BOOK REVIEWS

World City Network. A Global Urban Analysis.
P.J. TAYLOR, London/New York: 2004 Routledge.
241 pp. ISBN 0-415-30249-8, £20.99 paperback.

This work focuses on the global networks of cities produced in recent years by globally operating multi-branch suppliers of advanced business services. It analyses these networks based on the largest dataset available through a series of statistical exercises. These highlight the positions of individual cities in the network through their connectivities (e.g. in terms of hierarchy) and distinctive linkage patterns (hinterlands/worlds, gateways and cliques). And they demonstrate distinctive profiles of service provision (through R- and Q-mode factor analysis). The author interprets these networks as a decisive stage in the evolution of the world capitalist system, where possibly now the time is maturing for a lesser prominence of nation states and where new forms of city leagues may again become pre-eminent. References are made to the Hanseatic League and notably to the United Provinces of the middle seventeenth century as examples of an earlier age, but not to Renaissance Italy or the city-states of the Greek classical period.

This is an unusual book merging a careful quantitative description of one tiny time segment covering the world and speculative comment based on an informed reading about five centuries of history at the global scale. In light of Taylor's long time interest in world systems analysis, his longstanding expertise in quantitative analysis and his more recent focus on intercity relations (bundled in GaWC in Loughborough, <www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc>), this is of course a 'natural' outcome. It is a winning proposition from the perspective of occasionally convincing connections of serious theory and serious data analysis. It should however be added that some of the data-analysis is still explorative and not always suitable to sustain wide-ranging theoretical speculation (e.g. the differences in results of fuzzy set analysis and principal components). From the other side the gap between theoretical argument and empirical analysis cannot always be successfully bridged (e.g. the decisions of advanced producer firms to establish branches in cities and Jane Jacobs' theories of urban development).

The book has four parts. The first part critiques world city research for its negligence of studying actual inter city relations and takes some of the interpreting apparatus from Sassen, Castells and in particular Jane Jacobs with her strong views on the city-state contradictions favouring the city perspective. The second part describes the data matrix constructed from the branches of 100 'globalised' firms in 315 cities (in most cases reduced to 123) and produces ego (city-)based analyses of the resulting network and cliques. Part three takes services and cities as the basis for mappings of service globalisation through principal components and fuzzy set analysis. Part four speculates on the outcomes mainly through the lenses of the world systems perspective with Jane Jacobs' insights added.

The book has a number of critical messages. Perhaps three stand out. First, in the formation of the network, it is not the cities that are the main agencies but the global firms: they weave the networks. Competition is not particularly among the cities, they are considered as complementary arenas for doing business. Frankfurt and London bank offices are mainly in a co-operative mode, they may agree on a division of labour that suits both, the firms with footholds in both cities are not going to try to 'defeat' one city in order to promote the other. These networks are unusual in the sense that it is not the nodes but some lower level unit (the firm) that produces the links. The question is, of course, how much agency the nodes themselves, the city governments, have in setting the terms for the firms. This whole question is neglected in the book, including the difficulties of referring a node to a single government unit (boroughs and metrogovernment, not to speak of Whitehall in the British way of denominating things). There are many references to the actual political and economic interference of national governments to favour capital cities, but the question in this case should have been how exactly they favoured the shape of the globalising processes under review (that is the establishment of branches of this type of globalising firms in the capitals).

Second, globalisation is a hierarchy-producing set of processes. Its results are highly concentrated in very few places. London and New York have by far the most central positions in the network. They are part of all the major cliques of cities. There are further arrays of important globalising centres in the three core areas of the world economy: the US, Europe and Pacific Asia. There are manifestations of globalising processes in the other parts of the world as well, some with considerable connectivities. Examples

are Johannesburg and Sao Paolo, a banking centre like Manama in Bahrain and Mumbai in India. Some like Mumbai spread their connections unusually wide. The question, not really answered, is the explanation of this hierarchy. For such answers we would need more information on how the agency of these globalising firms is actually applied. There are glimpses of answers here and there but this is clearly still a major task ahead. What role does the distribution of clients play? Has the concentration of services really become the main factor in the maintenance and further expansion of centrality? And again the role of political governments at different levels should not be written out of the script beforehand.

