EDITORIAL: SPATIAL JUSTICE IN EUROPE. TERRITORIALITY, MOBILITY AND PERIPHERALITY [1]

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Abstract. The discussion surrounding the impact of territorial cohesion policy, and the territorial prioritization of cohesion policy, can offer significant insights by problematizing spatial justice. The notions of territoriality, mobility and peripherality are presented and analyzed due to their relevance to territorial cohesion, but also because they may strengthen the concept of spatial justice. The main objective of this paper, and by extension of this issue, is to stress the relevance of spatial justice as a concept created to address socio-spatial and territorial inequalities and useful when framing policy strategies, articulating policy goals, implementing policies, or taking actions to mitigate socio-spatial inequalities. The paper is organized in four sections. The introductory section presents social and economic inequalities as signifiers of the (un)sustainability of the European project and stresses the challenges facing territorial cohesion policy. The second section includes a conceptualization of spatial justice which plays to both the analytical strength and normative rigour of the concept. Third, there is a brief discussion of the notions of territoriality, mobility and peripherality. The final section is dedicated to a description of the basic features of the six papers included in this issue.

Keywords: mobility, peripherality, socio-spatial inequalities, spatial justice, territory.

Introduction

Since the mid-1980s economic inequality has risen in Europe, while concerns over its increase have surged in the aftermath of the post-2008 financial crisis. It is believed that inequalities have now reached levels at which they may undermine democracy in Europe. This belief is rooted in significant evidence, since economic anxiety and distributional struggles exacerbated by globalization have generated a base for populism (Rodrik, 2018). Populist leaders use the rising inequalities, evident marginalization of various groups and accompanying narratives to shift the discussion towards socioeconomic and cultural features which in turn drive populist politics.

The issue of economic and regional inequalities across Europe has been politicized in recent years, since it is considered a structural feature of the European construction. The latter is an economic and political project which appears to have failed, primarily because it lost its initial targeting and ambition when it became the cradle of neoliberalism, which now needs to be reinvented

or re-constructed (Zielonka, 2014; Balibar, 2017). According to some writers, given the existing state and power relations that have been introduced for its operation, Europe in its current form has become non-governable (Balibar, 2017, p.52). European governance is weak at two levels, the local and the general, and this weakness relates to the fact that democratic legitimation has not crystallized in those institutions that could operate in favour of post-democratic governance. In general, this is attributed to the delay in the evolution of European institutions into post-national democratic governance structures. More to the point, the problem facing modern democracies is that they are slow in their responses to the countless social and economic challenges which, along with rapid technological advances, prevent political changes and radical democratic trans-formations (Runciman, 2018). It is often argued that democracy loses ground when the economy is not doing well; when economic development slows downs, democracy runs into problems since economic prosperity allows for the better operation of democratic governments (Runciman, 2018).

In this general context, the economic and regional inequalities in the EU context are primarily addressed by its cohesion policy, and more specifically by the territorial cohesion policy which was introduced in the second half of the 1990s to counteract the liberalization of public services and, eventually, to sustain the standard of living and competitiveness of less populous regions (Faludi, 2009, p.2). European integration gave rise to territorial issues at two levels: the cross-national and the regional. More particularly, the lack of coordination of national policies on regional issues, and the lack of coordination of sectoral policies at the regional level, were recognized as a domain where territorial cohesion policy actions could offer remedies. In this way, vertical and territorial coordination within the EU framework is the major challenge facing territorial cohesion policy, while, as expected, national and sectoral vested interests have reacted to this policy change; in recent years, their nominal compliance has undermined the effectiveness of the policy. Moreover, it seems there has been an implicit (underlying) and explicit (prioritizing) territorial cohesion policy – following Faludi's 2009 designation – that needs to be better addressed by policymakers and the EU member states. It has been argued that territorial cohesion has introduced a new dimension into the debates around the European 'Social Model' by extending the application of this model beyond individuals and social groups to include and emphasize places and territories (Davoudi, 2007). It has also been said that 'the discourse of territorial cohesion has added a spatial justice dimension to European spatial policy, extending the applying John Rawl's theory of justice, with its emphasis on equity, to territorial development' (Davoudi, 2005, p.437).

Recently, it was reaffirmed that the territorial dimension is widespread and substantial in every component of the EU cohesion policy, while its further strengthening will need further action from both the academic community and the stakeholders involved (Medeiros, 2016). The main argument is that the EU cohesion policy is becoming increasingly territorialized through various mechanisms / processes including: a) the subsidiarity principle; b) the support of cross-border co-operation; c) the support of place-based development strategies; and d) the support of multi-level governance. More recently, two new instruments were invented, one promoting community-led local development interventions (CLLD) and a second financing integrated actions for sustainable urban development (Integrated Territorial Investments – ITI), which both have a clear territorial focus in mind (Medeiros, 2016, p.106).

