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PLANNING FOR PLURALISM IN NORDIC CITIES:

Key terms and themes

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This special issue probes into planning for cultural and ethnic pluralism in Nordic cities, focusing especially on urban diversity politics and practices related to migration. Although transnational migration is a predominantly urban phenomenon, there is a notable divergence of research interest between the scholarly fields of migration and ethnic minority studies on the one hand, and the fields of urban studies on the other. Nicholas De Genova (2015: 3) aptly points out, in an earlier issue of this journal, that even though migration studies research tends to be disproportionately urban in its empirical focus, it commonly leaves the urban question under-theorised or unexamined. In a similar vein, Nina Glick Schiller and Ayşe Çağlar (2011: 2) note that '[w]ithin the migration literature there are many studies of migration *to* cities and the life of migrants *in* cities but very little about the relationship of migrants *and* cities'. Whilst urban studies have been predominantly concerned with socio-economic urban divisions and spatial differences pertaining to segregation, much less attention has been on issues of race, ethnicity and migration. Although there has been a gradual orientation towards exclusionary effects of gentrification on ethnic minorities and racialised citizens, main focus is still on spatial and material dimensions of social (in)justice (Brenner et al. 2012; Butler 1997; Davis and Monk 2007; Harvey 1996, 2009; Marcuse et al. eds. 2009; Sassen 2000; Smith 1979, 2002; Smith and Ley 2008). Conversely, migration research has addressed problems of ethnic discrimination, racism, marginalisation of minority groups etc. for decades, whereas the urban dimension of (in)justice has remained largely unscrutinised. True, there is a growing body of literature that seeks to bridge the gap between migration/minority studies and urban studies/planning (see e.g. Fincher et al. 2014; Fincher and Iveson 2008; Kihato et al. eds 2010; Neill 2004; Neill and Schwedler eds 2007; Sandercock 1998, 2003; Schiller and Çağlar eds 2011; Wood and Landry 2007), but such intersections are still scarce in a Nordic context. Research in this region is predominantly oriented towards evaluating national welfare programmes, rather than studying cities (Dannestam 2008: 356). However, as the welfare state is restructured and an increased inflow of migrants settle in urban areas, a number of pressing issues regarding planning for pluralism arise – issues that are at once specific for the Nordic context and related to broader trends in Europe and beyond (see e.g. Righard et al. 2015).

The following sections explore theoretical perspectives on planning for pluralism and the implied methodological challenges. The final section introduces key terms and themes of the special issue.

I. Theoretical perspectives on planning for pluralism

Urban planning, considered as a subfield of urban studies here, has traditionally dealt with issues of social inequalities, and planners' awareness of racial and ethnic injustices has grown steadily since the 1960s, when exponents of so-called advocacy planning pushed for radical social reforms. Planning scholar Paul Davidoff (1965), who initially formulated the argument for advocacy planning and 'pluralism in planning', posited that the scope and nature of planning should be broadened to include all areas of interest to the public and that plural plans (rather than a single agency plan) should be presented to the public. These original ideas and ideals have engendered new strands of planning that address social injustices, including 'radical planning' and 'equity planning' (Sanyal et al. 2012: 21). Nevertheless, the focus on planning as a deliberative process has sometimes overshadowed concerns regarding actual planning outcomes: how planning is actually playing out differently for ethnic and racialised groups (Fincher et al. 2014: 4; Sanyal et al. 2012: 20). Moreover, the question of how planning could rebalance power relations continues to be addressed within the confines of the planning profession,

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remaining on the micro-level of planning conversations, even as broader contextual processes are taken into account (but then treated as precisely context influencing events rather than as dimensions central to the analysis). For instance, proponents of 'communicative planning' and 'insurgent planning' take into account conflicts of interests and diverging views, seeking to nurture (intercultural) dialogue among the involved and affected parties (e.g. Sandercock 1998; 2003), but their persistent focus on micro-level communication and participation makes it difficult to question, let alone change, the broader structures that constitute hierarchies of belonging and, more generally, urban divides (see e.g. Blanco 1999: 230; Slater 2012: 190). We might infer from this that the discussion about 'pluralism in planning' is not tantamount to discussing 'planning for pluralism', as the former is not exhaustive of the latter.