Third, globalisation is everywhere, but it is sector specific and region specific, with highly distinctive outcomes in different places. Geography is not dead, it is alive and kicking. Accountants are widespread, lawyers are only in the top of the hierarchy, advertising is connected to national media markets, thus concentrates in capital cities (and also in Barcelona), etc. Management consultants are over-represented in the United States, banks are preponderant in Pacific Asia, Europe has a unique blend of banks and lawyers, insurance companies have distinctive spatial distributions stamped by their origin. The United States shows up as a quite distinctive context with many cities having a relatively high proportion of their global links (that is the links produced by globally operating firms) concentrated in other US cities, not in Canadian or Mexican cities. This invites the paradoxical comment that in the cradle of globalisation contextual circumstances to engage in globalisation are relatively unfavourable in most locales, inducing relatively more emphasis on a more traditional space of places instead of a more 'progressive' engagement in a space of flows. Firms established in cities outside the United States apparently tend to follow that last route more often. On a different note, the European Union hardly manifests itself as a distinctive unit in these patterns: no distinctive EU-wide cliques, no characteristic EU provision of business services in its cities. The Australian part of the Pacific Rim is in many instances more like a part of the Commonwealth than a part of the Western Pacific seafront. Processes of globalisation in the other areas of the world have some attributes in common: lower connectivities, acting as a gateway to large areas, profiles with weak lawyer, insurance and banking components.

Taylor looks at city leagues as a possible, still utopian alternative to the territorial nation state. He is extremely dismissive of the collection of nation states as the manifestation of the political order and thinks that this mosaic order is doomed for reasons of economic dynamics and should be doomed for reasons of political preference. The time of the predominance of the space of places is running out and the space of flows takes over. As in Castells, this distinction is made into a dichotomy that runs the risk of being overblown. Taylor speculates that in the end the new knowledge workers in the advanced business services will unwillingly point the way towards a radical future as earlier cadres have done in the case of the mass parties of the past age. What is left out in all these speculations is how the inevitable mosaic, perhaps more fine grained, perhaps more disjointed will be laid out. There is the usual reference to the political order of the middle ages and the very early modern age, but territory was not a negligible attribute at that stage even if it was treated differently from contemporaneous usage. And in addition: the world is a lot more abundant with humans nowadays.

All in all, this book is a challenging read. It obviously reports work in progress. It rightly challenges the existing literature on a number of scores. It engages fruitfully with the current body of knowledge by presenting and using to considerable effect a precious database, that has graciously been put at the disposal of colleagues at an early stage. One final worry about the database is the stability of the patterns over time. We do not know the rate of change and the nature of the dynamics involved. Is this snapshot indeed quite similar to a shot of the following year? Possibly not. This is important in terms of the pattern to be explained. Short term, random shifts and evolutionary dynamics may be involved.

Heemstede   *Herman van der Wusten*

The Contested Metropolis: Six Cities at the Beginning of the 21st Century.
INURA (PALOSCIA, R., ed.), Birkhäuser 2004: Basel. 304 pp. ISBN: 3 7643 0086 8, CHF 74.00.

Birkhäuser is a Swiss publisher for architecture, but this book is certainly recommended reading to geographers, urban planners, urban sociologists, and political scientists. It is a richly illustrated volume featuring essays from six cities with an active INURA group.

INURA stands for the International Network on Urban Research and Action. The network was established in 1991 in Salecina in Switzerland and brings together 'activists and researchers from community and environmental groups, universities and local administrations, who wish to share experiences and to participate in common research' <http://www.inura.org>. Since 1991 INURA has organised annual conferences in the participating cities.

