenges that the movements expressed in questioning neoliberal politics. OPS criticised the dominant commodification and de-politicisation of public spaces. CG and SQ battled against the vacancy created by the processes of urban speculation due to widely de-regulated real estate markets and the absence of social-housing policies. PAH strived for the rights of those suddenly unemployed, impoverished and homeless, while the banks enjoyed huge privileges due to the current regulation of mortgages and the policies that bailed them out. The *TIDES* opposed the cuts in and privatisation of key public services, such as health and education. The source and reproduction of autonomous politics have been a strong component in this process of movement networking, but it was fed equally by simultaneous institutional practices and struggles. As the above cases show, movements in the urban realm have occupied a central political space in the 15M movement in general, which was motivated by a broader systemic and regime crisis.

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10

Gezi Protests and Beyond: Urban Resistance Under Neoliberal Urbanism in Turkey

Gülçin Erdi Lelandais

Introduction

Since the beginning of the 2000s, a number of international protest demonstrations, such as alter-globalisation movements, have emerged in reaction to neoliberal restructuring and the accompanying gradual erosion of citizens' rights. These movements contesting the impact of global neoliberalisation began over time to focus on cities and to scrutinize current urban governance, increasing precarization, and socio-spatial segregation. During the European Social Forum that took place in Istanbul in 2010, a handful of panels[1] on the theme of the right to the city brought together activists and residents from different neighbourhoods that were either destroyed or under the threat of destruction, to discuss the possibility

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[1] These panels were organised by different neighbourhood associations like Sulukule Platformu, Tozkoparan, IMECE (Movement of Urbanisation for People), Bir Umut (One Hope), No Vox France, and Reclaiming Space Germany.

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of creating a common urban movement. Two visits were also organised for international participants to the Tozkoparan and Sariyer neighbourhoods, both destined to be urban transformation areas, threatening the inhabitants with expulsion and resettlement in degraded conditions.

Gezi Park protests emerged in this context, against a background of established urban social movement networks. On the night of 27 May 2013, information about the felling of trees in Gezi Park started to circulate in social networks calling people to help the few activists resisting there. Three days later, an unexpected, large-scale political uprising developed in Istanbul, which spread to the main cities of Turkey. What was the reason for this spreading uprising? There was no economic crisis, the country had increasing growth rates, and the government was stable. Still, the country encountered one of the broadest and most enduring revolts of its recent political history.

Before this uprising, occasional mobilisations and campaigns had taken place, dealing with topics such as the over-exploitation of natural resources, environmental degradation, the destruction of historic buildings, forced displacement due to large-scale development projects, labour issues in different sectors, and human rights. These protests, however, were barely visible in the media, despite their regular presence in the public space. None of these protests seemed to find significant support in society. They remained limited to intellectual circles and specific professional groups, such as planners and architects, aware of and concerned about the neoliberal exploitation of urban and rural space and the environment, as well as those people who were directly impacted by urban or regional development projects. Gezi Park became the nodal point that brought together different motivations and different local social movements, and thus made visible an urban movement that had been developing since the beginning of 2000s.

As in the movements described by Mayer (2000), these also contest the lack of democratic participation in everyday life and strategies of restructuring the city, and criticise the spatial and temporal concentration of urban development projects to the detriment of other urban problems concerning a large number of inhabitants. This chapter shows that these movements are the result of a struggle about the production and appro-

priation of urban space between the conceived space, involving abstract constructions, technical space, often associated with business and developers' plans and projects, and the perceived space, namely, the everyday perception of space by those who inhabit it (Lefebvre, 1974).

This chapter thus brings a sociological viewpoint to these resistance struggles in Turkey. It provides a detailed analysis of current urban movements, their discourses, and mobilisation practices. Examples of some neighbourhoods help to better understand how the movements engage with political authorities. The struggle around Gezi Park is thereby revealed as the result of the accumulation of the mobilisation efforts of these various movements. As Marcuse states, 'occupied space is a means to an end, and only one means among others, not the end itself' (2011). The end was to rectify injustices created by systemic processes that run through the city (Miller & Nicholls, 2013, p. 467). While mobilisation around Gezi Park during the first half of June 2013 took a peaceful and festive character, it was criticised as an upper-middle-class, bourgeois action undertaken while people were dying in other parts of the country. In various cities, violent struggles between police and protesters were continuing in the streets of peripheral, poor neighbourhoods stigmatised by the political engagement or ethnic identity of their inhabitants. Residents in the Gazi and Okmeydanı neighbourhoods in Istanbul, the Mamak Tudusayır neighbourhood in Ankara, and the Armutlu neighbourhood in Hatay experienced the most violent clashes with police. All of these have the reputation of being extreme-leftist, Alevi neighbourhoods, and most of them are targets of urban-transformation projects.

This chapter is divided into three sections.: Section I will assess the period of spontaneous revolt, its origins, genesis, and objectives. It will elaborate the claims of the demonstrators and explain the specificities of Gezi Park resistance, as well as the role of space in the mobilisations. Section II analyses the neoliberal urbanisation of Turkey during the last decade and its relationship with different forms of urban social movements. Finally, in Section III, I will argue that these protests emerge from a struggle of perception and the appropriation of space, understood in a Lefebvrian sense, between different actors in Turkey, in the context of state-led neoliberal urbanisation.

Gezi Park: Location and Symbol of an Anti-Systemic Popular Protest

Until the evening of 27 May 2013, Gezi Park, the only green zone in the middle of Taksim, a highly urbanised tourist district of Istanbul, had not at first glance garnered any particular interest from the majority of the inhabitants passing by. Badly maintained, the park was used, *inter alia*, as a shelter for homeless people. It became the target of attention thanks to emails that started to diffuse, via such different lists as the Movement of Urbanisation for People, Union of Chambers of Architects and Engineers, and Twitter, with emergency calls for assistance and support, including images of bulldozers cutting down trees situated at the northern entry of the park.

Though unexpected, this mobilisation did not emerge out of nowhere. The project for the replacement of the park with a reproduction of a historic military barracks, which was to house a shopping mall and residences, had been worrying activists interested in town planning, architecture, and urban transformation for more than a year, as the government had announced the project in 2012. Joined together within the Association for the Protection and Embellishment of Gezi Park, founded in November 2012, activists informed the public about the felling of trees and set up tents to protect the park, thus preventing the bulldozers from advancing. On 30 May, the Turkish police intervened at 5 A.M. to evacuate the protesters from the park. In addition to the massive use of teargas, tents were burned, and the park was opened to bulldozers to continue demolition. After the diffusion on social networks of the violent images of this police raid, several demonstrations were organised spontaneously to express solidarity with those forcibly expelled. These demonstrations were gradually transformed into a political act of refusal and an existential uprising. Different initiatives, groups, and associations eventually joined under the banner of 'Taksim Dayanışması' (Solidarity for Taksim). The demonstrators at the park numbered more than 20,000 by the end of the day; several thousand individuals were still walking in from different areas of the city trying to reach Taksim Square, and by the night of 1 June, protestors had entirely conquered Taksim Square. Street

battles with police in different parts of Istanbul, as well as in other metropolitan areas, continued for more than a month.

The initial mobilisation around the trees of Gezi Park contradicted the supposed inertia and apolitical attitude of Turkish society in the previous decade. Since the anti-war demonstrations in 2003, no significant protests were observed during the Party of Justice and Development (AKP) rule. This sudden urban conflict actually took place in the context of increasingly blatant government authoritarianism manifest in various acts, including a recent law restricting the sale of alcohol, government censorship of media pertaining to a massacre in Reyhanlı near the Syrian border, and a police crackdown on First of May demonstrations. In this socio-political context, Gezi Park became a nodal point representing the frustrations of a heterogeneous mass of people (İMECE, 2014, p. 79). At the same time, for many people, the destruction of Gezi Park represented the ultimate attack of neoliberal urbanisation in Istanbul, following

Fig. 10.1 Mobilisation on 2 June 2013 in front of Gezi Park. Photo: Gülçin Erdi Lelandais

many others,[2] as the objective was to transform this small city park into a for-profit shopping mall and residential area. Both people who criticised neoliberal town planning for neglecting democratic participation, and those who rejected the imposition of conservative moral values regarding how to dress, how to behave, and what to drink in public, decided to act in the Gezi protests.

Thus, Gezi protests must be seen as a refusal of a new kind of spatial neoliberalism nourished by authoritarian and religious governmental practices which have become dominant in Turkey over the last decade. This authoritarian neoliberalism, polished with Islamic motifs, is characterised by a neoliberal, individualistic consumer culture, including the construction of hundreds of shopping malls all around the country and the spread of credit card and mortgage systems in the course of the previous decade (Erkip, 2003; Enlil, 2011). It is particularly based on the promotion of large-scale urban development projects and the gentrification of several neighbourhoods from which poor and marginalised populations are displaced in favor of newly created urban centralities.

Protests emerging from Gezi Park are actually the expression of a broader urban social movement referring to a system of practices whose development tends objectively towards the structural transformation of the urban system (Pickvance, 2003). In other words, they propose to change the models of conduct by which the society produces its practices (Touraine, 1978, p. 52). Authoritarian neoliberalism constitutes the model of conduct these protests contest. In the case of Turkey, the discursive means through which activists articulate grievances, formulate demands, and construct collective identities in urban social movements is realised under the frame of 'right to the city' and 'spatial and social justice' (Rutland, 2013).

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[2] In Istanbul, several projects, such as Galataport (the creation of a centre of entertainment on the historic Galata bridge), the transformation of the old Haydarpasa railway station into a residence and shopping mall, investments in the Olympic Games, the Beyoglu-Tarlabasi urban transformation project evicting the poor population from the district, the construction of a Formula One race track, the construction of a third Bosphorus bridge, and a third airport, destroying the city's northern forests, are only some examples of this neoliberal urbanism for which the profit value of the urban space and city branding are major elements in city-making.

Fig. 10.2 Collective and free food and book area inside the Gezi Park. On the poster behind: "Kitchen and Library of Gezi Commune". Photo: Gülçin Erdi Lelandais

The initial resistance organised at Gezi Park had a clear urban agenda: to reclaim the right to the city of ordinary urbanites 'who rely on use value in the city and to place it over the right to the city of capitalists, developers and their allies who recast the city as a locus of exchange value and capital accumulation' (Kuymulu, 2013a, p. 276). As Kuymulu points out, this neoliberal character of urban planning was recognised by protesters, who chanted the slogan, 'Capital be gone, Gezi Park is ours' (ibid.).

