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# Exclusion, Marginalization and Peripheralization: Conceptual concerns in the study of urban inequalities

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# Exclusion, Marginalization and Peripheralization

## Conceptual concerns in the study of urban inequalities



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## Introduction

The Working Paper at hand is closely connected to the research project "Urban Policies and Peripheralization", which examines the interrelation of socio-spatial inequalities and urban and regional policies in "peripheral" spatial configurations and is conducted at the Leibniz Institute for Regional Development and Structural Planning (IRS).

While focussing empirically on cities and regions undergoing structural changes, conceptually the project draws on discussions of peripheralization. The concept of peripheralization is closely connected to debates about spatial peripheries and uneven development (see Fischer-Tahir/Naumann 2013), and has been applied in a broad variety of disciplines and perspectives. We define peripheralization as a multidimensional process which includes economic (deindustrialisation, restructuring), social (impoverishment, discrimination, stigmatization) and political (exclusion from decision-making, dependence) phenomena and leads to the emergence of peripheries characterized by dependence, disconnection, poverty and outmigration. In our past empirical research the concept of peripherization has been applied productively to the study of local policies in disadvantaged mid-sized cities (see Bernt/ Liebmann 2013).

In the current research project, we plan to expand the spatial horizons of peripheralization research. We aim to both test the geographical range of the concept and to deploy a new perspective on issues of urban inequalities. Furthermore, we plan to apply the concept of peripheralization to the study of poverty in a major city in East Germany. The main motivation for this is the fact that socio-spatial disparities are not only increasing at an intraregional level, but also within cities both in Germany (see Häußermann et.al. 2004, Kronauer 2004, Bude/Willisch 2007, Bude 2008) and internationally. However, past research has concentrated largely on analyzing dynamics in growing and prosperous cities, whereas the situation in cities with low demand, weak economies and vacant housing has not attracted much attention. This presents a research gap which has yet to be adequately addressed in urban studies.

However, it is unclear if and how the concept of peripheralization can be applied to these research ends. This is for two reasons. First, relationalities and inter-scalar constellations that are characteristic of mid-sized cities are not necessarily reproduced in cities and urban regions. How far findings on the "making" of peripheralization can meaningfully be applied to explain intra-urban disparities thus needs to be studied empirically. Second, when analyzing growing disparities inside cities, the concept of peripheralization is far from being the only relevant one. In contrast, concepts like segregation, polarisation, exclusion and marginality have been applied to describe similar phenomena. As a consequence, an examination of the transferability of the concept of peripheralization to different spatial constellations must be supplemented by a consideration of the similarities and boundaries between peripheralization and already existing concepts.

Against this background, the working paper considers the insights studies on peripheralization can gain from existing work on exclusion and marginalization. The aim of this exercise is to exploit this enormously productive literature using these concepts as a source of intellectual stimulation. By doing this we aim to inform and enrich research on urban peripheries and advance the theoretical basis for our empirical work. Observing the debates on exclusion and marginalization we highlight what a study of peripheralization in urban contexts can learn from its "competitors".

In order to do so, we have critically reviewed the main literatures addressing exclusion and marginalization and extracted main propositions and developments. We summarize these and discuss implications for our research on urban disparities in German cities. To guide our analysis, we have organised our argument around four key questions:

a) From which conceptual and political backgrounds have the concepts of exclusion and marginality emerged?
b) How are the concepts defined and how are they applied in empirical research?
c) Which critiques and modifications regarding these concepts can be identified?
d) Which are the main insights a study on the making of urban peripheries can gain from the concepts of exclusion and marginalization?

The answers to these questions are organised in three sections. We start with a review of the concepts "exclusion" in the first and move on to the concept of "marginality" in the second section. In the third we summarise main concepts in the discussion on exclusion and marginality and discuss the implications of these debates for our research project "Urban Policies and Peripheralization".

# Exclusion

## Taxonomies of exclusions

Defining what is meant by the term "exclusion" is far from straightforward. The main theoretical problem here is that exclusion is closely related to other concepts and frequently used to denote similar phenomena (e.g. poverty, inequality, inaccessibility). The meaning of one in relation to the other is thus fairly dependent on the context and regularly a matter of debate. Certainly, among the different concepts used to describe urban inequalities, the term "poverty" has the longest history, dating back to 19$^{th}$ century's industrial revolution, when it was first used to describe emerging urban problems. Poverty originally meant deficiency in the material means of subsistence. Contemporary studies, however, go beyond this narrow definition. By adopting a broader perspective, they aim to respond to deep-seated socio-economic and political changes and increasing complexities. Therefore, academics and political organizations around the world have embraced new dimensions of poverty to depict interconnected negative consequences affecting individuals in different kinds of societies. According to the World Bank, poverty is thus still dependent on income (measured by the concept of poverty line), but is not exclusively a matter of material deprivation. It is rather a "denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity" (UN 1998).

The lines between poverty and exclusion are blurred and it is matter of controversy whether one term is more fitting than the other. Fisher (Fisher 2011) thus argues that the term 'exclusion' can potentially provide a wider scope to the analysis of the dynamics producing a situation of disadvantage. He emphasises that different forms of exclusion may or may not be related to actual lack of means (usually described as poverty), as people can be excluded on the basis of their race, age or gender, etc. By contrast, Sen considers this clear cut distinction between poverty and exclusion invalid and the concept of social exclusion essentially redundant (Sen 2000): he argues that the analysis of relational issues is already practiced in a number of classical poverty studies.

In this context, social exclusion has been defined as "the lack or denial of resources, rights, goods and services and the inability to participate in the normal relationships and activities available to the majority of people in a society" (Levitas 2007:9). This definition has been complemented by others with slightly different foci, so that exclusion remains a flexible, concise and value-laden onomasiological term (Riggs 1988 in Silver 1994). Its multilayered dimensions and the plurality of interpretations are not conducive to securing general agreement among scholars. There is hardly any consensus beyond the generally negative use of the term, and even less about the production of exclusion, its manifestations and its reproduction. Thus, so far, a generally accepted understanding among scholars seems to point to exclusion being both a process and condition, one resulting from a combination of intertwined forms of social, economic and power inequalities and leading to disadvantage, rele-

gation and the systematic denial of individuals' or communities' rights, opportunities and resources.