Despite this policy shift towards the territorialization of cohesion policy, it is evident that this territorialisation of policies in the EU is far from being established since 'The territorial dimen-sion of EU Cohesion Policy has not yet been fully taken into account, particularly regarding the convergence and competitiveness objectives. (…). Territorialization of policies is still in its infancy' (Zaucha, Komornicki, Böhme, Świątek & Żuber, 2014, p.249). Moreover, despite the claimed chan-

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nelling of financial support to less developed regions, the main gains from cohesion funding end up in the EU's metropolitan areas due to the socioeconomic strength and demographic features of the latter; in short 'the goal of achieving a more cohesive and balanced territory at the national level, has not been attained' (Medeiros, 2016, p.108). In similar way, other researchers have analyzed the two sets of reforms of new cohesion policy (i.e. the place-based approach and the conditionalities, thematic priorities and the performance reserve that offer a new policy context) and concluded that the extant disparities in economic performance among the EU territories are more likely to be exacerbated, while the existing uneven spatial relations are more likely to increase (Avdikos & Chardas, 2016). More to the point, relevant research has shown that the European cohesion funds have contributed positively to generating economic growth in lagging areas, but that their effect has been driven mainly by the successful performance of rural areas close to the main urban agglomerates (Gagliardi & Percoco, 2017); therefore, the EU cohesion policy has an urban bias and/or preference towards specific territories favoured due to increased socioeconomic activity, flows of people and business activities. We need to keep in mind the basic assumption behind the design and implementation of territorial policy, which is that it is conceived (like many other policies) as part and parcel of the Europeanization that has expressed itself unevenly across geographical and territorial scales (Sá Marques, Saraiva, Santinha & Guerra, 2018).

In brief, the above discussion reveals an apparent paradox in the discussion on territorial cohesion: while, on the one hand, it refers to the increased territorialization of cohesion policy, on the other hand, it reveals the relatively poor results of territorial cohesion policy for the peripheral regions. Certainly, a central element in such a paradox is the territory and its designation as a building block of spatialized cohesion policy. In this connection, the prioritization of territorial cohesion over the EU's cohesion policies seems to be a significant challenge for researchers and radical thinkers, while it remains rather politicized and contained within the scope of nation-state and governments.

Thus, the territorial level as a major component of territorial cohesion needs the capacity to transform itself from a simple 'container' of policies into a dynamic parameter of cohesion. State territoriality has been the category that seems to have captured the imagination of the national level and EU officials in their quest to design and implement the territorial cohesion policy. In fact, there is a certain territorialism, in the sense of organizing space in well-bounded containers whose integrity is well protected by a 'territorial-administrative complex', which remains at the core of cohesion policy (Faludi, 2016a). The legitimacy of the 'territorial-administrative complex' derives from the capacity of state territories to attain democratic legitimacy based on voting procedures and representative democracy (Faludi, 2016b). However, there are critical voices who argue that the emphasis should be placed on other types of territoriality which, since they are not necessarily tied to traditional state territories, allow for cross-cutting or rearranging territories regardless of state sovereignty (Elden, 2010; Faludi, 2013, 2016c, 2016d, 2019; Sassen, 2013). For example, the challenge of measuring territorial cohesion brings to the fore the issue of delimiting territories or disaggregating them, ensuring the context-dependence of territorial dynamics, involving and engaging sub-national stakeholders in indicator definition and monitoring changes, establishing close collaboration between researchers/experts and stakeholders, and translating real life issues into policy goals, targets and evidence (Zaucha & Böhme, 2019). It thus becomes evident that territory is much more than national-state territory, and there seems to be an emerging need to break out of the cages of national territory authority and engage in new forms of territorial governance (Sassen, 2013; Faludi, 2016c, 2019).

The main objective of this paper, and by extension of this issue, is to stress the relevance of spatial justice as a concept created to address socio-spatial and territorial inequalities and useful when framing policy strategies, articulating policy goals, implementing policies, or taking actions to mitigate socio-spatial inequalities. In this guise, spatial justice may well become a heuristic concept for looking into territoriality, mobility and peripherality. Moreover, the discussion about the impact of territorial cohesion policy and the implicit and/or explicit territorial prioritization of cohesion policy can gain significant insights from problematizing spatial justice and analyzing the notions of territoriality, mobility and peripherality. The next section includes a conceptualization of spatial justice in view of an attempt to emphasize not only the analytical strength, but also the normative rigour, of this concept. Following that, there is a brief discussion of the three notions which are relevant to territorial cohesion and are considered important for strengthening and enriching the concept of spatial justice. The final section is dedicated to a description of the basic features of the six papers included in this issue.