In the discourse of many activists, the right to the city and spatial justice appear as fundamental elements of the protest. Ergin quoted an urban activist in Istanbul who said:

> The right to the city is a revolutionary right, not a mere right of dwelling; right to access to centrality or to the urban services. It must be elaborated as related to the use-value of space with a democratic urban imagination. Urban struggle must aim for the right to the city, targeting a more democratic, just city based on the use-value. (Ergin, 2014, p. 51)

The concept of the right to the city, as elaborated by Henri Lefebvre, will serve to illuminate this study and, in particular, the emergence of urban movements in Turkey. According to Lefebvre, the right to the city entails

equal access for all to the potential benefits of the city, the democratic participation of all inhabitants in decision-making processes, and the realisation of inhabitants' fundamental rights and liberties. Lefebvre defines the right to the city as the right of citizens and city-dwellers (Lefebvre, 1996). His conception of the 'right to the city' is for dwellers to retain the ability to produce their spaces without conforming to the dominant modes of spatial production, and to participate in reshaping the existing norms and forces in which space is being produced within the capitalist order, rather than being themselves engulfed in those modes (Fawaz, 2009).

The following section will explore this process by analysing the meaning of neoliberal urbanism in Turkey, its orientations, and its impact on the everyday life of inhabitants.

Beyond Gezi Park: Neoliberal Urbanisation and its Discontents in Turkey

The introduction of neoliberal economic rules started in Turkey during the 1980s with the progressive reduction of state control of markets under the rule of former Prime Minister Turgut Özal. The Özal government engaged in shock therapy with regard to anti-labor legislation and centralisation of state power, accompanied by an export-led growth strategy (Bekmen, 2014, p. 54). Elected after the 2001 economic crisis, the AKP government introduced new measures in order to overcome the economic and financial problems the country was facing, and to reintroduce economic growth (Akça, Bekmen, & Özden, 2014). The neoliberal economic strategy of the AKP had two main characteristics. The first was the support of Islamic capital groups close to the party, in order to consolidate and unify this power bloc of politically dominant classes and capitalist groups. The second was the promotion of urban planning and development projects by accelerating the construction industry, which had already been boosted during the 1990s with the emergence of real-estate investment trusts and the privatisation of a number of urban public construction projects (Enlil, 2011). The government designated this sector as a solution to reviving the country's economy and stimulating growth (Yalçıntan & Çavuşoğlu, 2013), as well as ensuring the rise

of a new capitalist group close to its conservative ideology and political objectives (Gürek, 2008). In this sense, urban entrepreneurialism denotes an array of governance mechanisms and policies aimed at nurturing local and regional economic growth by creating a business environment propitious to capital accumulation and investment (Hall & Hubbard, 1998; Harvey, 1989; Leitner, 1990). The central point of these policies was indeed the spatialisation of the neoliberal order: For the first time, city space was commodified and became one of the main sources of capital accumulation. As Swyngedouw et al (2002) points out in his research on large-scale urban development projects (UDP) in Europe, the state has been the central actor in Turkey for privatising the large state-owned stock of former industrial and public buildings, forests, rivers, and informally urbanised land, by creating a set of laws to expropriate property from the owners of valuable inner-city neighbourhoods, and by taking the risk and giving guarantees related to the potential cost of UDPs (Çavuşoğlu & Strutz, 2014,). Recent research has shown that Turkey, and especially Istanbul, have been losing their uniqueness under the heightened impact of market forces and a 'market state' seeking to be competitive, and have been marked by a quantum leap in the neoliberal direction (Keyder, 2005; Lovering & Türkmen, 2011; Tugal, 2009).

During AKP's rule, cities in Turkey have become central to the continued reproduction of neoliberalism itself, constituting increasingly important geographic targets and laboratories for a variety of neoliberal policy experiments aimed at increasing the value of land. These include the creation of financial centres, the building of shopping malls and tourist attractions, and the construction of luxury gated communities. Some recent projects, like the construction of a new presidential palace in Ankara, the third airport, and Kanal Istanbul reflect some common characteristics of this neoliberal urban regime, which could be summarised as follows: (1) The State appears as the main propulsive force and developer via the mobilisation of the politico-economic competencies of various public institutions and the establishment of a new legal framework for property and urbanisation. (2) Urban transformation and large-scale development projects are the main tools of city restructuring. (3) The subsequent realisation of land rent embodied in the newly built environment of the city is one of the main objectives, (4) Urban transformation

and UDPs are considered catalysts of economic growth and the creation of a new conservative capitalist class close to the government. And (5) the decision-making and realisation process of urban projects is closed to deliberative democratic discussion, including that by inhabitants, and has a top-down authoritarian and security-based stance.

These characteristics are easily demonstrable in the following government acts. By implementing a number of legal and institutional reforms, the AKP decided to restructure the governance of Turkish real estate markets and urban planning under the control of the state, with significant consequences for the socio-economic geography of cities and the rural environment. The first stage of this restructuring was the reinforcement of the Mass Housing Administration's (TOKI)[3] competencies in 2003 by law no. 4966, permitting the transfer of all treasury lands to the use of TOKI, with the direct permission of the prime minister, in order to designate such land for housing. Between 2004 and 2008, several laws were passed by parliament in order to establish land and housing policy directions:

1) Law no. 5162, passed in May 2004, gave TOKI the authority to enforce expropriation in areas of urban renewal, to establish partnerships with private firms and financial trusts, and to develop transformation projects in *gecekondu*[4] areas.
2) Law no. 5216, passed in July 2004, extended the rights of municipalities to decide about urban transformation projects and areas.
3) Another important law (law no. 5366, 5/2005) was granted to municipalities and the TOKI to carry out urban regeneration projects not only in zones considered to be decayed and unhealthy, but also in historic districts, ostensibly in order to renew and reuse them.

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[3] Previously a non-profit public institution for social housing, TOKI today has permission to undertake 'for-profit' housing projects on state land, either through its subsidiary firms or through public–private partnerships, and to raise funds for the construction of public housing. With new laws, the institution is endowed with monopolistic competencies. It possesses all public lands and can distribute them at will to private construction firms.

[4] Originally a technical term, *gecekondu* is slang for a specific form of self-service urbanization that occurred during Turkey's industrialisation and the associated rural migration that took place between 1945 and 1985. *Gece* means 'the night' and *kondu* 'landed'; hence *gecekondu* translates as 'landed at night'. The term has evolved to encompass a variety of informal settlements and building types, and its usage denotes bottom-up, spontaneous action, which was especially prevalent during the first wave of mass migration.

4) In 2007, by law no. 5609, TOKI became the sole authority in determining zones of construction and the sale of public lands.

5) Finally, in 2012, with the 'Law on the Transformation of Disaster-Risk Areas- (law no. 6306), the government had a free hand to undertake renewal projects across the country under TOKI agency by using the argument of 'risk'. In this regard, the owners of a 'risky' property are forced to sell it to the municipality and demolish it at their own expense (Çavuşoğlu & Strutz, 2014, p. 147).

The role of TOKI is now undeniable in current urban policies, given that it centralises all housing decisions. Previously a non-profit public institution for social housing, TOKI today has permission to undertake 'for-profit' housing projects on state land, either through its subsidiary firms or through public-private partnerships, all to raise funds for the alleged construction of public housing. However, in 2012, of the total number of projects managed by TOKI, social housing projects comprised only 6.51 %, against 75.25 % comprised of for-profit housing projects (Lelandais, 2014). TOKI is an instrument for revenue-generation through both the development of projects in areas with high and increasing land rents, and by developing construction projects that it can share with subcontracting construction firms like Kuzu, Biat, Aksa, Ağaoğlu, Taşyapı, Albayrak, İhlas and Çalık (Çavuşoğlu & Strutz, 2014; Gürek, 2008).[5] These changes ensured the neoliberalisation of both land and housing in Turkey. The state also engages in risk-sharing with these companies. For example, in Istanbul's third-airport project, the state has provided a 25-year sale guarantee on rent-generating activities to successful bidders: 20 euros per passenger, a minimum passenger-number guarantee, and finally payment of the companies' external debts by the state treasury.[6]

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[5] A group composed of lawyers, academics, artists, and journalists who participated in the Gezi Park protest constructed a website including different interactive maps showing the organic relationship between the AKP government and these private constructors, counting all public projects and to whom they were attributed. See website "Networks of dispossession": http://mulksuzlestirme.org/

[6] This information is taken from the report prepared by the Defense of Northern Forests of Istanbul, a civil platform created to oppose the third airport construction. Report (in Turkish) available at: http://www.kuzeyormanlari.org/2014/03/21/kuzey-ormanlari-savunmasi-3-havalimani-raporu-nereden-baksan-katliam-yagma-saibe-guncellendi-3-2-2014/ , consulted on 17/11/2014.

In this neoliberal regime, urban transformation is considered a primary tool in generating land rent, commodifying more spaces, and redesigning city space. Therefore, the first objective is to transform *gecekondus* located close to the city centre, which have high real estate value. TOKI is aware that *gecekondu* areas include some of the potentially most valuable land in the metropolis, but they are not marketable to the existing population, who lack resources. TOKI, therefore, set out to remove that population. In June 2009, UN-HABITAT's Advisory Group on Forced Evictions was invited by civil-society groups to visit selected sites such as Ayazma, Başıbüyük, Gülsuyu-Gülensu, Tarlabaşı, and Sulukule, where approximately 80,000 residents were to be evicted and resettled to the outskirts of the city. In order to facilitate these displacements, urban transformation targets the urban poor and the informal economy, orders maintenance policing, the privatisation of security, the privatisation of public space and the (re)emergence of an often racialised discourse of the poor as dangerous and criminal. A speech by the former president of TOKI, Erdoğan Bayraktar, is a case in point[7]:

> Today, the *gecekondu* is one of the most important two or three problems that Turkey faces. It is well known that such things as terror, drugs, psychological negativity, health problems and oppositional views all come out of *gecekondu* zones and irregular areas. For this reason, a Turkey that wants to integrate with the world, that wants to join the European Union, must rid itself of illegal dwellings…. Turkey cannot speak of development without solving the *gecekondu* problem.

