Socio-spatial inequalities and social cohesion

in European cities

Tim Cassiers and Christian Kesteloot

Abstract

Spatial inequalities put a constraint on the possibilities of fostering social cohesion in cities. Many policy programs aim at reducing spatial unevenness in order to build more cohesive communities. These policies have some impact, but their effect on reducing inequalities at city-level is limited. This paper explores the question how the overall socio-spatial organisation of European cities affects social cohesion and the capacity to form an urban community capable of deciding on a common future. First, the complex and mutually enforcing relation between societal and spatial organisation is discussed, asserting that this leads to segregation. A second part reflects on how segregation is regarded upon in terms of social cohesion. Many authors explored the local innovative capacities within segregated areas. However, the role of the overall and place-specific spatial patterns is less treated, certainly in terms of how these patterns influence negotiation processes between different social groups.

Keywords: social inequalities**;** spatial inequalities**;** spatial lay-out**;** social cohesion; urban community.

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Introduction

Many scholars have demonstrated that processes of globalisation and capital mobility give birth to increasing inequalities in society. These inequalities are mediated by welfare state restructuring and are inscribed into space through spatial production processes, hence bringing about urban, regional and international inequalities.

This paper focuses on the impact of the urban inequalities on social cohesion. More specifically we will discuss the spatial aspects of these inequalities and show how the actual spatial structures of the urban fabric may constrain or facilitate social cohesive processes at the scale of the city as a whole.

This calls for a multidimensional and socially constructed concept of social cohesion (see Novy et al., this Special Issue a, developing social cohesion as a *problématique*) and thus goes beyond a mere cultural perspective of values and norms as often used by sociologists. Such a conception of social cohesion takes on board the mechanisms of social exclusion, and integrates them with a policy perspective of citizenship and public debate. In spatial terms, it goes beyond the approach that limits social cohesion to a locally bound instrument for fighting social exclusion and leads it to the level of the city as a political territory, and an arena of political conflict, which we will call the negotiated city.

We will argue that urban socio-spatial structures have a major impact on the functioning of the urban public sphere. Yet, these structures are rarely taken into account, neither in literature on this public sphere, nor in policy programs aiming at a socially cohesive society. Conversely, social exclusion is widely described and analysed in geographical terms. But the impact of spatial structures on exclusion is mainly analysed at the neighbourhood level and rarely takes the scale of the whole metropolitan region into account. Moreover, the geographies of social cohesion are left hanging (Cameron, 2005, see however Musterd et al. 2006).

Assuming the importance of space, one might argue for territorial cohesion policies − like proposed by the EU in the Lisbon Treaty, further developed in the Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion (CEG, 2008; see also Doucet, 2006; Novy et al., this special issue a) - or spatial cohesion policies, in order to construct a more even city. However, since spatial unevenness is the spatial reflection of inequality in society as a whole, spatially targeted action may not bring about the desired effects (Minton, 2009). It may be able, up to a certain level, to redevelop certain areas in case of area-targeted policies, or to redistribute wealth (or poverty) more evenly over a territory. However this does not imply that unevenness in society as a whole has decreased. It is just more evenly spread. The spatial side of societal unevenness is thus important insofar as it imposes constraints and opportunities for social action in the urban arena. However, this does not

mean that the problems of inequalities at the urban level can be solved with spatial solutions.

The first part of this article describes the interrelations between social and spatial inequalities, asserting that they are mutually reinforcing. We start with a brief description of the theories on production and reproduction of space in order to understand how spatial inequalities can emerge in present-day capitalist societies. Then we will focus on the changes in society as a whole, which have arguably increased inequalities, especially in cities. Two questions are essential in this context. One, what is the spatial structure of these inequalities? Two, how does this spatial structure affect social processes? We give an overview on the research on both questions.

A second part analyses the relations between spatial lay-outs of cities and social cohesion. In this part we will first unravel the relation between segregation and social cohesion. We will then argue that the socio-spatial patterns of the cities are of importance as they affect the capacity to foster social cohesion at the scale of the whole urban community. We therefore contend that we need a typology of the very diverse socio-spatial lay-outs of the European cities and new research on the potential and limits they impose on the process of building urban communities capable of taking their future in their own hands.