**Conceptual and political backgrounds to exclusion**

Just as the idea of exclusion has many meanings, it can also serve a variety of political purposes. As a consequence, in addition to academic discussions there are also different political understandings of exclusion.

A ground-breaking attempt to give order to the meaning of exclusion can be found in the work of Silver (1994) in which she explains "exclusions" according to different theoretical perspectives, political ideologies and national discourses.

For this purpose, she looks at three conflicting paradigms within which social exclusions are embedded: *Solidarity, Specialisation* and *Monopoly*. Each of the three paradigms are grounded in a different concept of integration and citizenship and attribute exclusions to different causes grounded in three main political philosophies: republicanism, liberalism and social democracy.

In the *solidarity paradigm* exclusion refers to a rupture of social ties in society. The paradigm is moral and cultural rather than economically focused. Here, according to the principle of solidarity, the State h the collective responsibility to repair this fragmentation through a third way between liberalism and socialism.

In the *specialisation paradigm* exclusion refers to the separation of functional spheres and economic division of labour, emphasising -according to the neoliberal model- contractual exchanges between individual rights and obligations. The "specialisation" of functions permits individual liberties to move across boundaries and discrimination occurs whenever exclusion from the sphere of actions impedes full participation in social exchange of certain individuals or groups.

In the monopoly paradigm exclusion is a result of the creation of monopolies. "Exclusion arises from the interplay of class, status and of political power and serves the interests of the included" (Silver 1994). The creation of a group with a monopoly serves the purpose of a bond of common interest among "unequal insiders", who exclude and thus dominate the outsiders. Exclusion is combated through formal rights such as citizenship and extension of membership.

Summarizing Silvers argument, it becomes clear that the conceptualisation of exclusion is not only a academic, theoretical exercise, but even more a political one. This is especially true for the European debate where exclusion became more widely used as a political concept than in other parts of the world.

Following Silver's analysis of exclusion and its political meaning, this can largely be traced back to French initiatives in the EU. The proliferation of the term exclusion originates in French debates in the 1970s (Martin, 1996, Spicker 1997 in Atkinsons 2000). Rene Lenoir,

then Secrétaire d'Etàt a l'Action Sociale in the Chirac government, published *Les Exclus: Un Francais sur dix* in 1974 which discussed different types of vulnerable subjects. But it was not before the 1980s that the term really gained popularity in France. It was only at this time that 'exclusion' became used to refer to social disadvantage and was related to new social problems which arose from economic crisis and restructuring. Both the Right and the communist opposition blamed the Socialist Government for raising unemployment and the "new poverty". In this context, exclusion essentially described people living at the margins of society without access to the system of social insurance (Room 1995; Jordan 1997; Percy-Smith 2000). The main point here was that the term "exclusion" meant exclusion from societal benefits and not having accesses to certain services. Ultimately exclusion mirrored the failure of traditional welfare state institutions which were thought to be incapable of dealing with new problems.

The reasons why this concept developed in France and not in another European country are rooted in politics. The French system rejected the moral Anglo-Saxon philanthropic approach -related to the unique charity culture in these countries - in favour of a model based on solidarity serving the purpose of constructing the idea of nation and citizenship. Atkinson (2000) disentangles the solidarity principle in the French system revealing two distinct ideas at work: the one of mutual aid which is in turn considered conservative/corporatist (Esping-Andersen 1990) and the other a wider form of solidarity. The latter became very prominent in the discourse around exclusion in Europe because it later influenced the definition of cohesion - as being the key for fighting social and economic disparities.

Time and context were also crucial in marking the development of the term. In the 1980s, economic crisis hit Europeans hard and the level of discontent rose among citizens in French cities. Urban riots re-centred the periphery of the *banlieues* in the public discourse, raising public concerns about the future of those areas where the "*exclus"* of Lenoir's memory happened to live. This engendered a political response that resulted in the drafting of the *Politique de la Ville as* a policy framework at the national level and inaugurated a new era of urban regeneration programmes dealing with *quartier en crise*. With this, France was among the first EU countries to launch regeneration programmes for deprived urban areas on a nation-wide basis. This primarily meant investments in physical renewal, often applied through massive demolitions and reconstruction of large urban areas. However, the story of the Politique the la ville has more than twenty years of practices and cannot be dismissed in a few lines. Of most relevance to the argument is that this was one of the first concrete policies to engage in the fight on social and urban exclusion. Furthermore, this French example has been followed by many other EU member states, possibly because these were worried that the social unrest among "exclus" was a ready to explode bomb in their cities as well.

The shift of the concern to tackle exclusion to a wider scale, was a matter of institutional power under the Delors' EU presidency. In the context of the definition of the Single European Act in 1987 and the Maastricht Treaty in 1999, Jacques Delors first introduced the concept of social exclusion in a set of political negotiations. Recently, it has been deployed in discussions on *insertion* (Healy 2000), to provide evidence for the necessity to include sub-

jects in the unified French social order. The rise of insertion is due to its positive, antonymic associations to exclusion, as insertion policies seamed to be a viable alternative path and contrast to xenophobia, attacks on migrants, refugees and other newcomers which were preoccupying French cities at that time. Morevoer, the idea of insertion was also in line with the emerging European Cohesion policy. Therefore, exclusion entered the political and institutional settings of EU countries which were united in the battle against exclusion and for inclusion, against division and for cohesion, against separation and for integration.