Spatial justice: socio-spatial inequalities and transformative actions

Discussing the concept of spatial justice is a major challenge especially when someone works in the interstices between geography and sociology. It is important to mention that in the last two to three decades social scientists have experienced many 'turns' (see Jessop, Brenner & Jones, 2008; Soja, 2010; Sheller, 2014) such as the 'cultural turn', the 'mobility turn', the 'spatial turn', the 'scalar turn' and the 'relational turn'. These have shifted attention onto older terms, introduced new approaches, and enriched discussions by entangling various (sub)disciplines and creating new conceptual and research domains.

The notion of spatial justice was first conceived as the spatial reference of justice at the scale of the region or territory by Davies in his book *Social Needs and Resources in Local Services*, published in 1968. Davies coined the term 'territorial social justice' as a spatial referent to social justice (Pirie, 1983; Dikeç, 2001). Harvey (2009a [1973]) went on to further develop and popularize the term in his book *Social Justice and the City*, in which he explored the implications of researching social justice over space and suggested a 'Lefebvrian path' to territorial justice, pointing towards the 'Right to the City'. In an interesting quote, Harvey argues that: 'The recognition that these topics [i.e. space, social justice and urbanism] cannot be understood in isolation from each other and that the pervasive dualisms implicit in western thought cannot be bridged, only collapsed, leads to a simultaneous evolution of thought on all fronts. And it is, of course, the power of Marx's analysis that it promotes such a reconciliation among disparate topics and the collapse of dualisms without losing control over the analysis' (2009a [1973], p.17). This surely implies an attempt to seek and build on the interlinkages among these topics and to integrate them into a common theoretical framework.

One of the main challenges of spatial justice is 'how space is comprehended?', meaning as some sort of container or as a process? Provoked by Soja's (1980) seminal work, Pirie (1983, p.471) argues that the notion of distributive justice arising from territorial social justice is not incompatible with conceptualizing spatial justice in terms of conceptualizing space as a process. However, it is not surprising that Pirie's (1983) engagement primarily with territorial justice, using a Cartesian conception of space, has been followed by numerous subsequent writers who have tried to measure, evaluate and revisit the territorialization of policies in an attempt to facilitate higher social

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justice while ensuring equity and fairness in space (Boyne & Powell, 1991; Powell & Boyne, 2001; Storper, 2011; Israel & Frenkel, 2018; Rauhut, 2018; Jones et al., 2019).

A significant contribution of the 'territorial justice' component of spatial justice is its capacity to consider and evaluate the empirical evidence on the spatial relationship between needs and the provision of services (Boyne & Powell, 1991). This understanding of territorial justice reflects a particular conception of equity: namely, on the basis of peoples' needs. However, there are four problems with territorializing resource allocation in this way (Boyne & Powell, 1991, p.264): First, there is the ecological fallacy, which implies that a just distribution at one spatial scale does not necessarily lead to a just distribution at another (inter-area vs intra-area inequity). Second, there is a trade-off between territorial justice and local autonomy. Third, there is a potential trade-off between efficiency and equity, which acknowledges the cost factor when an equal distribution of resources is pursued across high-cost and low-cost areas. Four, even if perfect territorial justice is achieved, this does not guarantee equality of well-being across areas. These problems raise numerous empirical, policy and political issues which cannot be tackled by researchers, but significant effort has to be made at various geographical scales by stakeholders, policymakers and researchers.

One decade later, Powell & Boyne (2001) revisited their initial thinking over territorial justice on the premise that little is known about either the geographical objectives or the spatial outputs of the welfare state. To redress these omissions, they argue that territorial justice arises as a concern of the welfare state, but it cannot be seen only through a centralist perspective which views socioeconomic and territorial inequalities as defects. The wider contextual issues of national and local services should be reckoned with, along with the trade-off between local autonomy and territorial justice. Therefore, the balance between 'people' and 'places', as if they are part of a dualism, is discussed here in view of operationalizing territorial justice; the limitations of the distributive justice and welfare statism are thus recognized.

The other component of spatial justice refers to the theorization of space as process (producer and reproducer) and the recognition of the interrelatedness of injustice and spatiality as producing, reproducing and sustaining each other (Dikeç, 2001, p.1793). This theorization is influenced by Lefevbre's thinking over the 'Right to the City' and his work on spatial difference. Dikeç (2001) shifts the attention to a 'triad' of notions – the spatial dialectics of injustice (the spatiality of injustice and the injustice of spatiality), the right to the city, and the right to difference – as parameters of a spatially informed emancipatory politics. This approach puts forward certain normative and emancipatory assumptions about the urban as co-constructed space, taking a favourable position towards 'politicizing the urban spatial'. For Dikeç (2001, p.1803) there are two substantive implications of spatial justice: first, spatial justice may provide a conceptual apparatus for normative content to guide the actual production of space; and, second, the discursive development and deployment of spatial justice may inform emancipatory politics aiming at confronting spatial dynamics that produce and reproduce various types of injustice. This instrumental theorization of spatial justice may be criticized (see for example Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2010, 2014; Williams, 2018) for leaving aside the analytical and explanatory strength of the concept for harvesting the benefits of targeted normative action.