This statement brings out the desire of policy-makers to link the shantytown or blighted downtown districts to criminality, and to designate their inhabitants as potential offenders and enemies, in order to legitimise urban-transformation projects. During the transformation of the Ayazma neighbourhood, where the majority of inhabitants are Kurds, Küçükçekmece Municipality asserted that 'it is essential to redevelop

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[7] Erdogan Bayraktar in 2007 to the Urban Regeneration and Real Estate Investment Conference, organised by the Urban Land Institute. See *Zaman* newspaper, 13 November 2007; Sabah Newspaper, 13 November 2007.

existing sub regions—which are problematic, unhealthy, lack urban quality and life security, are socially corrupted and centres of crime—as healthy and liveable places' (Küçükçekmece Belediyesi 2007, p. 6). It thereby was using 'public rhetoric [that] played upon the racist prejudice according to which Kurdish-ness is equated with political disloyalty, quasi-feudal primitivism, general anti-social attitudes and criminality' (Lovering & Türkmen, 2011, p. 84). The background noise provided by the high-profile Turkish media, which uniformly celebrates Turkish soldiers killed by the PKK as 'martyrs' while their opponents are 'terrorists', heightened the reluctance of Ayazma residents to display public opposition (ibid.).

The objective of urban planning is apparently to create cities whose centres are reserved for business, tourism, and leisure (shopping malls, residences, amusement parks, museums, etc.), where a type of habitat and lifestyle are imposed without taking into account the cultural, regional, and environmental characteristics of different populations (Dinçer, 2011). Lower-class neighbourhoods inhabited by the city's poorest, the land value of which has the potential to rise, have been refashioned by local municipality-private sector partnerships and allotted to new İstanbulites: people of high cultural and economic capital, such as local and foreign executives working in sectors that are in great demand in the post-industrialist era (e.g., finance, design, and informatics), as well as professionals in the institutionalised fields of arts and culture (Adanali, 2011). As many activist and advocacy groups emphasise, the Gezi protests emerged in the context of these urban processes, which for several years had been the reasons why various urban social movements organised locally, but with common perspectives, throughout Turkey. While these movements rarely were reported upon in the mainstream media, the Gezi protests became their visible expression. The following section provides some examples from these movements, discusses their organisational practices and participants, and demonstrates their link with neoliberal urbanism. I argue that these movements emerged from a will to appropriate urban space and reclaim the right to the city against the socio-spatial segregation they face in the newly conceived space—in Henri Lefebvre's sense—of urban policy-makers.

Contesting the Neoliberal Spatial Order and Reclaiming the Right to the City

In an urban space based on the market value of place, and without a participative process taking into account the needs and desires of inhabitants, the neighbourhood becomes the place where many social groups (e.g., minorities, political and/or religious groups, etc.) create enclaves wherein their identities are recognised without repression. These places enhance the development of a relatively shared identity, connected with the neighbourhood, inside the community. State efforts to renew such areas constitute a direct threat to the community's shared identity and lifestyle, thereby triggering resistance in order to protect the neighbourhood.

In Turkey, urban movements are composed of two complementary components. At one pole, professional organisations vested with a constitutional role, such as the *Union of Chambers of Architects and Engineers*, but also associations like *Solidarity Atelier*, *One Hope*, *Urban Planners without Borders*, and the *Movement of Urbanisation for People*, play a very important role in highlighting, critiquing or legitimising developments, often through protracted negotiations in the courts. The Chamber of Architects in particular has been a major player in seeking to resist or improve UDPs (Lovering & Türkmen, 2011). At the other pole, there are a wide range of groups at the centre of which one finds neighbourhood associations and inhabitants. These groups are variable and depend on the particularities of each neighbourhood. Some neighbourhoods in Istanbul are well known for their political dissent and the stigmatised ethnic composition of their inhabitants. For example, Gazi, Yukarı Dudullu, Gülsuyu-Gülensu, and 1 Mayıs are neighbourhoods with important Kurdish and/or Alevi communities with a strong tradition of political resistance. In these neighbourhoods, the movement is organised predominantly by left-wing political organisations, in a class-based manner, and often evolves into street fighting with the police. In other neighbourhoods with less collective political identity, inhabitants join the action with the help of the above-mentioned organisations around concrete issues, such as the preservation of their neighbourhood and their right to housing. In general, they build neighbourhood associations, and

these associations, thanks to their interaction with professional activists, develop their own discourse of justice and right to the city. These two components of urban movements came together in Istanbul under the banner of Istanbul Urban Movements in 2010. In their manifesto,[8] they refer explicitly to the concept of the right to the city:

> Against all the urban transformation/renewal projects that are forced upon us and shaped by the interests of transnational capital, we are determined to continue our struggle for the right to shape our city according to our way of life and our desires. As such, our goal is to spread our right to the city beyond shelter and access to urban facilities, to the whole of the city. Defending the right of the residents of Tarlabaşı to stay put in their neighbourhood, defending Hasankeyf, and Emek theatre, while at the same time opposing the third bridge and hydroelectric power stations, struggling against the marketing of our schools and hospitals to capital are all parts of this whole.

One of the most-followed urban-movement blogs, 'Mutlu Kent, Başka bir kent mümkün' ('Happy city. Another city is possible')[9] refers to spatial justice as one of the *sine qua non* conditions of a 'happy city': 'Space policies and urban services should be addressed in order to strengthen social justice. Injustices should not be exacerbated by spatial interventions. The best and most beautiful of public investments should be granted to the most neglected places.' This statement points out the necessity of spatial justice in city-making by emphasizing that the practice of spatial justice must include a counter-logic in opposition to neoliberal and neoconservative projects, promoting alternative definitions of the human being, the citizen, and economic life and policy, which generate a radically different conception of the city (Lelandais, 2013). Hence, spatial justice must forge a representation of political belonging and human community different from that proposed by neoliberal projects: that of a citizen who not only depends on democracy, but who also practices it and who will challenge

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[8] This manifesto is available in English on their website: http://istanbulurbanmovements.wordpress.com/

[9] This Facebook page has more than 4100 followers. It also has two blogs, one in Turkish (mutlukent.wordpress.com), and another in English (reclaimistanbul.com).

not only the legitimacy of the neoliberal project, but also the extension of authoritarian power (Brawley, 2009). This is one of the mottos of urban movements in Turkey.

Some local resistance struggles show how spatial justice and right to the city constitute core elements of urban movements in Turkey.

Sulukule Resistance[10]

Sulukule, a neighbourhood with a Romani community, represents one of the first examples of urban movements in Turkey. It permits us to understand how the concepts elaborated by Lefebvre, 'perceived space', 'conceived space', and 'right to the city', find concrete fields of practice (Lefebvre, 1974). At the beginning of the transformation project, the inhabitants of Sulukule were not considered legitimate interlocutors by the municipality of Fatih. Instead, organisations such as the Istanbul Chamber of Architects and Engineers, Human Settlement Association, and Solidarity Studio informed Sulukule inhabitants about municipal plans. The residents then founded a committee, in 2006, to ensure contact with the municipality and to obtain information on the course of the project.[11]

Mobilisation was initially organised by the external associations mentioned, and some district residents joined by founding their own Association for the Development of Romani Culture. While the role of the external associations remained crucial in terms of orientation and training, the Sulukule Platformu (Sulukule Platform)[12] was founded jointly, with some inhabitants initiating activism. The mobilisation in Sulukule was organised around two topics: the right to live in the city

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[10] For a detailed analysis of this neighbourhood resistance, see Lelandais (2014).

[11] The mayor of Istanbul presented the project as 'the most social urban project of the world' in that it aimed 'to improve the living conditions of Romanis' (Mustafa Demir , Mayor of Fatih district, *Zaman*, 17 November 2006) by proposing new housing possibilities in the district. In reality, the project approved heavy loans for inhabitants who were financially precarious. The planned houses did not correspond to the lifestyle of the Romani, who prefer to live in community and to pass their everyday life in the streets of their neighbourhood.

[12] This platform consisted of associations, academics, and independent individuals working for the preservation of the district and rehabilitation on-site, without residents having to leave the neighbourhood. The Chamber of Architects and Engineers and researchers at Mimar Sinan University were most active in the platform. It was an open space where everybody could join in flexible forms of activism. For more information, see the platform website. http://sulukulegunlugu.blogspot.fr/

and the right to a convivial life in a human environment. It denounced the inhumane character of the urban renewal projects promoted by the AKP as not constituting a socially equitable urban space. It sought to show how all the renewal projects systematically targeted disadvantaged districts and excluded low-income social groups by preventing them from living in the city centre.

From the beginning, the Sulukule Platform stated that they would agree to a transformation project in Sulukule only if its objective were to improve the well-being of residents without forced evictions. It also stated that the inhabitants had the right to continue to live in the district and pursue their professional activities. In support of these demands, professional associations and researchers from different universities formed a group named STOP (Autonomous Planners without Borders) and conceived an alternative project. Resistance was not limited to opposing the destruction of houses; above all, it rejected the process of urban segregation implemented by public institutions and the lack of viable alternatives for the Romani population. Thus, in all its confrontations with public actors, and in booklets and letters addressed to various international institutions, the mobilisation in Sulukule formulated its desire to take part openly and equitably in the production process of urban space and to participate in the advantages of city life. It emphasised that living in the city centre is not a luxury and it opposed all forms of spatial segregation and containment imposed by a top-down process.

Even if the mobilisation of Sulukule's Romanis was not entirely successful, and ultimately unable to prevent the destruction of the district, it constituted the basis for further urban movements articulating demands for spatial justice, right to the city, and urban citizenship (Lelandais, 2013). After the Sulukule campaign, many neighbourhoods mobilised against urban development projects and formed action coalitions with different organisations such as Solidarity Studio. Such cooperation between different organisations and neighbourhood associations in Balat, Tozkoparan, Ayazma, and Sarıyer led to the launching of the platform *Urban Movements* in order to centralise information on mobilisations.[13]

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[13] This platform has a website to diffuse information. Even though several neighbourhood campaigns continue, the website is not regularly updated. URL: https://istanbulurbanmovements. wordpress.com/

This platform repeatedly organized mobilisations for Gezi Park before the May 2013 uprising.