Borrowing from Ruth Fincher et al. (2014: 3), we take planning to be that part of urban governance that are concerned with, for one, how the characteristics of the built environment and its spatial features influence the interests and circumstances of individuals and groups and, second, how development of social, cultural and economic policies change conditions in places. That said, it is virtually impossible to make a neat distinction between planning policies and practices pertaining to pluralism on the one hand, and other social, cultural and economic interventions that affect urban pluralism on the other. It might therefore prove fruitful to include broader policy priorities and ideologies in the discussion of planning for pluralism, as well as focusing on the issue of coexistence in everyday life (Fincher et al.: 4).

The neoliberal turn towards community building policy

To understand the shape of prevalent discourses of urban pluralism, it is important to take into consideration the neoliberal restructuring and rescaling of states and cities that have taken place over the last couple of decades, especially in the global North. In its most general sense, neoliberalism refers to a political rationality that submits nearly every aspect of political and socio-cultural life to economic calculation. Protagonists of neoliberalism are prone to argue that the poor will benefit the more they are disciplined by the market, adhering to a 'trickle down' thesis associated with a universalistic discourse of globalisation: globalisation seen as one, singular force (Harvey 2009: 55, 57f.). A defining feature of neoliberal restructuring and rescaling is the winding down of public service provision and centralised government, which serves to devolve responsibilities 'downwards' – to the city or community level. The much-debated shift from government to governance in urban politics involves, among other things, a wide range of efforts to promote community participation in deprived, immigrant-dense areas of the city. The aim of the community building policy is to encourage immigrant engagement so as to create a shared sense of belonging and speed up integration (Bockmeyer 2007: 177). The various initiatives draw heavily on the 'social capital' paradigm associated with Robert Putnam's research (2000), as well as notions of 'social cohesion' or 'community cohesion' (more on these terms and themes in the following sections). Community building policy could be seen as an attempt at planning for pluralism in response to the question of how cities can engage their increasingly diverse populations. The underlying assumption seems to be that diversity entails fragmentation of society or the city, unless it is managed properly, that is, unless social problems associated with immigrant-dense areas are transform into more prosperous 'innovation areas', which will benefit the city as a whole (Gressgård 2015b: 207–8).

Fabrication of 'populations at risk' and security problems

Economic prosperity depends on a high level of mobility and circulation, and yet, mobile populations are increasingly seen as a security threat. It is a widespread view in contemporary urban governance, at least in the global North, that it is crucial to minimise the risks associated with circulation of people, goods and services to secure prosperous circulation (see Foucault 2007: 19, 65). Governments and other governance agencies therefore 'seek to regulate spaces and, where necessary, to immobilize flows of people, goods and services' in terms of spatial closure, entrapment and containment (Turner 2007: 290). Immigrant populations are often depicted as 'populations at risk' in policy documents, and treated as dangerous 'others' against which residential populations need protection.

To counter the risks brought about by immigration, urban governance has become preoccupied with social cohesion, where planning for pluralism functions as a means to secure social order; the city is to be (re)established as a cohesive whole (see e.g. Dobbernack 2014; Gressgård 2015b; Tunström and Bradley 2015). Even though it is not always articulated in idealist terms, we would argue that the preoccupation with cohesion in urban governance reflects an idealised notion of the city as an entity. Still, the scholarly debate about these issues have been rather limited in scope as well as in perspective, testifying perhaps to the lacking interface between migration/minority studies and urban studies/planning in the Nordic region, in conjunction with the lack of funding opportunities for research projects that moves beyond the framework established by policymakers (Schiller and Çağlar 2011: 3). We will proceed to discuss the relationship between policy and research in due course, but first we shall discuss another vital feature of planning for pluralism, namely, the issue of justice.

The right to the city – the right to difference

If we now return to the issue of citizen participation and pluralism in planning as outlined above, it is possible to argue that the participation rhetoric that characterises much contemporary, neoliberal urban governance is a far cry from the argument put forward by advocacy planners. Several critics have pointed to a democratic deficit in recent community participation programmes due to a technocratic managerialism that 'eschews democratic deliberation for the pursuit of goods deemed self-evident and beyond deliberation' (Davies 2007: 202; see also e.g. Baeten 2012; Bockmeyer 2007; Metzger et al. eds 2015). Others have criticised the culturalisation, moralisation and, in effect, depolitisation of urban inequality and marginalised populations implied by the emphasis on social capital and community responsibilisation in neighbourhoods of relegation (Wacquant 2008b: 284; Rossi and Vanolo 2012: 140f.; cf. Schierup and Ålund 2011; Schierup et al. 2014). Part of this criticism might apply to advocacy planners and their successors, too, given the lack of structural power analysis issuing from their micro-level focus. Nevertheless, the growing interest among urban scholars in issues of social justice signals an increasing concern with widening social gaps and spatial segregation. It might also testify to a growing interest in the urban realm of pluralism and belonging beyond fixed identities and state territorial borders, conceptualised as 'urban justice', 'urban citizenship', 'the right to the city', 'justice and the politics of difference', etc. (see e.g. Brenner et al. 2012; Fainstain 2010; Harvey 2009; Marcuse et al. eds 2009; Soja 2010; Young 1990).