**Urban exclusion as a combination of power inequalities**

This political debate had a strong influence on urban studies, especially in Western Europe. Despite this political "success story", conceptual issues about the definition of "exclusion" remained dormant. Thereby, the main problem with defining exclusion is that a multitude of theoretical meanings is accorded to the term. Several authors have tried to pin down more precise meanings. In itself exclusion has a problematic duality as it asserts a static vision of society divided into two, the excluded and the included (Levitas 1998), hardly clarifying from what one is excluded and into what one is included. This static image is not merely a result of rigidly viewing the problem in terms of urban disadvantages; on the contrary, this dichotomy is seen as a framework for understanding both exclusion and integration as two sides of the same coin (Murie and Musterd 2004). By studying exclusion and inclusion as interrelated processes, the academic literature generally moved from dealing with distributional and poverty issues to relational issues. As such, the concept of exclusion became more and more seen as resulting from interrelated and complex societal changes which were understood as producing a new generation of more complex combinations of problems and disadvantages (Andersen, H.S., van Kempen R. 2001, Andersen, H.S. 2003, Wassenberg F., van Meer A., van Kempen R. 2007 et al.).

This research approach, however, often tended to study the physical effects of changes in urban spaces (e.g. dereliction of buildings and urban areas, lack of meeting and public spaces, hindrances in mobility and infrastructural connection), without in depth consideration of the intertwined chains of dynamics producing different forms of inequalities which ultimately become visible in cities[1]. Conversely, this influenced the way public policies are shaped: they tend to focus more on the material effects of exclusion than on causes.

[1] Economic changes: declining retail trade, closure of industries, disproportion of rents and housing quality, management costs, lack of economic resources (including funding shortage), above-average unemployment, incapacity and lack of knowledge in starting up new business, pressures from the real estate market. Legislative-political changes: ownership of dwellings and public spaces (especially central and eastern EU countries), reliance on governmental assistance, problems in representativeness of low income communities. Physical changes in some case accentuating environmental and ecological problems (soil, air, noise pollution, energy loss, waste management). Social changes: demographic structure, cultural clashes among various ethnic groups, crime, lack of health and poor schooling, educational and training, insecurity (esp. for elderly and children) and bad reputation.

Other academic contributions see urban exclusion as an outcome resulting from state and market failures (Schuyt 2000 in Aalbers 2011) regarded as intrinsic to capitalism (Cox 1997, Lee and Wills 1997, Brenner & Theodore 2005). In a nutshell, this strand of literature argues that uneven development is functional and endemic to contemporary capitalism (Brenner 2009). At the core of the concept are the interdependencies of polymorphic geographies of uneven development, which act through relations among global, national, regional, urban and micro local levels (Swyngedouw 1997), producing unequal re-distributive mechanisms of the subdivision of labour, market and welfare.

Along this line, some scholars view the production of social inequalities as results of economic restructuring and its impact on the reproduction of wealth (Boyer and Saillard 2001, Jessop 2005). Contemporary economic and social dynamics cluster around the desocialization of wage labour with massive unemployment and growing precariousness (Waquant 2006: 263–267). Moreover, the action and inaction of the state is seen as an integral part of the genesis and growth of post-Fordist poverty and deprivation: “The ruling classes and government elites of rich nations have, to varying degrees, proved unable or unwilling to stem the rise of inequality and marginality” (Wacquant, 2006: 37). In contemporary neoliberal societies, it is argued, states as well as public institutions have been incrementally disempowered of their responsibilities to care for the health of their inhabitants to fuel the mechanism of capitalism, which is based on the creation of inequalities and scarcity. “A market system becomes possible under conditions of resource scarcity only under these conditions can price-fixing commodity exchange markets arise. […] There is clearly a paradox in a system that] relies upon scarcity for its functioning. It follows that if scarcity is eliminated, then the market economy which is the source of productive wealth under capitalism is liable to collapse.” (Harvey 1971 8-9). At the urban scale exclusion is translated into the intensification of the functional division of space, residential segregation, consolidation of infrastructure for production, all of which deepen the divide between capital–rich and capital-poor areas.

This critical analysis provides insights to understanding how the relational and multi-scalar process of creation of disadvantage is functional to a market-based system. Yet additional tools of spatial analysis are needed to provide a contextual approach to explain changes visible at the local level, one that incorporates structures and developments belonging to other spatial levels (Kempen-Özüekren 1998).

**Research Approaches**

Amidst the overload of theories, policy analysis and practices, empirical studies on urban exclusion can be divided into three main streams of debate:

1. People- vs. Place-based approaches
2. The relevance of area effects
3. Matters of scale and the integration of scalar relations

### *People- vs. Place-based approaches*

People-based approaches usually focus on the effects of policies on the living conditions of the weakest groups of the population, regardless of their geographic location. This approach concerns a series of transversal issues such as equality of access and capacity to benefit from a non-discriminatory judicial system, training and education, labour market and health. Place-based approaches, in contrast, include these issues, but with a spatial twist. This approach has been considered relevant for addressing issues related to urban exclusion especially at the neighbourhood scale (Atkinsons 2000).

Although there are in theory many bridges between the two approaches, in practice there is a tendency towards a division in which one approach looks at exclusion from a people-based perspective and the other focuses more on the interaction of exclusion and space. This rough subdivision is somehow mirrored in how public policies treat the questions of social, economic and spatial exclusion in different sectors and scales of public administrations, and how the problem of exclusion is further researched according to different thinking and beliefs rather than disciplinary borders. Studies of the urban dimension of exclusion have privileged the micro-scale as the target of research, considering a neighbourhood a window for analyzing and counteracting the effects of social and economic exclusion.

However, the same definition of neighbourhood as an area for place-based interventions bears some inconsistencies. First, the administrative borders and social spaces do not match. Usually, neighbourhoods are not strictly defined by administrative boundaries, and even if they are, these boundaries nearly always do not match the perceptions of local inhabitants. “Neighbourhood definitions have typically not been formed by thoughtful theoretical considerations. Rather neighbourhood delineation has been defined by limitations of an available dataset” (Dietz 2002: 541).

Second, the neighbourhood is losing significance in a ‘space of flows”’. In the vast literature on neighbourhoods many argue that the neighbourhood dimension has lost significance. “Community without propinquity” (Webber 1963) can be considered the new formula of neighbouring relations among people, who share social ties but not physical space. This concept has become more popular today in the discussions around mobility, flows and ICT (Castells 1997) in which the environment where interactions take place is not of primary relevance.