Tarlabaşı-Beyoğlu's Transformation and Resistances

Tarlabaşı was built in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a primarily non-Muslim neighbourhood harbouring minorities like Jews, Greeks, and Armenians. The construction of a large boulevard in the late 1980s disconnected Tarlabaşı from and increased its disparities with its immediate surroundings, especially with İstiklal Street, a cultural centre. Today, it is predominantly inhabited by traditional migrant families from various parts of Anatolia, especially the Kurdish in the southeast, and undocumented migrants from Africa and Syria. Recent official perceptions have tended to stigmatise the area as the home of marginal groups, such as transsexuals, prostitutes, and drug dealers (Dinçer, 2011), and were followed by the municipality's decision to renew the area with a private company given responsibility for both preparing and implementing the project. Homeowners and tenants responded by establishing a neighbourhood association in March 2008 to defend their rights. They were keenly aware that they would be displaced as a result of the project, while rent would significantly increase in the area (Kuyucu & Ünsal, 2010). Thanks to the efforts of a particularly adept community organiser and three volunteer lawyers, the association succeeded in collecting more than 200 letters of attorney from owners (ibid.). Furthermore, due to the highly effective tactics the association developed in fighting the private firm, the first significant result of this mobilisation was its inclusion as a third party in the negotiations (ibid.).

The urban renewal of Tarlabaşı and Sulukule is closely connected to the transformation and gentrification of the old historic peninsula of the Golden Horn and the Beyoğlu area. People with high social and intellectual capital, sometimes referred to as 'new creative classes' (cf. Florida, 2002), started to settle in these areas in the 2000s, following the gentrification of Cihangir, near Taksim Square, in the 1990s. During this same period, the government decided to transform the socio-cultural and economic nature of this area to make it attractive for global tourism, the

fashion industry, and the restaurant sector. Progressively, many little local shops started to be replaced by globally known brands; the nineteenth-century buildings have either been destroyed or were turned into shopping malls. Places like Robinson Crusoe Library, İnci Pastry Shop, or Cinema Emek, identified with old, historic Beyoğlu, have often been closed or destroyed because of rent increases. For each of these places, mobilisations took place which met violent police intervention. They were all organised by the same associations and institutions that were active in the Gezi protests, providing a strong background and experience in resistance prior to Gezi Park. The activists see this connection very clearly, as one of them, who participated in all of these urban movements, said in 2010:

> Unless neighbourhoods share their struggles and experiences with the other struggling areas, the resistance will be incomplete…. I think we should be able to unite all the opposition groups in the city. Then we can reach out to neighbourhoods suffering from urban renewal projects in Ankara and İzmir. Thus, we can intervene in our cities, and the struggle will be about not only the right to housing, but also the right to the city, not only for the working class, but also for the middle class. Unless we unite all the actors in a city, victims and their foes, the struggle for the right to the city won't be complete. (Erdoğan Yıldız in an interview conducted by Adanalı, Korkmaz, & Yücesoy, 2009)

For the urban movements presented in this chapter, this right to the city does not mean the claim of rights arising from being a resident in the city, but rather the right to be part of the city, to fill it with their own cultural and social manners, and to refuse the imposition of a uniform lifestyle inside it. Thus, the claim for a new ethos of the city is inseparable from the claim for a democratic ethos for the whole society. (Harvey, 2012).

The Gezi Park protests included many claims dealing with urbanisation policies and democratic participation, as well as opposition to autocratic tendencies in government. But analysing these protests merely as the consequence of various frustrations and of the consolidation of authoritarianism in Turkish society cannot explain the complete picture of protest in Turkey in the last decade. The distinctive role of the urban question becomes dramatically important under the Party of Justice and

Development (AKP) rule, and it is central to our understanding of the Gezi protests. It is also the struggle over the perception and appropriation of space, and especially urban space, which has characterised the Gezi protest. The construction of mosques on strategic sites in the city, such as Taksim and Camlica, the restriction of alcohol consumption in some public spaces, the progressive domination of Ottoman-Seljuk style architectural design, especially in public buildings, highlight not only a symbolic transformation, but also an increasing influence of Islam on spatial practices under AKP rule. The fact that resistance was organised around an urban-development project is emblematic. Since 2004, movements and neighbourhood associations, while not very successful, have, with increasing effervescence contested many projects causing forced displacements and demolitions.

Beyond the claims for individual freedoms, the Gezi protests expressed opposition to the political and spatial orders determined by both Islamic and neoliberal values (Haenni, 2005), and a request for a new ethos of the city. This new ethos is constituted against the increasing commodification of urban space, the exclusion of city dwellers from decision-making processes, and the implementation of urban projects affecting directly their daily life. Tags such as, 'do not touch my house, my land, my garden, my village, my water' and 'destroy the shopping mall and the AKP be crashed below', as well as songs invented during the occupation of the park, illustrate the rejection of current forms of spatial organisation of the city and the desire for an alternative vision:

> *They couldn't sell their shadow so they sold the forests*
> *They knocked down, closed down cinemas and squares*
> *Covered in shopping malls*
> *I don't feel like crossing this bridge* [reference to the construction of a third bridge over the Bosphorus]
> *What happened to our city?*
> *It is packed with roid buildings*
> *Oh my oh my, we've had enough.*[14]

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[14] An excerpt from the song 'Tencere-Tava Havasi' ('Sound of Pots and Pans') written by Kardeş Türküler during the Gezi Park protests. The song is on YouTube: https://youtu.be/o-kbuS-anD4

The Gezi Park protests, and especially the emergence of the neighbourhood associations and forums described above, could also be seen as reactions to the undemocratic decision-making practices of neoliberal urban planning. Some researchers like Dryzek (1996) underline deliberative democracy and assert that neoliberalism values individuals who myopically pursue their material self-interest in the marketplace, not citizens who cultivate civic virtue in the public sphere. As democratic decision-making tends to involve debate, it takes time and thus might become an obstacle to urban governance. Collective decision-making processes, therefore, are not desired. It comes as no surprise, then, that Gezi protests emerged against the implementation of the Taksim project, which was conceived without any participative and deliberative processes. After June 15, when the police took back control of Gezi Park and Taksim Square, activists from different organisations decided to organise public forums in other parks in order to contest the authoritarian decision-making process adopted by the government, not only in urban development projects, but in all aspects of everday life, from the right to abortion to the sale of alcohol. These forums have endeavoured to grant freedom of expression, to formulate new ideas, and, finally, to make common propositions.

Conclusion

This chapter analysed urban planning in Turkey as one of the examples of neoliberal restructuring, by means of which the city is shaped more by the logic of the market than by the needs of its inhabitants (Balaban, 2010; Enlil, 2011). This new order requires that cities be reorganised so as to make them more attractive to potential investors. Unsurprisingly, as Harvey (2012) points out, it is the poor, the underprivileged, and those marginalised from political power who suffer first and foremost from this process (16). Low-income groups occupying old neighbourhoods and inner-city *gecekondus* are considered undesirable. Current urban renewal projects displace such communities in order to confine them in new resettlement areas far away from their previous neighbourhoods. Most of these populations are composed of ethnic, religious, or political minorities whose identities are culturally and politically ignored by Turkish

public institutions (İçduygu and Keyman, 2005; Kirişçi, 2000). The neoliberal character of urban planning exacerbates the inability of these low-income dwellers to participate in the production of space, reflecting the rise of social and spatial injustice.

However, different kinds of urban movements, uprisings and ,local resistance flourish everywhere in Turkey, and show the porosity between urban and rural struggles[15] on a global scale, as a consequence of the hegemonic command of capital and the state. These movements have sometimes organised themselves in independent structures and developed their own local protests which are not specifically expressed in acts of street demonstrations. Their protest campaigns and daily, unspectacular survival strategies challenge the connection between urbanisation and civilisation claimed in neoliberal 'development' concepts (Künkel and Mayer, 2012, p. 79). Metropolitan cities in Turkey contain rich and heterogeneous social movement environments, constituted by diverse groups, activists, and organisations with specialised resources and knowledge in different policy areas (Miller & Nicholls, 2013). The majority of these groups are mobilising the concept of 'right to the city' in their own discourse and campaigns, and use it as an argument in favor of profoundly reworking the social construction of urban space, proposing a new form of citizenship based on being an urban dweller.

In terms of neoliberal understanding, urban space is designed as owned property, its role being to generate economic productivity. The right to the city destabilises this viewpoint and offers a distinctly new vision of what the city should be for (Purcell, 2008). In this ideology, the city comes to be seen as a collective, creative work by and for the residents, who may struggle to keep their perceived space as a site of resistance. In contrast to conceived space, which routinely ignores the complexities of daily inhabitancy, the right to the city underlines the needs of the citizens as urban dwellers and is reflected in these particular forms of resistance.

Gezi Park protests, therefore, could be defined as an act of urban resistance, an expression of a broader uprising. In other words, they could be

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[15] For example, the struggle against the construction of a third airport in Istanbul brings together urban activists concerned by the destruction of the city's northern forests, which provide Istanbul with clean air. and rural inhabitants losing their villages and farms. See: http://www.kuzeyorman-lari.org/category/english/

considered as a part, and the first multi-layered mass demonstration, of existing urban social movements in Turkey, which have been spreading since the beginning of the 2000s via the emergence of several local and neighbourhood movements against the restructuring of city space based on rent-generation. Dikeç qualifies them as an urban stasis in the sense of 'standing up against the current political system', a disruptive moment in the stillness. In other words, 'the urban citizens of Turkey have stood up against authoritarian governance, standing for their right to the city and right to resist top-down imposition of moral and spatial orders' (Dikeç, 2013). As Thörn, Mayer, and Thörn point out in the introduction to this volume, Gezi Park protests could be analysed as an uprising resisting the spatialities of social, political, and especially cultural oppression and reclaiming a place in the restructuring of urban centrality.

The Gezi Park protest and other struggles related to the claims of the groups inside the park show the importance of space and its appropriation through the organisation of daily resistance against the neoliberal understanding of public planning, which is radically reorganising the supraurban scalar hierarchies in which cities are embedded. Cities thus remain strategic arenas for socio-political struggle (Purcell, 2008). The protests organised for the protection of Gezi Park in Taksim Square in Istanbul during May and June 2013 showed the importance of symbolic spaces, such as neighbourhoods, squares, parks, etc., in the emergence of resistance, as citizens would not allow top-down public decisions about their life space, which they consider as part of their identity and everyday life.