Several steps on from Dikeç (2001), we find Soja's (2009, 2010) spatial (in)justice, which is socially constructed both as outcome and process; that is as geographies or distributional patterns that are in themselves (un)just and as the processes that produce these outcomes. Spatial (in)justice involves the fair and equitable distribution in space of socially valued resources and the opportunities to use them. Soja accepts that perfectly achieved spatial justice is unattainable, although seeking

spatial justice becomes a 'struggle over geography' (Soja, 2010, p.2). He grounds his thinking in the socio-spatial dialectic, which means that 'the two sets of relations [i.e. the social and spatial relations] are not only homologous, in that they arise from the same origins in the mode of production, but also dialectically intertwined and inseparable' (Soja, 1980, p.209). He states that the spatiality of (in)justice affects society and social life just as much as social processes shape the spatiality or specific geography of (in)justice. In the context of the latest economic crisis, the timeliness of spatial justice is related to the growing awareness of the injustices and inequities embedded in the new economy and an increasing need to find better ways to obtain greater justice (Soja, 2010, p.197). Soja's optimism is visible when he argues that a new 'spatial consciousness' is more likely to spread to numerous scientific areas, empirical analysis and social activism. In this way, spatial justice emerges as a consequential perspective that is based on the human agency that allegedly controls and influences the socio-spatial conditions (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2014).

On the basis of the recent literature that tries to develop a more complex understanding of measures and theorizations of spatial justice (Israel & Frenkel, 2018, p.4; Rauhut, 2018; Williams, 2018), we may distinguish three crude approaches to spatial justice: First, the 'liberal stream of thinking' in regard to spatialized social justice aims at developing specific norms and indicators for measuring, monitoring and promoting social justice in space. Both Rawls (1992) [1971] and Walzer (1983) rely on space to construct their liberal theories of justice, mostly as a background container, but neither of them enable space as an active participant; for Rawls space is simply transcended, while for Walzer space appears as a bounded territorial political community (Williams, 2018, p.65). Second, 'critical spatial thinking' is based on the Marxist critique of capitalism and theorizes spatial justice as an antithesis and/or remedy to systematic articulations of human suffering. The major figures in this approach are Lefebvre (1977 [1968], 1991) and Harvey (2009a [1973]), who along with Soja (2010) have supported the political revival of the 'Right to the City' idea, especially from a multi-scalar and regional perspective. Harvey (2009b) and Soja (2010) criticize Rawls's liberal notion of distributive justice, but they do not completely discard it. They rather see distributive justice as an incomplete project which needs spatial re-theorization. Third, 'utopian thinking' seeks a just form of socio-spatial relations by pursuing democracy, equity and diversity. For some writers, spatial justice can be fully realized if it is embedded in a deep desire to (re)build the urban common (Chatterton, 2010). For others, justice requires more than participation and, also encompasses, at least minimally, a deontological reference to norms transcending the particular (Fainstein, 2009, p.3). Such approaches seek to reconnect social science with moral thinking and philosophy and aim at rebalancing peoples' actions by offering them moral underpinnings for their living and planning (Sandel, 2009).

Spatial justice addresses socio-spatial inequalities in an increasingly complex globalized setting. Despite the rising complexity it tries to capture, spatial justice also aims at comprehending and transcending the socio-spatial inequalities by pursuing transformative actions at various spatial scales (Frazer, 2010). What is more, spatial justice is informed by two major understandings: first, it is treated as a normative outcome perceived by researchers who pursue their own ideology and/or political objectives; and second, it is understood as an analytical framework that investigates the role of particular spatialities for producing justice or injustice. Rather than choosing sides, we would rather emphasize both the analytical strength and the normative rigour of the concept; spatial justice should be conceived as a heuristic concept that seeks to balance the two understandings. A theoretical framing also needs to be articulated for operationalizing the concept without neglecting its politicization in specific contexts, provided that coalitions of stakeholders are enacted and mobilized.