### *The relevance of area effects*

Linked to the place-based approach is the debate around area-, or neighbourhood-effects. This debate privileges the neighbourhood dimension as the primary scale of analysis and studies how place influences the conditions and the opportunities of inhabitants. It argues that the living location might be the main cause for, or at least decisively contributes to, different forms of exclusion (Galster & Heldman 2013). Contributions on area effects regularly highlight neighbourhood characteristics and aim to demonstrate how the social, educational

and employment opportunities of particular places impact on the living conditions of their inhabitants (Wilson 1987). In this context, quite a number of different area effects have been identified. Based on propositions and evidence contained in the literature Atkinson and Kintrea (2001) have distinguished six different types of area effects. Within each of these types of effect, particular mechanisms which connect individuals or households to the neighbourhood are located. The types can be identified as follows:

| Type of Area Effect | Mechanisms |
|---|---|
| Concentration | ▪ Stress on services<br>▪ Many relatively homogeneous households living together |
| Location | ▪ Labour market<br>▪ Housing market<br>▪ Public housing allocations and accessibility<br>▪ Geographical isolation |
| Milieu | ▪ Social networks<br>▪ Contact and context for deviance<br>▪ Associational activity<br>▪ Patterns of daily life |
| Socialisation | ▪ Education<br>▪ Child caring<br>▪ Friendship<br>▪ Isolation<br>▪ Segregation<br>▪ Socialisation |
| Physical | ▪ Built Environment<br>▪ Housing quality<br>▪ Physical amenities quality, e.g. parks |
| Service | ▪ Reception of and dealing with “problem people” in “problem areas”<br>▪ Education |

(Atkinson and Kintrea 2001: 2281)

The usual policy response connected to the concept of area effects is urban renewal, aiming at “rebalancing” the social composition of areas with high concentrations of poverty through the introduction of middle class families (Blanc 2010).

Overlooks Despite its apparent popularity in the literature, the concept of area effects has also been increasingly criticized (Ham et al, 2012). This critical literature demonstrates that there is questionable evidence that living in deprived neighbourhoods really decreases the living standards and opportunities of its inhabitants. Thus, it has been argued that it is not the neighbourhood which leads to the disadvantage of its inhabitants, but rather power inequalities which limit the chances and resources of different social groups and force them to live in particular spaces and which thus also impact on the neighbourhood (Slater 2013).

### *Matters of scale and the integration of scalar relations*

Although it is generally accepted that macro economic and social trends affect the neighbourhood scale in different ways, the question remains how geographical distance contributes to maintaining social divisions. Moreover, as discussed above, the production and reproduction of exclusion is not limited to the neighbourhood scale, but covers interactions between a wide range of political and administrative scales, from the very local up to the global. As a consequence, integrating wider scales than the neighbourhood is more and more seen as indispensable for understanding the reproductions of urban inequalities visible at the micro scale.

One of the most comprehensive studies in this context was presented in the framework of the URBEX project (Musterd 2002), which studied territorial opportunity structures and their interrelation with different state contexts, metropolitan areas, locations within cities and neighbourhood characteristics. The outcome of this broad empirical research was summarized as follows: "Societies, cities, and neighbourhoods are all interrelated systems, and policy responses to neighbourhood problems, therefore, should take these various levels into account simultaneously. The welfare state at the national level, the labour market and economy at the regional - and global - levels, and the social networks at the local levels, probably all play a role in understanding what is happening at the very local level. Therefore, individual, neighbourhood, and wider context variables should be incorporated simultaneously." (Musterd-Andersson, 2005:786)

Interestingly, the research conducted by Aalbers (Aalbers 2011) demonstrates that these national, regional linkages may actually work according to intricate geographies and that faulty assumption may lead to erroneous belief. His work shows that even in countries like the Netherlands with a fairly solid welfare system at the national level, the welfare may indeed limit the extent of inequalities in the first place, but it may not be enough to solve and contain different forms of space based exclusion at the very local scale. In particular Aalbers highlights the dependency between the two forms of financial and social exclusion by researching the strategies of redlining[2] neighbourhoods in the Netherlands, Italy and US. According to Albers, redlining therefore means exclusion from and through homeownership, from the possibility to buy and to sell a property at a decent price, forcing people to suffer a loss or giving up the wish to sell and moving out of an area. The book shows the mechanisms of creation of exclusion, analysing how exclusion becomes operational at different scales including the global financialization of real estate affecting directly the way cities are shaped.

In conclusion, similar to matters of definition, there is also quite a range of methodological approaches when it comes to studying urban exclusion empirically. We would argue that both the focus on macro economic trends and the concern for micro level effects of social

[2] The redlining concept was first coined in the late 1960s by John McKnight. The practice refers to the outline of a boundary on a map of those areas in which banks would not be willing to invest and thus denying or restricting mortgages, insurance, health and other services to people living in selected poorer part of the cities.

exclusion have their merits – yet both may also prove to be troublesome if taken as standalone theoretical and methodological research perspectives.

## Marginality

### Marginality as a term with multi-disciplinary roots

Fairly comparable to "exclusion", "marginality" is also an awkward term which has been used in manifold and varied ways. Although it is frequently applied in the field of urban studies, it has a rather "fuzzy" history and, as a consequence, it has even been argued that the term lacks specificity and precision and this makes its use as a scientific tool questionable (Dunne 2005, Billson 2005).

In the sociological field, the concept of marginality was first introduced in 1928 with an essay by Robert Park titled "Human Migration and the Marginal Man" (Park 1928) in which Park described the cross-pressures experienced by immigrants through the overlapping involvement in different cultures. The resulting lack of integration and the status as an "outsider" with respect to dominant cultures, Park termed "Marginality". This strand of work was later continued by Stonequist (1937) who studied hybrid identities caught "between two fires" (Stonequist 1937: 101).