Henri Lefebvre, who coined the term 'right to the city' in the late 1960s, and whose writings have had a renaissance in the last couple of decades, believed that the urban environment is most suited to the pursuit of an egalitarian and just society (cited in Rossi and Vanolo 2012: 160; see also Lefebvre 1991, 1996). Lefebvre underscores the city dwellers' right and freedoms to make and remake their city, reframing the arena of decision-making away from the state and towards the production of urban space (Harvey 2008: 23; Purcell 2002: 101, 2003). This is not to argue for a neoliberal restructuring and rescaling of the state, however. The point to be argued is that city dwellers should be assigned rights based on their presence (place of residence) rather than citizenship status (conventionally identified with the boundaries of state membership and territorial borders). This perspective opens for a multiplicity of belongings and group-based claim making, often in response to perceived discrimination and disadvantage (Rossi and Vanolo 2012: 160f.). Importantly, Lefebvre (1996: 170) emphasises that the right to the city should be complemented by the right to difference, and some scholars see the right to the city, in pluralised form (i.e. the right*s* to the city), as the spatialisation of the right to difference (Rossi and Vanolo 2012: 162).

Other scholars take this argument one step further, maintaining that urban formations, even when generated within the territorial boundaries of the nation-state, have the potential to destabilise given spatial premises. A case in point is what Nicholas De Genova (2015: 5) terms 'the migrant metropolis'. Informed by Lefebvre's perspective, he argues that the 'the differential spaces produced at the intersection of specific cities and migrant historicities invite us to fundamentally reconceptualise the emergent formations of social and political life'. This suggests that the production of urban space does not imply merely the modification of the fabric of the city (Rossi and Vanolo 2012: 139), as urban encounters do not simply occur *in* space (as though space is a container for social life) but are themselves generative of space (Dikeç et al. 2009: 12).

Given this conception of urban society as a radically open-ended one, which invokes a temporality of becoming (De Genova 2015: 5), it seems pertinent to ask whether pluralism is at all something that could or should be planned for.[1] At any rate, it is evident that 'planning for pluralism' acquires a significantly broader meaning than 'pluralism in planning' when viewed from a theoretical perspective that foregrounds the contingency of urban society and problematises the given premises of urban policy. The notion of the right to the city does not imply merely the city dweller's participation in planning processes, but entails – more profoundly – struggles over the structural conditions for participation and deliberation. The process of claim-making is less to do, then, with inclusion in terms of broad participation within conventional spaces of representative democracy and more to do with questioning the frames that set limit to planning conversations and decision-making (Marcuse 2009: 246).

The challenge of conjoining political claim-making and critical thinking

To wind up this theoretical discussion, it could be argued that the selective legitimation of minority space, practices and codes of conduct by mainstream society and the established authorities gestures towards some overall quandaries pertaining to planning for pluralism (see Rossi and Vanolo 2012: 175; Fincher and Iveson 2008), akin to the dilemmas, paradoxes and conflicts of multiculturalism (Gressgård 2010). Aleksandra Ålund (1991) takes planned pluralism to be a technocratic, effective, rational and scientifically controlled form of integration of immigrants, arguing that the plurality is culturalised into a multiplicity of cultural distinctions, while at the same time being linked to prevailing standards of normality. This amounts to a paradox inasmuch as recognition of distinctness – which is a prerequisite for 'the right to be different' – relies on the dominant norms that necessitated a call for recognition in the first place (Gressgård 2010: 5, 10ff.). The problem is compounded by that fact that complicity to prevalent norms is a condition for being included as full member of society – and for having a liveable life – at the cost of others' liveability *and* at the price of radical politics, which involves claim-making that is not intelligible or even potentially legitimate within existing discourses and institutions. Once again, it seems pertinent to ask whether planning for pluralism is desirable or even possible. Judith Butler (2004: 107) comments, in a related context (the field of sexuality), that one might find oneself wanting to opt out of this whole story – to operate somewhere that is neither legitimate nor illegitimate – but then the critical perspective (that operate at the limit of the intelligible) also risks being regarded as apolitical. The challenge is to keep the tension alive between maintaining a critical perspective and making a politically legible claim (Butler 2004: 108).