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11

Neoliberal Post-Socialist Urban Transformation and the Emergence of Urban Social Movements in Poland

Dominika V. Polanska

Introduction

Since the collapse of state socialism in 1989, the transformation processes of Poland in the fields of economy and politics have been characterized by a clear 'turn to the market', deregulation, decentralization and withdrawal of the state. The process, also called shock therapy, has moreover been quite rapid and dramatic, causing abrupt changes in the social structures and everyday practices of Poles. Tosics (2005) has listed the most important changes in urban development in post-socialist societies, and, although not using the term neoliberal, stresses the role of market forces, along with the diminished role of the public sector in development, being limited to 'making private investment possible' (2005, p. 60). The introduction of property rights was dramatic in these societies, as the majority of the population lived in state-owned housing

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before 1989, and the situation has shifted radically to what has been called 'nations of owner-occupiers' (Dimitrovska-Andrews, 2005; Hirt, 2012; Lux, 2003). In her analysis of physical planning and regional and housing-policy practices, Dimitrovska-Andrews (2005) shows how they were characterized by ad-hoc decisions and tendencies to use economic tools as drivers of local development. In my own work (Polanska, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2014a), I have underlined the shortcomings of urban policy in Poland, running in parallel with quickly spreading processes of consumerism, competitiveness, pro-investment policies, individualization, privatization, gentrification, decline and gating in the urban sphere.

The response of civil society to widespread neoliberal practices and ideas in Poland has been described as 'moderate reformism', a form of neoliberal consensus that civil society shares with the country's politicians and economists (Ekiert & Kubik, 2014). The first decade of transformation has therefore been characterized as moderate in its aspirations to reform or oppose the dominant neoliberal rhetoric. This consensus among civil-society actors has, however, been losing its grip since 2006, when a growing number of populist and right-wing mobilizations, along with growing discontent among the population, in the aftermath of an economic recession beginning in 2008, caused researchers to pose questions about 'an end to patience' in the second round of economic hardships among post-socialist populations (Beissinger & Sasse, 2013). A change has also been observable in the activity of urban social movements in Poland, which, in the second decade of transformation, have intensified their activity. Płuciński (2013) argues that the slogans 'right to the city' and 'urban revolution' have become very popular in the extra-parliamentary politics in Poland in recent times. Scholars claim that there are strong incentives to organize and coordinate urban activism in Polish cities in recent years in the form of the annual Congress of Urban Movements, where participants discuss questions of local transport, revitalization, spatial planning, social issues, participatory budgeting, housing-estate de-concentration, metropolitan problems, participatory democracy and so on (Jacobsson, 2015; Kowalewski, 2013). The heightened level of urban activism and the ambition to coordinate this kind of activism have also been manifest in the activities of the squatting movement. The number of squatters and squatting attempts, while still limited in the 1990s (Żuk, 2001),

escalated in the 2000s (Piotrowski, 2011; Polanska, 2014b) and more or less long-lived squats have been active in the last five years in Poznań, Warsaw, Wrocław, Opole, Gdynia, Lublin, Łódź, Gdańsk, Gliwice, Biała Podlaska, Częstochowa, Kraków, Grudziądz, Ruda Śląska, Białystok and Sosnowiec. Another example of intensification and streamlining in the field of urban activism has been the tenants' movement present in most large Polish cities (Polanska, 2015; Audycka-Zandberg, 2014), increasing in activity in the last ten years.

This chapter analyzes the emergence and development, since 1989, of two particular urban social movements, the squatting movement and the tenants' movement, and the way both have reacted to neoliberalization processes in the Polish politico-institutional setting related to housing and urban issues. Special focus will be given to the global financial crisis of 2008 and to the significant intensification in cooperation between the movements in the period that followed.

The underlying argument is that the intensity and scope of neoliberal changes in the urban sphere, coupled with the global financial crisis, triggered a sharper critique of neoliberalization in both movements, causing a *rapprochement* between them, despite their differences with respect to causes, organizational structure, goals, identities and repertoires of action. This cross-movement alliance has, moreover, had some initial influence on practices and ideas of urban governance on the national and local levels throughout Poland. It has been facilitated by the relatively brief tradition of institutionalization of social movements in the post-socialist context, where, above all, the Polish tenants' movement has not been professionalized, as would be expected in Western cases, receives no financial support, holds no organizational resources and is driven by a group of extremely dedicated members. At the same time, both movements function in a political context where only some forms of mobilization are deemed acceptable: 'those which are non-violent, "civilized", "cultured", "rational" and seeking cooperation—rather than conflict—with state and market actors' (Gagyi & Ivancheva, 2014, p. 4). This means that neither squatters nor tenants fit the category of 'right' kind of mobilization due to the causes and nature of their claims (e.g., criticizing state and municipal policies, questioning property rights, demanding 'affordable' housing, using direct action methods or civil disobedience). In contrast

to the Western European context, political culture in Poland is strongly guided by the norm and tradition of non-violence, since the emergence of the non-violent protests in the 1980s (Modzelewski, 1982), and later the Solidarity movement's non-violent repertoire, or what would have been called the 'self-implied moderation' of the working classes by Ost (2000), reinforced by neoliberal rhetoric, which results in the further marginalization of the two movements under examination.

The tenants' and the squatting movements are here conceptualized as social movements consisting of groups of people who act collectively to reach their goals, sharing common purposes and solidarity, and who are constantly interacting with elites, authorities and/or opponents (Tarrow, 1998). Social movements' relations to neoliberalization processes can be explained by studying specific practices of these movements in their historical context. Neoliberalization is here seen as a political and economic project that encompasses both practices and imaginaries—ideas, ideals, discourses and so on—in the sociocultural, institutional and political spheres of a given society at a specific point in time (Leitner, Peck, & Sheppard, 2007), and aims at increasing competitiveness by promoting marketization; decentralization; privatization and deregulation; along with the weakening of political governance in deference to market forces and the replacement of social-welfare systems with models founded on requirements of specific individual contributions to society (Harvey, 2005; Peck & Tickell, 2002). In the case of the Polish tenants' and squatting movements, I will argue that a historical perspective, with a focus on neoliberal governance and its effects, is needed in order to examine how social movements contest and challenge their specific societal context. I will show how the two movements have responded to the effects of specific neoliberalization processes, and their reinforcement over time, responses that have united them in their struggle in recent years.[1]

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[1] The analysis in this chapter is primarily based on 40 semi-structured interviews with squatters and tenant activists conducted in 2013 in Warsaw. Twenty of these were conducted with squatters and 20 with activists in the tenants' movement, covering questions on: the respondents' motives; experiences of activism within their specific social movement; the strategies, practices and relationships characterizing their movement environment; and their interpretations of changes over time. Moreover, secondary material, in the form of previous studies of the neoliberal character of Polish urban governance and the emergence and activity of urban social movements and other civil-

Three Distinctive Periods in the Emergence and Development of the Movements

This section provides an examination of the squatting and tenants' movements, and the way they have developed in their specific local and national contexts. The analysis is structured chronologically and distinguishes three major changes that the movements have undergone in the period since 1989: (1) the emergence and adaptation of the neoliberal logic in the first decade of transformation; (2) the re-definition of adversaries and goals in the beginning of the second decade; and (3) the maturation of and cooperation between the movements in the last five years. As the focus is on neoliberalization processes and the impact of the financial crisis on the functioning and activity of urban social movements, this study focuses on the last period in the development of the movements, the years following 2008, arguing that it is during this period that urban social movements gained considerable influence in negotiations in the politico-institutional setting of housing and urban development.

1989: The Emergence and Adaptation of Anti-State Neoliberal Logic

The shock therapy ('Balcerowicz Plan') introduced in Poland in order to reform the economic and political system after the fall of state socialism was characterized by the assumption that market forces would regulate areas of the politico-economic field that the past system either neglected or failed to regulate. The results were ambiguous, prompting 'too much shock, not enough therapy' (Shields, 2007). Stenning, Smith, Rochovska, and Swiatek (2010) argue that neoliberal economic ideas were not 'new' in Eastern Europe at the time, but were widely shared and discussed in the region in the 1980s and even before. After 1989, most of the introduced reforms, policies and programs included neoliberal ideas promoted by 'local think tanks, policy makers, political parties and

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society actors is used in the examination of the emergence and development of the two movements and their responses to neoliberalization processes. For more information, see Polanska, 2014b.

trade unions' (2010, p. 39). Even the Solidarity movement, responsible for overthrowing the former system, supported the neoliberal reforms (Ost, 2000), despite their guiding principles of 'worker self-government; self-management and the 'self-liberation of civil society" (Shields, 2007, p. 156). In a way, Solidarity helped the neoliberal agenda on its way by 'winning workers over to neoliberalism'. Indeed, they abstained from striking during the first two years of shock therapy despite the dramatic decline in living standards during this period (Ost, 2000, p. 514).

Urban governance during the first decade after 1989 could be described as reactive, or as answering increasing problems in Poland's urban sphere (Węcławowicz, 2005). First, a shift of power from the state to the municipalities occurred as a consequence of the new order. Private actors and local governments entered the stage of urban planning and resulted in a shift from 'government to governance' (Nedovič-Budič, Tsenkova, & Marcuse, 2006, p. 3). From now on, local governments assumed responsibility over development, maintenance and rent control in housing. Long and complicated processes dealing with formerly nationalized property and land began, although the restitution process in Poland has been described as one of the slowest in the region. In the early 1990s, legislation on urban issues was concentrated on regulating private property and strengthening and attracting private investment in urban areas. The field of spatial planning was neglected during this period, as the dominant belief was in market-led regulation characterized by terms such as 'competitiveness', 'sustainable development' and 'economic growth'. The increasing importance of private interests contributed to processes of suburbanization, gentrification, residential differentiation, ghettoization and gating in Polish cities.

Both the tenants' movement and the squatting movement emerged shortly after 1989. They initially emerged and developed separately and independently of each other. The first formal organization of tenants, the *Polish Association of Tenants*, was founded in 1989 in Kraków, and quickly spread to other Polish cities. In 1991, a *National Housing Movement* was formed consisting of tenants' organizations, organizations of people on waiting lists for housing, real estate owners' organizations, trade unions, and representatives from the private sector, as well as academia. About 30 organizations from all over the country formed an alliance aiming at cooperating/giving advice/mediating with the national government

for the improvement of housing policies and housing development. The main goal of the movement was to clarify the legal status of different stakeholders in the field of housing and their responsibilities vis-à-vis one another (e.g., tenants vis-à-vis owners, municipalities vis-à-vis tenants, owners vis-à-vis municipalities). The focus was on making national decision-makers pay more attention to housing issues, and also to influence public opinion. Clear statements were developed, the majority of which confirmed and strengthened the neoliberal logic of urban policies. For instance, one of these statements was that 'housing is a commodity' (Kancelaria Sejmu, 1992, p. 2). Moreover, the arguments of the movement on housing production and state housing policies were built upon economic reasoning, using arguments that considered housing policy and housing construction as drivers of the national economy. Furthermore, the *National Housing Movement* promoted further privatization and re-privatization of the existing housing stock and ordering of the ownership issues in order to be able to fully and rationally exploit its potential.