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Enriching and strengthening spatial justice

There are three notions which are relevant to territorial cohesion, but also considered important for strengthening and enriching the concept of spatial justice. These notions are territoriality, mobility and peripherality. To enrich our understanding of socio-spatial theory, it is important to capture the multidimensional character of socio-spatial relations. The TPSN framework of socio-spatial relations is therefore suggested (Jessop, Brenner & Jones, 2008, p.389), which involves territories (T), places (P), scales (S) and networks (N) that should be conceived as 'mutually constitutive and relationally intertwined dimensions of socio-spatial relations'. The one-dimensional understanding of each term is avoided when they are considered together as separate components of a theoretical framework. However, each of the four terms faces a trap or fallacy that requires the full attention of both researchers and policymakers; the traps/fallacies are: methodological territorialism, place-centrism, scale-centrism and network-centrism. The TPSN theoretical schema offers a further refinement of socio-spatial theory, but also provides a frame for the analysis of historical and contemporary transformations of socio-spatial relations (Jessop, Brenner & Jones, 2008). In this context, we will deal in turn with the three notions, which illustrate the variability and differentiation of spatial justice in the light of socio-spatial relations and transformations.

Territoriality

The conceptualization of spatial justice discussed above has revealed two rival understandings of territoriality: state territoriality which is somehow fixed and refers to territory as a container for socio-spatial relations and policies; and territoriality as the outcome of social construction (Elden, 2010; Sassen, 2013). It has been argued that the nation-state as a territorial myth of the European construction is being called into question, while a new concept of territorial sovereignty is emerging (Kahn, 2014). Challenging state territorialism, it becomes necessary to revisit territory that can be understood today as a political technology which comprises techniques for measuring land and controlling the terrain, while the measure and control must be thought of alongside the economic and strategic (Elden, 2010, p.811-812). This does not imply that territory is identified with a fixed and bounded category, but rather that it remains a historical question (produced, mutable and fluid), a geographical question (highly uneven in its development), and a political question. According to Sassen (2013, p.38-39), there is a debordering process that creates new types of bordered spaces inside national territory, which may be internal to state territory or cut across state borders. These transversal bordered spaces are constitutive of distinct territorial capabilities; each territory has its specific embedded logic of power and of claim-making.

When it comes to concrete understandings of spatial justice, it becomes apparent that Sassen's (2013) more fluid and formative notion of territory opens up new paths for discussing the multi-scalar dimensions of spatial justice claims. More particularly, there are antagonisms or clashes between micro-justice claims and macro-justice claims in particular territories, and these need to be accommodated, prioritized or resolved (Bret, 2018). The main question is how to deal with spatial justice in a globalized multi-scalar world which is perceived as a complex system; do we need universal ethical principles that have to be applied to all, or do we trust the people who build social and political coalitions and pursue their plans?

Two final issues regarding territories and their relevance to spatial justice need to be mentioned here: first, territories are considered as an articulation of people and place and may act as collective actors; and second, territories are constructed and reconstructed because of peoples' place attachment and sense of belonging. Regarding the first, to achieve territorial justice, one must consider the interaction of place distributions and people distributions in terms of income

and opportunity; these are not always compatible (Storper, 2011). Combining economic efficiency with geographically just outcomes is not an easy task, since it requires complex mechanisms for making decisions (or choices) for trading off and for improving the resource allocation across territories. Since territorial interdependence grows alongside the need for inter-territorial transfers, how is it possible to come up with a just way of relating the one to the other?

As for how territories are (re)constructed, it should be mentioned that people may be attached and belong at multiple, overlapping and changing scales (Antonsich & Holland, 2012). There are various understandings of territorial belonging (i.e. local attachment, elective belonging, and multi-local belonging) that continue to matter to most people (Solari & Gambarotto, 2014; Tomaney, 2015). Territorial attachment and belonging, at various scales, is dynamic in nature, creates socio-spatial arrangements, and produces cultural landscapes (Blunt, 2007). This line of thinking has a couple of implications: first, local attachment has a specific moral content that cannot be reduced to generic feelings or emotions and which invokes particular imaginaries (Tomaney, 2012, 2017); and second, place belongingness (feeling 'at home') is complemented by belonging as a resource for socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion (politics of belonging) (Antonsich, 2010).

Mobility

Mobility and socio-spatial inequalities are closely interwoven (Manderscheid, 2009; Manderscheid & Richardson, 2011), although their entanglement is not easily deciphered by social scientists. For sociologists, terms such as place, socio-spatial inequalities and spatial mobility have been integrated into their vocabulary only relatively recently (Gieryn, 2000; Weiss, 2005; Recchi & Flipo, 2019), and more specifically in parallel with the launch of the 'new mobility paradigm' that initialized a new way of thinking and looking at social phenomena, and more particularly migration, through the lens of movement (Sheller & Urry, 2006; Urry, 2007; Sheller, 2014). Mobility – or mobilities, according to this approach – can be conceived as a complex assemblage of movement, social imaginaries and experience (Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013). From the start, the mobility approach has emphasized (im)mobility, moorings, dwelling and stillness as well as speed, or liquidity (Cresswell, 2006, 2010). More to the point, mobility cannot be comprehended without considering the spatial, which involves a number of aspects (scale, borders and territories) (Miller & Ponto, 2016; Kwan & Schwanen, 2016); in addition, imagined places or territorial imaginaries are important components of mobilities and of peoples' actions in relation to their (non)movement.