Since that time the use of the term "marginality" has flourished and the concept has been broadened and diffused (Billson 2005: 33). Billson has suggested, that marginality has actually been applied in sociology in three different kinds of ways: a) as cultural marginality, referring to the dilemmas of cross-cultural identities and assimilation, b) as social role marginality, describing the tensions which occur when an individual is restricted from belonging to a positive reference group, c) as structural marginality, referring to political, social and economic powerlessness and disadvantage. It is especially the latter strand of research which has gained most attention in the last decades, and here concepts of power and oppression are regularly fused with more "culturalist" ideas of "outsidedness" to create a generally accepted contemporary definition of "marginality" as the lack of power, participation and integration experienced by a group, or a territory.

Geographical discussions about marginality have had a quite different history. Perhaps not too surprisingly, scholars from this discipline have for a long time struggled and are still struggling with developing a definition of marginality which is capable of covering phenomena at different socio-spatial scales. As a consequence, in many geographical definitions, there is some tension between a definition of "marginal areas" and descriptions which target insufficient integration and the resultant vulnerability of people. As a consequence, "marginality" has remained a frequently discussed topic in geographical studies, encompassing a wide spectre of phenomena from remote rural regions to disadvantaged urban populations. Thus, the concepts itself has remained rather unspecified and subject to ongoing debates. Within the IGU, to give but one example, a Study Group on Marginality was created in 1992 and this was followed by a Commission on Evolving Issues of Geographical Marginality in 2001 and a Commission on Marginalization, Globalization, and Regional and Local Responses in 2008. The outcome of this work has largely been that an identification of margin-

al areas should take into account a variety of criteria. Leimgruber (2004, p. 48), to give but one example, has suggested the following: a) significantly lower per capita incomes, b) low infrastructure equipment, c) cultural isolation, d) difficult natural conditions. It should be noted that, compared with more sociological approaches, this definition focuses on conditions rather than relations. Nevertheless, the geographical discussion went far beyond simple measurements of marginalization and a fair summary would perhaps state that marginality has nowadays been established as a multi-dimensional concept which simultaneously covers aspects of insufficient integration (isolation, dependency, weakening), lower development, and economic, social, political and cultural disadvantage (see Schmidt 2007: 41).

A third group of discussions circling around the term "marginality" needs to be placed in the context of leftist Latin-American Debates in the 1960s and 1970s (see Caldeira 2009). The background was dramatic urbanisation which was driven mainly by the growth of both informal settlements (favelas, barrios, ranchos) and a workforce which was occupied outside the established economies. In order to grasp the outsidedness and exclusion of these immigrants from established urban societies, economies and political structures, several Latin-American theorists used terms like "marginality", "marginal masses", or "marginal settlements" for the places the "marginal masses" were inhabiting. Theoretically, this argument was closely linked to Dependencia-Theories which analysed the partial and dependent industrialisation of Third-World countries. A main feature of this was the integration of only parts of society into capitalist economies, with other parts made redundant and deproletarianized (see Quijano 1966 and 1973, Nun 1969, Kay 1989, Cortes 2012). Later on, these theories were repeatedly criticised for their dualist perspective and the counter-argument was made that the "surplus" population excluded from formal housing and labour markets would in fact perform all types of badly paid and low skilled tasks for the economy of the respective cities and would thus be anything but marginal to society. Its denomination as "marginal" would therefore be misleading and mask the specific integration of these population groups, concealing rather than uncovering a defining aspect of Latin-American urbanisation (see Perlman 1976).

Given these different roots, it is obvious that the term "marginalization" has unfolded with multiple meanings. Consequentially, it has three fundamentally different meanings: a) underdevelopment, lack of resources, distance, b) relation, oppression, closure and c) lack of cultural integration, lack of adaption to norms (i.e. "culture of poverty", "urban underclass")

**Urban Outcasts – Marginality in Paris and Chicago**

Notwithstanding these rather confusing histories in the sociological and geographical usage of the term, generally in urban studies "marginality" has arguably become one of the most used concepts in the last decade. This is due mainly to the work of Loïc Wacquant who made his concept of "advanced marginality" pivotal to his studies of disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods in Chicago and Paris (see Wacquant 2008). Wacquant's work has not only found widespread attention, it has also become a central point of reference for studies which use

"marginality" as a relational approach for the analysis of urban inequalities. At the same time, Wacquant's "Urban Outcasts" is a paradigmatic example of the challenges which emerge when relational approaches to marginalization are applied in empirical research. It thus makes sense to discuss this work in more detail.

The starting point of Wacquant's work on "marginality" is dissatisfaction with popular comparisons of "black ghettos" in the United States with *banlieus* in France. Though both form stigmatised neighbourhoods situated at the very bottom of the hierarchical order of modern metropolises, Wacquant insists on the different roots of deprivation and dereliction in the territories. Confronting ideas of a convergence in U.S. and European experiences regarding place-bound poverty, relegation and stigmatisation, Wacquant claims that the American "ghetto" and the French "*banlieu*" constitute two disparate socio-spatial formations, produced by different institutional logics and resulting in different levels of hardship. "Marginality" is thus applied by Wacquant as a political concept, describing the dynamics of oppression, powerlessness and disadvantage which produce concentrations of poverty and exclusion in modern Western metropolises.

To a large degree Wacquant's work can only be understood when it is set against the background of research on segregation in the U.S. and Europe from the 1980s to 2000s.Wacquant mainly positions his approach in relation to three developments in urban sociology. The first is the seminal work of William Julius Wilson (who was one of Wacquant professors) which gave the changing economy and the loss of Fordist labour relations a primary place in the explanation of increasing spatial concentrations of poverty and the emergence of areas of combined disadvantage (see Wilson 1980, 1987, 1996). The second point of departure for Wacquant was the work of Massey (1990) in which the weight of racial segregation was highlighted as the main explanatory factor for the segregation of class and race experienced in most American cities. Against both, Wacquant holds the political determination of urban marginality. According to him, "hyper-ghettoisation is primarily a chapter in political sociology, not post-industrial economics, racial demography, or urban geography."(Wacquant 2008: 4). This emphasis on state-policies is the third central theme of Wacquant's work and also marks his critique of European research on "neighbourhood effects" (which he sees as de-politicised and based on misleading ecological assumptions).