This book is the third published by INURA, following *Capitales Fatales* (Hitz *et al.* 1995, in German)

and *Possible Urban Worlds* (Wolff *et al.* 1998). This volume surely replies to the preceding one: the same editor, the same layout and subtitles echoing each other (*Urban strategies at the end of the 20th century* vs. *Six cities at the beginning of the 21st century* in 2004) but unlike the former volume, the present one is organised by city and not by topic. These cities all display an image of success in global finance, commerce, tourism; but the book investigates other uses of the city: the conflictual politics behind these facades of prosperity.

This book offers a wide collection of testimonies of contestation of and resistance to neoliberal globalisation in Toronto and five European cities: Berlin, Brussels, Florence, London and Zurich. The editor is Raffaele Paloscia (INURA Firenze), a professor at the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Florence and the collection emerged from the 11th INURA conference in Florence and La Chiara di Prumiano in 2001 under the theme *Rights and Fights*.

The introduction by Raffaele Paloscia is followed by two essays on achievable utopias. In a text entitled *Practising Utopia: Sustaining Cities*, the Australian/ Canadian planner Leonie Sandercock presents five propositions about 'an art of urban engagement which takes a position on issues such as democracy, power, social and environmental justice': (1) democratising planning decisions, (2) community-based planning (self help), (3) communicative action rules, (4) re-conceptualising planning as organising hope, negotiating fear and mediating memories to, and (5) beware of the delusive idea of planning as a social project. In his text, *The Local Project*, the Florentine architect Alberto Magnaghi is pleading for a territorialist approach toward self-sustaining local development, considering the importance of place consciousness, municipal democracy and citizenship to articulate his ideal of a bottom up globalisation of a global network of local societies.

An afterword by the British urban sociologist Fred Robinson about the spirit of INURA encourages readers to join the network while the closing section presents the Declaration for urban research and action entitled *An Alternative Urban World is Possible*, agreed upon at the 12th INURA conference in Clinchamps sur Orne in June 2002. The slogan no doubt places INURA in a wider movement against neoliberal globalisation, echoing the slogan adopted by the World Social Forum (convened for the first time in January 2001 in Porto Alegre, Brazil): *Another World is Possible*. INURA used it already in 1997 for its 7th annual conference in Zürich and Amden under the title *Possible Urban Worlds* (see Wolff *et al.* 1998). *An Alternative Urban World is Possible* features five demands: Demand 1: Disempower global players; Demand 2: Make profits unsustainable; Demand 3: No borders for people; Demand 4: Autonomy and

social justice in everyday life; and Demand 5: Liberate the urban imagination.

There is no need to share INURA's utopian agenda to be interested by the structural changes, (planning) policies and grassroots initiatives presented in the book. Nevertheless, urban planners taking for granted that their skills serve capital and the state, may be feel tempted to question their own role in urban politics.

The city sections are ranked alphabetically and feature five to seven contributions each. Organising the book by city enables the contributors to stress the specificities of the local experiences, focusing on the issues at stake in their city but also revealing differences in approaches, perspectives, interests and disciplinary backgrounds. In 'Berlin: From metropoLUST to metropoLOST' contributions address the issues of becoming commercial in a city that symbolises the fall of communism. 'Brussel/Bruxelles: Tale of a fragmented city' addresses the fragmented character of the city and its dependence on the Belgian state, and initiatives to bridge differences. 'Firenze: Insurgent city' focuses on public space and diverse groups rejecting marginalisation (children, immigrants, sex workers, squatters). 'London: Uncontested capital?' addresses the global city position of London, its innovative metropolitan government and democracy. In 'Toronto: Outside the glamour zones' multiculturalism, creolisation, fusion and suburbia are analysed in another global city. Finally, 'Zürich: From paranoia city to ego city' deals with postindustrial development, creative enterprises and alternative cultures.