II. Methodological challenges

Research and policy-making; emic and analytical categories; internal and external critique

The special issue focuses on a set of terms and themes in the intersection of urban studies and migration studies – themes that are also prevalent in the policy fields of migration/integration and urban governance/planning. These include social cohesion, social capital, security, coexistence, conviviality, social mixing, dispersion, citizen participation and justice.

An important methodological challenge of making such terms and themes into objects of study concerns the relationship between research and policy-making. In urban governance as well as in other areas of society, collaboration between policy-makers and researchers is widespread, and urban strategists and researchers often deploy the same vocabulary, sometimes for different purposes but oftentimes with a view to solving the same kind of problems (articulated within the same discursive frame). Loïc Wacquant (2008b: 199) critically remarks that research has 'become ever more tightly tethered to the concerns of city rulers, and correspondingly unmoored from self-defined and self-propelled theoretical agendas'. In a similar vein, Tom Slater (2012: 189) cautions against 'the positivist humdrum of independent variables drawn from survey categories (legitimised by appeals to "policy relevance")', suggesting instead a critical perspective that foregrounds issues of social justice.

Many scholars, like ourselves, are skeptical of the focus on prefabricated problematics of policy, even as we continue to use concepts that are common in policy circles. An important critical function is therefore to scrutinise the articulation of policy problems – the constitution and delimitation of the policy field itself – rather than just contributing to problem-solving on given, restricted terms (Butler 2004: 107; Dikeç 2007; Wacquant 2004, 2008a/b). To this end, we think it is important to discern between analytical and 'emic' terms or categories, although this distinction is far from clear-cut. For instance, 'pluralism' functions both as a generic, thematic term and as an analytical category in this special issue. We take pluralism to be an umbrella category that encompasses various conceptualisations, depending on theoretical and methodological approaches. In some

conceptual frames, 'difference' is the preferred term, whereas others speak of 'diversity', 'multiplicity', 'mixing' etc. when discussing planning for cultural and ethnic pluralism.

Because it is not always easy to distinguish between analysing and deploying the terms under scrutiny, we unwittingly risk reproducing the categories we set out to problematise. Needless to say, it is impossible to occupy a position external to the field when taking up a critical stance, but it is still possible to distinguish between internal and external critique. To take an example: whereas an internal critique of the term 'social cohesion' that questions its adequacy for a European context would subscribe to the conceptual underpinnings of social cohesion, an external critique of the term would contest its underlying premises. However, when we wish to reformulate rather than dismiss prevalent terms and themes, we end up alternating between internal and external critique. This is a methodological challenge that most of the authors in this special issue face. In their own way, they contribute to an analytical reflection on key terms and themes pertaining to planning for pluralism.

Generalisations and specification of empirical particulars

Although the analysed themes and terms are specific to context, we cannot understand their meanings independently of the broader political and economic frame. A degree of generalisation is therefore appropriate. Countering the assertion that generalisation means simplification, David Garland (2001: vii) remarks that it is always possible to object to wide-ranging social or historical interpretations by pointing to variations that have been missed, specific facts that do not fit etc., but detailed case studies tend to suffer from the opposite fate of simplification, namely, the problem of significance. For instance, to understand the significance of a specific urban policy, such as community responsibilisation programmes, we must pay due attention to dominant rationalities and legitimising discourses characteristic of (neoliberal) state restructuring (Dikeç 2007: 174). The articles in the special issue try to strike a balance (although not in identical ways) between generalisation and specification of empirical particulars, bearing in mind that the degree of engagement in general processes, such as the restructuring and rescaling processes, varies from city to city. The reorganisation of capital accumulation pertaining to neoliberalism is, as Schiller and Çağlar (2011: 5) put it, selectively applied in diverse political contexts and within specific places. Moreover, there is no neat correspondence between the different scales: urban, regional, national and global scales cannot 'be easily understood as a nested set of institutional relationships. Instead, cities now have to negotiate directly with regional or globally connected financial institutions and regulatory regimes' (Schiller and Çağlar 2011: 5).