Notwithstanding the clarity and straightforwardness of Wacquant's argument, a definition of exactly what Wacquant understands as "advanced marginality" is hard to grasp. Thus, in a very general definition advanced marginality is described as "the novel regime of sociospatial relegation and exclusionary[3] closure (…) that has crystallised in the post-Fordist city" (Wacquant 2008: 2). Using the Weberian concept of closure (*"Schließung"*), Wacquant relates the spatial concentration of poverty to theories of stratification and power which designate the collective monopolisation of access to resources, power and prestige with the aim of securing privileged access to social and economic opportunities. The outcome of this une-

[3] Here, as on other occasions, Wacquant refers to the concept of exclusion. However, Wacquant neither indentifies this overlap between the debate about exclusion and his use of the term marginalisation, nor does he state which of the many meanings of exclusion he refers to.

qual power relation in contemporary cities would be a regime of urban poverty marked by "economic penury and social destitution, ethnoracial division and public violence, and their accumulation in …distressed areas" (Wacquant 2008: 232). Whereas urban history is full of examples of the oppression and exclusion of stigmatised groups, Wacquant characterises the developments he studied as essentially new and different: "These new forms of exclusionary closure translating into expulsion to the margins and crevices of social and physical space have arisen – or intensified – in the post-Fordist metropolis, not as a result of economic mismatches or backwardness but, on the contrary, as an effect of the uneven, disarticulating mutations of the most advanced sectors of Western economies…The qualifier 'advanced' is meant to indicate that these forms of marginality are not *behind* us: they are not residual, cyclical or transitional; and they are not being gradually resorbed by the expansion of the 'free market'… or by the (protective or disciplinary) action of the welfare state. Rather they stand *ahead of us*: they are etched on the horizon of the becoming contemporary societies." (Wacquant 2008: 232)

Six distinctive properties (Wacquant 2008) define this impending regime:

1. the transformation of wage labour towards being a source of growing instability and insecurity,
2. the functional disconnection of social conditions and life chances (in the relegated neighbourhoods) from macroeconomics trends,
3. territorial fixation and stigmatisation,
4. spatial alienation and the dissolution of place, in terms of an urban landscape one can identify with, a loss of hinterland, understood as place-bound networks of self-help and support, historically used by those rejected from the labour market,
5. social fragmentation, precarisation and symbolic splintering of proletarian experiences.

All these characteristics distinguish recent "landscapes of poverty and relegation" from their historical counterparts. Although Wacquant insists on the different historical pathways and varied socio-spatial configurations determining marginality differently at different places, he also provides a list of universal structural logics which would make it possible to speak of different forms of a universal process, observable in places as different as Paris and Chicago. These four structural logics are the following (Wacquant 1998: 1641ff.):

1. The macrosocial dynamic: the resurgence and deepening of inequality
2. The economic dynamic: the mutation of wage labour,
3. The political dynamic: the reconstruction of welfare states,
4. The spatial dynamic: concentration and stigmatisation (around notorious "quarters of misery")

Methodologically, Wacquant's researches the dynamics of marginalization with a mix of "empirical data from quantitative surveys, in-depth interviews with residents and ethnographic observations" (Wacquant 2008: 3). Where details on local conditions are given, the measures are well-known from the analysis of neighbourhood conditions as it is conducted

in other segregation studies. In order to sketch measures of vulnerability, Wacquant uses data on occupation and unemployment, welfare recipients, income, household structure and personal networks. These are complemented by more qualitative descriptions of the effects of state policies (i.e. relations between the inhabitants and the police, constructed on the basis of interview data and participatory observation or descriptions about the collapse of public health, based on newspaper reports) and extensive ethnographical data (partly collected through participation in a boxing gym).

Wacquant's methodological approach is thereby guided by five key premises (8ff.). Firstly, Wacquant establishes a clear-cut separation between technocratic and popular lexicon and scientifically constructed analytical concepts. This implies that particular attention is given to the critical examination of categories and discourses that organize the collective perception of marginality. Secondly, Wacquant places the state and fate of a neighbourhood in a diachronic sequence of historical transformation (9), i.e. he applies a perspective which views urban space as a historical and political construction and pays particular attention to historical trajectories. Thirdly, with respect to methodology, Wacquant applies a combination of ethnographic observation (i.e. in a Boxing Gym) with institutional analysis, insisting on a central role of ethnography as a necessary instrument for "bottom-up" theory building. Fourthly, Wacquant establishes a distinction between the position of a place at the urban hierarchy and the function it performs for the broader urban system. Thus, whereas the position of two deprived neighbourhoods in two different cities could be the same in terms of a hierarchical order, one could for example serve as an affordable living place for a low-paid labour force whereas the other could be a "mere warehouse for supernumerary population that have no longer any observable … utility in the new polarized capitalism" (11). Lastly, Wacquant insists on specifying different "degree(s) and forms(s) of state penetration", i.e. the different relations between different public agencies and the inhabitants in different sectors as well as local and national contexts.

With this approach, as Gilbert 2010 has argued, the strength of "Urban Outcasts" lie in its combination of innovative methodologies of triangulation, (rarely found) internationally comparative analysis, an attention to the political determination of poverty and exclusion, and a nuanced theoretical framework. The focus of Wacquant's research is thus less on the identification of "marginalized" places, than on the analysis of relations which combine these places with structures and agencies outside the neighbourhood.