1. Segregated cities

1.1. Understanding production of uneven space under capitalism

Since quite some years, the spatial dimension of social processes has been the object of study of many scholars, especially in the field of urban studies. This attention has led to ever more refined and complex theoretical frameworks on space and society, which evolved through the adaptation of inherited views of place as a fixed and more or less unique unit of socio-spatial organization to a relationally constituted, polyvalent complex of processes embedded in broader sets of social relations (Van Kempen, 1994; Jessop et al., 2008).

The ideas on the spatial dimension of societal processes were theorised in the pioneering works of Harvey (1973; 1982) and Castells (1972). Harvey explained the role played by urban space in the process of capital accumulation, taking into consideration how the city acts as both a locus and a regulator of that uneven process and its inherent contradictions, whereas Castells emphasised social reproduction processes in the city through collective consumption.

Building further on these insights, Massey (1979) exposed her ideas on the division of labour, explaining that economic growth goes with rounds of investments that create new spatial divisions of labour. These spatial patterns overlay and combine with patterns produced in previous periods.

The effects of the combination of successive layers vary over space and give rise to regional differentiations in the conditions of production, which are the spatial basis for the next round of investment. Hence, the actual spatial arrangement of cities and regions can be thought of as a geological metaphor, superimposing layer after layer, each of which reflects the logic of production of space in its period of origin. Lipietz (1977) developed a similar analysis and the ideas of the French regulation school, in which he participated, provided a relevant framework for the temporality of economic growth (see Boyer 1986) (for a full description of the impact of the division of labour on geographical development, see Moulaert and Mehmood, 2010).

Smith (1984) explored the logic behind uneven geographical development. He states that the logic behind capital accumulation processes embodies specific geographies of economic expansion. Hence, uneven development is endemic to capitalism as a historical-geographical system, since capitalist competition calls for a continuous development of new spaces and territories as forces of production. Many authors have since then debated the geographical instability of socio-spatial organisation patterns under capitalist conditions over time (e.g. Brenner and Theodore, 2002; Hudson, 2001; Lipietz, 1996; Harvey 1989; Massey, 1985). It is agreed that space is part of the production and reproduction processes in society. However, on the exact interpretation of the spatial processes, discussions are still going on. In their overview of the different interpretations of space,

Jessop *et al.* (2008) note there has been a succession of relatively distinct debates on territory, place, scale, and networks [1]. The authors made a plea in favour of all four socio-spatial concepts to be taken into account. Space, in all its dimensions, is thus a crucial element of the societal organisation and the production and reproduction of inequalities.

1.2. Overall changes in society crystallise in the city

Our society is rapidly changing, induced by the development of a new phase of capitalism that goes beyond industrial capitalism and emphasises the role of knowledge, flexibility, global networks and global finance for capital accumulation. This phase of capitalism is the most recent expression of a "liberal economic view that has emerged or submerged in cyclical ways since its birth in the late 17th century" (Moulaert *et al.,* 2001, p. 100). Every cycle or regime creates new forms of capital accumulation each time the potential of the former one has been exhausted. According to the French regulation school, these forms of capital accumulation display some degree of regulation that keeps the economic, social, political and cultural elements of growth in balance, including its spatial organisation . The latest phase of capital accumulation has been called the 'flexible accumulation regime' (Storper and Scott, 1989) by this school, but goes by many names.

Cities take a prominent place in this recent accumulation regime and it is in cities that the inherent rapid increase of social and spatial unevenness was most noticed (for a full description of polarisation in cities, see Morlicchio and Pratschke, this Special issue). Not surprisingly, most scholars who have described the increasing inequalities within cities were first fascinated by "global cities" which concentrate both institutional and private power. Friedmann and Wolff (1982) and Sassen (1991, 1994) asserted a link between globalisation and a growing polarisation between urban elites and the urban underclass (Wilson, 1987; for a nuanced use of the term see Wacquant, 1996). However, this theory has been questioned by Fainstein et al. (1991) and Hamnett (1994). The main arguments are directed towards the oversimplification of the social structure of the cities (e.g. Marcuse 1989) and the underestimation of national differences through the actions of the welfare states (Mingione, 2004; Silver, 1993; Esping-Andersen, 1990).