It is also important to note that varying spatial scales of social inquiry leads to dissimilar interpretations (Sanyal et al. 2012: 24). Despite the interconnectedness of, say, community participation programmes in Copenhagen and the global economy, the analytical lenses through which these connections are analysed vary depending on scale of inquiry. Different studies of one particular city or district might therefore differ considerably from another with respect to findings. The various contributions in this special issue have overlapping and yet distinct foci, depending on their theoretical perspective, empirical case, choice of methods and scale of inquiry. Methodologically, the special issue brings together different levels of analysis, ranging from political life to everyday life, constituting different kinds of empirical data, such as policy documents, urban master plans and ethnographic analysis of localities.

External, policy representations and internal, everyday life narratives

National and local policies on immigration and urban planning tend to offer external and rather static representations of particular places, often focusing on what is construed as social problems. By contrast, the (internal) narratives of those who inhabit these places tend to focus more on their use and experience of – and sense of belonging to – the neighbourhood. Sometimes negative external representations of deprived areas are reproduced in the residents' own stories, but more often they are contested (Mazanti 2002), as several articles in this issue illustrate. The difference between external and internal perspectives on places could also be analysed in terms of a distinction between policy discourse and everyday life narratives. Because analysis of policy discourses (i.e. articulations of policy problems) does not capture the complexities of everyday life in the way that ethnographic analysis does (Jenkins 2011; Noble 2011), it might prove fruitful to distinguish between planning for pluralism as articulated at the level of policy and pluralism 'on the ground', as it were. This special issue is particularly concerned with the relationship between policy representations and everyday life narratives: conjunctions and disjunctions in the ways in which local identity formations and social relations relate to public debates about immigration, integration, security, ethnicity, national identity, citizenship etc. The point is not to stress that everyday life narratives either resonate or are at odds with policy discourses, but to highlight the complexity of production of space – thus gesturing towards the contingency of planning (for pluralism) (cf. note 1).

To conclude this section, the special issue does not purport to provide exhaustive knowledge of either single cities or Nordic cities as such, nor provide a comparative analysis of the cities in a conventional, empiricist sense. We consider the variation in perspectives and methods to be a strength rather than a weakness when probing into planning for pluralism.

III. Key terms and themes

Our overall goal is to foreground the conceptual foundation of central terms and themes in theory, policy and everyday practice – a set of cross-cutting terms and themes that connect (1) the fields of urban studies and migration studies, (2) research and policy and (3) the policy level and the realm of everyday life. In what follows, we will give a brief account of the analysed terms and themes, current debates pertaining to these and how the various contributions relate to them.

Social cohesion, social capital, security, coexistence and conviviality

As already mentioned, over the past two decades in the global North (notably in European urban governance), debates about migration, globalisation, diversity and social integration have revolved around the term social cohesion or community cohesion, focusing on how migrants and refugees challenge the ability of society to cohere in terms of common culture and national identity. The term 'social capital' is often used in conjunction with social cohesion inasmuch as

it draws attention to conditions of social integration. Putnam (2000, 2007) distinguishes between bonding capital (based on likeness with others) and bridging capital (bridging with people who are unlike oneself), arguing that especially bridging capital is declining in Western societies, which could lead to increased ethnic tensions. His thesis is that ethnic diversity in residential settings is lacking in solidarity, trust, mutual cooperation and friendships.

Several critiques have contested the concepts of social capital and social cohesion from an external point of view (recall the distinction between internal and external critique). For instance, Derek McGhee (2003: 387) argues that whereas readily absorbed diversity or difference is to be celebrated, consumed and valued, other kinds of pluralism (i.e. undesirable forms of sociation) are subjected to policy programmes of reorientation: transformation from bonding social capital typical of 'ethnic enclaves' to bridging social capital characteristic of inter-community networks. In a similar vein, Jan Dobbernack (2014) maintains that worries about increasing cultural pluralism in European countries give rise to social cohesion programmes that invoke particular normative standards of evaluations for success and failure: a moral division is created between 'virtuous' versus 'failed' citizens; integrated versus disintegrated immigrants; desirable and undesirable pluralism etc. (see also Amin 2012; Fortier 2010).