In connection with the above discussion on peoples' attachment to places/territories, and in the context of the globalizing multi-scalar world, places retain their specificity by being distinct mixtures of wider (extra-local) and local socio-spatial relations (Massey, 1991). The role of mobile and immobile populations is important for co-constituting the particular places, but also at various spatial scales. Places are nodes where socio-spatial relations interface and interact, while a continuous spatial process of reconstruction and renegotiation is also underway. The well-known phrase of Massey (2005, p.151) about the 'throwntogetherness of places' implies that places take shape as a result of an 'even-shifting constellation of trajectories'. Places are negotiated by identities that are on the move, while there are numerous overlapping and contrasting temporalities, too. Consequently, as already mentioned, places and territories are not fixed entities whose alleged coherence is disturbed by 'external forces' such as globalization, the economic crisis and migrant flows. In fact, mobility (re)creates places and territories by being an internal factor through place attachment and belonging (Antonsich, 2010; Antonsich & Holland, 2012).

Migration, and mobility in general, is considered a major challenge for EU cohesion policy, because the policy seeks to capture positive social and economic gains from migration, while at the

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same time addressing negative implications of migration, such as social exclusion and the decline in social solidarity (Deas & Hincks, 2014). In contrast, there is the view that migration has the potential to bring about greater social justice, both individually and collectively, at both ends of the migration process, inter alia by creating new relationships across transnational space (Bastia, Piper & Carron, 2011, p.1492). The most prevalent understanding of migration and mobility towards the European 'borderland' among researchers and radical thinkers is that the arrangements of the EU migration and asylum policy, as well as migration governance based on state territoriality and increased border control, create vast injustices by 1) not allowing migrating populations to enter Europe, 2) increasing the cost in human lives to people trying to cross the border, and 3) mistreating those who do succeed in crossing the borders (Balibar, 2009; De Genova, 2016). The challenge of integrating migrant populations in receiving countries is considered a national (and/or government) matter (Cheong, Edwards, Goulbourne & Solomos, 2007) rather than an issue of spatial justice to be approached alongside the socio-spatial inequalities and transformations.

Peripherality

The main focus of spatial justice is on urban areas, urban problems and more developed regions (Harvey, 2009a [1973]; Mitchell, 2003; Brenner, 2009). According to this approach, the use of the designation 'rural' becomes highly problematic, at least as a category of social scientific analysis; similarly, in the urban age discourse, the notion of the rural is simply a 'black box' since it refers to the residual zones of settlement that are 'not urban' (Brenner & Schmid, 2014, p.747-748). Peripheral regions lack accessibility to markets – a fact which determines their absolute and relative competitiveness; the lack of economies of scale also create a significant disadvantage in these regions (Rauhut, 2018, p.114). Therefore, peripheral or rural territories are poorly theorized in terms of the urban-centred conceptualization of spatial justice.

There are three aspects to the discussion about peripherality and spatial justice. First, conditions of uneven regional development are important for comprehending the impact of globalization in peripheral areas. Massey's (1979, p.234) understanding of regional/spatial inequality involves two aspects: on the one hand, there is inequality in the degree of attractiveness of a particular area to the dominant form of economic activity; on the other hand, there is inequality in terms of various indicators of social well-being (i.e. rate of unemployment, per capita income, degree of external control of production). In fact, there always has been spatial (or regional) inequality. The concept of spatial inequality is pivotal for considering the processes of uneven regional development, which was an important component of the recent financial crisis, both globally and, more particularly, in the EU and its peripheral areas (Harvey, 2011; Hadjimichalis, 2011; Hadjimichalis & Hudson, 2014).

Second, various attempts have been made to improve the record of local and regional development by using locally and territorially-specific attributes and institutions, and mobilizing resources at the local/regional level (Rodríguez-Pose, 2013; Pike, Rodríguez-Pose & Tomaney, 2017). Similarly, the so-called place-based approach has introduced a clear territorial perspective that recognizes the impasse represented by aggregate a territorial studies that do not offer conclusive answers on policy impact (Barca, McCann & Rodríguez-Pose, 2012; Medeiros, 2016). However, the ineffectiveness of former local and regional development policies, to which the recent economic crisis also contributed, have driven certain regions – or 'places that don't matter' – to express increased political discontent in various ways (Rodríguez-Pose, 2018; Dijkstra, Poelman & Rodríguez-Pose, 2020).