The argument characteristic of this period was the one created in relation to the socialist past. One of the main goals of the *National Housing Movement* was to position the movement against the '"socialist way" of thinking: in which people were given a dwelling, but you could get it faster if you had "access" to privileged persons and could return the favor' (Kancelaria Sejmu, 1992, p. 3). The tenants' organizations in the movement cooperated closely with the owners and other included organizations, and one common declaration was to reach their goal by acting politically and rejecting extra-parliamentary methods of activism such as those used, for instance, by the *Housing Lobby* formed in 1991 and encompassing 90 housing cooperatives across Poland. In the following years, new tenants' organizations were formed, working with similar issues, cooperating with owners' organizations, and organizing in the form of associations. These included: *Polish Tenants Union* (1994), *National Movement for the Protection of Tenants' Interests* (1995), *National Association of Tenants and Residents of Cooperatives* (1997) and *National Representatives of Pensioners and Retirees* (1997), which was mainly engaged in housing issues.

The Polish squatting movement emerged somewhat later than the tenants' movement. The first squatting attempts occurred in various Polish cities in 1991–1995: Wrocław, Opole, Gdynia, Lublin and Łódź

(Żuk, 2001). In the second half of the 1990s, the movement intensi-
fied and spread to other cities, among them the capital, Warsaw. Żuk
(2001) argues that squatting emerged in relation to the transformation
of capitalism, and as its critique, and was connected to the development
of Polish alternative culture since the 1980s. The squatting movement
criticized capitalism's expressions in the local environment, in the form of
vacant buildings as a result of land and housing-speculation practices, the
re-privatization process, and the rise of consumerism and materialism in
the country. Polish squatters drew inspiration from squatting movements
in other, mainly Western European countries, although not exclusively.
Young adults involved in squatting were one of the groups disadvantaged
by the new system: Both their socio-economic position and the new
connections to the West were among the factors behind the movement's
emergence during the early years of transformation. Nevertheless, the
major reason for the emergence of squatting was anti-systemic or anti-
state ideology: The majority of squatters belonged to anarchist-alternative
groups and included 'ecologists, anarchists, anarcho-feminists, and coun-
tercultural youths' (Żuk, 2001, p. 224). The ideological dimension of
squatting throughout the 1990s is best described as neo-anarchism—a
neo-anarchism with a clear anti-state imaginary. Płuciński (2013) argues
that this anti-state character might be a remnant from the ethos of the
1980s, when a counterculture had developed in Poland. This, however,
changed at the end of the 1990s and the beginning of new millennium.
The anarchist movement in Poland redefined its *main* enemy as capital-
ism, and also changed its sphere of action to the local level. The transfor-
mation within the movement occurred, according to Płuciński, due to
strengthened neoliberalization during this period, an awareness within
the movement of the risks of marginalization of bottom-up politics in
national politics, as well as its lack of influence on national politics at
the time, and a strategic turn towards the local in order to secure a sense
of effectiveness and success within the movement. This allowed Polish
anarchists to maintain their traditional action repertoires: their anti-
systemic rhetoric, confrontational stance, taking control of 'autonomous
zones' and use of direct action. Płuciński writes that 'the redefinition of
identity of the neo-anarchist movement is enriched with the evolution of
the action strategy, above all its light pragmatization' (2013, p. 6), and

sees the increased use of legal action in the movement in the 2000s as a consequence of a more pragmatic strategy.

The Re-Activation and Re-Definition of Squatting and Tenants' Movements

The re-activation and re-definition of both the squatting movement and the tenants' movement took place during the years preceding Poland's accession to the European Union in 2004. The accession has been regarded as a second wave of the transformation process 'by embedding a highly selective application of Europeanisation in what is becoming an increasingly vituperative variant of neoliberalism' (Shields, 2007, p. 156). The reinforcement of neoliberalization processes started some years before the accession, and aimed at adjusting the country's political and economic status (Shields, 2007, p. 160). The ongoing dismantling of the European social model at the time of EU enlargement in 2004, in combination with an ongoing social crisis in the Central and Eastern European countries joining the Union, entailed serious implications for Poland in the form of 'escalating job insecurity, decreases in real wages with particular sections of the population worst hit, for example, the elderly, single company towns and rural communities' (Shields, 2007, p. 164). The results of these processes in the urban sphere were immediate. Private investments in the built environment became more manifest during this period, at the same time as contrasts between the privately and the publicly owned parts of Polish cities became even sharper (Polanska, 2011). From the point of view of tenants and squatters, the situation worsened significantly. Re-privatization processes led to the eviction of tenants living on property of this kind, in some cases resulting in homelessness (Kretkowski, 2011). Higher rents in re-privatized housing set off gentrification processes and growing tenant indebtedness, and there were also a growing number of unoccupied buildings either waiting for the resolution of ownership status or left vacant for speculative purposes. The indebted and unwanted tenants in re-privatized property were, during this period, more and more exposed to serious harassment, severely aggravating living situations by cutting off electricity and water, causing

flooding or fires in the property, making threats and so on (Kretkowski, 2011). Tenants in municipal, company-owned and social housing were also subjected to rising rents. While some were given the opportunity of becoming owners of their dwellings at subsidized cost, others were left fighting for ownership, as becoming an owner could be seen, even for the poorest households, as a more secure form of housing compared to renting and risking eviction in case of rental debt. Strapped municipal budgets and state withdrawal from the construction and maintenance of social housing caused serious problems to tenants living in social housing, due to its poor condition and acute need for renovation. The overall situation made it almost impossible for young households and youths to leave their parents' homes and start lives of their own.

What is evident in the activity of both movements in this period is that between 2006 and 2008 a wave of re-activation in the movements took place, and new tenants' associations and new squats were founded all over the country, particularly in Warsaw. The three most active and recognized tenants' organizations located in the capital city were founded in this period: the *Social Justice Office*, the *Warsaw Tenants Association* and the *Committee for the Defense of Tenants*. The re-activation wave in the tenants' movement went hand-in-hand with a re-definition of the enemy and repertoires of action, and tenants' associations formed between 2006

Fig. 11.1 The mermaid, symbol of Warsaw, with the squatting symbol on her shield. Photo: Dominika Polanska

and 2008 set new standards. The aim of the tenants' movement was now described in relation to what was perceived as neoliberalization processes. In the words of one tenant activist:

> Poland is an example of a neoliberal country, it is a kind of model of neoliberal success…. I think that the existence of movements similar to ours is an example of a natural coalition of all those fighting with Polish social dumping and this Polish model … that is leaching out the state, leaching out the public sphere and causing the leveling off downwards and not upwards (interview no. 22).

During this period, tenants' associations' main activities consisted of: providing legal counseling for tenants; organizing protests, demonstrations, meetings, campaigns and eviction blockades; disseminating information on housing issues to the media, authorities, tenants and so on; and writing petitions and legal-act amendments. In contrast to organizations formed in the first half of the 1990s, the owners of real estate were no longer seen as partners in the same struggle for a better legal system. Instead they became the enemy and judicial processes between tenants and owners succeeded one another. Landlords were perceived as representatives of the unjust capitalist/neoliberal system, where tenants' interests were subordinated to those of owners. The legal system was still criticized. However, the Polish social-welfare system was now seen as equally poorly developed, and the neoliberal logic as dominating how tenants and other disadvantaged groups were perceived. There was a shift in the rhetoric of tenants in this period, no longer characterized by an anti-state logic, but emphasizing the role of the state in leveling out inequalities and criticizing the neoliberal dogma of less state intervention.

Another important re-orientation in the tenants' movement of this period was in the field of extra-parliamentary action. Whereas, in the early 1990s, the movement condemned any form of extra-parliamentary action and worked hard not to be associated or cooperate with groups outside the formal political system, this attitude changed in the mid-2000s and some of the tenants' organizations even adopted direct-action methods in their repertoires. What is also interesting is the shift within the movement from the local to the national level when tenants' issues

were brought up and discussed. However, this tendency is most evident after the 2008 global financial crisis, which will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

Some years earlier, at the end of the 1990s, the Polish squatter movement had also re-defined its enemy and changed its action repertoire. The squatters played down their anti-state logic in their critique, instead identifying capitalism as their main enemy. In the decade following the turn of the millennium, the Polish squatting movement grew and had more or less long-lived members in several Polish cities: Poznań, Warsaw, Wrocław, Opole, Gdynia, Lublin, Łódź, Gdańsk, Gliwice, Biała Podlaska, Częstochowa, Kraków, Grudziądz, Ruda Śląska, Białystok and Sosnowiec. The spread of re-privatization processes functioned both as cause and opportunity for the intensification of the Polish squatting movement. The fact that many squats' existence was threatened by intensifying re-privatization processes across the country during this period contributed to the movement's involvement in the issue. The movement also criticized the fact that fully inhabitable/usable buildings were left vacant in urban landscapes suffering housing shortages. At the same time, Polish squatters were aware of extended ownership-status proceedings and seized the opportunity of taking over buildings with unclear ownership, as proceedings could take several years to finalize. The very existence of such buildings facilitated the squatters' ambition after 2011 to create alternative spaces for living and cultural activities, and engage in more explicitly political activities. The connection between the squatting movement and the tenants' movement was described in following way by one of the interviewed squatters:

> If we assume that squats are a part of the tenants' movement, then for sure their PR activity is to sensitize the public to the issue of unoccupied flats, to the fact that there are many municipal buildings that are standing useless. It for sure is laying foundations to the tenants' movement. The tenants' movement can criticize municipal policy, while the fact that there are unoccupied flats is an expression of this policy. So the fact that these unoccupied flats are getting occupied is indirectly also a criticism of municipal policy. I treat it as one and the same (interview no. 6).