Randi Gressgård's article in this special issue demonstrates how an expanded cohesion agenda in Malmö involves plural forms of policing, enabled by partnership agreements between the police, local authorities and non-governmental actors. She uses the term 'welfare policing' to elucidate and problematise the conflation of welfare politics and crime prevention that takes place in designated, immigrant-dense areas of the city. Dalia Mukhtar-Landgren, for her part, explores the notions of diversity implied by the policy problems that proceeded Malmö city's regeneration strategy in the 1990s. She argues that whereas one type of problem formulation emphasises the loss of a coherent identity and unity, a parallel problem formulation signals the fear that certain groups might not be able to 'keep up' with – and contribute to – the anticipated progress and transition from industrial to knowledge city.

Other scholars are less concerned with the conceptual underpinnings of social cohesion, but might still be critical of particular aspects of the term (by way of internal critique). For instance, some critics ask whether Putnam's thesis is adequate for European societies, given that the level of trust is generally higher here than in the US (Hooghe et al 2009), perhaps even more so in the Nordic countries. A related critique is whether ethnicity is the single form of diversity that affects trust. Other forms of pluralism, such as socio-economic difference, might have more negative effects on social capital and cohesion than ethnic or cultural pluralism (Lancee and Dronkers 2011). Furthermore, most of the social capital research is quantitative and tends to construct notions of trust on a set of taken-for-granted parameters, pre-critically accepting the premise that trust is essential to good neighbourhood relations (Hooghe et al. 2009; Lancee and Dronkers 2011).

The question as to whether (planning for) inter-cultural contact and encounter will reduce prejudices and conflicts, fostering instead meaningful interaction and new solidarities across difference, has been discussed for a long time in urban studies (Allport 1954; Fincher et al. 2014; Hudson et al 2009; Peters 2011). Recent studies of urban spaces and coexistence have investigated the issue of everyday practices and habituated behaviour, emphasising the importance of routine and unreflective forms of daily encounters (Werbner 2013). A central question in these studies is whether coexistence depends on positive attitudes among the residents. There has also been a return to neighbourhood studies and the meaning of locality and community in recent years. In research exploring the interrelating spatial and social dimensions of everyday coexistence, a key question is in what settings, contexts or situations the different meanings of coexistence may converge (Jensen 2015; Noble 2013; Peters 2011; Wise and Velayutham 2009). Few studies have explored 'emic' approaches to issues of coexistence and trust, though. Tina Gudrun Jensen's article in the special issue offers an ethnographic case study of social relations in a multi-ethnic social housing project in Copenhagen, focusing on local understandings of trust and neighbourhood relations. Her study indicates that informal everyday spaces of contact rather than emotions of trust and strong ties condition neighbourly coexistence. Such ethnographic findings challenge and contradict common discourses on what constitutes 'social cohesion' and 'trust' in ethnically diverse neighbourhoods.

The concept of conviviality (denoting ways and conditions of living together) is frequently used in literature that deals with ethnic and cultural pluralism in an urban context (Amin 2008; Gilroy 2004; Noble 2013; Nowicka and Vertovec 2014). This body of literature tends to counter discourses on the backlash of multiculturalism. However, it could be argued, as does Linda Lapiņa in this special issue, that certain conceptualisations of conviviality over-emphasise active, positive relations founded on belonging and trust between people. Based on a study of the establishment of resident-driven park in Copenhagen, Lapiņa suggests that conviviality is premised on majority norms – normative conceptions of urban society – and that the lack of complexity in notions of conviviality obscures how racism and conviviality might be intertwined.

Social mixing, dispersion, citizen participation and justice

Policy programmes and measures to enhance social mixing and dispersion are promulgated in a number of national and local planning policies, integration policies and strategies against segregation. Mixing and dispersion are in policy circles understood as a coming together of ethnic minorities and majorities in urban spaces. Social mixing is often seen as a solution to the problem of settlement patterns in multi-ethnic public social housing estates and their development into 'vulnerable', 'endangered', 'segregated' or 'ghettoised' areas due to a concentration of poor people, mostly immigrants. As Fincher et al. (2014: 45) point out, planning efforts to regulate and discipline the poor and marginalised minority groups have a long tradition, and '[t]he philosophy of some current social mix programmes retains an emphasis on "improving" the poor themselves, even as it seeks also to enhance their physical living environments'. Arguably, the rhetoric of ghettoisation conjures up notions of marginalised and emplaced minority groups that do not interact with people from the majority population. Similar conceptualisations, such as 'parallel lives', have given rise to major concerns over planning for pluralism in multiethnic cities in recent years.