Finally, the well-known concept of the 'Right to the City', conceived by Lefebvre (1977 [1968]),

is based on an abstract claim to the city – referring to the right to work, to belong to and to determine the fate of the urban setting – and a concrete claim to social, economic and political goods – housing, culture, education, well-being, etc. (McCann, 2002; Brenner & Elden, 2009; Mitchell & Villanueva, 2010). It signifies the right to inhabit the city, the right to produce a new urban life (based on use value), and the right of the inhabitants to remain unalienated from capitalist urban life (Attoh, 2011; Purcell, 2013). The right to the city has upscaled into a wider claim, illustrating the social movement towards the achieving of greater spatial justice, to now include other types of territory – more peripheral and less developed – such as the rural and the countryside suggested by various writers (Barraclough, 2013; Bühler, Darly & Milian, 2015; Pierce, Williams & Martin, 2016). However, despite the generic claim of the right to the city, there should be more targeted work to specify which types of rights are claimed, in what space, by whom, and whether these claims are compatible in the specific territories (Attoh, 2011).

Brief description of the main rationale of the papers in the issue

The papers included in this issue address existing socio-spatial inequalities across countries, regions or places. More importantly, five papers present empirical evidence relating to various countries around Europe (i.e. Albania, Greece, Romania, Poland, Lithuania, Russia, Sweden and the United Kingdom) while the final paper focuses on the EU countries and contains a cross-country comparison. The contributors have backgrounds in various disciplines within the social sciences, such as geography, sociology, economics, but a number of papers develop an interdisciplinary approach. The six papers address different sorts of migration, various types of migrant groups (i.e. seasonal workers, return migrants, emigrants) and types of mobility. Moreover, every paper addresses the issues of territory or peripherality, either by focusing on different territorial inequalities using empirical evidence (e.g. Romanian immigrants who have left their country to improve their wellbeing, different types of Romanian emigration depending on the development dynamics of their region of origin, Albanians immigrants who left Greece and returned to their country of origin due to the economic crisis, different prospects for migrant integration on the basis of the host country and the level of wellbeing expected there) or by raising issues of peripherality (e.g. seasonal workers who are employed in rural areas within developed countries, the movement of young people from less developed to more developed regions, outmigration of Romanians from less economically developed regions, different trajectories of migrants in Southern Europe compared to Northern/Western Europe).

The issue begins with the contribution by Loukia-Maria Fratsea (2019), which explores the changing aspirations of Romanian migrants during their migratory journey to Greece and the way these are shaped by individual parameters, their family and social networks, and changing socio-economic conditions in their country(ies) of origin and residence. Since the collapse of the Communist regime, a range of factors have influenced the aspirations and migration decision-making of Romanian migrants, while the dynamics of Romanian migration have facilitated the emergence of a 'culture of migration'. The narratives of Romanian migrants reveal an interplay between migrant agency and changing structures in the countries involved, while migration decision-making is continuously reformed during the life course on the basis of changing aspirations and any new constraints or opportunities that may arise. The author points out that actual or perceived

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territorial inequalities regarding incomes, livelihoods, employment prospects, social mobility and well-being are not compared solely between a migrant's countries of origin and destination, but rather include potential future destinations. The author concludes by considering the issues of territorial inequality and stratification in the study of migrant aspirations, both of which are important elements for discussing and evaluating the spatial justice claims of migrants that need to be framed accordingly.

The second paper, by Ruth McAreavey (2019), contributes to the body of literature that considers the role of migrant labour in the agri-food sector and the agency of migrants in the context of temporary migration programmes (TMPs) as these operate in the more developed countries, and more particularly in the United Kingdom. The paper deploys Fraser's concept of social justice (2010) as a means of understanding and evaluating seasonal worker schemes. It is argued that there is evidently a strong political imperative for framing seasonal worker schemes in a particular way, some of which is about justifying the operation of international organizations. A rosy picture is presented of seasonal worker schemes, which are generally considered to offer a triple win: i.e. for the sending countries, the receiving countries, and the migrant labourers themselves. However, when the working conditions, payment and care of seasonal workers are not safeguarded and the relevant legislation is breached, then seasonal worker schemes are considered to be a cradle of bonded labour and harsh exploitation. The author argues that the seasonal worker schemes can create opportunities for fair employment regimes, but that they require real governmental investment to ensure they are properly designed and monitored with scope for remedial action and less attention paid to political calculations and support for employers. In fact, the involvement of stakeholders and the territorial governance of seasonal worker schemes would constitute a step forward towards introducing the requirements for spatial justice.