The contributions range from action only (such as the logbook of the Universal Embassy in Brussels, a self help initiative of undocumented people located in the former Somali Embassy) to research only (Michael Edwards' analysis of wealth and poverty creation in London). Most offer a combination of action (not necessarily grassroots) and reflection (not necessarily academic) and most contributors combine an academic affiliation and an activist profile. Various disciplinary backgrounds are represented including architecture, urban planning, geography, urban sociology, and political science.

The overarching themes include: the impact of neoliberal competition (especially Berlin, London, Toronto and Zurich); commodification and place selling (especially Berlin, Florence and Zurich); migration and multiculturalism (especially Brussels, Florence, Toronto and Zurich); participatory planning (especially Brussels, Florence, London and Zurich); alternative redevelopments (especially Florence, London, Toronto and Zurich); underground/ alternative cultures (especially Berlin, Brussels and Zurich) and the history of social movements (especially Florence and London).

The book is richly illustrated with black and white photographs, many of them are reproduced in full colour on a poster recapitulating INURA's five demands, and other illustrations (maps, figures, drawings). Noteworthy are also the connections between online and offline activism (see for example <www.urban75.com> in Brixton, or <www.kraftwerk1.ch> in Zurich, Kraftwerk1 being the complex where the international 'office' of INURA is located).

The book is an asset for both activists wanting to learn about grassroots experiences elsewhere, planners dealing with similar challenges, and analysts observing urban dynamics from a geographical, a sociological or a political viewpoint. It can be read in a pessimistic or optimistic mood, depending on the disposition of the reader: yes, something is happening; no, the challengers do not overcome. The neoliberal city is contested indeed, but those who do not see the importance of everyday involvement and engagement for their own sake, might be sceptical about the obtained results.

In sum, this book displays a world of possibilities, challenging the dominant neoliberal understanding of global cities and acknowledging everyday practices contesting and transgressing this predominant thinking. As such it is an essential contribution to our understanding of the dynamics of cities. Its fragmented nature mirrors the network character of the INURA collective, and more generally speaking of the transnational grassroots and the multitudes. The book features no conclusion: as such, it does not provide a systematic comparative analysis of the six cities (it does not suggest it would in the first place): this is something an academic audience will surely regret and an appropriate ambition for the next INURA book.

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INURA (R. Wolff, A. Schneider, C. Schmid, P. Klaus, A. Hofer & H. Hitz, eds.), (1998), *Possible Urban Worlds, Urban Strategies at the End of the 20th Century*. Basel: Birkhäuser.

Amsterdam   *Virginie Mamadouh*

Discriminating Risk: The US Mortgage Lending Industry in the Twentieth Century.
GUY STUART, Ithaca/London 2003: Cornell University Press. xi + 248 pp. ISBN 0-8014-4066-1, $39.95.

Discrimination in housing and credit markets is a hot issue in the United States; and it has been a hot issue ever since the first redlining maps popped up in the 1930s. In those days maps were discovered in which some areas were marked red: in those areas it was impossible to get a mortgage loan to finance the purchase of a home. The first maps were discovered in Boston, but soon they were found throughout the United States. Redlined areas were predominantly 'black areas' or areas that were under the transformation or 'threat' of becoming black. In the post-war literature on redlining, it is widely believed that redlining practices were not just practices of private banks, but also of (semi-) government agencies. Many authors even claimed federally-created organisations such as the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC), Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Veterans Administration (VA) were instrumental in the implementation of redlining practices. It was argued that the HOLC had created maps indicating where it was safe to invest and where it was not. The FHA and the VA then used these maps for government-guaranteed loans. This is the first subject matter where Stuart disrupts what had been taken for common knowledge for decades. Stuart argues that although the FHA is blamed for redlining, it is clear that these were already in place at the local level. In this way, the FHA was institutionalising the then current practices. In the same year when Stuart's book was released, Hillier (2003) also came up with evidence that lenders were avoiding areas before HOLC made its maps, and that lenders had other sources of information about real estate risk levels.