The Blooming of the Movements and Cooperation Attempts

Poland has been described as one of the European countries least affected by the financial crisis of 2008 (Ekiert & Kubik, 2014). However, while the country maintained positive GDP growth in the years following the crisis, unemployment rates were steadily rising, and public finance was exposed to pressure, as it grew by a third in 2009. Growing unemployment after the economic crisis was accompanied by deteriorating working conditions, in particular in sectors exposed to international competition, especially the financial and export-oriented sectors (Meardi & Trappmann, 2013). If the trend in the political and economic spheres before the crisis was to stop the emigration of workers, after the crisis it became a priority to protect jobs and propagate labor-market flexibility. These changes were evident in the protest trends in the aftermath of the crisis, which concentrated mainly on economic issues (Beissinger & Sasse, 2013), but it was in particular a right-wing and populist rhetoric that gained new ground (Ekiert & Kubik, 2014; Shields, 2013). What is evident in this period is that the neoliberal critique has been taken over by right-wing activists. Shields argues that the right wing in Poland has equated neoliberalism with internationalism and sees it as 'a serious threat to the sovereignty and identity of the nation'; therefore 'transnational capital poses a menace to national businesses and jobs' (2013, p. 5), and the recent financial crisis has aggravated this kind of populism.

The take-over by populists and right-wing movements of the antineoliberal critique has pushed the squatting and the tenants' movements towards broadening their claims and activities and, above all, towards cooperation. In light of a third wave of economic hardship and growing right-wing mobilization among the Polish population, the movements once more intensified their activities and reached towards alliances with other influential actors, and in the case of the tenants' movement towards political activism on the national level. During this time, both movements realized considerable and concrete achievement, in particular in regard to their cooperation. The re-definition of the enemy by both movements, but also the re-orientation of action repertoires, and ten-

ants' turn towards direct action methods, which had already occurred before the financial crisis, were helpful when the movements identified each other as partners. Also, earlier 'mushrooming' of both tenants' organizations and squats in Polish cities following the accession to the EU created differentiation and development of 'profiles' within the respective movements and provided a plethora of potential allies for the movements to choose from.

Another factor contributing to the collaboration between the movements in this period was an intensified public debate about the construction of container neighborhoods in various Polish cities, especially around 2009. A number of Polish municipalities—Białystok, Oleck, Poznań, Szczecin, Bydgoszcz, Sosnowiec, Elbląg, Bytom—proposed and erected neighborhoods at their peripheries consisting of container modules serving as living spaces, as a solution to the lack of social housing, and they planned to have the most 'problematic' households reside in these (Urbański, 2010). The proponents of container neighborhoods legitimated their construction by using images of tenants as unwilling to pay for housing, irresponsible, unable to adapt to the basic norms of society and therefore deserving the punishment of relegation to a container module. In the words of the director of management of municipal housing stock in Szczecin: 'Barracks are something worse than an apartment—not yet the streets, but a level lower. They will not solve the problem, but they will teach people something' (Gazeta, 2009-08-20). The hostile attitude towards tenants in this debate was quickly recognized as a threat within the tenants' movement, and as such it carried mobilizing capacity and influenced a willingness to cooperate and look for potential partnerships and brokers.

Informal and formal cooperation between squatters and tenants was initiated in various Polish cities in the years following accession, and common initiatives (such as the campaign *Housing is a right, not a commodity* in 2004 in Warsaw), support actions (eviction blockades, demonstrations[2]), formal cooperation (Warsaw Tenants' Association's weekly legal counseling located at a Warsaw squat since 2010), organizational

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[2] Here the participation of the tenants' movement in a demonstration against the eviction of a squat in 2012 in Warsaw (Elba) needs to be mentioned. The demonstration gathered 2000 participants, a number that in the Polish context, where tenants' demonstrations usually gather between 100 to 300 participants and where the best-established and longest-lived squat has succeeded in gathering

Fig. 11.2   This squat in Warsaw opened in 2011 and explicitly worked with tenants' issues. Photo: Dominika Polanska

support (a squat's help in founding *Tenants' Association of Wielkopolska* in Poznań in 2011), jointly organized actions (demonstrations against increasing rents in municipal housing in Kraków in 2011; occupation of a central square in Kraków in 2012), the formation of a group comprised of squatters and tenants to negotiate with local authorities (in Warsaw, in 2012) and the formation of a representative group to hold talks with the Ministry of Transport (in 2013) were only some examples of this cooperation.

This trend among Polish squatters to broaden their activities to tenants' as well as migrants' rights, offering shelter when possible, opening up vacant dwellings for individuals and families in need of housing, providing legal counseling to tenants, and getting involved in issues con-

at most 1500 supporters when the squat was threatened by eviction in 2009, is a considerable, if not exceptional, number for a left-wing social movement.

cerning housing politics on the national and local levels, started around 2009–2011. The movement perceived local authorities' attitudes and strategies as threatening, aiming at 'closing in' the movement under the label of 'cultural activism'. The cooperation with tenants was described in the interviews as part of that extension:

> The authorities wanted to break up the movement and label it in the shape of lifestyle, alternative culture. And we, different persons from the tenants' and squatters' environments wanted to act against it, to do the opposite, to broaden the area of criticism as much as possible, to show the common denominator – that it's about the right to the city, about the city budget and spending more on needs and not some spectacular trinkets (interview no. 8).

Simultaneously, the Polish tenants' movement has, especially since the end of 2009 and beginning of 2010, focused its activities on formal political activism, increasingly addressing the national level in its demands and claims. For instance, cooperation between the political party *Palikot Movement* and one of the most active tenants' organizations was initiated in 2011, and several actions have been carried out together with allied MPs (such as eviction blockades, where MPs hold immunity, and presentation of a draft to an amendment of the *Act on the protection of tenants' rights* in 2013), an exhibition at the European Parliament organized together with the German political party *Die Linke* in 2012, and other formal and informal actions where politicians' and celebrities' support has been achieved as, for instance, in petition-signing. There was a clear broadening of the claims of tenants' organizations from the local to the national level of housing policies during this period. This fits well with the transformation within the neo-anarchist and squatting movement towards being more pragmatic and looking for activities where the movement could actually accomplish something (cf. Płuciński, 2013).

The broadening of the movements' claims and the cooperation between the Polish tenants' and the squatting movements took place at a specific time and place that jointly influenced the way in which both movements have developed over the last four years. A change in

the demands of the urban population, but also in the attitudes of local authorities, has been identified by the interviewed activists. Here are the words of one squatter:

> I think it [squatting] naturally becomes a part of urban movements, which I think last year [2012] got a second wind. And these are urban movements that are not even strictly activists, but these are simply people who want some changes. I think they are mostly disappointed in the fossilized character of this city and they want some other forms. So on one hand we have the tenants' movement and people who directly experience the shitty housing policy of the city. On the other hand there are people who create food cooperatives, who want to shop in a different manner than is offered to them. We have squats, people who want to live differently and do something differently than is offered to them in this urban space. And in this context I think we are a part of an organic whole. Organic also because these are the same people that are engaged in different things, are active in diverse fields (interview no. 6).

The interviewees identified a change in media representations since 2010, where tenants, and also squatters, have been portrayed more sympathetically. The change in the attitudes of local governments is connected in the interviews to the change in media reports and, consequently, public opinion:

> Suddenly the media started to make features about Elbląska [Elba squat] and talk about squatting. They began to dig out material about squatting, show what squatting looked like in the West, the examples of Berlin, Christiania and all that is most commonly associated with squatting. And I think that someone in some office began to understand that it wouldn't be a good decision to kick us out by force. Because people started considering squatting as some value. And we started talking (interview no. 2).

In Warsaw, this trend in the media coincided with a change of local political opportunity structures, as new officials entered the city council. The new vice president was in particular described as different from previous decision-makers. Being responsible for the management of the municipal housing stock, he has been in frequent contact with both ten-

ants' organizations and squatters in the city and was described by the interviewees as always forthcoming and even 'as one of a kind in the whole Poland' (interview no. 17). In general, the recent city politicians were perceived by interviewees as more genuine, friendly and open to discussion, or at least more willing to listen to social movements' claims, than their predecessors. One example of this more open attitude is the introduction of 'participatory budgeting', where citizens get to vote on projects to be financed by the municipal budget. Participatory budgeting was introduced in Brazil (Porto Alegre) in 1989 as a way of involving citizens in decision-making over public spending and has since spread to other countries in Latin America and Europe. Since 2012–2013, Polish cities such as Poznań, Łódź, Toruń, Radom, Bydgoszcz, Sosnowiec, Płock, Zielona Góra, Elbląg, Rybnik, Dąbrowa Górnicza, Sopot, Świebodzice and Karpacz (www.partycypacjaobywatelska.pl) have all introduced participatory budgeting, giving their residents the opportunity to take part in decisions on what parts of the city's budget should be spent on. This invitation of citizens into the decision-making process of local governments in Poland could surely be questioned and accused of turning attention away from the 'real' problems of Polish cities or of trying to coopt social movements or hijack their ideas. However, I would argue that it reflects the awareness among local authorities of increasing urban activism, and that it also mirrors the fact that local authorities need to relate to this activism in some way. Several cities, among them Warsaw, Kraków and Poznań, have since 2012 changed their approaches towards urban social movements, including extra-parliamentary movements, and initiated dialogue with organizations and groups representing tenants and squatters. Even the level of national politics has demonstrated some tendencies towards a new approach to urban social movements. Polish urban policy and in particular housing policy has, since 2013, been discussed in a series of meetings between the minister responsible for housing, Piotr Styczeń, and representatives of the tenants' and squatting movements. On the level of local politics, several urban social movement activists entered the November 2014 elections: About a thousand candidates active in urban social movements, gathered under the *Alliance of Urban Movements*, were put forward in local elections (see www.ruchymiejskie.pl, Domaradzka, 2015). However, it is still too early to assess the impact that these movements have had or will have on policy-making.

Conclusions

This chapter argued that there are three stages in the development of the two movements, closely following the three stages of neoliberalization that have swept Poland since 1989. Even though the reasons for the emergence of the tenants' and squatting movements differed to begin with, their development from the beginning of the 2000s was similar in the way they re-defined their goals and adversaries. The financial crisis of 2008, triggering a third wave of neoliberalization, pushed the movements further towards a broadening of claims and cooperation, resulting in a cross-movement alliance that achieved considerable influence on the politico-institutional setting related to housing and urban issues in the country.

The development of the tenants' and squatting movements in Poland, and in particular their recent turn towards cooperation and alliance-building, is part of the broader activity of urban social movements challenging the advance of urban neoliberalization in Poland. Neoliberalization's effects on the urban landscape in post-socialist societies have unquestionably conditioned the activity of urban social movements and posed some specific challenges: in the case of tenants' and squatting movements, driving them towards broader political agendas and some tactical decisions.