However, the global city explanation for growing inequalities only considers, in the strict sense of the reasoning, a few cities in the world that operate as headquarters of the world economy. Obviously, the growth of inequalities within cities is not confined to these global cities. The question why the other cities are also affected has to be addressed through the complex interplay of strategies within the new capitalist accumulation regime. Basically, "flexible accumulation" emerges from the capitalists'

double response to the crisis of fordism: extending the fields of exploitation and deepening the exploitation of workers.

The first response is clearly expressed through globalisation (and mainly the transformation of China into the industrial factory of the world economy), and we will examine further down what the consequences are for social inequalities. Another, until recently less documented road of extension of the accumulation field is financialisation (see Küblböck et al., 2010; Torrance, 2008; Fainstein, 2001), or investment and reinvestment in the financial sector rather than in productive activities. Financialisation has affected the social division of labour, especially in large cities, but it also means investment in the real estate industry with the concomitant erosion of – mostly inner city – low cost residential space and rocketing housing costs to which poor households are more sensitive.

A third expansion strategy is flexibility. Usually approached from the production side, it appears as a new mode of organisation of production which adds economies of scope to the typical economies of scale of the Fordist accumulation regime (Harvey 1989). But flexibility is also about the diversification of consumption over social groups, the increase of variation of consumption over time and a tendency towards debt financed consumption. As such it also participates to the expansion of the capitalist markets by forcing much more outlet possibilities than in the case of a single and stable mode of consumption.

The fourth strategy is revealed through the restructuring of the state. As many scholars have rightly observed in Europe, there is no real retreat of the State, but a deep restructuring that opens large avenues for privatisation, i.e. the take-over of State tasks achieved in the redistributive sphere by the private sector operating in the capitalist market sector but still being paid for by public funds.

The second response, deepening the exploitation of the workers, or increasing the rate of profit in productive activities, has been achieved through relocation of activities in low wage countries and outsourcing. Both strategies are clearly included in the story of globalisation. But many production tasks cannot be relocated whether because the means of production cannot be moved or because the production is linked to the place of consumption. In these cases, the deeper exploitation of the workers is achieved through immigration of cheap and unorganised (often illegal) labour force into the cities.

The state also plays a significant, although forced role in the second response through geographical competition (Harvey 1985). As a result of increased mobility of capital within the global economy, every city or region, has to compete with the others to attract and keep investments in its area. A similar competition exists for highly skilled labour force under the form of brain drain. This geographical competition surely participates to the extension of outlet markets, each region or city having to make sure to

construct or buy the necessary amenities to remain at least as attractive as the others. The role of this strategy is most visible at the level of the nations: the neoliberal restructuring of the economy, that took shape under Reaganism and Thatcherism in its early developments, removed state constraints on the use of capital to make investment more profitable. It also entailed a large scale redistribution of wealth from the poor and the middle classes to the rich through fiscal and social security reforms, resulting in a significant reduction of the share of indirect collective wages in the total labour costs. This logic has also materialised at regional and urban scales, where public money is more invested in attractiveness for investments than in welfare for inhabitants.

One can thus concludes that this new phase of capital accumulation is marked by intensified processes of economic globalisation, capital and labour mobility and welfare restructuring (DeFillipis, 2004), which inherently relate to the spatial structure of cities. However, in order to avoid generalisation, one should pay more attention to the interactions between social and spatial structures. Two questions are actually concerned: the production of spatial unevenness on the one hand, and the reproduction of social inequalities through the spatial structures. Or to put it in another way: what is the spatial reflection of social inequalities and how does this spatial structure affect social processes?

1.3. Spatial segregation

Segregation is the projection of a social structure onto space (Haussermann and Siebel, 2001). However, the coincidence between social and spatial inequality is too easily taken for granted. Hypothetically, it is possible to construct a socially unequal city without spatial inequalities (Hamnett, 1996). Therefore, one has to prove the causes of socio-economic and spatial inequality, as well as to explain the reasons for their coincidence. Therefore, we have to look at the particular processes which shape the spatial structure of our cities.