Stuart has written an extraordinary study: while most studies on redlining of the last two decades have focused on quantitative econometric analyses of housing discrimination (see Munnell *et al.* 1992; 1996 for the most cited of these studies), Stuart is one of the few that undertook an historical and qualitative analyses of housing and credit discrimination processes in the United States. He does this by analysing the development of the mortgage lending industry throughout the twentieth century. In the first two chapters of *Discriminating Risk* an historical analysis is presented in which Stuart deconstructs how 'value' has gained meaning and how this was translated into 'risk' and consequently 'exclusion'. In the subsequent three chapters an analysis is presented of the contemporary loan application process and how this involves the construction of housing markets to result in lending discrimination. Chapter 6 then present a summary and chapter 7 the policy implications and suggestions.

In the introduction Stuart starts by explaining that mortgage lenders are faced with the problem of having to reduce a large and equivocal set of information about a person applying for a loan to a very concrete and one-sided decision: will this person get a loan, and if so, how will this loan be priced. Almost casually,

there are references to important authors in economics and social science, like Keynes, Simon, Granovetter and Lawson, but strangely enough not to Merton when he is discussing self-fulfilling prophecies. Following Keynes, he makes the important assertion that 'financial institutions, faced with a future full of uncertainties, simply copy each other' (p. 8; Keynes 1937, p. 214). Following Granovetter, he explains how we can understand the construction of risk in a social context. Then, Stuart explains that the current literature is not inconsistent with the thesis of his book, but that the literature is limited, in particular in its assumption that risk can be objectively measured. Stuart is interested in how lenders construct risk – i.e., how they translate uncertainty into risk, or, how they form and apply criteria which they view as 'formal rationality'. To deconstruct this process, Stuart presents a theoretical framework that is built upon rules, networks and the production of space. Here, he takes in some 'ingredients' from economic sociology as well as from British economic geographers such as Martin, Thrift and Dow who work on the money-space nexus. In contrast to many other studies, Stuart directly links his theoretical framework to his case, the mortgage lending industry, and how it is organised through – and how it organises – rules, networks and the production of space.

In Chapter 1, Stuart, alternately follows two tracks: one is an institutional track that examines the professionalisation of the practice of appraising; the second focuses on the way in which the particular solution to the appraisal problem that is adopted by the profession produced a particular kind of urban space. It is not the most interesting chapter of the book, and all the abbreviations of all the different organisations sometimes make the chapter hard reading. Stuart's story is, however, clear: the industry can be characterised by a constant drive toward uniformity, and there was a consensus that the mixing of people by race, country of origin, and social class depressed real estate values; white and non-white neighbourhoods were to be considered separate housing markets. Although the language of appraisal changed over the years and the practices sometimes changed as well, the underlying logic of uniformity was a stable factor.

Where Chapter 1 stressed the network of professionals in the lending and appraisal industry, Chapter 2 focuses on the rules that are used for assessing the borrower. Stuart starts by discussing the loan-to-value ratio (a commonly and widely used method to assess requests for credit) and the ability to pay (partly depending on the loan-to-income value), and then moves to the willingness to pay. A calculation of the housing costs in relation to the income and other financial obligations answers the question whether or not someone *can* pay a mortgage, but the money-lender does not only try to establish if someone can bear the burden of a loan, but also if he or she is *willing* to pay it back (behavioural risk). Credit scoring is a method to use available information in a way that a prediction can be made about the future behaviour of payment (see also Aalbers 2004). Stuart explains the development in credit scoring, the role of credit bureaux and the underlying ethics.