Summarizing, Wacquant has developed a quite successful approach to studying the dynamics of "marginalization" – yet at many places in his texts it is not exactly clear what the term refers to and how its use differs from other terms like exclusion or poverty. The main reason for this is that "marginality" is a concept not deducted from a particular strand of theory or scientific debate, but rather developed in a dialectical way as the spatially and historically specific expression of a number of tendencies implicit in recent capitalism. Similar to a Bourdieuian (who was also one of Wacquant's professors) way of thinking, the definition of "marginality" is thus not set a priori, but rather derived from specific historical experiences

and constellations. This makes it both very elastic and vulnerable to criticism of a lack of preciseness (see below).

**Critiques and Modifications**

When "Urban Outcasts" was published in 2008, it was warmly welcomed by the urban studies community and soon became one of the most cited works. It was subject to three special issues (in CITY, Urban Geography and the International Journal on Urban and Regional Research) and stimulated concurrent research, both in the North and in the South.

Critiques were apparent nevertheless and, by and large, referred to two different issues.

Firstly, a frequently discussed issue was the representativeness and validity of Wacquant's study. Numerous authors argued that neither Chicago nor Paris could be conceived as "typical cases" and thus the generalizability of Wacquant's argument was questionable (see Musterd 2008, Dangschat 2009, Patillo 2009, Maloutas 2009, Agnew 2010, Gilbert 2010, Nobles 2010, Hutchinson/Haynes 2012). Interestingly, this line of critique was argued on quite a variety of geographical scales. Thus, both differences between various poor neighbourhoods in one city were emphasized, but also the comparability of different U.S. cities, and of cities in the U.S. and Europe as well as for policies which also show strong variations both between different countries and between cities in the same national context.

Critique was also apparent on methodological grounds. While Wacquant's triangulation technique was widely accepted, his treatment of segregation data was heavily criticized by Jens S. Dangschat (2009) who found the "interpretation of segregation values (…) both wrong and ideological" (Dangschat 2009: 836) and called for a more careful use of indices and other quantitative data.

Secondly, there were criticisms regarding conceptual directions taken in "Urban Outcasts". Some rejected Wacquant's strong critique of theories of "neighbourhood effects" and argued that these were indeed a complex issue and hard to demonstrate – yet ignoring the importance of local contexts would be detrimental to finding adequate interventions (see Musterd 2008, Maloutas 2009).

In addition, from a more political science oriented perspective, Nobles (2010) argued that Wacquant's work was marked by a tendency to treat the state as a monolith and underplay the role of political parties, public opinion, elections and politics. As a consequence, policy guidance was fairly superficial and the potential of Wacquant's work to promote the required political change thus weakened.

Perhaps the strongest objection to Wacquant's concept of "Marginality" came from Teresa Caldeira (2009) who highlighted the similarities between Wacquant's concept and Latin-American discussion of the 1960s and 1970s that have repeatedly been criticized and, by and large, overcome in research on these countries. In contrast to conceptualizing processes as a deviance from a perceived normality, i.e. *negatively* defining marginality by needs and defi-

cits, Caldeira suggested that phenomena should be studied form the ground up, thus allowing for a perspective capable of grasping contradictory experiences of transformation, class formation, status, land use and consumption practices.

While it is difficult to make general remarks about this wide variety of criticism, it is probably fair to state that the arguments pointing towards the limits of a case study should not be seen as an objection to Wacquant's methodological and/or conceptual approach. Rather, they can also be regarded as a hint that additional studies are needed to get a more complete picture of marginalization processes in different contexts.

Conceptually, however, it is hard to say how Wacquant's work is related to the many approaches discussed above. Certainly, it does not solve the problem of "marginality" being associated with a number of meanings and being studied in very different ways. Rather, Wacquant maintains a multi-dimensional understanding of the term and includes cultural issues, matters of social stratification and spatial segregation and political disadvantage. The strength of Wacquant's work thereby lies in bringing together these different aspects in the study and comparison of empirically observable cases. For this he applies a methodologically flexible, and rather interpretative, approach which should largely be open to integrating most of the above mentioned critiques.

## Peripheralization, Marginalization and Exclusion – insights and similarities

In this paper we have demonstrated how exclusion and marginality are used in extremely varied ways in both politics and academic research. Both concepts have been discussed in very different contexts and been applied from a plethora of perspectives. Thus, every summary is confronted with the danger of oversimplifying a complex and fragmented debate. Notwithstanding this problem, we argue that research on exclusion and marginalization provides a number of valuable insights which can productively be used for informing the study of urban "peripheries".

Admittedly, the contextual background of all three concepts is quite varied. Whereas the terms exclusion and marginality came to be used in the contexts of urban problems (e.g. rising concentrations of poverty, increasing segregation, urban riots), the term peripheralization came into being as an attempt to advance the understanding of intra-regional differences (see Kühn/Weck 2013, Bernt/Kühn 2013). It thus had a stronger focus on whole cities and their relational positioning, whereas differences inside cities were not considered in detail. Moreover, the interest in discussing peripherality has been politically rooted in the observation of rising disparities between growing and shrinking regions and the resulting challenges for regional planning in Germany, whereas exclusion and marginality became popular against the background of urban "ghettos", riots and "no go areas" in cities like Chicago, London and Paris. Against these different contextual histories, debates about peripheralization on the one hand and discussions about marginalization or exclusion on the other tend to address different real-world backgrounds, focus on different issues and speak to different audiences. However, on a theoretical macro-level, the concepts of exclusion, marginalization and peripheralization (and the broad field of variations within these) are far from being mutually exclusive. As a matter of fact, several authors (among them Wacquant) use these concepts as synonyms and do not care too much about different intellectual backgrounds. That this is possible, we would argue, is due to the fact that there is actually a number of similarities and overlaps between the three concepts: they all foster a relational approach towards inequalities, all three are interested in the interconnectivities of disadvantaged places to socio-spatial dynamics outside these places, and they all share the *problematique* of a potentially dichotomist understanding of the relations between an imagined "centre" and the "peripheries" (resp. the "margins", or the "excluded"). What is also true for all concepts is that research strategies struggle to find an appropriate balance between people- and place-based approaches as well as between micro- and macro explanations in the study of spatial inequalities.