Van Kempen and Marcuse (1997) detect four forces through which globalisation is reflected in the spatial order: 1) variations in the capital accumulation regime and flows of capital which cause a shift in location strategies; 2) demographic changes, as work opportunities make people migrate both on an international scale and on the scale of the city-region; 3) xenophobia and racism that lead to concentration of ethnic groups in certain areas which may become segregated [2]; and 4) the changing role of the public sector that forces people to rely more on market strategies for access to housing, which exacerbate segregation (for an overview of housing see Cameron et al. in this Special Issue; for a recent overview of more potential factors of segregation see Smet and Salman, 2008).

Many studies have empirically proven that spatial segregation is on the rise in urban Europe and elsewhere. Cities that have been covered

include Istanbul (Eraydin, 2008), Stockholm (Harsman, 2006), Rome, (Mudu, 2006), London (Sassen, 2001). Only few cases show a decline in segregation: Athens for example (Maloutas, 2007) or Oslo (Wessel, 2000) [3]. Notwithstanding these rare cases of declining segregation, the processes of social polarisation and segregation, often initiated by the economic crisis, have been reinforced by the growth strategies of flexible accumulation. Even though social divisions of cities are not a new phenomenon (Marcuse, 2002; Haussermann and Siebel, 2001), their character has changed (Gerometta et al, 2005) and their geography has been reinforced by tendencies of restructuring national and urban welfare regimes. One can thus conclude that urban and societal transformation under contemporary capitalism has led to an increase of spatial segregation between different social groups in cities.

1.4. The effects of spatial segregation

Although segregation results from processes in society, the relation between society and space is a dual one. The produced spatial organisation will in turn determine constraints and opportunities for societal action, since actors and processes will have to interact with inherited spatial forms (Abu-Lughod, 1999; Buck and Gordon, 2004). In general, scholars are increasingly acknowledging the fact that segregation acts as a motor that drives social inequality (Hanhörster, 2001). Living in a segregated

neighbourhood will cause even more exclusion. The way spatial inequalities thus reinforce social unevenness has been researched at three levels.

On a first level, spatial segregation affects the opportunities of individuals when it causes a disconnection between the segregated areas and areas where the jobs are. This spatial mismatch theory was mainly developed by American scholars analysing the disconnection between black ghettos in the US and the jobs that were decentralised towards the suburbs (Kain, 1968; Wilson, 1987; Johnson, 2006; and for a confrontation of theory with empirical evidence, Gobillon et al., 2007).

In Europe, much more attention is given to a second level of analysis. The concentration of people with the same (low) social profile in segregated areas reduces their chances of upward social mobility. There are the issues of not having access to the kind of networks for climbing the social ladder (Van Kempen, 1994), lacking political representation, not having access to good services, pathological social norms, stigmatisation (Wacquant, 1999) and being kept away from the job market (Buck and Gordon, 2004). These so-called neighbourhood effects assume that someone living in a deprived area has less social opportunities than someone with the same social characteristics elsewhere. Empirical research reveals small, but significant correlations between social exclusion and neighbourhood characteristics (e.g. in Sweden (Musterd and Andersson, 2005), in the UK

(Buck, 2001; Buck and Gordon, 2004), in Glasgow and Edinburgh (Turok et al., 2004)).

A third and most complex and encompassing level of analysis researches the overall socio-spatial structure of the city (Marcuse and Van Kempen, 2000, 2002) and its intrinsic logics. As argued above, uneven development is endemic to flexible accumulation, creating a logic in which social and spatial inequalities are mutually reinforcing. This concerns the production of the new socio-spatial configurations emerging from that accumulation regime (see Kesteloot, 2004 for this concept), notably gentrification (Van Criekingen and Decroly, 2003; Butler, 2004; Ergun, 2004), gated communities (Vesselinov et al., 2007; Bodnar and Molnar, 2009), urban sprawl (Couch et al., 2004), selective migration (Van Crieckingen, 2009; Bailey and Livingstone, 2008; Andersson, 2006) and immigrant ghettos and enclaves (Van der Laan, 2007; Mingione, 2009). It looks at the continuing negotiation between space and society and the resulting spatial order, which reflects the logics of the social organisation structures.