After the historically-oriented first two chapters, Stuart moves to a more current case study of the loan application process in Chicago in Chapter 3. But again, the network between different actors is a red thread throughout this chapter. After a short overview, Stuart presents the outcomes of his interviews with real estate and mortgage lending professionals and a quasi-experiment. He shows how both 'good risk' and 'bad risk' are social constructions – although he does admit this process can only take place within what one may call a 'material' context. He shows how information on a potential borrower can be explained and used in different ways. Stuart argues that automation has not changed the essential choices that professionals face, but that automation in combination with risk-based pricing is doing exactly that as it puts risk assessment second, as the primary 'focus of lenders will be to charge as high an interest rate as they can' (p. 131). Here, Stuart makes an important link with the recent, but growing literature on predatory and sub-prime lending (e.g. Williams *et al.* 2000; Pennington-Cross 2002; Squires 2003; Newman & Wyly 2004).

In Chapter 4 Stuart explains how real estate professionals construct housing markets. His introduction on 'what is a neighbourhood' relies heavily on Suttles (1972). But then, the discussion is focused again on how (powerful) actors have defined a neighbourhood. Special attention is paid to neighbourhood ethnic succession and the Schelling model (Schelling 1978), before Stuart presents his result from a Chicago case study in which much attention is given to gentrification processes. His analysis somewhat coincides with that of Neil Smith (1996) to whom no reference is made. Stuart explains that the principle of uniformity can only be applied with the use of boundaries which can divide the city in 'different within itself' uniform areas: 'The practice of demarcating a neighbourhood is, therefore, a form of market co-ordination – the greater the consensus on the boundaries the greater the co-ordination. And the greater the co-ordination the greater the ability of the real estate industry to promote what it values – homogeneity' (p. 155).

More data from Chicago are used in Chapter 5 to analyse the determinants of racial disparities in the distribution and approval of home purchase loan applications. Stuart uses a network analysis to show how a mix of neighbourhood boundaries and the

race of a loan applicant affect the results of a loan application. Although very different in its analysis, Stuart comes to a similar conclusion as Holloway who argues that both race and place are insufficient in explaining lending discrimination: it is the interaction of race-based and neighbourhood racial composition that constitutes lending discrimination (Holloway 1998).

After the summary in Chapter 6, Stuart presents his policy recommendations in Chapter 7. Corresponding with his framework of analysis, he presents three interrelated strategies for fighting racial and ethnic discrimination: a rules strategy, a network strategy and a spatial strategy. Under the first he suggests ways of dealing with overt discrimination, disparate treatment and disparate impact as well as with sub-prime lending. The second strategy is designed to help people comply with the rules, while the third strategy briefly discusses the need to attack the underlying structure that continues to produce segregation.

While empirical studies of lending discrimination are plenty, and econometric modelling abounds, there are very few 'social science' studies on the subject. For that reason only, *Discriminating Risk* is already like an oasis in the desert. But this study goes much further: it admits that markets are social constructions, but it does not take the argument too far in arguing that there are no material conditions framing this construction; it presents a solid theoretical framework, but also a deep and thorough analysis; it presents an historical analysis, but is also able to make decisive connections between historical processes and the reality of today; finally, it is able to provide policy-makers with a set of useful suggestions – some very practical and short-term focused while others are more strategic and demand a sustained effort. And then I still forgot one thing: *Discriminating Risk* is a legible book that does not make things more complicated than they are, but is able to unravel the complexities without reducing them.

Many scientific books nowadays seem to be collections of previously published papers, replenished with a more theoretical introduction. Stuart's book only builds upon one previous paper (in the *Chicago Policy Review*); I do, however, hope Stuart is now working on a series of papers in which he will more systematically confront a specific scientific audience with his analysis. A few suggestions: (1) Stuart has a lot to tell to narrow-minded econometric analyses of lending processes; why not have a discussion with them in one of their own journals?; (2) Stuart has interesting things to say about gentrification: I would not mind him mingling in the discussion between Neil Smith, David Ley, Chris Hamnett and others; (3) Some theoretical schools like that of the social constructivists seem to be screaming for more empirical studies that support their arguments beyond their 'natural habitat'; Stuart is able to provide them with a powerful study while at the same time quantifying some of the assumptions or theoretical rigidness of the social constructivists.