Thus, while all three concepts come from different intellectual traditions and focus on different historical and socio-spatial contexts (and, in addition, show a considerable number of variations), they all share a large number of overlaps. These commonalities, we find, make it possible to engage findings from different realms in a flexible and pluralist way for guiding

empirical research. With this, we think that five areas can be identified in which past conceptual work can productively inform empirical research.

The first area refers to a relational understanding of urban inequalities. In contrast to traditional definitions of periphery, the concepts of exclusion and marginalisation interpret peripheral positions of places in the urban hierarchy not in terms of a lack of resources, but as the outcome of discriminatory relations. The pivotal point of both concepts is not the location, the connectedness, or the resources attached to a particular place, but the social relations which relegate powerless and discriminated individuals or groups to this place. It is thus the presence of peripheral groups which makes the place peripheral, so that spatial inequalities need to be explained with societal relations. In this realm, however, the literature provides quite a number of conceptualizations, ranging from descriptions of oppression and closure as the driver for urban inequality, to approaches which direct their attention to deficient integration (absent connectivities, differences in norms, etc.). Thereby, contributions to the issue of exclusion focus to a stronger degree on individuals and social groups and their strategies in coping with problematic circumstances, whereas works on marginality tend to put more emphasis on political and economic conditions.

The literature has, secondly, contributed to advancing our understanding of the differences, passages and trade-offs between people-based and place-based approaches in research. Whereas people-based approaches do well in analyzing the living conditions of economically weak and/or discriminated population groups, place based approaches have added spatial relegation and concentration effects as an additional source of disadvantage. As described above, this has stimulated a massive amount of research on “neighbourhood effects” which builds on the idea of a causal relationship between place and life chances (Wilson 1987 and 1991, critical Slater 2013). Notwithstanding the longstanding debates on and critiques to this approach, this strand of research literature provides a number of indicators and highlights mechanisms which can help to identify marginalized, peripheral urban areas and decipher underlying mechanisms. It can thus be used as a source of inspiration which helps to train ones eyes for the empirical work on urban inequalities

In this context, it should, thirdly, not be forgotten that the literature on exclusion and marginality has also pointed to structural deficiencies implied in an area focus: “We should keep in mind that problems in the neighbourhood are seldom problems of the neighbourhood … an area focus cannot by itself tackle the broader structural problems, such as unemployment, the underlie the problems of small areas!” (Musterd and Andersson 2005: 386). Wacquant has even gone so far as to insist that neighbourhood effects should be best understood as “the effects of the state inscribed into urban space” (284). It is thus crucial to include the interconnectivities which link these places to processes nested at other spatial scales into the research design. The research should thus not limit itself to the description of “peripheral” places, but needs to integrate this with a study of the changing function of these places in larger socio-spatial configurations. This demands a historical perspective. Moreover, the interconnectivities which link processes functioning at the neighbourhood scale with processes nested at other spatial scales need to be taken into account.

While this enables a broad range of research strategies, it also leaves us with practical problems regarding the appropriate level of analysis (see also Blokland 2012). We would argue that this is due to a tension between structural- and agency-based dimensions of urban inequalities which can hardly be overcome by privileging a certain perspective over others. While on the one hand, cities structurally experience similar macro-level challenges like "globalisation" or "neoliberalism", they still produce widely diverging experiences and disparate patterns of inequality and different relationships between actors and institutions. In order to understand similarities at a macro-Level, at least some level of structuralist explanation is needed. On the other, people-based, *micro*-perspectives can contribute immensely to understanding agency, but easily slide into methodological individualism. The most appropriate choice thus seems to be not an "either-or", but a combination of both perspectives. What is needed, then, is a more integrated, *meso-level* perspective which enables us to simultaneously describe large processes and to study how these interact with agency on the micro-level.

The fifth point to be discussed here, regards the tendency towards a potentially dichotomist reading of "exclusion", "marginalisation" and "peripheralisation" which is in a way easily suggested by the terms themselves. The problem here is that a dualist "inside" vs. "outside" dichotomy is inherent to both concepts. This dualist logic remains in place even when the uses of exclusion or marginalization are supplemented by terms like "relative". Yet, as a matter of fact (and this is also emphasized in both theories) the "excluded" are part of a society for which they fulfil certain functions and into which they are integrated in only a very specific manner. As Wacquant reminds us, even the most marginalized zones perform certain functions within their metropolitan systems (be it as reservoirs for the industrial reserve army, or as containers for the ostracization of undesirable activities). Defining these places as "outside" a perceived normality thus implies the danger of "othering" these places and overlooking their relationship to the "centre". Thus, if one takes the call for analyzing relations, instead of positions, seriously, the terms exclusion and marginalization are arguably not the best starting point. These difficulties are inherent in the conceptual architecture of both terms and thus cannot be completely solved. However, scientific debate has also pointed towards a number of devices, which can meaningfully be used in order to minimize dichotomist fallacies. Most notable among these are Wacquant's "key premises for the study of marginality" (see above) which call for a critical examination of categories and discourses, a historical perspective, a combination of methodologies, attention to the relationalities of a place, and regard to differing institutional contexts. Although dichotomist understandings of both exclusion and marginality cannot completely be avoided, with these "guidelines" in hand a sensitive use of these terms can at least minimize potential shortcomings and productively use the potentials inherent in both approaches.

To sum up: the concepts of exclusion and marginality provide a broad number of conceptual insights which are closely related to the concept of peripheralisation. These can enrich any study of urban inequalities. At the same time, the findings remain contentious and knowledge is still being assembled. Past work on exclusion and marginality should thus be

used rather as a source of inspiration than a ready-made model. As context plays an immense role in shaping the actual dynamics underlying the development of urban inequalities, the object of research necessarily remains a “moving target” for which the appropriate set of methods and concepts needs to be found anew every time. We would argue that using a broad variety of concepts can be supportive of this venture. Against this background, we have identified five areas in which past conceptual work needs to be taken into account when developing an appropriate research design for studying new configurations. These represent the conceptual guidelines for our future empirical field work.

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