2. Social cohesive city

2.1. Segregation and social cohesion

How does segregation influence social cohesion? In order to answer this question, the concept of social cohesion must be clarified (see also Novy et al., this Special Issue a). Strategies for fighting segregation and strategies for achieving more social cohesion have often been confused. Indeed, there is a dominant assumption that social cohesion at a general level is best acquired via local interaction. At the same time, spatial segregation, and especially socio-ethnic segregation, is considered negative for several reasons (Dilger and Fürst, 2008; Van Kempen and Ozuekren, 1998). Targeting this spatial dimension thus seems a rightful approach to fight social inequalities, resulting in policies that focus only on excluded people and certain neighbourhoods (Forrest and Kearns, 2001).

Many policies and strategies have been introduced to fight segregation (de Souza Briggs, 2005; Smet and Salman, 2008; for an overview of policies in urban Europe, Ireland, 2008). Such policies can target a decline in spatial segregation, by aiming at a social mix via housing policies. A second set of strategies consist of trying to reduce the problematic outcomes of segregation without attempting to change spatial patterns themselves to any significant degree (e.g. by creating economic participation programs).

These spatially-targeted policies have been the subject of many critiques. Musterd and Andersson (2005) argue that two assumptions behind social mix policies are not sufficiently tested, i.e. 1) social mix enhances the

opportunities of the individual, and 2) this can be accomplished via housing mix. Though spatial targeting might have a positive impact on the living conditions of people in the targeted area, its potential effect on overall levels of deprivation and exclusion is however very limited (Boddy and Parkinson, 2004; Buck and Gordon, 2004; Lupton, 2003). Therefore, policies wanting to combat spatial segregation should target the exclusion mechanisms, not simply assist the poor in targeted areas (Andersson, 2006). Yet, these exclusion mechanisms can only be tackled by acting upon the dialectical process between space and society. Spatially targeted programs are problematic in the present flexible accumulation regime as they replace Keynesian-style support. Moreover, they often create a logic in which spaces, not people need to be integrated (Rodriguez et al., 2003; Kesteloot et al. 2006). Instead of social integration, displacement and further polarisation are often achieved. As long as public authorities, being dragged into the game of geographical competition, are not willing to break with the accumulation regime, all strategies of dealing with spatial segregation will reproduce the socio-spatial unevenness.

Some authors also produce arguments in favour of (or at least accepting) segregation; thus they open up another conception of social cohesion. They point out that survival strategies develop more easily in segregated milieus; moreover they see segregation as a mitigating force in society which creates a safeguard for newcomers; and they argue that spatial

concentration of people with the same background enables self-organisation and thus political agenda-setting - an argument that turns the fear that segregation could lead to conflict upside-down (see also Haussermann et al. 2008). When analysing these arguments, Haussermann and Siebel (2001) conclude that whether one is pro or contra segregation will depend much upon the starting hypothesis regarding the public realm. Here we can distinguish two main approaches (Flyvbjerg, 1998; Beaumont and Nichols, 2008). There is the Habermasian tradition, which focuses on the institutional framework, through which a rational consensus can be reached. This school is in favour of participation. Another tradition goes back to Mouffe (and Foucault) and focuses on the normalising of power relations and radical democracy. Participation, according to these thinkers, is valid, but must inscribe itself in a real diversity, giving a role to conflict. Those who think segregation as a negative element in society are more in line with the Habermasian approach. We tend to agree with the Foucauldian approach, thus believing that segregation can act as an empowering mechanism. We see social cohesion as:

> "the capacity to acknowledge the existence of different social and territorial groups present in the city (the two entrances to consider groups tend to overlap according to the level of segregation), their diverse and sometimes contradictory interests as well as the capacity for these groups to organize themselves and for the city to create

institutions in which these groups can confront each other and decide

about the city's future."

In line with Foucault, we stress that social cohesion cannot be found in consensus, but consist in settlements on conflicting visions.