The third contribution, by Bianca Mitrică, Nicoleta Damian, Irena Mocanu and Ines Grigorescu (2019), uses statistical data available at the NUTS2 level, provided by the National Institute of Statistics in Romania and other statistical sources, to examine the links between two indicators: Romanian out-migration (through the Out-migration Rate) and social development (through the Social Disadvantaged Index). The article begins with a general overview of emigration trends in Romania and a description of the computation of the composite indexes. At the centre of their analysis there is a detailed investigation of the territorial differences in these indicators between Romania's eight NUTS2 level Development Regions (North-West, Centre, North-East, South-East, South-Muntenia, Bucharest-Ilfov, South-West Oltenia, and West). The analysis and the mapping of these indicators reveals areas which are advantaged or disadvantaged to different degrees in terms of social development levels. By looking at the territorial distribution of the Social Disadvantaged Index and the Out-migration Rate, a spatial overview of relationships between out-migration dynamics and social development is identified within and between the Development Regions in Romania. There is a correlation between the high outmigration and low social development recorded in several regions, while the reverse is also true in a small number of regions, based on their socio-spatial characteristics. Based on the described territorial inequalities and their correlation to mobility patterns, the spatial justice claims of movers need to be analyzed in depth to reveal the movers' understanding of the wider processes and challenges.

The fourth contribution is by Przemysław Kulawczuk, Andrzej Poszewiecki and Adam Szczęch (2019), who investigate the Baltic Euroregion which is currently facing strong depopulation pressures, with Poland and Lithuania experiencing marked population decline, especially in rural areas, over the last two decades. The paper examines young people's preferences for their future, analyzing the results of a quantitative survey conducted in six localities in four of the Euroregion's states

(Poland, Lithuania, Sweden and Russia). There are differences across countries and regions due to the socialist past of three of them, which are somehow illustrated in the preferences of their young people today. Certain factors, such as family relations and emotional attachment, influence potential youth migrants towards remaining in their area of origin, while the difficulties they experience in fulfilling their own destiny and improving their wellbeing are important factors that encourage potential youth migrants to depart from their place of residence. The authors argue that existing regional policies do not actually pay enough attention to real people, and more particularly to the aspirations, motivations and needs of young people. Instead, regional policies reproduce abstract rationalizations around the supply and demand of typical individuals with specific specializations. In a similar vein, they suggest that young people's decisions to leave and/or stay should be carefully considered and understood, as they may facilitate the design and implementation of policy measures suitable for addressing potential population deficits. Consequently, the notion of spatial justice becomes a major instrument for articulating the needs and claims of the youth in the peripheral regions of the Baltic Euroregion, while it also clarifies the need to reconfigure territories by enabling the participation of young people, as potential migrants, along with their mobility patterns/ trajectories.

The fifth paper in this issue is by Kalie Kerpaci (2019), who has done research on return migrants from Greece who own small businesses in Tirana, the capital of Albania. The analysis focuses on the reasons the returnees engaged in entrepreneurial activities through the necessity-opportunity entrepreneurship approach. Those who became entrepreneurs out of necessity were less prepared to embark on such venture and took their decision to avoid unemployment; in contrast, the majority of opportunity-seizing entrepreneurs had planned their return and intended to set up a business before migrating. The onset of the economic crisis in Greece enabled many Albanian migrants who maintained strong ties with their home country to seriously consider returning to their country of origin. The response of Albanian migrant returnees to a major and long-lasting economic rupture has been part and parcel of their migration and mobility strategies in the past. In retrospect, migrants' decisions need to be framed by taking into consideration their mobility patterns, the territorial canvas, and the socioeconomic and political opportunities in various countries (and locations within them). The author argues that the two main categories of migrant returnees differ in terms of their motivations, calculative thinking, mentality and networking. All in all, the wider framing of migrant returnees' aspirations and motivations requires the consideration of territoriality and the socio-spatial transformations and sense of belonging of the movers; if it is to capture the transnational dimension, spatial justice (claims) is still in need of a good deal of thought (and theorizing).

The final contribution, by Dionyssis Balourdos and Maria Petraki (2019), uses mostly EU-SILC survey data with the expressed aim of empirically investigating the risk of poverty and/or social exclusion of immigrants across Europe. More particularly, the article focuses on cross-national comparisons of immigrants' and nationals' risk of poverty and/or social exclusion, whereby discerned patterns and related explanations are pursued. Overall, there are different paths toward social and economic integration for nationals compared to immigrants. Despite immigrants being attracted to welfare benefits in countries with high level of equality and/or prosperity, they are worse off in these countries in terms of living conditions and the risk of poverty is far higher than it is for nationals. In most countries immigrant social inclusion policies do not seem to be well-connected to social protection and/or welfare targeted at nationals. Similarly, children with an immigrant background are more exposed to the risk of poverty in almost every country. All in all, immigrants are severely disadvantaged in most EU countries, and are occasionally exposed to risks many times

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higher than nationals. Therefore, immigrant populations do not enjoy the same level of support as EU nationals, which is possibly the result of the implementation of discriminatory policies. Issues that need to be addressed if spatial justice is to be improved/achieved are evident at various spatial scales (i.e. local, region, national, cross-national); despite that, there is no provision for migration policy other than at the national level.

Acknowledgement

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