Some urban strategists see gentrification – understood as the transformation of a working-class area (or a former industrial space) into a middle-class residential and/or commercial area – as an efficient way of converting 'problem areas' into 'innovation areas'. Gentrification is perceived as 'a pretty good thing' (Slater 2012: 177) to the extent that it attracts 'the creative class' and, in turn, serve as a basis for economic growth, investments etc. (Florida 2002). Urban strategist might also see gentrification as a means to reduce socio-

spatial segregation, achieve a liveable city and broaden horizons (Lees et al. 2008: 199). In this respect, urban regeneration strategies are closely connected to mixing strategies. In the name of 'social mixing' or 'social balance', the city authorities might use a strategy of dispersal to bring affluent residents, usually white middle-class people, into neighbourhoods that are targeted for regeneration (Smith 2002: 443, 445). From a critical urban theory point of view, however, gentrification is inextricably intertwined with segregation and displacement (Slater 2012: 184).

Several of the articles in the special issue demonstrate how the idea of 'the right kind of mixing' produces otherness, and how dispersal politics involves regulation of minority populations who presumably are unwilling to mix with the majority population. As Astrid Quahyb Sundsbø's study on gentrification in Oslo indicates, however, the lack of mixing might just as well result from ethnic majority people's fear of residents with ethnic minority background when choosing in which area to settle. Likewise, based on their study of regeneration programmes in a multi-ethnic neighbourhood of Copenhagen, Kristina Grünenberg and Michaela Freiesleben observe that ethnic majority residents do not participate in the 'social mixing' programmes. The authors argue that notions of mixing are premised upon essentialist notions of culture that may contribute to their crystallisation rather than an encounter on common ground. Another way of putting this would be that rights and freedoms for some urban populations go hand in hand with security interventions and stricter control of others, especially those who live in neighbourhoods of relegation. The notion of a 'livable city' tends to come at the cost of 'the right to be different' for others who are not recognised according to prevailing normative standards.

This brings us to the relationship between urban regeneration, social justice and the right to the city. A major part of the literature and political activism that are influenced by Lefebvre's writings consider material inequality to be in the forefront of urban injustice, often related to housing issues and segregation. Such a view might involve a much-needed call for alternative institutionalisations of democratic rights, but it does not necessarily involve a critical discussion of justice per se (Gressgård 2015a). Struggles for social justice that are not about concerns defined as primarily material – such as ethnicity and race (or gender and sexuality for that matter) – thus risk being relegated to the sphere of the 'merely' cultural, which works to construe this cultural politics as identitarian and particularistic (Butler 1997: 1, 36, 38). However, as the special issue sets out to demonstrate, the gulf between material and cultural aspect of planning for pluralism is far from unbridgeable. A noticeable example is Katja Maununaho's contribution, which draws attention to both the spatial/material and the cultural/ethnic dimensions of housing issues in her study of two Finnish suburban residential areas targeted for regeneration. Theoretically, her study points to the challenges of participatory agendas intrinsic to Lefevbre's concept of the right to the city. All the articles in the special issue are concerned with social justice in one way or another, and that seems to be a productive way of bridging the gap between urban studies and migration studies.

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Tina Gudrun Jensen, PhD, is an anthropologist and affiliated with the Centre for Advanced Migration Studies, at the University of Copenhagen (AMIS). She has done research on migration, cultural complexity, social integration and urban spaces. Her work focuses on inter-ethnic relations. Her latest publications include 'The Complexity of Neighbourhood Relations in a Multi-Ethnic Social Housing Project in Copenhagen' in *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* and a monograph on everyday life and social relations in a multi-ethnic neighbourhood in Copenhagen: *Om at leve med forskellighed: hverdagsliv og naboskab i et multietnisk boligområde* (Samfundslitteratur: København).

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Notes

1. If Lefebvre's concept of the right to the city offers and open-ended vision of urban politics, as Purcell (2002: 100) suggests, it is also an entirely contingent politics: 'it may have desirable or undesirable outcomes for the social and spatial structure of the city … we cannot know what kind of city these new urban politics will produce. They could play out as a truly democratic challenge to marginalization and oppression, but they could also work to reinscribe new forms of domination.' If we take contingency to be radical, and not merely empirical (see Glynos and Howarth 2007: 11, 32, 109f., 116), then the issue of contingency raises the critical question as to whether pluralism could be planned at all.

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