With this definition, we focus on the political dimension of social cohesion as a *problématique* (Novy et al., this Special Issue a). Citizenship, according to Friedmann (1998) should be based both on the political community -which gives the right to voice, and on territory - which gives the right to the city. As a concept, the right to the city was developed by Lefebvre. It has been extensively used in many debates on citizenship (Purcell, 2003), as it is based on actually living in the city and oriented towards the production of space (Lefebvre, 1974). In this regard it bears a lot of similitude with social cohesion, also not being a neutral construction but framed within a certain ethical viewpoint. It is a political-philosophical construction, of which it is not always clear how to be put in practice (Fernandes, 2007a). In this regard, Latin-American –and especially Brazilian- literature on the right to the city and on citizenship (Fernandes, 2007b; Burgos Baumann, 2005) seems to contain some promising ideas, since advanced urban and institutional reforms gave birth to a whole new legal framework, in which the right to the city became a central notion (Fernandes, 2007a). This right to the city legal framework was constructed through major institutional reforms both at the local and the national level.

This achievement, though, required an immense social mobilisation, drawing on multiple issues and multiple scales.

2.2. Locality as basis for social innovation

The Brazilian example shows that cities act as sites where new practices emerge. Since exclusion processes, endemic to flexible accumulation, have developed the furthest in cities, these have become the primary action site of civil society, action groups and social movements and thus for experimenting with new practices (Moulaert, 2000; Gerometta, 2005; Behrer and Quesnel, 2006). These new practices often start at a local level, in marginal areas, that are cut off from the mainstream economy (Moulaert and Leontidou 1995; Ipsen, 2005), thus bouncing on the intrinsic spatial logic of capitalist accumulation in order to build up alternatives (DeFillipis, 2004). In the neo-communitarian approach this kind of innovative action is translated into a policy-oriented perspective which sees an important role for the third sector for economic development, social cohesion and grassroots mobilisation (Gerometta et al. 2005; for an overview on grassroots mobilisation, see Fraisse this Special Issue). The neo-institutional approach (Keil, 2006, following Giddens) focuses more on the role of institutions as enduring societal construction and thus considers governance in terms of the negotiation of structures where different groups and interests co-exist and confront each other. Neo-communitarian and neo-

institutional approaches have been challenged by the regulation school for being over-romantic (DeFillipis et al., 2006). Yet, others argued that they are not necessary contradictory to regulation theory (Moulaert and Mehmood, 2010; Moulaert and Scott, 1997), but can be perceived as an exploration of local regulations, especially in the urban context. These approaches advance the local context as the site of social innovative action that integrates social justice, social rights and the right to the city (Harvey, 2003). This kind action of action can be politically valorised, both in communitarian as in institutional terms, via an integrated area approach (Moulaert, 2000) through which creative strategies can be developed (see Klein and Tremblay this Special Issue) that lead to new local practices.

Yet, the Brazilian example mentioned above shows that the local level is not sufficient in order to alter legal and other conditions for granting the right to the city. Furthermore the local scale has only limited impact on the overall mechanisms producing inequalities (Dreier et al., 2004) A mobilisation at different scales is needed, in order to forge new institutional arrangements out of local social innovative action (Fernandes, 2007a). Multiscalar thinking has been incorporated into literature on social innovation and has led to a plea for acting simultaneously on different scales (Featherstone, 2005; Novy et al., this Special Issue b). The quest for new local practices is seen as being part of a process of constructing more

equitable cities and spaces on a regional and global level (Moulaert and Scott, 1997; DeFillipis, 2004).

Local action, rooted in local conflicts must therefore join and be joined by collective action at other spatial scales, thus interconnecting different levels of political negotiation and struggle. Urban civil society and policy-makers should come to the fore in this process, since local action will mostly take place within the urban context, and try to seek alliances at for example the European level (see also Novy et al., this Special Issue a).

Yet, in order to assess the constraints and opportunities for local action to reveal itself at the level of the city as a whole and thus take up this crucial role, one must bring the construction of the socio-spatial order, as a result from complex interaction between social and spatial processes, into the analysis.