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Amsterdam   *Manuel B. Aalbers*

**Lokales Sozialkapital für die 'Soziale Stadt'.
Politische Geographien Sozialer Quartiersentwicklung
am Beispiel Berlin-Moabit.**
OLAF SCHNUR, Opladen 2003: Leske & Budrich.
xxiv + 416 pp. ISBN: 3-8100-3846-6, €39.90

Does neighbourhood matter? Is it a favour for social groups to form homogenous neighbourhoods or not? These questions were raised in the beginnings of urban social sciences – and are not fully answered yet. Because of the increasing spatial concentrations of poverty in specific urban neighbourhoods they are attending a new actuality. These concentrations create a new awareness both among scientists as much as among practitioners in public administrations and local politicians (cf. Musterd & Ostendorf 1998, Andersen & van Kempen 2001).

Schnur directly intervenes with his book both with the old question, whether and how spatial concentrations of social groups matter concerning questions of social cohesion[1] and social integration and discusses the local interventions.

The scholarly debate mainly supports the idea of mixed neighbourhoods. Only voluntary separations are accepted or if they are not the results of structural inequalities in the housing market; involuntarily concentrations or if there are results of disadvantages within the housing sector should be rejected. Local politicians and urban planners undoubtly support the idea of mixed neighbourhoods and use their means for fighting against segregation. But what about the voluntary separations in the form of gated communities – yes, people can do this, but should they? Moreover, is the flight of the middle classes out of some declining inner-city areas not only voluntary but also the cause of concentrations of those who are left?

The recent German discourse among urban scientists seems to be polarised, as Friedrichs (1995, pp. 79–80) judges segregation as a direct measurement of social disintegration and Heitmeyer (1997, pp. 643–644; Anhut & Heitmeyer 2000) comes up with empirical results that figures of concentrations of alltochones in neighbourhoods does not impact the chances of integration and advises against 'parallel societies' within bigger cities. The opposite position is taken by Häußermann (1995, p. 84) and Siebel (1997) who argue for the 'urban mosaic' as the 'culture of difference and indifference' and the need for 'intra-integrative segregation'. They assess the desegregation policies as in the interest of narrow minded autochthones.

It would be misleading to take the US debates on the ghettoisation and the African-American underclass classifications directly onto Western European conditions. Based on their analyses of the integration of Turkish migrants, Heitmeyer & Anhut (2000) conclude that proportions of non-natives have no impact on the probability of successful integration. Chances for sufficient forms of integration (accepted by both sides) are more dependent from intervening variables such as:

- governance (collective agreements by the political-administrative system, in the sense of the de-escalation of conflicts),
- political culture (locally-based traditions of the political habitus, the participation of the citizens, strong relations to the constructions of the social situation by the political class),
- social networks and group-forming processes (existent institutions, which have a meaning for identification (for forming groups against the others)),
- local inter-group-relations (the inter-group-activities and the in-group closures) and
- social climate (locally-based positions and emotions on the dimensions like fear-safety, trust-mistrust, relatedness-disinterest).

Schnur's book is an analysis on a deprived district in Berlin (Moabit) and its different interventions. It is interesting from both the theoretical point of view and of practical relevance. It is organised into four larger chapters besides the introduction, the reference list and a extensive methodological supplement. In the first of the four parts the author conceptualises a broad macro-meso-micro-theory of socio-spatial interrelations (what is the current state of art in German urban sociology? cf. Dangschat 2005) in combining regulation theory, theory of (framed) stakeholder activities and theories on behaviour of local actors. In the second chapter he describes the four neighbourhoods of his analysis in Berlin-Moabit. The third part addresses his empirical results, while in the fourth part he concentrates on how to use the socio-spatial potential (collective social capital) and what needs to be changed particularly within the political-administrative system of the county Berlin and on the district level.

Based on a sound theoretical and methodical concept, the study aims to analyse, how locally-based social capital is produced, converted and exchanged as a multidimensional basis for local empowerment, inter-group relations, social cohesion, new public management and new planning cultures.