The cooperation between the squatting and tenants' movements in Poland was developed in a socio-cultural environment characterized by anti-leftist sentiments, a growing number of right-wing mobilizations and a harsh public discourse on marginalized groups, all closely connected to neoliberal ideas and norms, which influenced the broadening of the movements' claims and their willingness to look for allies. In a context where both tenants' claims and squatting are perceived as 'uncivil' or 'unacceptable', due to the movements' opposing the state and the market, and using conflict-oriented and non-moderate methods of action, such cooperation with others, as well as the re-defining, broadening and scaling-up of claims, as well as some more pragmatic and tactical decisions, have been crucial for the development of both movements. The alliances built between the squatting and tenants' movements resonate

with the hybridization processes observed within the M15 movement described by Martínez López in this volume, where urban struggles oscillate between autonomous and institutional forms. The pragmatic turn towards an alliance between the Polish tenants' and squatters' movements in recent years, and also the turn towards the local context within the squatters' movement at the end of the 1990s, were strategic moves to secure a sense of success and efficiency within the movement, to avoid the isolation associated with autonomy, and also to gain greater influence and resonance among the wider public.

However, the challenge that social movements pose to neoliberal ideologies and practices do not always achieve the intended goals (Mayer & Kűnkel, 2012; Taylor, 2013). Sometimes social movements' claims, mottos and ideas are hijacked or coopted by advanced neoliberalism in strategies such as the NGO-ization of social movements, the fostering of entrepreneurial identities, cooptation of social movement practices and social movement actors into urban governance, and the incorporation of ideas and mottos raised by social movements into the world of business or the dominant discourse. The link between the critique presented by radical social movements and neoliberal proponents of the state and its power should not be ignored, as it has in some cases functioned as a confirmation and legitimation of neoliberal rule.

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12

Afterword: Spatialized Social Inequalities and Urban Collective Action

Margit Mayer, Catharina Thörn, and Håkan Thörn

What could we learn from the chapters in this book for further developing an analytical framework for understanding the relationship between neoliberal urbanism and various forms of urban collective action? We have moved from the 2005 Paris uprising, involving major, violent confrontations between police and urban youth, who did not couple their actions with the articulation of any shared political demands, to a well-organized and articulated urban social movement coalition in Poland, with both illegal but non-violent occupations and conventional political pressure in its action repertoire. While these two cases involve very different forms of collective action, we have argued that analytically they share an important similarity: They address, and resist, the effects of globalized

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neoliberal urbanism. While the various cases presented in this book show that this global process manifests in the form of particular national and local articulations, they also make clear that it always has the profound effect of *deepening spatialized social inequalities*.

The violence that frequently occurs in such contexts has been described as the 'language of the unheard', because the social, economic and political marginalization of these groups has often made it very difficult for them to make their concerns recognized. Once violence erupts, the media and politicians' attention focuses—though invariably with very different interpretations—on the neglect, discrimination and injustices characterizing these (sub)urban areas. This is basically what makes Dikeç's concept 'unarticulated justice movements' (see Chap. 3 in this volume) an accurate term for conceptualizing not only the Paris uprising, but also those that took place in London and Stockholm. We have also argued that they should be understood in this way because they are *politicizing processes*, as they are not only defined by, but also express and make manifest, the power inequalities, social tensions and social conflicts characteristic of this era (Miller & Nicholls, 2013; Thörn, 2015).

Viewed from such an analytical perspective, it is at best pointless, and at worst misleading, to treat phenomena such as the urban uprisings of Paris, London and Stockholm as fundamentally distinct from those forms of urban collective action that may be categorized as organized, goal-oriented social movement action according to the conventional criteria of social movement research. While such an identification of the commonalities between different acts of urban resistance in the recent wave of collective action across Europe is based on *a structural analysis*, we have also argued that it is in many cases very difficult, and indeed pointless, to distinguish *empirically* between 'riots' and movement action. In a number of cases, violent urban resistance is clearly part of an overall movement strategy, fomented by repressive policing of protest (della Porta & Reiter, 1998), which has become an established element of the movement action repertoire through decades of recurring violent confrontations with the police, such as in the cases of Athens, Copenhagen and Hamburg. In connection with this, it should be noted that, first, all acts of violent resistance analysed in this book were preceded by violent police action; second, and more importantly, the cases studied in this book confirm a key

point in research on neoliberal urbanism, emphasized in Mayer's chapter: its increasingly repressive side, 'the new military urbanism' (Graham, 2010), which, in its relevance to the cases in this book, involves everyday harassment of the residents in poor neighbourhoods and suburbs. While cities are becoming ever more securitized, and in some aspects even militarized, as surveillance systems are expanded to track public space and infrastructures, and the geography of policing has identified certain areas as 'unsafe' or 'violence-prone' (Eick & Briken, 2014), the populations inhabiting these territories, as well as groups deemed potential threats to cities' key competitive functions, have become targets of increasingly repressive state strategies. This involves frequent 'stop-and-frisk' actions, ID controls and use of violence, as well as new and militarized tactics for 'protest policing' (Wahlström, 2011).

Even though one can of course distinguish between strategic violence as an element of movement repertoires, and the 'unorganized riots' of, for example, the Paris *banlieues*, our book has provided several examples of how even such a distinction is not just analytically but also *empirically* problematic, as there exists a continuum from the violent resistance of 'unorganized' uprisings to well-organized and articulated collective action. In fact, the different cases analysed in this book make it possible to identify a number of ways in which moments of urban uprising can be part of the sustained collective action of urban social movements.

In some cases, urban uprisings occur within or are the product of an urban social movement, where the different forms of resistance, which may include violence, are elements of an ample action repertoire. For example, the tradition of militancy formed in decades of urban struggles to defend old working-class districts, and the alternative, leftist infrastructures established within them, from encroaching valorization has been resuscitated in many European cities. The frequently militant urban and squatting movements of the 1970s and 1980s, often focused on youth centres or autonomous cultural centres in Zurich, Berlin, Amsterdam, Athens, London and Copenhagen, have left in their wake strongly politicized milieus and neighbourhoods with their own institutions as well as interurban and international connecting links among them (e.g., Bodenschatz, Heise, & Korfmacher, 1983; Mayer, 1987, 1999).

The urban uprisings in the context of threats of eviction of Hamburg's social centre, as well as the recurring uprisings in Athens, are examples of how this tradition of militancy was resuscitated after the 2008 crisis. Similar, though smaller, violent confrontations keep re-emerging. A case in point may be Hamburg, where such confrontations ranged from a wave of arson attacks on private cars, and organized assaults on a heavily guarded police station in the heart of the city's entertainment district, to the ritualized, regular rioting near the social centre Rota Flora. First of May demonstrations have also frequently provided occasion for subsequent heavy clashes between mostly young men and the police, though connections to the demonstrations are not always obvious. A police report on such May-day confrontations, which Birke (2010, pp. 176–177) refers to, claims that the arrested, some of whom were younger than 16, came primarily from the suburbs, which leads him to conclude that, if this was indeed the case, parallels to the eruptions in Paris 2005 would appear to be manifest, except that the rioting took place in a gentrified amusement district rather than a suburb. But the violent uprising in defence of Rote Flora and against police violence in 2013–2014, which Birke describes in this volume, was, just like earlier violent resistance in Copenhagen, a strategic element within the inherited social movement repertoire.

In other cases, the uprising may occur in a less unified movement context, which, in the process of the uprising, develops into a new movement. This was the case in the 2008 December uprising in Athens and the 2011 May uprising in Spain, both starting points for the unification of a number of movements under the umbrella of a nation-wide anti-austerity movement. In the Istanbul case, a similar movement-unification process took place in connection with the 2013 Gezi Park uprising, but, in contrast to Greece and Spain, attempts to sustain collective action on a substantial scale once the uprising had ebbed seem to have failed. In the London case, it is significant that the uprising occurred within a movement context, in the sense that it took place at a moment when other major events of collective action addressed the effects of urban neo-liberalization and austerity policies in England, but, in contrast to the Paris and Stockholm cases, no substantial direct empirical links seem to have been made between the uprising and the collective action preceding and following it. In the Paris case, such links were made when The

Social Forum of Popular Neighbourhoods created fora for discussion and political engagement in the *banlieues*, without, however, developing into more sustained collective action in the shape of a major social movement. In the Stockholm case, another form of linking took place: The uprising occurred in the context of an emerging social movement, but was not staged as a movement act. In the process of the uprisings, links were, however, made when leading movement organizations took an active part in the public struggle over their meaning ('they address the same structural inequalities as we do').

Not everywhere, though, have urban uprisings involved riotous behaviour. Whether peaceful demonstrations evolve into militant disruptive action or not depends both on local traditions and cultures, and on how responsive political opportunity structures are to the grievances articulated. In the context of the Spanish *Indignados* movement, even though police frequently used excessive force, the activists mostly remained

Fig. 12.1 'Fuck austerity'. Photo: Bruce Spear

within peaceful bounds, as Martinez points out in this volume, eventually directing their energies towards municipal platforms that seek to put into practice the movements' demands for more just and more democratic cities.

Most protests in the Eastern European region have also been characterized by a 'civilized' repertoire of contention, emphasizing legal action and nonviolent means. Still, Jacobsson (2015) stresses that, despite their adherence to the principle of strict pacifism, they can be viewed as contentious and transgressive. Polanska (in this volume) explains the absence of violent resistance in Polish urban uprisings with a political culture guided, ever since the 1980s Solidarnosc protests, by a strong tradition of non-violence now reinforced by neoliberal rhetoric.

To sum up this brief discussion of the role of (non)violence in today's urban uprisings, we have argued that while uprisings undoubtedly have politicizing and mobilizing effects, it is an empirical question to what extent this is related to more prolonged and sustained collective action. As the chapters in this book have demonstrated, the last decade's urban uprisings, whether spontaneous, violent and without clear demands, or organized social movements articulating clear political agendas, are intrinsically related to neoliberal urbanism, as they all address the deepening spatialized inequalities and injustices inherent in it. Whether expressed in pacifist or militant fashion, the protests against the effects of the neoliberal restructuring of cities across Europe signal that liveable and sustainable cities cannot be built by neglecting, marginalizing or repressing 'disposable' areas or their residents.

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Note: Page number followed by 'n' refers to footnotes.