2.3. Socio-spatial layout and social cohesion

When urban conflict related to segregation or exclusion manifests itself for example via riots, this often comes as a shock to the urban society. Elites and middle classes often react with a 'wir haben es nicht gewusst' attitude, a logical outcome of shutting off the reality caused by a wilful blindness for the conditions of the lower parts of society. This blindness is very much enforced by the spatial organisation of the city, laid out in such a way that – even when there is a certain awareness among members of the

elite - they are never to be confronted with the lower parts of society within their daily experience. As Engels put it, for Manchester in the 19th century:

> "Owing to the curious layout of the town it is quite possible for someone to live for years in Manchester and to travel daily to and from his work without ever seeing a working-class quarter or coming into contact with an artisan. […] This division is due partly to deliberate policy and partly to instinctive and tacit agreement between the two social groups" (Engels [1845] 1968, cited by Goonewardena, 2004; p. 158)

This insight on the mediating role of urban spatial structure —which takes into account the dialectical relationships between social relations, the production of urban space, and the lived experience of the city— has been rarely followed up (Goonewardena, 2004). Urban space places a mediating role through the confrontation of everyday experience with the socio-spatial structure of the city. Donzelot and Jaillet (1997) understand the city as a theatre, where different socio-spatial groups can confront each other. They notice that in the fordist-keynesian regime the city acted like a socio-spatial continuum linking functionally interdependent areas. It is in this sense dramaturgic, since effective interaction between the different urban zones is a necessity, because they are part of one system. Socio-spatial upward mobility is part of the functioning of this system, involving a spatial trajectory from countryside to industrial neighbourhoods and suburbs. In

flexible accumulation, the city has lost this intrinsic spatial logic. This leads to a socio-spatial fragmentation, which no longer integrates the centre and the periphery, but links the centre with other networked cities. City centres depopulate and become the décor for tourism, leisure, shopping and headquarters of multinationals. Such a city can be called topological, as the flight from the centre is to be seen as an escape from urban society, and not any longer as an inherent logic.

These ideas were further explored by Kesteloot (2004) in his analysis of how spatial arrangements mediate the relations between the rich and the poor. He asserts that the actual spatial lay-out of cities defines three socio-spatial groups that play a role in the future of the city: the city poor, the other city-inhabitants and the users of the city, living outside the city's administrative borders (see Halfpenny et al., 2004; Lupi and Musterd, 2006 for the role of suburban communities in urban social cohesion). The interactions between these groups make the city dramatic, an arena of confrontation between conflicting interests. In cases where the poor live in the inner city, the two other groups are confronted with its poor population, as long as they need the city centre. This can lead to two archetypical outcomes. Either it becomes a repressive city, where the safety of the rich is guaranteed by a strong police force and where any form of social conflict is oppressed in order to protect the islands of wealth and keep control over the marginalized. (Swyngedouw et al., 2003) However, an alternative is

possible as well. It may end up in a negotiated city (Abramo, 1998; Kesteloot, 2004), where every socio-spatial group has its say on the future of the city. Institutionalisation of this negotiation implies a mutual recognition of all three socio-spatial groups, extraterritorial rights for the city users and strengthening social and political rights of the poor (see also Terhorst and Vandeven, 2001 for a useful framework of analysis in this respect). If on the contrary, the poor live in the urban periphery and the rich hold the city centre – possibly as a result of "revanchist gentrification" (Smith 1996) - potential violence in the periphery does not harm the rich, so urban authorities can neglect the rights of the poor. The negotiated city is thus a political integrative approach to social cohesion (for a cultural consumerist approach of the negotiated city, see Jansson, 2003). It uses the socio-spatial order of the city in order to unveil conflicts and institutionalise them into negotiations that potentially fulfil the right to the city. The negotiated city uses the inherent socio-spatial logic of the capitalist accumulation by rethinking the city as an arena in which the different socio-spatial groups confront each other. The goal of this negotiation needs to be a new and socially just regulation, not a consensus-based and entrepreneurial urban project (for this kind of approach to the negotiated city, see Theurillat, 2009). If not, the negotiated city will eventually confirm the existing structures.

3. European urban diversity

As society- and space-shaping processes unfold in place-specific forms and combinations within particular local and national contexts, one must be extremely cautious when interpreting research results in terms of features of general processes. This is even more the case, when the aim consists in comparing cities in search for policy recommendations. Success or failure of such socially innovative policies depends as much upon the effectiveness of policies themselves as on the recognition of local features. (Mingione, 2004) In the words of Le Galès (2002, p. 183):

> "Any study of cities must steer a course between the Scylla of representing the city as a separate unit, thus risking its reification, and the Charybdis of showing it to be infinitely diverse and complex."