The starting point of his theoretical attempt is the critique of the positivist quantitative positions, by which 'space' is seen as a container and where the contents of containers count – and not social networks, interpersonal relations, local political culture or the 'habitus of the place'. In a post-modern and complex attempt Schnur combines three distinct theories to overcome the respective weaknesses and – combining system structures and individual activities

– to design a macro-meso-micro attempt[2] to analyse the weaknesses and strength of four neighbourhoods within the Moabit district in Berlin and its regulation in a broader sense:

- *Regulation theory* to analyse the great and fundamental changes of globalisation, economic restructuring and changes in the regulation regimes, which leads to new corporative structures, new roles for civil servants, politicians and planners as much as enlarged and more flexible communication and decision processes.
- *(Urban) regime theory* looks at cities as institutions and its major stakeholders as institutional actors; parallel to processes, best described by the regulation theory, cities are in increased competition for defining their niche as unique selling proposition ('local selling proposition') and to define new forms of a broader social cohesion.
- *Social capital theory* is usually used to define further forms of capital (beside economic capital) for individuals or social groups; in this case urban neighbourhoods are seen as units (as institutional capital) and the central aim of area-based initiatives are seen as how to create an empowerment of entire neighbourhoods.

Besides this three levels-attempt he argues for an understanding of 'space' not only as places (territories) as in the container view, but as a multidimensional product of re-constructions of different actors. However, he misses a more sociological point, as individuals do not act in space as 'human beings as such' but as socially-structured individuals (by class, race, ethnicity and gender), provided with different forms of capital (economic, cultural, social, political and symbolic) as resources or constraints. This understanding of space as a social product as well is important for the analysis of the preferences of local stakeholders within the framework of urban regime theory.

Schnur defines two aims of his study: (1) a better understanding of the relations of socio-spatial structures (which always are the basis of interventions) and the activity patterns within deprived neighbourhoods (as resources) and (2) concrete suggestions for the interventions of the political-administrative system into these neighbourhoods on the basis of collective learning and forming institutional capacities of (collective) social capital on the neighbourhood level (p. 5).

The understanding of the phenomenon of social reality in deprived neighbourhoods has to be found – as Schnur states – in a sufficient understanding of the social strength of those groups which are marginalised via labour market and/or acceptance due to their cultural or racial backgrounds. Based on this changing of awareness he argues for three aspects:

1. Activation of the local social capital.
2. The support of the willingness for an engagement for the neighbourhood.
3. Establishing a potential for local identity building.

For the fields of administration he suggests three types of structural reform:

1. To improve the goal of social capital empowerment (against the formal goals of physical investments or job creation itself).
2. To the establishment of neighbourhood regimes as part of the decentralisation of public administration (thus being part of new urban governance).
3. To look for a new equilibrium between local state and citizen (as part of civil society).

All in all, Schnur's book is recommended as it fulfils two main goals by giving a sound survey of the broad range of recent theories of urban social sciences, and suggests practically relevant issues, based on a sound empirical basis.

Notes
1. Note that 'social cohesion' as a sociological concept dates back to Max Weber and Georg Simmel and was seen as a prerequisite for forming social groups (external dissociation and internal identification). Thus, the recent shift of the discourse of politics for supporting social cohesion means in this context a clear distinction of social groups and consequently their segregation behaviour and patterns and is thus counter-productive for social inclusion. On the other hand it mirrors perfectly urban regime strategies for clearing up the cities for the service sector middle classes.
2. In his theoretical part he discusses some recent social sciences ranging from critical positivism (rational choice) to neo-marxist critical macro theories. His excursions in forms of boxes where he very briefly, but concisely describes the core aspects of theories are very well done. Moreover, he is drawing synopses in the form of tables where he underpins the differences of the theories or theoretical concepts, the regimes of Fordism and postfordism or the logic of the qualitative interpretative programme (in distinction to the constructions of objectiveness of critical rationalism).

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