The coarse distinction between cities where the poor or the rich hold the city centre and their consequences on the chances for a genuine negociated city, illustrate the need to take these local features into account. However, the spatial lay-outs of inequalities in European cities are much more complex and diversified, even more so when their changes are taken into consideration. A full picture of European urban situations would need a vast number of characteristics, accounting for the overall processes of globalisation, financialisation and state restructuring as well as local variations and the historical pathways of cities (Abu-Lughod, 1999).

Marcuse (2006) sees four key questions for this sort of urban research: Is there a new spatial pattern produced by the globalisation period? Is there a new pattern, what aspect of globalisation is responsible? Does the pattern emerge in all globalising cities, or only in global cities? And finally, what aspects of the pattern are not new, and what are the underlying determinants? Based on these questions, Marcuse gives some basic patterns which appear in the urban fabric. From a residential point of view, he distinguishes between the luxury city, the gentrified city, the suburban city, the tenement city, and the abandoned city. Yet, when beholding the economic role of the city, other archetypes can be described: a city of controlling decisions, a city of advanced services, a city of direct production, a city of unskilled work and informal activities or a residual city. The built environment of the cities brings forward yet another typology of residential areas that combine in various ways: the citadel (upper class residential and commercial space), the older city neighbourhoods (regenerated and gentrified), edge cities, diluted and manipulated areas of social and working class housing, ethnic enclaves, and excluded ghettos. What is needed is to combine these archetypes in order to shed light on the multiple socio-spatial patterns of European cities and their present-day changes and to understand the opportunities they offer and constraints they impose on urban social policies.

4. Conclusion

This article has reviewed the literature on the interactions between socio-economic and spatial processes on the one hand and on the relation between the created socio-spatial structures and social cohesion at the level of the urban community as a whole. It explains how flexible accumulation increases social inequalities, intensifies segregation and challenges social cohesion. Although social and spatial processes in contemporary European cities reinforce each other, tackling social exclusion by implementing spatially-targeted policies is insufficient and may even bring about opposite results. In order to move towards a good city (Amin, 2006), one needs to foster social cohesion at the level of the city as a whole. This is the aim of neo-communitarians, neo-institutionalism or defenders of social innovation.

However, the impact of the socio-spatial structures of cities, and their reshaping by flexible accumulation, on the capacity to form and strengthen a cohesive plural urban community remains largely unexplored. There exists a considerable diversity of socio-spatial structures of European cities that complicates this task of grasping the role of the socio-spatial urban structure and calls for truly comparative research that replaces the idea of a "European city" model (Haussermann, 2005) by more reality-related approaches and comes up with a policy-relevant socio-spatial typology of European cities. The concept of a negotiated city in which

different socio-spatial groups can confront each other is a promising avenue, but is more applicable in some socio-spatial configurations than in others.

Confrontation, negotiation and the creation of compromises about the city's future are also a matter of enabling institutions. Again, the diversity of political arrangements in Europe is very large and calls for a systematic understanding of these institutions and their role in fostering social cohesion, focusing on new urban policy programmes like participation or neighbourhood development. The issue is to create socially innovative programmes that produce places and institutions through which different socio-spatial groups can confront each other on the one hand, and connect to regional and global processes on the other hand.

The issue is to uncover the social consequences of a hegemonic story of exogenous urban growth strategies based on geographical competition between cities and to come up with socially innovative strategies that mobilise both exogenous and endogenous resources to challenge the main economic viewpoints and to constitute these new institutions through which the future of the city is negotiated.

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[1] For an overview on networked and territorial cities, see Robinson, 2005.

[2] Van Kempen and Marcuse speak about 'race and racism'. However, it is difficult to assert how race (not being a process) would lead to concentration. We therefore speak about xenophobia.

[3] This decrease in segregation can be explained by the local context. In Athens, different social groups live in condomiums that are vertically segregated, with the upper floors containing more spacious apartments occupied by the higher social strata and the lower floors, with smaller and darker apartments, occupied by lower social strata (Maloutas, 2007). In Oslo, the decrease is an unintended effect of adaptations made by conservative city council to the existing housing policies in an attempt to create a more diversified urban landscape. It turned out to raise the opportunities for residential integration. (Wessel, 2000)

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